



**WHEATLAND  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

**NEWS**

**Wheatland Electric  
Cooperative, Inc.**

Bruce Mueller—General Manager

**Board of Trustees**

**William Barnes**

President

**Wes Campbell**

Vice President

**Dan Bonine**

Treasurer

**Stacey Addison-Howland**

Secretary

**Mark Arnold**

Trustee

**Charles Ayers**

Trustee

**Vic Case**

Trustee

**Katie Eisenhour**

Trustee

**Bob Hiss**

Trustee

**Roe Johnson**

Trustee

**John Kleysteuber**

Trustee

**District Offices**

**Garden City**

2005 W Fulton

P.O. Box 973

Garden City, KS

67846

620-275-0261

**Leoti**

N Hwy 25

P.O. Box 966

Leoti, KS 67861

620-375-2632

**Scott City-Main**

101 Main Street

P.O. Box 230

Scott City, KS 67871

620-872-5885

**Syracuse**

206 1/2 N Main

P.O. Box 1010

Syracuse, KS 67878

620-384-5171

**Tribune**

310 Broadway

P.O. Box 490

Tribune, KS 67879

620-376-4231

**Great Bend**

2300 Broadway

P.O. Box 1446

Great Bend, KS

67530

620-793-4223

**Harper**

906 Central

P.O. Box 247

Harper, KS 67058

620-896-7090

**FROM THE MANAGER**

**Why You Should Attend the Annual Meeting**



**Bruce Mueller**

It's that time of year again—annual meeting time. On behalf of Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc. I'd like to personally invite you to join us on April 19,

2017, at the Wichita County Community Building, 502 East M St. in Leoti.

We look forward to gathering with you—members of Wheatland Electric—to catch up, listen to what you have to say and enjoy some good food and fellowship. We will have several great door prizes to give away and will announce the winners of the Wheatland Electric scholarships for local seniors, two recipients of the Youth Tour trip to Washington D.C., and two recipients of the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp to Colorado.

This event is not only a chance

to visit with other members of the cooperative, but a great opportunity to learn about what Wheatland has accomplished in the previous year, and also what we are planning in the upcoming year and beyond.

It's also an opportunity for you to exercise one of the greatest benefits of being a member of Wheatland Electric: voting for the upcoming board of trustees.

Wheatland Electric is not owned by far away investors. It's run by a democratically elected board of trustees, a board who is given the privilege to serve because of your vote. Our trustees are members of your community. They are concerned with the issues you face every day because they face them, too.

So make it a point to attend the Wheatland Electric Annual Meeting and exercise your right as a member of the cooperative and vote.

**Until next time, take care.**

**Attend the Annual Meeting on April 19**

The 69th Wheatland Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 19, 2017, at the Wichita County Community Building in Leoti. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m. CT and the meeting will follow at 12:30 p.m. CT.

*We hope to see you there!*

**April 2017**

S	M	T	W	U	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23/30	24	25	26	27	28	29

# What is AMI?

## How You, the Member, Can Benefit

After investing in nearly 33,500 AMI meters, Wheatland members have more control than ever over their energy use and electric bills.

In September 2015, Wheatland Electric began telling you, our members, about installing new Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) across our service territory. Fast forward 18 months and the process is all but complete. Our crews and operations staff have been busy installing nearly 33,500 meters. Your meter may look similar to the old one, but is much more sophisticated and offers many more advantages.

### Reduced Meter Reading Costs

As a result of the AMI and Meter Data Management deployments, operational cost savings have been realized through automation of meter reading and member service activities.

### Improved Service

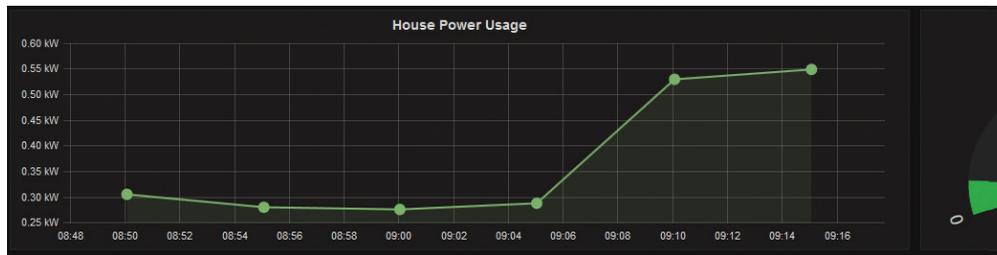
The new AMI system provides Wheatland quicker notification of meter failures at both a communication and hardware level. Integrating the AMI system with Wheatland's member service software system has provided additional operational efficiencies and improved member service.

### State of the Art Outage Management System:

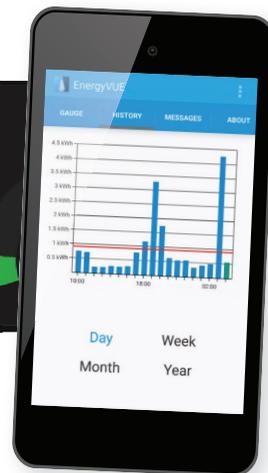
The AMI system has allowed for faster, more efficient outage detection and diagnosis, as well as reduced restoration times. System operators can ping meters to get a clearer picture of what is happening in the field and deploy restoration field crews more efficiently. In many cases, the AMI system identifies the outage, a crew is dispatched, and power is restored—all without any members calling to report the outage.

In addition to these





Pairing Wheatland's AMI system with other technology like The Eagle energy monitor allows members to make informed energy efficiency decisions.



improvements, installation of these new meters has allowed members the ability to access their usage data down to the hour, on a daily basis through SmartHub. Accessing this data puts a wealth of information at the member's fingertips, allowing them to make informed decisions about their energy usage and compare usage to previous days, months and years.

### Make Informed Choices with SmartHub

Login to your online Wheatland Electric account and you'll notice a more powerful, efficient and streamlined experience designed to help you make smarter energy choices. By utilizing SmartHub technology, co-op members can now access these great benefits:

- ▶ View your electric usage data, down to the hour;
- ▶ See how temperature affects heating and cooling usage;
- ▶ Compare usage between months with temperature data;
- ▶ Set usage markers, thresholds and alerts;
- ▶ Receive bill reminders; and
- ▶ View Wheatland's social media feeds.

To access SmartHub from your desktop, simply click "Pay Bills" at the top right of our website at [www.weci.net](http://www.weci.net) and login with your email address and password. Setting up a new online account is quick and simple, too.

You can also access SmartHub on the go by downloading the free mobile app on your Apple or Android device. Simply search for "smarthub" in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

### In-Home Energy Monitor

In addition to utilizing Wheatland's SmartHub

**I am more aware of how much power I am using and hopefully using that information to lower my usage.**

technology, members can also track their energy usage using an in-home energy monitor. The Rainforest Eagle Energy Gateway is a consumer energy monitor that connects to two-way advanced metering networks using the wireless ZigBee® Smart Energy Profile. By providing access to current energy use, historical data, energy pricing and alerts, the Eagle connects consumers to information necessary for successful energy efficiency programs. The Eagle is a pocket-sized device that connects wirelessly to your AMI meter to continuously report energy use and cost.

One Wheatland member in Great Bend, David Schraeder, is taking advantage of the technology and monitoring his energy usage. Schraeder uses the Eagle to get power use from his meter. "Right now, I have the Eagle logging my power usage every few minutes to a graphing system," said Schraeder. I also have a custom skill on my Amazon Echo that I can ask for my power usage and it will give it to me."

Schraeder has been using the Eagle for a couple of months and already sees the benefits: "I am more aware of how much power I am using and hopefully using that information to lower my usage," said Schraeder.

Wheatland's new AMI system has brought with it a number of benefits for both the cooperative and you, our members. From improved operational efficiencies, to increased access to meter data for both members and Wheatland, the list of benefits will only continue to grow. Beyond that, as members like Schraeder have seen, by utilizing and leveraging our existing technology and infrastructure with other technologies available in the utility industry we can help give you access to even more tools and information. Access to more data and timely use information ultimately gives our members the information they need to make better decisions on how they use electricity.

## Get to Know Your Co-op Staff

### Greg See

Crew Foreman, 27 years at Leoti



Greg See

#### TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

My wife, Linda, and I have two sons, Shane and Brent, five grandchildren, one dog and several cats.

#### WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

Sharon Springs

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

Anything outdoors

#### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SPORT?

Golf

#### WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE VACATION?

Hot Springs, Arkansas

#### WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

My family

#### WHAT WOULD YOUR IDEAL JOB BE?

Anything outside

## Tip of the Month

Warmer weather is on the way! Use energy efficient window treatments or coverings, like blinds, shades and films, to reduce heat gain in your home. These devices not only improve the look of your home but also reduce energy costs.

## Save Using Co-op Connections Card

America has come to love **DAIRY QUEEN's** famous Orange Julius. If you've never tried this frothy drink, you're in for a sweet treat! The eponymous beverage is a blend of frozen orange juice concentrate, milk, vanilla, sugar and ice. Stop in at Dairy Queen in Scott City today and use your Co-op Connections Card and buy one Orange Julius and get one FREE!



For more great savings, use your Co-op Connections Card at these other local businesses: **RENEWAL BY ANDERSON**, Great Bend; **SUZY B'S FLOWER'S & MORE**, Scott City; and **D'MARIO'S PIZZA**, Harper.

For a complete list of deals, visit [www.connections.coop/weci](http://www.connections.coop/weci).

Still need a Connections Card? Contact your local office for more information on how to start saving now with the Co-op Connections Card!

## Daylight Saving Time Reminders

On March 12, remember to *spring your clocks forward* one hour. This is also a great time to check fire, smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, and change out batteries. Make sure smoke detectors work properly by using the alarm test option. Use a vacuum to make sure there are no cobwebs, spiders or other little insects taking up residence that would hinder the effects of the smoke alarm.

Detectors play a larger role in survival than one might think. Experts have determined that inoperable smoke alarms caused two-thirds of fire-related deaths due to damage, defects and missing batteries. It

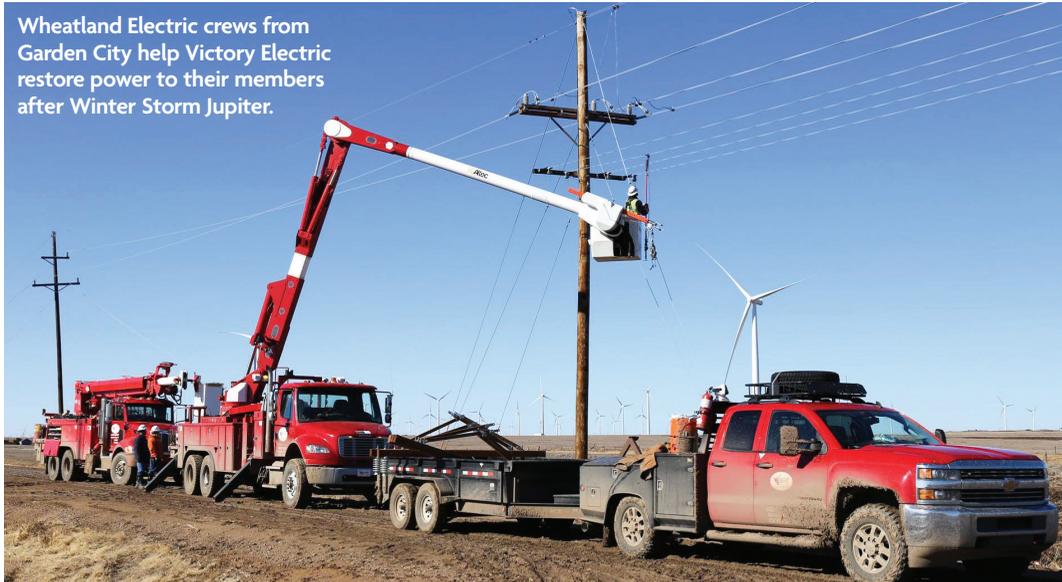
is recommended writing the date on the new battery in the detector so there will be no question as to when it was last replaced.

Daylight saving time is also a great time to review with family members home safety including escape routes and checking all electrical outlets. Practice home safety and test procedures on getting out safely in an emergency situation. Look through the house for any hazards, such as overloaded or improperly placed extension cords. It is recommended to make sure areas around the furnace, water heater and stove are clear of debris that can cause fire.



# Cooperatives Helping Cooperatives

Wheatland Electric crews from Garden City help Victory Electric restore power to their members after Winter Storm Jupiter.



Winter Storm Jupiter brought ice and snow to a vast swath of the country, with Kansas enduring large areas of freezing rain. Several electric cooperatives throughout the state experienced outages due to ice on the lines. Ice-covered trees falling into lines created even more issues and considerably slowed down the restoration efforts as all debris had to be removed before lines could be repaired. Wheatland was affected, but was fairly lucky as much of the service territory only received a light coating of ice. This was not the case with several other cooperatives.

In times such as these, the cooperative principle “Cooperation Among Cooperatives” is crucial. Several crews were sent to assist in the rebuilding and restoration efforts. Wheatland sent a total of four crews and several pieces of equipment to two of our fellow cooperatives.

Ninnescah, headquartered in Pratt, sustained extensive damage and requested help to restore power more quickly to their members. Wheatland sent two crews comprised of **CLAY SHELTON, MARCUS GOEBEL, ADAM PARKER, CHRIS SCHURLE, CLINT GULICK, DEREK CALLAWAY, DEVAN YORK** and **ROBERT OSTERBERG**—all from Wheatland’s Harper district—to help. They were joined by crews from several other cooperatives.

Victory Electric in Dodge City was also hard-hit by the storm. Many had to seek shelter somewhere other than their homes, schools

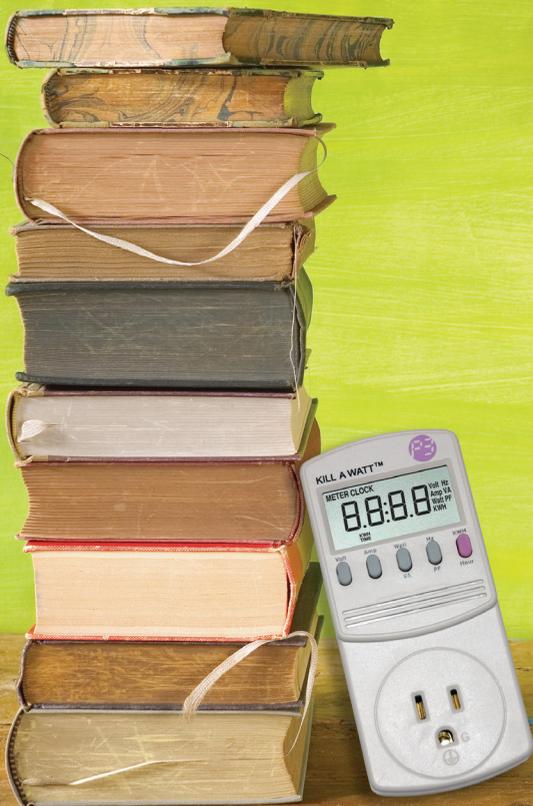
were closed and Dodge City Community College even had to delay the start of term. Two Wheatland crews from our Garden City District joined the efforts to restore power to Victory’s members. The crews included **BROCK BRAZEAL, KREYTON DEMEL, TUAN HERRELL, LOGAN MATTHEYER, CARLOS PARDO, JUSTIN SKELTON, CODY STRECKER, BRAD THYNE, LEVI UNRUH,** and **AARON WRIGHT**. Wheatland also sent three digger trucks, two bucket trucks, two pickups and a pole trailer.

Wheatland is very appreciative of the linemen who work tirelessly restoring power not only for our members, but for members of other cooperatives.

Crews from Wheatland’s Harper district help Ninnescah repair lines.



# Check Out a New Way to Curb Your Energy Usage



*Borrow a Kill-A-Watt at Your Local Library Today!*

The Kill-A-Watt™ EZ is an electricity monitoring device designed to easily measure how much electricity is being used by your plug-in appliances at home or work.

Find out how much money you would save on your electricity bills by turning them off and being smarter with your home energy management.

The Kill-A-Watt EZ is now available for checkout at your local library.

*You must have a valid library card to borrow a Kill-A-Watt through this program.*

## Rebates Available to Upgrade Your HVAC

*Save Energy, Save Money*

Did you know that Wheatland offers rebates to residential members for the installation of energy-efficient heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems?

Heating and cooling a house often accounts for the majority of a household's monthly energy costs. Many homeowners have a great opportunity to save energy and money by installing a more efficient HVAC system.

Essentially, higher efficiency equates to lower monthly energy bills and improved comfort. For example,



you could receive a \$410 rebate for a four-ton (48,000 BTU) heat pump.

For eligibility requirements or to download a rebate form, visit [www.weci.net](http://www.weci.net) and click on the "Energy Education" tab and then on "Rebates." You can also contact any local office.

### Rebate Levels

BTU	Min SEER	Central A/C	Heat Pump
Up to 36,000*	13	\$200	+\$150

\*Add \$30 for each ½ ton above 3 ton (36,000 BTU)



# Use Caution When Burning

Each spring, all across Wheatland Electric's service territory, members prepare to burn pasture for the upcoming spring grass season. When burning, please be cautious around electrical poles and equipment. Burning or even scorching a pole may compromise the integrity of the structure.

Power poles are treated with a protective coating that prevents moisture from entering the core of the pole and causing deterioration. If a pole is scorched or blackened, the protective coating is damaged. Though it may appear as just a discoloration or slight burn, this is, in fact, damage to the pole. This will significantly shorten the life of a power pole. This pole may then become a hazard and could cause an outage.

Burning of pastures and ditches does not have to result in the burning/scorching of power poles. Before burning, check to see if there are power poles in the area. Clear any vegetation/weeds within four feet of the base of the pole, and wet the base of the pole with water before beginning to burn.



**Before burning, check the property for electrical equipment and power poles to avoid damage and potential outages.**

If the fire does get away from you and a pole becomes engulfed in flames, immediately call the fire department and Wheatland Electric. Do not spray water close to the conductors! Water may cause a short circuit, and you and/or firefighters could be in the path of the current and serious injury or death may result.

Not reporting the damage may cause a serious accident to happen later. A pole that has been burned through is likely to fall over. This can leave the energized lines about a foot off the ground. If a person comes into contact with the line, they most likely will be seriously burned, or even killed. Your careful consideration could save lives.



**Contact Wheatland Electric immediately if you see fire near power lines. Call our office at 800-762-0436.**

## Get to Know Your Co-op Staff

### Michael Doyle

PC Support Specialist  
10 months in Great Bend

#### TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

My wife, Ali, and I just recently got married last November. We have two dogs, a 6-year-old rescue mix and a 2-year-old Mini Australian Shepherd that keep us both busy.



Michael Doyle

#### WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

Leavenworth

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

Spending time with family, fishing and camping in Minnesota and traveling to sporting events and concerts.

#### WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE VACATION?

A cruise with my wife to Key West, Florida and Cozumel, Mexico.

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

Flight: It would be awesome to be able to fly around and get places a lot quicker.

#### WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

Landing a career that I love and having a great family living in a perfect farm home.

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

My grandpa. He has always been a great role model and helped me become the man I am today.

# A DAY in the LIFE

BY SHAWN POWELSON



**Denzil Reed**  
District Manager  
10 years in Harper

**DENZIL REED** and I began our day with lunch which was a little backward from a typical Day in the Life. (Most of the time, I start my visits first thing in the morning.) But since it's a four-hour drive from Scott City to our Harper office, we agreed to start the day backward. We met

at Denzil's favorite local restaurant, The Fence Post. Think of the TV show *Cheers* and you'll be pretty close to the feel of local camaraderie and good-natured ribbing by the regulars.

As we enjoyed lunch and the steady supply of jokes from Denzil's "Fence Post Friends," we talked about his work at Wheatland and our plans for the afternoon. Technically, Denzil has only worked for Wheatland for 10 years which was when Wheatland acquired the former assets of Aquila. Prior to then, he began working in 1986 for a company called Centel that was eventually purchased by Aquila.

As the Harper district manager, Denzil oversees three line crews, two servicemen and two substation technicians. The Harper district covers at least six different communities with various forms of city and county government that he interacts, coordinates and communicates with on a regular basis. From construction projects to the staking of new services to outage restoration, there's always someone to keep in the loop. As you might imagine, that keeps his cell phone in a perpetual state of ringing.

After taking care of a few "fires" that required his attention at the office, we set out to check on a new service installation at a large grain-handling facility in a nearby community. But

before we made it three blocks, we'd been summoned back to the office to put out a couple more fires. With the fires tended to, we were on our way to inspect the new service project. The construction site was enormous. Denzil showed me all the new poles the crews had set, and we discussed the various details of the project, including determining from where the line would be extended, where underground was being placed and more.

As we headed to our next stop, his phone rang once again. Denzil pulled over to take the call from one of his servicemen in Conway Springs who was repairing a transformer. That call was followed by Denzil placing a call to our dispatch center to inform them of the repair and coordinate the outage associated with the work.

On our way back to the office, we talked about life in Harper, where Denzil has lived all his life. He and his wife have two sons who live and work in the area. When he's not working for Wheatland, Denzil operates his small farm that consists of 100 head of cattle and growing wheat, triticale and grain sorghum.

As we finished our time together we talked about the changes he's seen since 1986—especially during his last 10 years with Wheatland. He talked about how proud he is of all the improvements Wheatland has made to the system in the Harper area. He said, "It's so much better. It doesn't keep me up at night anymore."

Lastly, I asked him what is his favorite part about working at Wheatland was. "The people," he said. "Working for a co-op is so much better than working for an investor-owned utility (IOU). Getting to know everyone you work with is the best part. We didn't do that at the IOU." Sounds like the place where everybody knows your name. Thanks for sharing your day with me, Denzil!

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