



April, 2018

From The Desk Of . . . Don Smith, Manager

Welcome to springtime everyone!

As I write this, it is the first official day of spring, although I have lived in this region long enough not to be under any illusion that we are done with winter weather! We still have a ways to go and are in need of the moisture brought by the spring snows and rain. The winter season definitely had its ups and downs, but didn't bring a lot of moisture around here, so we welcome what will come.

Our Annual Meeting was very successful last week. We had excellent attendance, especially considering how nice the weather was that day! While we don't have the final numbers yet for the health fair, we did hand out 240 ballots at the meeting. It is great to see such interest from our member-owners! I would be remiss though if I did not mention all of the excellent work our employees put in to making sure this meeting came together. They ordered gifts, scheduled the health fair, organized the wonderful meal, coordinated the door prizes, set-up and tore-down...etc. The list goes on! Thanks to all of the great employees here at the REA!



To highlight the meeting, Bob Brockman and Sandy Hbranchak were re-elected to the Board of Directors. Congratulations to Bob and Sandy! It is truly a pleasure to work with both of them, as well as the rest of the Board! These folks do an excellent job representing you, looking out for your interests, and taking care of the cooperative overall. Under their leadership and guidance, the future of the cooperative looks bright.

Mr. Brockman reiterated that there would not be an overall rate increase in 2018. Another speaker, Mike McInnis, CEO of Tri-State (who we buy our power from), let everyone know that things are looking good at Tri-State and he does not anticipate any large rate increases from them for the next few years. As Bob reported, over 70% of our costs are related to the purchase of power, so when Tri-State says they do not foresee any significant increase in the next few years, that gives us reason to breathe a huge sigh of relief!

As for system growth, our total electrical sales continue to increase very slowly, mainly due to large commercial usage. Irrigation usage has been decreasing fairly continuously over the last five years, due to weather, and last year equated to about 11% of the total sales. Residential usage remains fairly flat. In researching information on historical usage, we put together a graph showing the electrical sales from the beginning of the cooperative. It was interesting to see the changes when different industries came and went, such as a spike in sales when they built LRS, and the significant decline when the missile silos were deactivated. This type of history shows how susceptible we are to changes created by industries and activities. If you would like to see this graph, stop by the office; I am happy to share it with you.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the planning, and preparation, and for those attending the Annual Meeting. Without your participation, these meetings wouldn't happen.

On the legislative front, things are relatively quiet. The Wyoming Legislature passed a law that requires traffic to move over for stopped utility vehicles, just as we do now for emergency vehicles. This type of law will increase the safety of our linemen and others working adjacent to roadways. Other than that, things have been rather uneventful.

As we move forward through this year, please let us know if you have any thoughts or suggestions, questions or concerns. Thanks for letting us serve you, the member-owners of your Association! Again, welcome to springtime!

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From the office of RKA.....

Here we are, already in the 4th month of 2018! Hopefully, we will get some needed moisture in April! On a good note, your tax returns are not due until Tuesday, April 17th. April 15th falls on a Sunday this year, and Emancipation Day, which is observed in Washington, D.C., is on Monday, the 16th. I am sure that there are a lot of people who appreciate the extra two days!



Our 81st Annual Meeting was held on March 14, 2018, and was another successful meeting. The Wellness Fair was very well attended. If you didn't take advantage of this, you should plan to participate next year. Remember, the co-op pays for you and your spouse to receive the basic blood draw. There are also many other optional tests that you can select. The 4-H Leaders' Group served a fabulous lunch, and there were vendors providing interesting information about services they offer.

At the meeting, we handed out the Capital Credit Retirement checks to our members. Any checks that weren't handed out were mailed the following day. If you didn't receive one, it could be for the following reasons: (1) the total amount of your check was under \$20, and we do not cut checks for less than \$20.00; (2) you might not have had service for the years that we paid out; or (3) you were past due over 30 days on your account. The years paid for Wheatland were: the remainder of the year 2001, and a partial year of 2002. The years paid for Tri-State were the remainder of the year 1998 and a partial year of 1999. If you have any questions about Capital Credits and how they work, please feel free to give us a call at the office.

April is Lineman's Appreciation Month. I would like to personally thank my fellow employees, the linemen, for all their hard work and dedication. Without a doubt, their focus is on customer service and getting that electricity back on as soon as possible. So, thank you Bob Anderson, Clay Becker, Jared Call, Chase Gaines, Chuck Hiatt, Jeff Loseke, Jeremiah Stegman, and Nate Trotter!!! A special thanks also to Levi Eaton and Chris Urbanek (our meter techs), and Mike Johnson and Jason Wright.

We are itching to get out to the water, but we have one slight problem... no boat. We have purchased a different boat, but unfortunately, we have not been able to pick it up yet. I know the fish are just waiting for me to drown a worm or two! Next month, my daughter will be graduating from the University of Wyoming. Okay, seriously, what in the heck happened to time!?!?! I remember when I was writing about her going to prom and then graduating from high school. My son is still gainfully employed, which makes everyone happy. And the dogs, well, when taking them to the reservoir for a run, they eat and roll in everything smelly that they can find. Iron guts, for sure!!

Until next month.....



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Congratulations



To Bob Anderson (Wheatland REA Apprentice Lineman) and Layton Lawrence on their engagement.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS ARE!

Basin Electric Power Company

Jason Hobbs \$1,000

Tri-State G&T

Miranda Stegman \$1,000

Wheatland REA's Directors and Manager's

Meagan VanBuskirk \$400

Tri-State G&T Director's

Jamison Brown \$200

Zac Gunter \$200

Breanna Miller \$200

Yesenia Perez \$200

Darci Tamlin \$200

Lineman Appreciation April 18, 2018



Linemen are truly a rare breed. Our linemen make a living on the electrical lines that power our MEMBERS. So on this day, we ask you to let your linemen know they are appreciated.



ANOTHER GREAT ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING GOES DOWN IN THE BOOKS



Above: McCrea Call tells members about the science fair project he did for school.



Above: Board Director Britt Wilson awards Jason Wright a 20 year service pin.



Above: Members taking their place in line for the blood draw.



Above: Leah Walker is ready for her blood draw.

Left: Jeff Loseke gives a big smile and offers a helping hand to the Platte County 4-H Leader's Group with lunch.

