

# Watts New

March, 2019

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

March 2019 may be the end of a blustery winter! As I wrote the WREN article last month, it was a nice sunny day; this month, not so much. It is cold outside today! Spring is coming; at least it has come every other year.

As I mentioned last month, March 20<sup>th</sup> is the 2019 Wheatland REA Annual Membership Meeting and we hope to see you there! It's the REA's 82<sup>nd</sup> year of serving you, our Member-Owners. We hope to see you at the meeting to share time, hear about your REA, enjoy a great meal, and participate in the health fair. The doors of the Platte County 4-H Building in Wheatland will open at 7:00 a.m. for the health fair, and the membership meeting starts at 11:00 a.m. Hope to see you there!

2019 started out to be a very busy year on the legislative front! Unlike most years, a good portion of this activity has been within our own state. Several bills were introduced, and others were considered that could have impact on the REA. Some of these would have a positive impact, while others would put your REA at risk. The individual electric cooperatives around the state, as well as the statewide association, have all been very diligent in watching bills and voicing concerns where appropriate. As I write this, the Legislature is still in session, with some bills still lingering. We don't know how the remainder will turn out. Some of the defeated bills could have negatively impacted your REA by directly targeting existing and future electrical load. In one way or another, these bills compromised the REA boundaries that we serve, either by allowing others to serve within our boundaries, or by allowing customers to take service outside of our boundaries, and then extend service inside of our boundaries. Protected boundaries are why we are able to provide a high level of service to ALL of our members. We cannot "cherry-pick" loads and go after only the profitable services, and likewise, others should not be able to "cherry-pick" our loads. You have to take the good loads with the not so good loads, such as an oil pumping station next to a transmission line, or a stock well at the end of a five-mile-long feeder. It takes everyone to make the REA function as was intended during the creation of the "National Rural Electrification Act of 1936", and others should not be allowed to come in and take only the large loads. It was through the diligence of all, including the Grassroots Network, communicating with our elected officials that these bills were defeated.

This is a very interesting time in this industry. Things are changing fast! Historically, the power supply industry has been very slow to develop and change. While so many technologies have made huge advances over the last few decades, (computers, cell phones, and medical care, to name a few), the power industry still puts wires on poles as we did nearly 100 years ago. Sure, some of our other equipment has advanced, but the basics of the industry have not changed. We still use spinning machines (even wind generators are spinning machines) to generate power, and we have wire on poles to move the power. However, we are now looking at different ways of doing things. Some of this is through advances in technology, and some is through our desire to be even more efficient.

Change has limitations. Some limitations are the laws of physics and thermodynamics, which do not change. The conservation of energy is an absolute law called the "first law of thermodynamics". Energy cannot be created nor destroyed; energy can only be changed from one type to another. There is no perpetual motion machine and no magic technology to save the world. Maybe some of our elected officials need to take a basic physics class before they start spouting rhetoric! I believe we need to be very diligent in looking for improved ways to further our efforts, to improve cost effectiveness, reliability and safety. But we have limitations, and I don't believe we should be on the bleeding edge of instituting change, and certainly not for the sake of change when it hurts our member-owners economically.

It is always a joy to serve you, the fantastic member-owners of Wheatland REA! Please stop in or give us a call if you have any questions or concerns and we will be happy to help. I hope to see you at the Annual Membership Meeting on March 20<sup>th</sup> at the Platte County 4-H Building. Thanks for all you do as our member-owners!



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From the desk of RKA....

Happy March 2019! We are sure rolling through the first quarter of 2019. Spring is just around the corner, although while I write this article, it is subzero temperatures and snowing outside. So maybe I am pushing the "spring button" just a little too quick!

We hope that you will be attending our 82<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting on Wednesday, March 20, 2019.

Once again, we are having the Wellness Fair, starting at 7:00 a.m. The meeting will start after 10:30 a.m. This year, we have one board position to be elected, the Director At Large. Lunch is being served by the wonderful Slater Women's Club. There will also be several booths available with valuable information. One new item that we are adding this year is the shredding service, Shred-It. They will have a truck available from 8:00 – 11:00 a.m. for you to bring any items you would like to have shredded. Please bring only 2-3 boxes per member, as we want everyone to have the opportunity to take advantage of this service.

Once again, we are handing out capital credit retirement checks. For the REA, we are paying the remaining margins of 2002 and approximately 53% of 2003. From Tri-State, our G & T, we are paying the remaining margins of 1999 and approximately 78% of 2000. Capital credits can be somewhat confusing, so if you ever have any questions about them, please give me a call.

First quarter at the co-op is always busy; not only are we trying to complete the previous year end reports for many government entities, we are also keeping busy with day to day work. Each government entity requires a specific report which contains only the information they want and need. None of the reports are alike in any shape, matter, or form, so it is somewhat of a struggle to remember how to do all of them when you just do them once a year. Notes and examples of what I have done in the past are marvelous things!!

It is pretty quiet on the home front, although we are already gearing up for fishing. You know, springtime is just around the corner and we need to be the first out on the lake! I even attended a fishing seminar with my husband and son just so I can understand when to use planer boards, jig or troll. There is so much to it. But like my son said, "You have to stay up on all of it, if you want to catch the big one." Ok, I get it.... Well, at least I think I do. My "young adults" are staying busy, fortunately both being gainfully employed. Micah only has 5 more months until she is officially a registered nurse. I keep telling her that she could make \$\$\$\$ off of her own family just because we are all getting a little older. She wants to go into the trauma area.... doesn't get that from me by any means!

Until next month.....



# Who Loves Budget Billing?!

If you do, mark your calendar! April is budget billing sign-up month. Call the REA at **322-2125** and talk to **Jill** to find out how you can get set up. It is quick, easy, and free!



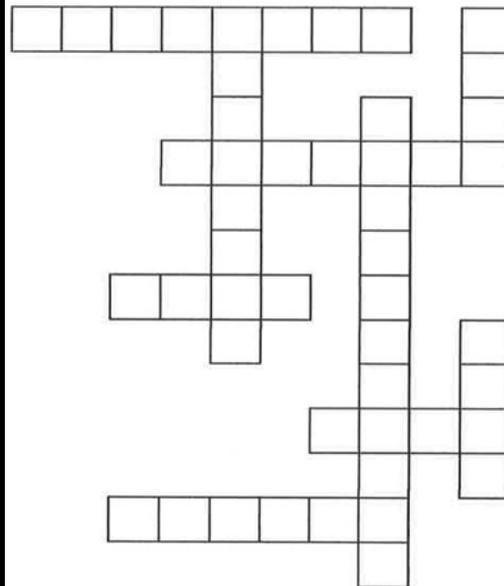
Were the holidays hard on you and your water heater? Let us help you with a Marathon Water Heater. We have 40 and 50 gallon models in stock. These also qualify for rebates! Call the REA at 322-2125 and ask for LaRon.



Do we have the right phone number for you? If you have changed your number please call us at 322-2125, to update your information.



## Power Outage



**WIN** a six pack of compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs.

The first member to bring this completed Crossword in will receive six CFL bulbs.

- Animals
- Cars
- Earthquakes
- Lighting
- People
- Rain
- Snow
- Tornados
- Wind

# Hey Farmers!

Are you in need of a new irrigation motor for this year's season?

Don't forget, REA offers rebates of \$10/hp on irrigation motors that are 10 through 500 hp. Call 322-2125 and talk to LaRon for more information. You can also get information on our website. Go to "Service Center" and click on "Rebates".



## ***HARD TO BELIEVE!***

Some of the Electric Thermal Storage Heating units owned by our members have been in service for 20 years!

***Some have had little or no maintenance.***

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