



## Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Bruce Mueller—General Manager

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### FROM THE MANAGER

## Co-ops are Companies that Care



**Bruce Mueller**

Chances are, you probably don't think too often about your ownership role with your electric cooperative. As a member of Wheatland Electric Cooperative,

Inc. you can take pride in the fact that you are an owner of Wheatland Electric. While at times it may seem easy to take the provision of electricity for granted, we are working 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to make sure you, the member-owners of the co-op, are well taken care of when it comes to your electricity needs.

Wheatland Electric believes this special bond and obligation is an integral part of the communities we serve. We understand that you can't sell electricity to a business that has closed its doors or to people who have left the community because there are not enough local opportunities. Electricity is a critical

need, but it takes more than poles, wires and kilowatt-hours to make a community.

We all are owners of our co-op, and in a real sense, we all are owners of our communities. Our communities are strong. Think about how much greater it can be when we work cooperatively to tackle our future challenges. If we consistently act like owners, we will put even more care and attention into our communities and we will look locally for solutions. Finding local solutions can help keep businesses—and people—right here in our communities.

We all have a role to play. As your local electric cooperative, Wheatland Electric promises to do our part for the communities we serve. If you have thoughts about how we can do a better job, please feel free to contact me anytime. You are the owners of the co-op, and we welcome your active participation.

I hope everyone has a safe and happy Thanksgiving!

*Until next time, take care.*

# WHEATLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE NEWS

## Holiday Office Closing

Our offices will be closed Nov. 24 and 25 in observance of the holiday. Wheatland wishes you a Happy Thanksgiving.



# Sharing Success

Wheatland Partnership Provides \$42,000-plus to Local Non-Profits

*In 2016, Wheatland Electric's Sharing Success Fund, managed by the Scott Community Foundation, surpassed \$42,000 in total funds awarded since its inception in December 2012.*

Wheatland Electric and CoBank renewed their Sharing Success program in early summer of 2016 and have since awarded two \$1,000 grants. The **CITY OF HOLCOMB-HOLCOMB POLICE DEPARTMENT** was awarded a \$1,000 grant to help purchase and train Kazla, a dual-purpose canine.

Kazla is a 15-month-old German Shepherd from Holland. Kazla is trained in dual patrol (patrol and narcotics) and is currently at the top of his class of 23 total canines for narcotics detection. At the end of November, Kazla will be ready for certification and to start work at the Holcomb Police Department.

"I believe that with the added asset of a canine we would be able to better perform our job as well as stop more narcotics from coming into our community and schools," said Joshua Tipton, Holcomb Police Department police officer II. "The canine would also add a level of assurance when meeting the requirements of probable cause and reasonable suspicion."

The **SOUTHWEST GRAPPLERS WRESTLING CLUB** also received a \$1,000 grant to help purchase singlets and warm-up gear for the athletes. The Southwest Grapplers are a USA Wrestling-sanctioned, local non-profit youth wrestling club for ages 5 through 18 located in Garden City. The mission of the club is to introduce youngsters to the sport and provide members with a safe place to have fun while being active and experience competition, both as individuals and as a team.



Alli Conine, member services representative, presents Holcomb police officer Joshua Tipton with \$1,000 Sharing Success grant.

## Sharing Success Grant Recipients

### 2013

- ▶ Russell Child Development
- ▶ Caldwell Public Library
- ▶ Holy Family School
- ▶ Wichita County Economic Development
- ▶ Harper Hospital District #5
- ▶ Greeley County Library
- ▶ K-State Research & Extension-Scott County
- ▶ K-State Research & Extension-SW Area Office
- ▶ Hamilton County Library
- ▶ Wichita County Health Center
- ▶ Scott Community High School

The Sharing Success program was created through a partnership with one of Wheatland's partner banks, CoBank and the Scott Community Foundation. CoBank matches contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis, from a minimum of \$1,000 up to a maximum of \$5,000. Wheatland contributed \$5,000 to the Scott Community Foundation for the Sharing Success Fund. CoBank matched the donation made by Wheatland, giving the fund a balance of \$10,000 to distribute to local non-profits.

CoBank first launched the Sharing Success program in 2012 in conjunction with the International Year of Cooperatives. Since inception the Sharing Success Fund has awarded 51 grants totaling more than \$42,000 to non-profits across Wheatland's service territory.

"The Sharing Success program has given us the opportunity to increase the power of local giving," said Bruce Mueller, Wheatland general manager. "It is one more way that Wheatland creates value for its members, by partnering with them to strengthen the communities we serve."

The partnership with CoBank and the Scott Community Foundation has been tre-



Shawn Powelson, manager of member services and corporate communications, presents Southwest Grapplers Wrestling Club with \$1,000 Sharing Success grant.

mendous and the main reason why Wheatland has been able to help so many organizations over the past four years. Other organizations and projects that have received funding through the program include, among many others, schools, hospitals, park projects, libraries and community theaters.

The Scott Community Foundation continues to accept applications on Wheatland's behalf for the Sharing Success program. Non-profits interested in receiving grants from the Wheatland Electric Sharing Success Fund should contact the Scott Community Foundation at 620-872-3790 for further details.

#### 2014

- Caldwell Public Library
- Bad Boyz Boxing Club
- Greeley County Library
- Harper Hospital District #5
- Golden Belt Human Society
- Scott Recreation Commission
- Wichita County Arts Alliance
- Scott County Development
- Breast Cancer Unity Project
- Great Bend Community Theatre
- Viola Township Library
- Hamilton County Economic Development

#### 2015

- Harper Hospital District #5
- Family Crisis Center
- City of Syracuse
- Sumner County Hospital District #1
- Barton County Young Professionals
- American Legion Post 27
- The Great Bend Foundation
- Caldwell Public Library
- Hamilton County Public Foundation
- Greeley County Library
- Scott City Elite
- Harper Chamber of Commerce
- Vets for Veterans
- Hamilton County Library
- Golden Belt Community Foundation

#### 2016

- Dixon Township Library
- Bad Boyz Boxing Club
- Harper Hospital
- Scott County Extension Office
- Wichita County Arts Alliance
- City of Caldwell
- Syracuse Elementary School
- City of Holcomb-Holcomb Police Department
- Southwest Grapplers Wrestling Club

## Get to Know Your Co-op Staff **Shawn Powelson**

**Manager of Member Services and Corporate Communications**  
5 years in Scott City



**Shawn Powelson**

### TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

My wife Lisa and I have been married for 16 years and have three kids: Alexis (10), Emma (9) and Brant (7). We have two black labs, Jackson and Aspen, two cats, Charlie and Nala, two tiger salamanders, Marco and Margie, a fish name Trixie and a passel of chickens.

### WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

Garnett (approximately 60 miles straight south of Lawrence).

### WHO ARE YOUR FAVORITE TEAMS?

Kansas City Royals, Kansas City Chiefs, Colorado Avalanche and Kansas Jayhawks. They're all my favorite.

### WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

I don't know what spare time is. If I had any, I would love and squeeze it, pet it and call it my own.

### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE BOOK OR MOVIE AND WHY?

"Top Gun" and "Tombstone," 1 and 1A. They have so many good quotes! "Negative Ghost Rider, the pattern is full."

### WHAT IS SOMETHING NOT MANY PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT YOU?

I've climbed two "14'ers," the first one was Long's Peak (14,259 ft), which is the northern most "14'er" in the Rocky Mountains.

### WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU IN YOUR LIFE AND WHY?

My grandpa Zentner. He was a good man and taught me lots about life, values and being a good person. Half of what I learned from him, I learned without him ever speaking a word. Plus he lived on a farm, and I loved getting to go to "the farm" when I was a kid.

## Cold Weather Accommodation Begins

As of March 1, 2016, Wheatland Electric has adopted the following Cold Weather Accommodation policy for **residential members**. All accounts are subject to disconnection when temperatures exceed 35 degrees for a 48-hour period between Nov. 15 to March 15, unless a member requests a cold weather accommodation.

In order for a member to retain electric service when temperatures are above 35 degrees during the cold weather period, they must comply with the following cold weather accommodation provisions:

- ▶ Inform Wheatland of their inability to pay their account in full;
- ▶ Pay half of each current bill during the cold weather period;
- ▶ Have a zero balance due at the start of the cold weather period;
- ▶ Apply for federal, state or local funds for which the member may be eligible;



The Wheatland Electric Cold Weather Accommodation begins Nov. 15, 2016.

- ▶ Agree to make a payment plan at the conclusion of the cold weather period; and
- ▶ Complete and sign a Cold Weather Accommodation agreement at any Wheatland district office.

Members who do not adhere to the Cold Weather Accommodation rules are not eligible for payment arrangements at the conclusion of the cold weather period. Their entire outstanding balance is due and payable prior to reconnection if service is disconnected after March 15.

## Save Using Your Co-op Connections Card

### THE TAYLOR

**HOUSE** offers a warm and welcoming environment where you can count on quality drinks and service. Lynn and Adam Taylor invite you to their house—The Taylor House—to sit down with a delicious drink, a good friend, and enjoy some time well spent with 15 percent off flavored espresso drinks from 10 a.m. to noon, Monday through Friday when you use your Co-op Connections Card.



Search **The Taylor House** on

Facebook and check out their new custom wood signs and leather crafts!

Use your Co-op Connections Card at these other local businesses for more savings! For a complete list of deals, visit [www.connections.coop/weci](http://www.connections.coop/weci).

- ▶ **BECKER TIRE**, Great Bend
- ▶ **RENEWAL BY ANDERSON**, Great Bend
- ▶ **DAIRY QUEEN**, Scott City

Still need a Co-op Connections Card? Contact your local office for more information.

# Wheatland Wraps Up Cram the Van Season 3

And that's a wrap! Season 3 of Cram the Van is officially in the books. Seven weeks and 11 events later, we've made our last stop for this year.

As you know, during the past two years, we've collected more than 7 ½ tons of food to help feed hungry people in Wheatland's service territory. We've had our sights set on that 10-ton mark. Did we make it? Next month, we'll give you the grand total and the total from each of our districts. Then we'll make one last round in the van and deliver your donations to the local food banks.

A great big "thank you" to all of our members who came out to the van events or dropped off donations at our local offices. We couldn't do this without your help. We love seeing each and every one of you out there in your communities helping us support your local food banks. Thanks for helping us Cram the Van!



Top left: Manager of Member Services Shawn Powelson helps a member from Tribune with her donation.

Bottom left: Area Wide Supervisor Curtis Peterson and Staking Technician Corbin Spellman, District 5 (Garden City) man the grill at Ron's Market in Holcomb.

Top right: Heartland Foods employees help load their generous donation into the van.

Bottom right: Three youngsters enjoy lunch at the Syracuse Cram the Van event.



## Get to Know Your Co-op Staff

### Nicole Semenko

Accounts Payable Specialist

3 months at Garden City



Nichole Semenko

#### TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

I have been married to Charles Semenko for 17 ½ years. We have a 5 year old son named Nikolai and we have two rescue dogs.

#### WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

I grew up in Malin, Ore., a small town in southern Oregon along the California/Oregon border.

#### WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

I like to sew, read and do home improvements.

#### WHAT TEAM IS YOUR FAVORITE?

Oakland Raiders

#### WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE VACATION?

Scuba Diving in Cozumel, Mexico

#### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE BOOK OR MOVIE AND WHY?

Any novel by Agatha Christie. I love mystery novels.

#### WHAT IS SOMETHING NOT MANY PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT YOU?

I used to teach Scuba diving to individuals ages 8 through 80 and college classes.

## Tip of the Month

Heating your living space uses more energy than any other system in your home—typically making up about 42 percent of your utility bill. By combining proper equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings, you can save about 30 percent on your energy bill.

# Safety for All: Educ

At Wheatland, we take safety very seriously. We provide our employees with up-to-date electric safety training, to ensure our employees go home safely to their families every night. However, electric safety not only applies to our employees but to our members, as well.

On Oct. 12, Wheatland Manager of Safety and Policy **LUKE WEST** and linemen from Wheatland's Tribune and Harper offices, including **DAVID ALLEN, MACE BENDER, JORDAN KARNOOPP, WADE GRUMBEIN** and **STEVE HAGEBERG**, spent their day educating students about electrical safety at the Progressive Agricultural Safety Day in Tribune and a safety demonstration for the Harper Elementary School.

In Harper, Wheatland's High-Voltage Safety Demonstration Trailer provided a graphic reminder that electricity is the safest form of energy but only when treated with respect.

**It's important to Wheatland and all of our employees to help kids learn how dangerous electricity can be if not respected**

The safety demonstration features an open trailer outfitted with actual equipment necessary to distribute electricity, such as poles, wires, transformers, meters and other items.

More than 60 fourth and fifth grade students from Harper got a close-up look at various conductors and components of the electrical distribution system and gained a clearer understanding of how the distribution system operates. The presentation vividly shows the effects of contacting 10,000 volts of electricity.

Wheatland also offered a table-top safety demonstration for more than 125 students from Greeley and Wichita counties and Weskan



Manager of Safety and Policy Luke West and Harper (District 7) Area Wide Supervisor Wade Grumbein teach the fourth grade class from Harper Elementary the importance of electrical safety.

# ating Our Youngest Members



Tribune (District 3) Linemen Mace Bender and Jordan Karnopp utilize a table-top safety display to teach electrical safety at the Tribune Progressive Agriculture Safety Day.

schools on Oct. 12. Students participated in nine educational safety sessions. Sessions included topics ranging from tractor safety and first aid to all-terrain vehicle (ATV) safety.

Using a table-top model of a farm, Tribune line crew demonstrated the value of electricity as well as how to use it safely. The importance of being aware of overhead and underground electric wires is taught along with several examples of accidents that can happen and how to best avoid them. Wheatland line crews also completed table-top demonstrations recently in Lakin and Caldwell.

When asked if copper wire was an insulator or a conductor of electricity one student answered, "It's an insulator because that's what wires are made of." Mace Bender went on to explain that copper wire is actually a conductor of electricity. "Copper is still the most popular

material used for wires because it is a very good conductor. Electric current can flow freely, in an insulator it can not."

Wheatland believes that safety is a key component of Cooperative Principle Five: Education, Training and Information, which is why we are so active in educating about and promoting electrical safety.

"It's important to Wheatland and all of our employees to help kids learn how dangerous electricity can be if not respected," said Bruce Mueller, general manager. "The importance of being aware of overhead and underground lines is taught along with examples of accidents that can happen and how to avoid them."

If you would like to learn more or set up a demonstration, please contact Luke West at lwest@weci.net or Shawn Powelson at spowelson@weci.net or call 800-762-0436.



Students at the Progressive Agriculture Safety Day try on a lineman's rubber safety glove.



Harper area first-responders get a first-hand look at the danger of coming into contact with a high-voltage electric line.

# A DAY *in the* LIFE

BY SHAWN POWELSON



**Randy Coleman**  
Area Wide Supervisor  
37 years in Syracuse

Most of my interactions with **RANDY COLEMAN** consist of me asking him for favors or to help with a project and him always answering, "Sure, no problem." So when we met this time, it was nice to not start the conversation

with asking for a favor.

We started our day attaching a tag to a pole. Randy explained that he liked to attach the tags himself after a job was completed, as it allowed him a chance to inspect the job. After we attached the tag, we hopped back in the truck.

But before we could even put the truck in drive, Randy got a phone call. One of our broadband installers called to verify an address. After a few references to the old barn and Mr. So-And-So's place, Randy had the installer headed in the right direction. Just as he hung up the phone, it rang again. This happened several more times before we drove off. He looked over at me, smiled and said, "Now you know what I do all day."

Our next stop was to check on a crew from Garden City. Randy offered that sometimes if his local crew was too busy, they would bring in an outside crew to help out. We donned our hard hats and made our way over to the crew foreman. I overheard a discussion which included references to A-2, A-5, B-phase and a bunch of other things I didn't understand, but clearly they were speaking the same language.

After a quick mail stop, we headed out to the country. As we drove, Randy and I talked

about his time at Wheatland. He started out as an Assistant Warehouseman right out of high school, then went on to become an Apprentice Lineman and eventually worked his way up to his present position as the Area Wide Supervisor for District 4 (Syracuse).

As we chatted, we stopped several times to "flag" a few poles that were going to be retired from service. When retired, the poles and the lines associated with them are no longer being used and therefore, are removed.

Our next stop was to check on a local line crew who were working on a line extension project that would provide power to a member's new grain bin site. After visiting with the foreman, we chatted with the member about the project and the progress of their fall harvest.

As we drove away, Randy looked over at me and nodded back in the direction of the member: "That's what is great about this job—getting to interact with the members."

We finished our day by staking out the Garden City crew's next project. As we did, Randy told me about his three children. His oldest daughter, Michelle (26), lives in Wichita, is married and has made Randy a proud grandpa twice over. His son Jace (22) is in college and studying finance at Wichita State University. His youngest, Andie (14), is a freshman in high school in Syracuse. It was obvious to me on this day (and the many others that I'd heard Randy speak of his children) that he was certainly proud of his family.

Thanks for sharing your day with me, Randy. And thanks for always saying "yes" whenever I or any of our coworkers are in need!

**SHAWN POWELSON, Manager of Member Services and Corporate Communications**

