

# Watts New

December, 2019

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

Happy December everyone! The weather continues to be fall-ish without any major storms thus far. Temperatures rather pleasant with minor snowfall. I am under no illusion this will remain until springtime!

We had a great turnout on Veterans Day for our open house! Thanks to all who stopped by and visited our military displays! This event continues to grow, with a total of 47 displays from the Civil War to our current military. This is a great way to recognize those who have served to protect our freedoms! Thanks again to all of those that participated in this event whether it was visiting, loaning display memorabilia, or even just talking and support a veteran somewhere along the way, Thank you!

Another project we recently participated in was a clothing drive called Operation Stand-Down. This was sponsored by the American Legion Post and collected coats and clothing for veterans in need. We had so many donations we expanded to the general homeless population in Cheyenne! Thanks to all the members and employees for their generosity!

Unfortunately, with all the fun we have serving others, we have other things to be dealt with, such as various legislative issues and regulations from other states which end up impacting Wyoming.

While this year is supposed to be a budget session for the Wyoming legislature, there are bills being considered which, if passed, are not in the best interest of you, our member-owners. These issues can get complex, so I will not go into the detail. If you have questions as the session progresses, please give me a call. Some of the bills involve the net-metering of renewable energy generation and the required sales of coal plants and the sale of this power output. We continue to watch the issues and do our best to push back where we are able, always considering what is in your best interest to maintain a reasonable and reliable power supply.

In addition to watching the legislative front, we have been working with some potential new large loads in various places on our system. This requires quite a bit of work in building new lines and substations, as well as obtaining right-of-way and permitting. It keeps everyone quite busy but, in the end, the more loads we have out there, the more we can share some of the costs of serving you and minimize your individual costs.

Keep watching for information for the 2020 Wheatland REA Annual Membership Meeting! Save the date: March 18, 2020! Much more information will be coming soon!

As this magazine will hit your mailbox a little before Christmas, I want to wish you all a very Merry Christmas! As I have reflected on the last year, I realize that I am very blessed with family, friends, a great job with fantastic employees and wonderful members! I have never seen two groups of people, employees and members, work so well together in their respective capacities! Our employees truly care about our members and the members appreciate this dedication of the REA employees! It has been a wonderful year to reflect on, so thank you!

As always, it is a pleasure to serve you! Please, if you have any questions or concerns, stop in and see us. We are here to serve you!

Have a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year!



[www.wheatlandrea.com](http://www.wheatlandrea.com)



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The power of human connections®



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**Tammy Gonzalez, Editor**

**REA WINTER HOURS**  
**Monday - Friday**  
**8:00 AM - 4:30 PM**

**OUTAGES-OPEN 24/7**

**OUTAGE PHONE NUMBERS**

(307) 322-2125  
(800) 344-3351  
**24 hours a day**

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From the office of RKA...

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you! I hope that the New Year 2020 will be filled with peace, love, and laughter!

It really doesn't seem like we should be getting prepared to close the year end books of 2019, but we are very busy doing just that. We work hard to make sure that all expenses are posted for the correct year and are diligently balancing accounts to start a clean slate for next year.

Our annual meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 18, 2020. We have two board positions open for re-election. We will again offer the Wellness Fair, and will have the "Shred It" truck there so that you may bring items to be shredded. More information will be forthcoming.

As always, this is the time of the year that we wait to see if our G & T, Tri-State will increase its electric rates for the next year, and I am happy to report that it did not! We are working on a cost of service study, which is a comprehensive analysis of all the expenses involved in operating the cooperative, and what it costs us to provide you with safe, reliable electric service. It gives management a thorough analysis of what rates currently are, and what they should be, based on costs. This cost of service study is as important as the annual budget, as it provides us an assessment of the co-op's needs in capital projects for the future. As we all know, material costs are not getting any cheaper, nor are taxes, insurance, and many other expense items that we have. As always, we will keep you posted.

As we move forward into 2020, the Board of Directors and Management will review our strategic plan for the cooperative. This past fall, the Board and Management met for 1½ days to strategize a long-term outlook for the co-op. We always have a capital work plan that is 1-5 years out, but this plan is designed to look farther out and discuss the strengths, weaknesses, and critical areas of concern. The five goal categories that we all agreed to focus on were: Safety, Human Resources, Operations/Reliability, Member Relations, and Corporate. Under each of these categories are measurable actions which will be reviewed on a quarterly basis. As we all know, there are always other things that come up that might steer us in a different direction and sidetrack us for a while, but the goal in strategic planning is to identify measurable initiatives that need to be reviewed by current and future boards of directors and management.

It is still quiet at my house. The dogs are loving pheasant hunting, although I think that they went out more last year than this year. Someone has taken up more goose and duck hunting this year, which then developed into a week-long trip to Canada to hunt geese up there. Hmm... don't we have quite a few geese around here?@! Remodeling has slowed down a bit since we got the majority of my parents' house completed. "The talk" going around is possibly looking at another remodel in the future. I am just going to sit this conversation out and see where it goes...

Until next year, 2020...



## MEET YOUR NEW EMPLOYEES



*Peggy Ervin, a local Wheatland resident, is our newest Administrative Assistant. Peggy is married and has three children and two grandchildren.*



*Scott Struempler, Journeyman Lineman, comes to us from Morrill, Nebraska. Scott is married and has one son in college.*



*Brent Jensen, Apprentice Lineman, hails from Rozette, WY. Brent is married and has a 3-year old daughter, and a new baby girl!*

**SAVE MONEY ON HOME HEATING THIS YEAR!  
GO ETS FOR YOUR HOME HEATING NEEDS!**

**You could save approximately 51%  
over the cost of standard electric heat.**

### **Electric Thermal Storage (ETS)**

ETS is the technology of converting low-cost, off-peak electricity into heat, and storing this low cost heat for use in satisfying the comfort requirements of a home or business 24 hours a day. An ETS system contains electric heating elements which lie within special, **high-density ceramic bricks**. When the thermostat asks for heat, the ETS unit sends the home's return air through the heated ceramic bricks and further sends the warm air into the home's living areas.



**ALL FOR ABOUT 51% LESS THAN OUR  
STANDARD ELECTRIC RATE!**

### **Don't Forget!**

Wheatland REA gives rebates on those brand new appliances you might get for Christmas. If the yellow tag on the appliances has the energy star, you may qualify for a rebate.



**Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year!**  
**From Your Directors and Employees**

**The office will be closed on  
December 25th and January 1st.**

**VETERANS...  
WE WANT TO EXTEND A VERY BIG  
THANK YOU**

**FOR YOUR SERVICE, FOR THE VETERANS' DAY  
PARADE, AND FOR MAKING THE REA'S  
VETERANS' HONOR DISPLAYS AND OPEN HOUSE  
A HUGE SUCCESS!**



**Sophomores and Juniors**

Spend a week at beautiful  
Glen Eden Resort near  
Steamboat Springs,  
Colorado, all expenses paid.

**Electric Leadership Camp**  
Applications are due at the  
Wheatland REA office  
on or before  
**January 17, 2020.**

**SCHOLARSHIP TIME!**

Information and applications are  
available at the  
REA office,  
[www.wheatlandrea.com](http://www.wheatlandrea.com),  
and at your high school!

Applications are due at the  
Wheatland REA  
office on or before

**February 15, 2020.**

**\*\*\*PLAN TO ATTEND\*\*\***

***83rd Annual Members' Meeting***

**MARCH 18, 2020**

**See our February Insert for more details.**