

WHEATLAND
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

NEWS



WHEATLAND ELECTRIC

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FROM THE MANAGER

Annual Meeting Recap & Pending Sales Tax Legislation Update



Bruce Mueller

Thank you to all of our members who attended Wheatland Electric Cooperative's 67th Annual meeting in Syracuse.

We had 84 members register and served 125 barbecue meals to our members and guests. Thank you to all of the special guests who attended.

During the meeting, we presented the 2014 financial report, discussed the upcoming Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) installation, and provided a yearly summary on the activities and accomplishments of the cooperative in 2014. Wheatland presented our new scholarship program, and 10 high school students were recognized as the winners. We also recognized two Electric Cooperative Youth Tour winners and one Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp winner.

During the meeting, service awards were presented to Wheatland employees with awards ranging from five to 40 years.

Stuart Lowry, President and CEO of Sunflower Electric, Wheatland's wholesale power supplier,

presented an update on electric generation. The 2016 Annual Meeting will be held in Tribune.

Sales Tax Legislation

On another front, I'd like to discuss a serious tax issue that could affect your electricity bills in the future. As I'm writing this, the Kansas Legislature is contemplating removing the state sales tax exemption on residential utility bills. If Senate Bill 261 passes along with a corresponding House Bill, your electric bills will increase by 6.15 percent each month.

This would be a state tax and not a Wheatland rate increase. Nevertheless, we would have to collect the tax and send it to the state.

Wheatland and your member elected Board of Trustees are committed to being part of the solution, but we don't believe our members should carry the burden alone. We will update you on the outcome of SB 261 in the July issue.

Until next time, take care.

If Senate Bill 261 passes along with a corresponding House Bill, your electric bills will increase by 6.15% each month.

Wheatland to Send Three Students to Washington and Colorado

Wheatland Electric's Board of Trustees has selected three students for Youth Tour trips courtesy of the cooperative. Wheatland selected **DERIAN GARRISON** of Norwich High School and **ESSENCE RATZLAFF** of South Haven High School for the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., and **MALLORY HORTON** of Syracuse High School to the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, CO.

Since 2014, Wheatland provided all 13 high schools in its service territory an opportunity to nominate a student for Youth Tour consideration. This year, six schools nominated students.

The candidates submitted essays on "the nature and philosophy of a cooperative business, comparing and contrasting it with an investor-owned corporation." They also demonstrated their poise and knowledge during interviews with a panel of Wheatland's board members.

"The students' essays were a wonderful reminder about what makes cooperatives unique," said Katie Eisenhour, one of the Wheatland board members in charge of the selection process and also a Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp alumni. "I think our generation knows all that cooperatives have done for rural communities, and it's nice to see that young people also recognize that contribution."

Here are some samples of what our winners had to say about cooperatives in their essays.

► "Cooperatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, and equality... profits

are put back into the cooperative to help run the business efficiently, or are returned to the customer-owner," Derian Garrison, said.

► According to Essence Ratzlaff, "Electric cooperatives were created to bring power to the rural areas... since investor-owned power companies refused to deliver power to these areas due to lower profit potential from having fewer customers per mile of powering."

► Mallory Horton's essay revealed that, "The difference between the two is like the difference between earning an item and being given one. I worked really hard to earn enough money to buy myself a Nintendo DS a few years ago and I take care of it because of the amount of time and money I put into it."

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., will take place June 11-18. The national trip is in its 51st year. In 1957, then-Senator Lyndon Johnson gave a speech to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and proclaimed,

"If one thing goes out of this meeting, it will be sending youngsters to the national capital where they can actually see what the flag stands for and represents."

The goals of the program are twofold: to teach students more about

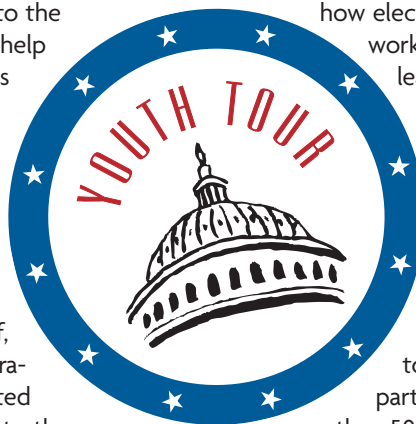
how electric cooperatives work and to develop the leaders of tomorrow by exposing them to people and places outside of their own communities.

Today roughly 1,700 high school students attend each year, traveling to Washington from 45 participating states. More than 50,000 students have participated in Youth Tour since its inception.

Wheatland's 2014 winner was **BAILEY HARRIS** of Greeley County High School in Tribune. She said the trip was "one of the best experiences of my life thus far! I learned a lot from our conversations with legislators, and I really enjoyed getting to ask questions and speak with them on such a personal level."

The 2015 tour includes stops at the Smithsonian museums, Arlington Cemetery, the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, George Washington's Mount Vernon and the National Archives, as well as tours of the national memorials and monuments and meetings with Congressional staff members.

Closer to home, the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, CO, has been educating students for more than 40 years. Students from Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming attend. The goal is to give students a broader view of the world and educate them about cooperatives. On the agenda for this year's camp are visits to Look-out Mountain, Fish Creek Falls and Steamboat Springs, various leadership activities, white water rafting, and tours of Trapper Coal Mine and Craig Generation Plant.



Meet This Year's Youth Tour Winners

Mallory Horton

Camp Winner

WHERE ARE YOU FROM AND WHAT SCHOOL DO YOU ATTEND?

I am from Kendall and I attend Syracuse High School.



Mallory Horton

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECT IN SCHOOL? My favorite subject in school is probably Yearbook.

WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS? My future plans are to go to college and study to become a high school English teacher. I also wouldn't mind baking on the side because it's something I love to do. Plans change all the time though, so I'm just going to go where the wind takes me.

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE PROGRAM AND WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO APPLY? I heard about the program through my guidance counselor and I figured, why not? It sounded like it was going to be an amazing time, and I wanted to go.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO ON YOUR TRIP? I'm definitely looking forward to meeting all new people and making new friends. I also am pretty excited to go white water rafting.

Derrian Garrison

DC Winner

WHERE ARE YOU FROM AND WHAT SCHOOL DO YOU ATTEND?

I am from Norwich and I go to Norwich High School.



Derrian Garrison

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECT IN SCHOOL? My favorite subject in school is Human Body Systems because I find the human anatomy very interesting.

WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS? I haven't decided what college I am going to but I plan on going into pre-health and then eventually going on to be a radiologist.

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE PROGRAM AND WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO APPLY? I heard about the program from my school counselor, and I decided to apply because it sounded like a fun experience that is once in a lifetime.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO ON YOUR TRIP? I am excited to go to Washington, D.C., to make new friends and say that I have visited our nation's capitol. I'm also excited to visit all of the historical monuments and museums.

Essie Ratzlaff

DC Winner

WHERE ARE YOU FROM AND WHAT SCHOOL DO YOU ATTEND?

I am from South Haven and attend South Haven Highschool.



Essie Ratzlaff

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECT IN SCHOOL? My favorite subject in school is Music.

WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS? I hope to attend Wichita State University and major in accounting and minor in music.

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE PROGRAM AND WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO APPLY? I heard about the program from school. It felt like a great opportunity.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO ON YOUR TRIP? I am excited to see all the different museums and memorials.

2015 Scholarship Winners

Ten high school seniors were awarded a \$1,000 scholarship from Wheatland this year. They are: **ANDREW MAGES**, Argonia; **KAITYNN DVORAK**, Caldwell; **LEORA SEILER**, Conway Springs; **MARC SKIPPER**, Deerfield; **TAYLOR HOFELING**, Great Bend; **BAILEY HARRIS**, Greeley Co.; **KAITLYNN HAMMOND**, Holcomb; **SKYLER HEMBREE**, Leoti; **MARSHAL HUTCHINS**, Scott City; and **LAKOTA STUCKY**, Syracuse.

Congratulations and best of luck in your future endeavors.



Five of our 10 winners were able to attend the Annual Meeting to be recognized. They were (from left) Lakota Stucky, Bailey Harris, Marc Skipper, Taylor Hofeling and Kaitlynn Hammond.

2015 Wheatland Annual Meeting Highlights

The 67th Annual Meeting of Wheatland Electric was held on April 15 in Syracuse. Each year, it is an opportunity for Wheatland members to learn about what has taken place with their co-op during the past year and find out what is on the horizon. Several key programs were highlighted during the Annual Meeting that give back to the community.

Sharing Success

Each year, Wheatland's Sharing Success program donates \$10,000 to worthy non-profit organizations. Members of American Legion Post 27 were presented with a \$1,000 check to help with renovation costs of the Veterans Building in Syracuse.

Youth Tour

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour is not just another trip. It was referred to as the "trip of a lifetime" in a presentation by the 2014 Youth Tour participant, **BAILEY HARRIS**. She shared about her experiences in Washington, D.C., and the memories and friends that will last her a lifetime. This year's D.C. winners are **DERIAN GARRISON** and **ESSENCE RATZLAFF**.



Bucket trucks hoisted flags to welcome members to the Annual Meeting on April 15.

In addition to the two Youth Tour winners, Wheatland also sponsors one student to attend the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp. This year, **MALLORY HORTON**, will attend the camp that will be held in Steamboat Springs, CO, in July.

Scholarship Winners Announced

Ten high school seniors each were given a \$1,000 scholarship from Wheatland this year. Why award scholarships? The answer can be found in two of the core founding principles of cooperatives of all kinds: Education, Training and Information, and Concern for Com-

munity. Wheatland established the scholarship to help develop the leaders of tomorrow and to ensure that Wheatland's future is just as bright as its past.

Trustee Election Results

Election results were announced and the following trustees were appointed: District 2—**CHARLES AYERS**; District 3—**ROE JOHNSON**, District 4—**RON DAVIS**, District 6—**DAN BONINE**, and District 7—**DAVE LOWE**. Members also voted to approve a recommended bylaw amendment.

We look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting in 2016!



Board President Wes Campbell (left) and General Counsel Jim McVay address the membership.

Employees Recognized for Service at Annual Meeting

40 Years

George E. Andrasek
Mary Ann Davis

35 Years

Joseph L. Birzer
Randy G. Coleman
Lynn B. Freese
Gregory M. Ladner
G. Joyce Trettenero

30 Years

John E. Houston

25 Years

Todd A. Nemechek
Gregory A. See
James S. Zorn

20 Years

Jana S. Harkness
Bryan L. Mulligan
Mike R. Olson

15 Years

Chad M. Deniston
Loren R. Goss
Colton T. Green
Mark A. Maier
Randy L. Rogers

10 Years

Darrin A. Campbell
Paula S. Crook
Wade M. Grumbein
Keith D. McMillan
Radona L. Smythe

**Thank you
for your
service!**

5 Years

Marcus B. Goebel
Patricia A. Hanna
Brandon M. Ritchie

Beat the Summer Heat with Cool Products

When temperatures soar in the summer, utility bills can do the same. There are several small ways to manage your energy use this summer. Wheatland Electric is happy to help you with those simple, no- or low-cost ways to save—but for those who are considering remodeling or making larger purchases, here are a few ideas that may help keep your energy use in check and keep your wallet cool.



This smart thermostat is easy to program. The display is very large and easy to read.

electric bills. Contact your local HVAC expert for more information.

If making changes to your heating and cooling system isn't the right upgrade for you now, consider installing a smart thermostat. These "cool" devices learn your behavior and adjust heating and air conditioning settings with a goal to save energy. Smart thermostats also have the capability to connect to the Internet, al-

lowing homeowners to manage energy use via a smart phone app. There are several smart thermostat options available on the market, typically costs range between \$200 and \$400.

Purchasing new appliances?

If you are considering purchasing new appliances that will use less energy, but may not have the budget for a complete appliance overhaul, start with replacing your clothes dryer. Dryers are big consumers of electricity, using around 900 kWh each year as compared to a refrigerator, which uses around 455 kWh each year.

There have been big developments with dryers in recent years, and Energy Star awarded two standouts—the LG EcoHybrid Heat Pump Dryer and the Whirlpool HybridCare™ Heat Pump Dryer—the 2014 Emerging Technology Award.

Using heat pump technology, these dryers offer 40 percent in energy savings if operated on their most efficient settings and can save more than \$400 over the life of the dryer. Visit energystar.gov and check out their "Most Efficient 2015" list to help you determine which products are the most efficient for your home.

Looking for a rebate? Check out the rebate finder on the Co-op Connections Card website at www.connections.coop/weci for a complete list of appliance rebates!

Remodeling?

If you are making esthetic changes to your home, consider products that will also make it work more efficiently. Heating and cooling systems use the most energy in our homes, so if you are making upgrades to your floors and cabinets, consider making some energy efficient upgrades, too.

If you're making additions to your home or converting attics or basements into living spaces, a ductless heating and cooling system is a great option. A ductless system does not require adding pipes or ductwork to a home's existing system, making it a more affordable upgrade for many. Ductless systems tend to be more efficient, meaning homeowners will use less energy and save on their



Using heat pump technology, new energy efficient dryers offer up to 40 percent in energy savings if operated on their most efficient settings and can save more than \$400 over the life of the dryer.

WHIRLPOOL

Get to Know Your Co-op Staff Jana Harkness

WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

Jana Harkness

WHAT IS YOUR JOB

AND LOCATION? Meter Tech. Garden City

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED AT WHEATLAND?

20.5 years



Jana Harkness

WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR

FAMILY (SPOUSE, CHILDREN, PETS)?

I have been married to Kenton for almost 37 years. We have three grown children Chad, Michelle and Tyler with eight grandkids from the ages of 20 months to 19 years and expecting a new one in July. We have a dog named Teddy Bear.

WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

Scott City

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

Visit grandkids, garden, read, and listen to music on my back patio.

WHAT SPORT OR TEAM IS YOUR FAVORITE?

Denver Broncos

IF YOU COULD HAVE ANY SUPER POWER—WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

To transport myself to my kids and grandkids without the travel time so I could be with them on all their important life events, help them out and be with them.

WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

My children—they are all great adults and an asset to their communities. They are raising great kids with respect to others and a good work ethic, in this day and age that is not always seen.

WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU IN YOUR LIFE AND WHY?

My mom—she passed at an early age from cancer, but was a fighter and never gave up. She always had a positive outlook.

Get to Know Your Co-op Staff Jim Welker



Jim Welker

WHAT IS YOUR NAME? Jim Welker

WHAT IS YOUR JOB AND LOCATION?

Manager of Broadband/IT (a.k.a. Cell Phone Guy) in Scott City

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED AT WHEATLAND?

8 years

WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY (SPOUSE, CHILDREN, PETS)?

My wife of 15 years, Teri, is a great mother to our two children, Brady, 9, and Bailey, 7. She is a massage therapist in Scott City. Her true full-time job is keeping the three of us in line. Brady is in third grade and enjoys football, basketball, baseball, and riding his ATV. Bailey is in first grade and enjoys soccer, softball, reading, and riding her ATV.

WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY? Syracuse, GO BULLDOGS!

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME? Hang out with friends and family, ride ATV's, and travel whether it be vacation or sporting events.

WHAT SPORT OR TEAM IS YOUR FAVORITE? Baseball Atlanta Braves

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE VACATION? Cancun, Mexico

WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF? Being a Dad! Most rewarding job ever!

WHAT WOULD YOUR IDEAL JOB BE? ATV Test Rider

Wheatland Receives National Award for “Cram the Van” Food Drive

Wheatland recently received recognition in the 2015 “Spotlight on Excellence” national awards program, sponsored by the Council of Rural Electric Communicators and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Wheatland received a **GOLD AWARD** in the Best Event Category

for the **“CRAM THE VAN”** food drive. Shawn Powelson, Manager of Member Services and Corporate Communications coordinated the award-winning event.

“The judges noted that electric cooperatives are being challenged to communicate to the people they serve in more ways than ever before,” said Carol Crabtree, administrator of Spotlight on Excellence. “Printed newsletters, news releases, websites, social media and videos, are all more important than ever to keep members updated.”

A special reception honored the award recipients during the national cooperative communicator conference held in Minneapolis, MN, on May 12. Winning entries were displayed during the event.

“What an honor. The Spotlight award winners are the best of



Wheatland's Shawn Powelson, Manager of Member Services and Corporate Communications (left) and Bruce Mueller, General Manager, accepted the Spotlight on Excellence award at the CONNECT Conference in Minneapolis, MN, on May 12.

the best from cooperatives across the country. I'm very proud of our efforts and thrilled that Wheatland received an award for this great program,” said Bruce Mueller, General Manager of Wheatland.

The annual Spotlight awards competition recognizes the top-rated communication and marketing efforts by electric cooperatives and related organizations. Participants in the awards competition competed with electric cooperatives of similar sizes in 16 categories. Electric cooperative communicators and marketing professionals submitted more than 780 entries in the Spotlight on Excellence program, now in its 27th year.

Faculty members from the University of Missouri–Columbia, University of South Carolina and Ohio University Scripps-Howard School of Journalism judged the entries.



Wheatland Teams Compete in Sunflower ElectroRally



Twelve high school teams competed at the 18th Annual Sunflower ElectroRally on April 22 in Scott City.

Twelve teams from across the state (and one from Florida) competed in the Sunflower ElectroRally on April 22 at the Scott City Airport.

In years past, participants in the race have had to fight some less than ideal weather conditions, so it was a pleasant surprise to have a warm, sunny day for the event.

Each team is made up of students who draw on knowledge obtained in classes such as Math, Physics, Auto Technology, Graphic Design and Electronics to design, build and race the cars.

Two heats, divided into three classes, (standard, solar and open) raced to see who could get the most number of laps in an hour. The results were compiled and the top three finishers in each division were awarded plaques.

Along with sponsoring two of the teams in the rally (Great Bend and Scott City), Wheatland was happy to furnish lunch for all of the participants, faculty sponsors, spectators and volunteers. A special thanks goes out to



The Scott City team driver Daniel Varela prepares ElectroRally car 195 to race.

the Scott City linemen, who manned the grill.

Both of Wheatland's sponsored teams finished well at the Scott City race including Great Bend earning first place in the Standard division and Scott City earning third in the Standard division and second in Solar division.

Since 1997, Kansas electric cooperatives, like Wheatland, have sponsored ElectroRally racing events.

This program encourages youth to think about future technology that car makers may develop. The opportunities and knowledge the teams get from the experience will benefit them later in life.

BRUCE MUELLER, MANAGER



Wheatland sponsored ElectroRally teams from Great Bend and Scott City (above).



*Perry Smith
Manager of Water Works in Garden City
14 Years at Wheatland*

A Day in the Life

Perry Smith

BY BETH LOONEY,
ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

When most people think of Wheatland Electric, they think of electricity. But did you know that Wheatland also provides wholesale water? Part of Wheatland's mission is to provide other essential services to rural Kansas: including water supply. **PERRY SMITH** manages the water works for Wheatland.

I arrived at the reverse osmosis water treatment plant at 7:30 a.m. to start my day with Perry. He briefed his one-man staff, Francis Lobmeyer, and me on the day's work. Then off we went. Since Francis was holding down the fort at the water plant, Perry and I hit the road to take care of some field work. Within the first hour of our trip, Perry and I jumped in and out of his truck nine times to check on a variety of Wheatland water equipment and buildings.

As Perry explained to me, it is required that a daily visual inspection occur at many of the water sites, including; pumping buildings, the deep well injection building, and chlorination buildings, among others.

Our next adventure was to drive out to the water ranch. This is an area in rural Finney County where most of Wheatland's water wells are located. After driving through some rather rough terrain that had me holding on for dear life and squealing on one occasion, we stopped to put a fitting on a pipe for a temporary water supply then quickly moved on to other wells. Perry just kept trucking along: he has a non-stop, admirable work ethic.

As we continued on our journey, I asked Perry what was his favorite part about his job. He said that he preferred to work on the water ranch. He said that when he's out in a field smelling fresh cut alfalfa and seeing and hearing the sounds of the country as he's working, he feels at ease. This made sense to me as my impression of Perry is that he is a quiet, respectful, and hard-working individual.

We then moved on to inspect a chlorination station. As we walked into the building, I noticed a relief valve that lets a small stream of water run into a drain. At the head of the drain, getting a fabulous shower, sat one giant toad. Perry said the toad was a sort of house pet that had lived there happily for several years enjoying the fresh water and the occasional gourmet bug.

As we wrapped up our day together, Perry and I talked about life in western Kansas. Perry puts a priority on his family. He has several grown children and grandchildren who all visit regularly. He clearly loves his wife, Ann. With a softness in his eye, he said that she takes very good care of him and their home.

In starting my journey with Perry in the water works department, I had little idea of what he did on a daily basis. I now know that he and Francis work very hard managing and maintaining a complex system of equipment and piping all for the purpose of providing quality drinking water to thousands of people and businesses. Thank you, Perry.