



JULY, 2017

Tammy Gonzalez, Editor

*From The Desk Of . . . Don Smith, Manager*

Happy July everyone! Specifically, Happy Independence Day!

It was a great spring, and we are now well into the summer. We will see what the summer season brings for weather. Our prayers are for perfect weather for our agricultural members! Things have been somewhat quiet this month on the political front, at least when it comes to issues affecting the electric utility industry. From all the news reports, I've seen, it appears the politicians and media are focused on other things, and our issues are not in the spotlight. We will continue to monitor the issues that affect us and keep you posted.

As I mentioned last month, some of us recently attended an annual Legislative Conference in DC. There, we met with several agencies and our elected officials to express our concerns. The other day, I was talking with someone who had also attended the conference; she commented how impressed she was with the event, and our ability to meet with those agencies. We discussed the necessity of getting our opinions out there, and making sure our voices are heard. As I said last month, the founding fathers of this great nation set the country up to be a "government of the people, by the people and for the people." This means if we truly want to be governed the way our founding fathers intended, and not just be led around like livestock, we need to be involved. We



need to make sure that the people we elect know our opinions and understand our concerns. These elected folks know that it is our votes that put them there, and can either keep them in office, or elect someone else that will listen. Years ago, I heard that the political trackers have statistics which equate calls and letters to votes. I don't remember the exact numbers, but it was something like if someone called a legislator on the phone, there were at least 60 other people that had the same opinion and would vote the same way. In other words, one phone call was worth 60 votes. Along the same lines, a letter was worth 100 votes because it took more effort to write and send a letter than to make a phone call. Since that was in the days before email, I don't know how that would equate today. If the elected officials want to stay in office, they will watch, listen and keep track.

Being involved also means that we need to serve in our community. Frequently, various boards, committees and the like, have problems finding volunteers to serve. Those organizations are here for the betterment of our community, residents, and children. As I said before, unless we want to be led around like livestock, we need to be involved and serve. Keep your eye out for openings and see what you can do to volunteer and serve.

Speaking of community, I would like to wish the contestants of the Platte County Fair the best of luck! Let's all get out and support 4H and the fair! Good luck everyone!

Another event that is coming in August is the solar eclipse. If you haven't heard, this event will occur on August 21<sup>st</sup> and is expected to significantly impact Platte County, as well as a good portion of Wyoming. Glendo is in line with the maximum viewing length (what they call "totality"), and Wheatland is on the edge. While the estimated number of people coming to our area varies, the high estimate is that Wyoming's population may double for the week of the actual eclipse. That is a lot of people! There has been quite a bit of planning and preparation for the eclipse, and there are some community meetings being held to talk about everything going on. The next meeting will be July 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:00, at the First State Bank Conference Center.

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From the Desk of RKA.....

Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July to all! I hope you all had a safe and fun-filled day! Let us all remember why we celebrate this holiday, and embrace the freedom and independence that we have. We live in a great nation where we are able to go places without fear, speak up for what we believe, and live a life of comfort.

The summer months are very busy for us here at the co-op. Several members have asked me why we have our "summer hour" schedule of four 10-hour days. Although I would like to contribute it to the fact that having Fridays off is the reason (although that is a nice perk), the longer days work better for the line crew. A lot of our projects needing to be completed take hours to drive to the location. The longer days gives the linemen an opportunity to complete more work at that site before having to turn around and come back. Another reason is because the extended hours save our members money by eliminating extra drive time. The summer hours continue through September.

At the time of writing this article, our annual audit has been completed. When I receive the final audit report and findings, I will share them with you. The audit is a very important part of the cooperative, as it ensures that we have accurate financial reports and statements in all phases: billing, work orders, payroll, metering, etc. It also is significant to you as members, as it assures that your assets are protected and accurate. Once the review of the audit is approved by the Board, the yearly patronage allocation of previous year's margins will be completed.

Last year at this same time, we included a "pink slip" with your electric bill. This slip was for you to update your telephone numbers with us. Please look for a similar insert in the near future, as we will once again be asking you to update your information for us! Be on the lookout!

It's been pretty quiet on the home front. The dogs are not a big fan of the heat. They would rather have snow on the ground. Yard work and fishing are keeping me pretty busy. Someone actually asked me if Lee and I were going to enter any fishing derbies together. Yeah, like that would turn out just dandy, right!?!? Thank goodness Anthony goes with us often! He makes sure that we avoid near misses and helps keep us in the boat. If you ever want to make some \$\$\$\$ , just follow us around with a video camera on the lake! There is never a dull moment with us two!

Until next month.....



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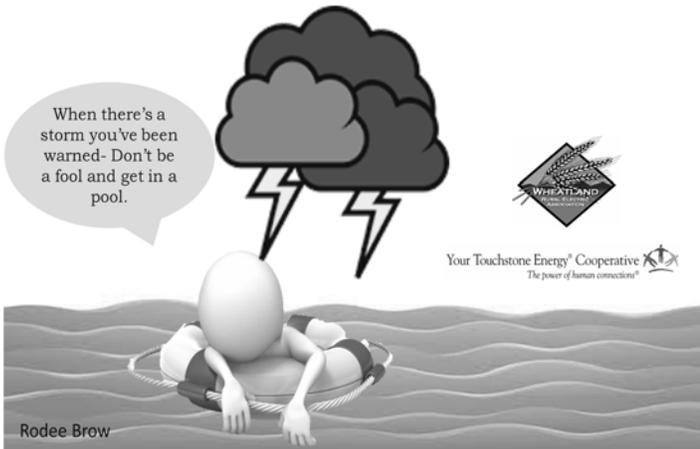
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Some of the concerns with this influx of people are: cell phone traffic and will the towers be so congested you won't even be able to call 911; grocery stores and gas station supplies being depleted; and the overall traffic congestion. From the REA perspective, we have concerns that portions of isolated power systems may be overloaded. All of these concerns for an event that only will last about 2 ½ minutes! We will keep you informed as best we can, but I encourage you to attend the community meeting on July 11<sup>th</sup>.

As always, it is a true pleasure to serve you, our members! Call or stop by if you have any questions or if we can help in any way. Again, best of luck to the Platte County Fair contestants, and have a wonderful 4<sup>th</sup> of July!

### Electrical Safety Tip from: Wheatland 8th grader Rodee Brow



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Do you know the  
"LIGHTNING 30-30" RULE?



**30-30 RULE:**

When you see the "flash", count the number of seconds until you hear the thunder. Lightning travels approximately one mile in five seconds. Divide the number of seconds by five. Example: you count 30 seconds before you hear the thunder. Divide thirty seconds by five. The answer is six, therefore the lightning is six miles away from you. A Platte County resident was struck by lightning last year. There were no clouds overhead. He was in his yard, and the nearest clouds were over the foothills west of town when he was struck. When you see lightning at about six miles away, it is time to seek shelter!

**30-30 RULE (PART TWO):**

**Stay inside your shelter for 30 minutes after you hear the last "clap" of thunder.**

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# KIWANIS DAY OF DISCOVERY 2017 AND WHEATLAND REA WAS THERE!



Top left: Austin Gesinger helps Alan Bennett's ( REA member ) grandson, with the digger truck controls.  
 Top right: Al Teel explains to a father and son how and why we use the digger.  
 Left: LaRon Eller, wearing lineman's gear, poses for a picture with Russ Henderson.

## Welcome Chris Urbanek to the Wheatland REA



Chris Urbanek, our new Apprentice Meter Technician, joined our staff on April 17, 2017. He comes to us from Torrington, WY, where he was born and raised; his parents still live in Torrington. Chris attended Eastern Wyoming College, and earned a degree in Information Technology in 2007. Chris was previously employed as an I.T. Administrator for Eastern Wyoming College. Chris' partner, Aubry Calcagno, works in the radiology department at Platte County Memorial Hospital. Chris enjoys hunting, fishing, 4-wheeling, and most outdoor activities.



*The Wheatland REA will be closed on July 4th.*