



Merry Christmas everyone! Hard to believe...Christmas is just around the corner and that this is my last note to you for 2021. The weather this fall has been beautiful! I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving and was able to enjoy time with loved ones. It has been an interesting year in the utility world, with the continued “pandemic” concerns, supply chain issues, interest in Wyoming from crypto miners, the “polar vortex” in February, the huge March snowstorm, and then all of the issues with Colorado and Tri-State. All of this has kept us very busy and the REA has persevered!

Recently I heard Tony Dungy, the former head coach of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, speak. In the discussion, Mr. Dungy told a story about his childhood, as most children do, he would sometimes complain to his father about life not being “fair”. Mr. Dungy said his father would always respond with a statement like, “life is not fair, you just have to teach yourself to fly.” During his father’s funeral, a eulogy was given that mentioned Mr. Dungy’s father was a Tuskegee Airman. For those that are not familiar with the Tuskegee Airmen, they were a group of African American airmen in World War II. During the time, the U.S. military was segregated, and African Americans were not allowed to serve as pilots. The process to establish an all-black unit was significant and the standards for qualification were extremely high. As a result, the members of the Tuskegee unit were essentially forced to teach themselves. Hence the statement, life is not fair, you have to teach yourself to fly and this is what Mr. Dungy’s father did, taught himself to fly.



How does this relate to Wheatland REA? Many of the things happening over the last year plus, have not been “fair”, however this is the hand we have been dealt. The whole politicizing of the virus and vaccine, the resulting supply chain issues, and Colorado attempting to control Wyoming economy through their legislation. None of this is “fair” to Wyoming and especially Wheatland REA members as we have not asked for this and we certainly did not elect the Colorado legislators who passed their laws. Nonetheless, this is all something that we have to deal with, and we have to teach ourselves to fly through these issues and deal with them. As the military adage goes, adapt, improvise, and overcome. We will do just that, “overcome” these issues. We continue to fight the fight in Colorado at their Public Utilities Commission, and we continue to fight at the federal level at FERC. Where it all ends, we do not know but we will do our best to teach ourselves the best way through the quagmire!

As we do teach ourselves to fly, our industry is in a rapid state of change. Since the creation of the electric utility industry, the industry has been relatively slow to change. We did things that worked and continued to work. Members and customers wanted their lights to come on when they clicked the switch and we made sure that happened. Currently, there are higher expectations, not just from members and customers but regulators as well. Technology is changing and we must teach ourselves to fly with these changes. It is a steep learning curve. From communications, to how we construct our line, to required reporting, to employment laws, and the list goes on. One statement I heard recently is, “If the rate of change outside your organization is faster than the rate of change inside...you are becoming less than relevant!” While I think it will be a while before Wheatland REA becomes “irrelevant”, other cooperatives are not quite so immune from the relevancy issue. Wheatland REA still needs to keep moving forward learning about the changes required to insure we are in compliance with not just the laws, but our members’ expectations. We will continue to teach ourselves to fly!

On a lighter note, if you haven’t seen the latest issue (Winter 2021/2022) of Range Magazine, I encourage you to find a copy and read the article on our own Jack Finnerty, REA Director. If you can’t find a copy, stop in and we will share what we have! It is a great article written by Ray Hunkins.

As always, it is a pleasure to serve you, the outstanding member-owners of Wheatland REA. Stop in and let us know your thoughts or questions. Thanks for letting us serve you. I hope you have a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year!

**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 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**

STAFF

**Donald E. Smith
General Manager**

**Rhonda Apodaca
Office Manager**

**Jason Wright
Operations Manager**

**Al Teel
Member Services
Manager**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Robert Brockman 322-2220
President**

**Britt Wilson 331-8405
Vice President**

**Jack Finnerty 331-2100
Secretary/Treasurer**

**Sandra Hbranchak 322-4393
Director**

**Candy Geringer 307-351-8716
Director**

From the Office of RKA....

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you! WOW! What honestly happened to the year 2021? Even though this year was once again tumultuous and trying, I am very thankful and grateful for all the blessings that I have in my life. Each of us should take the next year and be thankful for each day!

As we close 2021, we are getting ready to close the year end books. It keeps us terribly busy as all accounts must balance, all expenses must be posted in the correct accounts and any adjustments or corrections must be done before December 31st. It also proves difficult because at the end of the year, there are so many tasks that are those "once a year" duties, that it makes me use my brain a little bit more to remember everything that is required to close the books.

As we move forward into 2022, our biggest concern again, is COVID19 and its continued presence. The biggest hurdle that we have with it now is receiving materials and supplies. Items that we usually order that take 4-6 weeks are now 6 months out. Ordering of vehicles is a huge concern as some of our larger vehicles are out 1-2 years. Ordering, in general, is a gamble as one day we can call our supplier and he has the items and the next day, not. This makes budgeting for capital expenditures a challenge.

Do not forget to mark your calendars for our Annual Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, March 23, 2022. We will be having our meeting at the AGRIPLEX building. We will have the Wellness Fair for you again and doors will open at 7:00 a.m. We will have the first part of the business meeting, break for lunch, then complete the business meeting, and as always have our door prize giveaway! I hope that you will be able to attend. It will be nice to get together and see our members again!

The 2022 annual budget will be approved by the Board of Directors at the December Board meeting. Part of the budget is the approval of capital credit retirements. If approved, we will be cutting checks in 2022 and hand the checks out at the annual meeting. Stay tuned for both amounts that we will be retiring; Tri-State's portion and the REA's portion.

Pretty quiet at the homestead. The dogs are still doing the "hunting thing" along with hubby. We did fish in the middle of November as there were quite a few nice days in that month to go. Our motto, "Start when ice off, end when ice on." No projects....and no, there is still no fire pit for the patio. You would think that he would get the idea while I am sitting out there with a blanket wrapped around me and my "snow clothes" on!!!! JK

Until next month....



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
The power of human connections®





Wheatland REA would like to wish you a very, Merry Christmas and a safe, Happy New Year! Our office will be closed on December 24th and December 31st.

As you decorate this year, please keep these safety practices in mind...

Use only outdoor approved electric lighting and wiring.

Make sure all of your connections are waterproof.

Spread out your decorative lighting to multiple electric circuits to avoid overloading any one circuit.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP 2022!

*The Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp is **July 16th-July 21st, 2022**, open to REA member dependents only (sophomores and juniors).

*Leadership camp is a great way to make new friends, experience the beautiful Rocky Mountains, learn about yourself, build leadership skills. It also looks great on your resume & college applications!! (It's FREE!)

*We are mailing applications to eligible students, and also available at: www.wheatlandrea.com or the REA office.

*****Application Due Date***
Tuesday, January 18th, 2022**

Don't Forget!

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

*Rebates must be submitted within 90 days of purchase.



Scholarships!!!

Information and applications are available at the REA office, www.wheatlandrea.com, and at your high school!

Applications are due at the Wheatland REA office on or before

February 15, 2022.



NOV. 11 VETERANS DAY HONORING ALL WHO SERVED



On November 11th, Wheatland REA in partnership with VFW Post 3558 and the American Legion Ora Call Post 10 Auxiliary put on the 7th Annual Veterans Day Honor Display. A free luncheon was served to honor and celebrate our Veterans. There were over 100 different displays this year, which included uniforms, write-ups about individual veterans, pictures and memorabilia, some dating back to the Civil War. Over 200 people came to enjoy the displays and the delicious lunch provided by the Auxiliary. Each year the Honor Display grows larger and we anticipate it to continue to grow as more people want to pay tribute to their loved ones. This event reminds us of what a Veteran is and what they've sacrificed to help our Country become free, and to sustain its freedoms.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
The power of human connections®



www.wheatlandrea.com