



March, 2015

Barb Moody, Editor

From The Desk Of . . . Don Smith, Manager

Greetings All! We are a good part of the way through the winter and I'm sure most of you are looking forward to springtime! As this letter arrives in your mailbox we will have just finished our 78th annual meeting and are moving forward into March and the happenings of Spring. I hope many of you were able to attend the annual meeting and take advantage of the health fair! If you were not able to make it this year, please plan to attend next year. Also, at the meeting we passed out your capital credit checks. These capital credits are one of the benefits of being a member-owner of Wheatland Rural Electric Association. No other type of electric utility distributes these refunds; in fact, not even all electric cooperatives refund capital credits. Details of the Annual Meeting will be in your April WREN insert. My thanks to Rhonda and her office staff of Barb, Lynelle, Rodene, and the newest member of Rhonda's team, Monica, and then we can't forget Al Teel, for all the work on the Annual Meeting! There is a tremendous amount of work that goes into the planning and organization of this event and these wonderful employees do a fantastic job without a complaint. Thanks to them all!



In my February letter I mentioned the transmission outages that plagued us over the last several months. We met with representatives from Tri-State Generation and Transmission, Basin Electric and Western Area Power Administration to talk about the plans to address the issues causing the outages. Several of the outages were caused by equipment communication system errors in the Laramie River Station substation. This communication equipment at the substation has been replaced with fiber optic equipment, which should eliminate the previous issues. Other improvements have been implemented including changes in procedures that will ensure work is reviewed and appropriate steps are in place to prevent errors. Finally, a transformer replacement is scheduled for the Guernsey-Rural substation. The new transformer will improve our reliability as it creates an extra layer of protection if a problem should occur. If anyone would like further details on any of the projects, please feel free to stop by and we can talk about them.

One change that is in the works is a change of our after-hours answering service. For many years the Association has used an answering service that was previously based in Cheyenne. A few years ago they moved from Cheyenne out of state. While they served many organizations as just an answering service, they did not have a focus or thorough knowledge of electric utilities. Beginning in mid-February we will be moving to Security and Response Services (SRS) which is part of Basin Electric. SRS is a dedicated electric utility dispatch center which will provide people who understand electric cooperatives answering our phones after hours. This will give you, our members, much improved service. Except in actual extreme situations and storms, you should be able to speak to a person when you call in for a question or to report a problem. Your call truly is important to us and SRS provides several dispatchers 24 hours per day, 7 days per week to help our members. If you have any concerns or questions regarding our new service, please give us a call or stop by.

As part of the move to SRS and to help us serve you, please make sure your member contact information is up to date. Should there be an instance where we need to get in touch with you, whether during normal hours or after hours with SRS, we need to have your current contact information.

As always, it is a pleasure to serve you! My wife and I continue to enjoy Wheatland and we are meeting new people all the time! Thanks for all the friendly smiles and warm welcomes! I hope to have seen you at the Annual Meeting or just stop by and say "Hi".

Wheatland Rural Electric
Association

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From the Office of RKA...

When you read this article, we will have completed another annual meeting, our 78th!! I hope that you made it out to the Wellness Fair and stopped by the other booths that were set up.

Overall, January and February were pretty quiet months for winter. We did have a few storms and subzero temperatures but I also remember a couple of weeks in both months that were in the 50's and 60's. I am hoping this isn't an indication that Mother Nature plans to give us a torrential spring.

In the February, 2015 WREN magazine, our Wyoming REA Executive Director wrote a great article about democracy at the coop. Mr. Taylor talked about being a member of a cooperative. At the statewide REA, they believe in the OWN, USE, SERVE, and BELONG model. I believe that every cooperative should have this model. In order for me not to get into trouble with Mr. Taylor for plagiarizing, if you would like a copy of the article, please stop by. We are here to serve you and we want you to feel like you belong. The cooperative is YOUR cooperative and without you, we wouldn't be here.

At the annual meeting, we handed out capital credit retirement checks. We retired capital credits from the years of 1997 and some of 1998. Paying back capital credits is part of the BELONG theory in a cooperative. Because we are non-profit, any profits to us at the end of the year are considered margins. Those margins are then posted on our books as a liability to be paid out in future years. So, any margins that we make go back to you, the member. If you have a question about your capital credit checks or the overall procedure, please do not hesitate to give me a call.

First quarter of the New Year is always busy as I am required to complete several annual reports for governmental agencies and our own power supplier, Tri-State. These reports determine our capability to borrow funds if needed. They also keep us in check with paying back capital credits, paying our power bill, etc. These reports are also necessary in reviewing historical figures. Although the reports are quite detailed, they do give us guidance and direction for planning future work plans to better our electrical system while keeping your electrical costs down.

Springtime for me also means baseball season is here! As you read this, my son has already started baseball and been at it for about a month! Unfortunately, his opponents are much farther away than in previous years....possibly some travel plans for me on the horizon!! My daughter is doing her "thing" at college and keeping busy with her major...still loves it and wants to be a chemical engineer. What they don't understand is mom is still having "empty nest" syndrome and although I love the dogs, they just don't quite cut it!

Please feel free to stop by anytime if you have questions, complaints, or comments...

Until next month...

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS MARCH 8TH @ 2:00 AM!

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CONSOLIDATED MANUFACTURING ENTERPRISES (CME): 10% off in-store items, except welders & coolers. Not valid with other offers.

FRENCHMAN VALLEY COOPERATIVE: \$.03 discount per gallon of gas or diesel at the pump. \$25 gift card with the purchase of four new tires.

HOBO'S CLOSETS: 10% discount on room rent for six months with a six month agreement.

HOWSHAR HARDWARE: 10% off all VALSPAR paint.

LARAMIE PEAK MOTORS: 5% discount on all mechanical repairs (parts and labor).

MICKE'S FAMILY RESTAURANT: 10% discount on Wednesday's "all you can eat" chicken fried steak. Free coffee, tea or soda with the purchase of a meal.

MUREL'S GREAT TREASURES: 10% off any purchase.

PICTURE THIS PHOTOGRAPHY: \$25.00 off your photographic disc.

REGISTER CLIFF PHARMACY: 15% discount on all non-prescription items (excludes "Simply Creative" items).

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SHERARD REALTY, INC.: For sellers-1/2% off listing commission. For buyers-\$100 in Platte Co. Pride Certificates.

SIMPLY CREATIVE: \$5.00 discount on purchases of \$30.00 to \$50.00, and \$10.00 discount on purchases over \$50.00.

SOUTH STREET PHARMACY: 15% discount on all non-prescription items (excludes "Posie Patch" items).

TACO JOHN'S: Free Churro with any combo meal when you present your Co-op Connections card.

TEEL GUN WORKS: \$25.00 discount on purchases over \$50; \$50.00 discount on purchases over \$1500.

THE PIE TIN BAKERY & CATERING: Either free delivery (up to 100 miles) or free qualified dessert (up to 300 people)

Wheatland REA's History



We would like you to meet the "First Lady" of Wheatland REA, Lillie Goodrich. Lillie passed away sometime ago. She was the wife of one of our "founding fathers", and first manager, Ward Goodrich. Lillie never missed our annual meeting from the first, on February 15, 1937, for over 50 years.

Lillie commented (at our 50th Annual Meeting), "Things were pretty tough because we had just come through that terrible depression. A big cow would only bring about \$20.00. However, desire may be great, even if you are poor.

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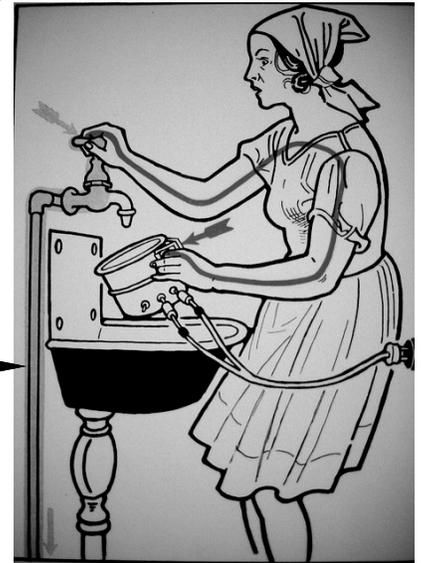
Reminder from the billing department...Budget billing begins in April. In order to qualify for budget billing, you must have a year's history at the location and your account must be paid in full. For further information, please call 307-322-2125 or 800-344-3351. Ask for Lynelle.



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DAY



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When you are in the field...Please pay attention to the overhead power lines! Farm machinery can be higher than the lowest wire on a power pole.



WELCOME!

Meet our newest Cooperative Connections business, Consolidated Manufacturing Enterprises, Inc. (CME, INC) of Wheatland, WY and Eaton, CO.

CME, Inc. has been serving customers since 2002. They are fully equipped and capable of performing a variety of services. They have recently constructed a new facility in Wheatland, WY that includes a retail store front, and are in the process of building a new machine shop. CME carries a wide variety of industrial supplies, safety equipment, welding supplies, FR clothing and iron.

We encourage our members to stop by CME (2556 South St., Wheatland) and see all they have to offer, especially their new store, which is open Monday through Saturday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Oh, don't forget your connections discount card because they give a 10% discount on all in-store items except welders and coolers (not valid with other offers)! Try: www.cmewy.com

First Lady...

(Continued from page 3)

You still desire to have things better. Our city cousins all had electricity. We decided we would go out and try to get electricity. When asked if they would be interested in electricity, some farmers said, 'No', but other farmers were very anxious and they got 10 or 15 to go ahead.

To begin with, everything was done by hand. School boys hired out for about a dollar a day to dig pole holes.

We have worked hard, and now everyone in the rural country has electricity". Reminiscing, Lillie said, "Each of us felt very happy to have it".

Ward and Lillie are gone, but never forgotten by those who understand the importance of being a member-owner of an electric cooperative.

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