

Watts New

May, 2018

From The Desk Of... Don Smith, Manager

April is off to a fantastic start! As I write this, it is a beautiful morning with a little moisture last night, full sun this morning...and not a stitch of wind! Over the last few weeks, we have had some rain, as well as wet snow and pleasant temperatures. It is truly a beautiful time of year!

Recently, I had the opportunity to attend the Tri-State Generation and Transmission Annual Meeting, where they always feature great speakers. One of the speakers this year was former astronaut, Mark Kelly, who piloted two shuttle missions and commanded two others. Mr. Kelly described how he became an astronaut and discussed perseverance in achieving one's goals. At one point, after going through Navy Aviator training, one of his commanders asked him, "Are you sure this is the job for you?" Mr. Kelly stayed with the program and obviously became an outstanding pilot.

Another speaker at this meeting was Mike McInnes, CEO of Tri State, who also spoke at our Annual Meeting in March. Mike re-emphasized that Tri-State is on solid financial footing and that rates are projected to be stable overall for the next few years. He stated that should there be increases, they should be minor. This is always great news! Mike also spoke about the strength of cooperatives and their business models. He said, "The strength of our industry remains in the minds and responsibilities of individuals who got together in 1952 and decided that they would be stronger together than they were individually, and over many years, have shown this cooperative model to be not only successful but to be resilient." I fully agree with this statement. In 1952, a few utilities got together and realized the buying power they would have together, as opposed to separately, and they then formed Tri-State G&T.

When you look at the economies of scale related to Tri-State's building projects and buying power, compared to Wheatland REA's, there really is no comparison. We are not that big in the power distribution industry so we don't have the strength to go against the big guys in the marketplace. However, when you join us with 42 other similar utilities, for a combined total of hundreds of thousands of members, this gives us a powerful voice at both state and national levels. Tri-State has the strength and resources to support the Tri-State members, which in turn, supports you, our member-owners.

While Tri-State is a strong organization and has been doing a fantastic job in keeping the political forces in check. We all need to be diligent in communicating to our elected officials at all levels, local, state and national. This is especially true as we come into the election season. We need to make sure we communicate to the candidates our concerns and ensure they understand we will hold them accountable once they are elected. They cannot think that once they are elected they will have free reign; they need to understand we can vote them OUT just as we voted them in. We need to do our research, being careful of media reports, which can have its own motivations. The political climate and the war against our Wyoming resources that we fought just a short time ago has not gone away, it has just been lying in wait for this election season. We need to do our part and elect those whom we feel will support our beliefs and lifestyle. Wyoming is a great place to live and raise a family and we need to do our part to ensure other individuals do not attempt to impose their culture and beliefs on us. This nation was founded with a government structure that gives us all a balanced voice; we need to exercise that voice! A great place to stay informed is a website set up by NRECA: vote.coop, which has significant information dealing with electric cooperative issues. You can register on this site and they will send you information crucial to staying informed.

In closing this month, here is a quote from Barbara Bush who recently passed away, "Never lose sight of the fact that the most important yardstick of your success will be how you treat other people – your family, friends, and coworkers, and even strangers you meet along the way."

Thanks for letting us serve you!



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
The power of human connections®



Watts New is a publication of
 Wheatland Rural Electric
 Association
 2154 South St.
 Wheatland, WY 82201
www.wheatlandrea.com
 (307) 322-2125
 (800) 344-3351
Tammy Gonzalez, Editor

REA SUMMER HOURS
Monday - Thursday
7:00 AM - 5:30 PM
Friday
CLOSED

OUTAGES-OPEN 24/7

OUTAGE PHONE NUMBERS
 (307) 322-2125
 (800) 344-3351
24 hours a day

STAFF

Donald E. Smith
 General Manager

Jason Wright
 Operations Manager

Rhonda Apodaca
 Office Manager

Al Teel
 Member Services

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robert Brockman 322-2220
 President

Britt Wilson 331-8405
 Vice President

Jack Finnerty 331-2100
 Secretary/Treasurer

Sandra Hranckak 322-4393
 Director

Candy Geringer 307-351-8716
 Director

From the office of RKA.....

May 2018! So many events happen this month: Mother's Day, graduations from high school and college, Memorial Day, end of school; the list goes on. Honestly, should we really be rolling into summer already?

Here, at the cooperative, we try to implement new things to help our members get through the busy days that we all have. In addition to the "auto-pay" option currently available on our website, where your payment posts immediately, you'll now also be able to do the following:

- 1) Set up your payment for a future payment date
- 2) Set up recurring payments to post on the same day each month, on the date of your choice.

If you have any questions about these two new options, please feel free to call the office. I think these new options will be a benefit to our members!

We are looking at some enhancements in the future for you, the members. A couple of items we are considering using:

- 1) Alerts and reminders where to send you a text or e-mail about your bill, outages, etc.;
- 2) A phone app where you would be able to look at your bill, or make a payment with your phone.

I am hoping to get these enhancements out to you by the end of summer!

May is the time we start our summer schedule. Please remember our summer hours are Monday-Thursday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and closed on Fridays. This schedule remains in effect through September, 2018.

May is also the time we get ready for our annual audit. As I have mentioned in the past, when the audit is completed, I will share the results with you. The audit looks at all aspects of the cooperative, not just the financial statements. Our auditor looks at billing, work orders, inventory, depreciation, bank statements, and many other things. This is why the audit keeps us all busy, as we must continue our day-to-day work along with the audit. Never a dull moment!

At this time, last year, I was bragging about my son graduating from UNC-Greeley. This year I get to brag again about my daughter. She will be graduating from UW. She is continuing her education, working on her nursing degree. It just does not seem like both kids are pretty much done with college. Of course, their mom isn't aging at all!!! It's also that time to get the boat out and do some fishing. I actually went to some seminars and classes about fishing this winter. I will let you know if I paid attention and learned anything.

Until next month....



The Linemen Across the State were Honored!



Governor Matt Mead (in the middle) signed into Proclamation, Lineman Appreciation Day on April 13, 2018.

We were fortunate that Bob Anderson (on the right) and Clay Becker (on the left) were able to attend.



NEW PAYMENT OPTIONS

Currently when making a payment on our website, your payment posts immediately. You'll now also be able to:

- 1) Set up your payment to post on a future date;
- 2) Set up recurring payments to post on the same day each month, on the date of your choosing.



*Memorial Day is May 28.
During this time let's thank the
people who have served to protect
our lives and our freedom.*



***Wheatland REA will
be closed on
May 28th for
Memorial Day.***

**Summer hours have started!
Wheatland REA
Monday –Thursday
7:00 am to 5:30 pm
We are closed on Fridays.**

Wheatland REA would like to congratulate the 2018 High School Seniors, and wish them the best of luck in their dreams for the future.

