



October, 2015

Barb Moody, Editor

From The Desk Of . . . Don Smith, Manager

Welcome to October! As we go into fall and look back over the summer, it was certainly a season with ups and downs. From the early dry period to the extensive rains, and then to the EPA's new rules (for which we are still waiting for the complete analysis), it was a rollercoaster season. We continue to do our best to keep you informed and do what we can to guide the process. We must continue to keep our eyes open to everything that may impact you, our members.

One area that concerns us is the employment future of our youth, as well as others in our region, who may be interested in advancing their careers and employment prospects. To help with this, we have joined forces with Platte County School District #1 to organize a career fair to be held November 24, at the Platte County 4H Building. This event will be open to not only high school students, but to the entire community. We have extended the hours into the early evening to provide for those in the community who may already be working, but want to see what employment options may be available to further themselves. The event will have booths staffed by a significant cross section of industries: from health care to military; from land surveyors to computer applications; and, we would be remiss if we did not include the utility industry and education since we are the ones organizing the event. Different from many career fairs, this event will not have an emphasis on careers requiring a four year college degree. Although a degree may be helpful in some areas, there are a number of careers that are hands-on trades and incorporate more of an apprenticeship or on-the-job training where individuals can earn a living while still learning the trade. We encourage anyone even slightly interested in learning about new career options to attend this event.



Along the same lines of careers and workforce development, I recently heard a presentation from the president of Western Nebraska Community College (WNCC), Todd Holcomb, WNCC has one of the very few Lineman training programs in the region, located in Alliance, NE. Mr. Holcomb stated that the Lineman training program is truly the shining star of success, with 100% placement since the program's creation about 10 years ago, and an average starting wage for an apprentice linemen of around \$45,000 per year plus over-time and benefits. In addition, the program is only a 12 - 15 month program. Very short for pretty much a guaranteed job and a very respectable starting income! Now the rest of this story is that our statewide group, Wyoming Rural Electric Association, has scholarships available to folks interested in becoming line workers and the requirements for applying for these scholarships are very basic: mainly you just have to be a Wyoming resident planning to attend an approved, regional line worker program. Not only does the Statewide Association have scholarships, but Wheatland REA offers scholarships for various programs as well. The Statewide Association is developing a brochure outlining their programs and as it says in the brochure, "Don't let money be an obstacle to your career". This is especially true with becoming a lineman! Wyoming needs line workers and while this has typically been an industry for men, we are seeing more women getting into the trade. Think about it; great opportunities for good pay, good benefits, job stability, good training, a good potential to stay in Wyoming and significant opportunities for educational benefits.

As always, it is wonderful to be here to serve you, our member-owners! It is great to work with such a wonderful group of employees and a Board that is so dedicated to their jobs and always looking out for the membership! Please stop in and say hello; we are always happy to see you!

www.wheatlandrea.com



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
The power of human connections®

Watts New is a publication of
Wheatland Rural Electric
Association
P. O. Box 1209
Wheatland, WY 82201
www.wheatlandrea.com
(307) 322-2125
(800) 344-3351

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

Jeff Dirks
Line Superintendent

Rhonda Apodaca
Office Manager

Jason Wright
Asst. Line Superintendent

Al Teel
Member Services

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robert Brockman 322-2220
President

William Teter 422-3539
Vice President

Britt Wilson 331-8405
Secretary/Treasurer

Jack Finnerty 331-2100
Director

Sandra Hbranchak 322-4393
Director

From the Office of Rhonda A.

Fall is here and with it are all the wonderful colors, the temperature is just right, the scents are awesome, and we get to enjoy the fruits of our communities' hard work and dedication.

I know you might think that all I talk about is the EPA and the fight against coal. I feel it is extremely important that we stay on top of this and keep you, as members, informed. I can guarantee you that in some way the EPA and this 111(d) regulation will affect all of us.

In the most recent Rural Electric (RE) Magazine that I receive, there is an article about a power plant in Florida, called Seminole Generating Station. This coal-fired power plant employs 300 people, is located in the poorest county in Florida, and is the lifeblood for that county. This power plant, along with 26 out of 30 others in Florida, are under the gun with the EPA's model. The twist to this whole story is that Seminole Generating Station was one of the six top-performing coal plants in the world in 2009. The generation and transmission cooperative that owns this plant has already spent \$530 million on environmental upgrades. Needless to say, there are apprehensions by both plant newbies and veterans who worry about losing good-paying jobs with benefits in a community where blessings are few and far between. A quote from the Director of Public Relations for the power plant, Clay Thomas stated, *"I think the biggest challenge that all of us have right now is to make a plan where there's no certainty in the plan. It's like we're trying to play a game, but the rules keep changing. My hope is eventually legislators and regulators will hear our concerns and put some reasonable timelines in to allow us to adjust to such a drastic change in our energy policy and our energy generation."*

In the article it continues to show the impact that this power plant has on the community. Putnam County where Seminole Generating Station is located, was listed in the USA Today as one of the poorest counties in the United States. Their population of 72,143 has a 26.4% poverty rate, the highest in the state. The impact of closing this power plant to the county would be detrimental at the least, and catastrophic at the most.

My point in relating this story to you is that we have a very efficient coal fired power plant right here in our county. At the Laramie River Station, they are also making every effort to be environmentally compliant: more efficient turbines have been installed in the three units; the plant is a zero-discharge facility, meaning water can only leave through evaporation; and some of the coal ash is recycled and sold for beneficial uses.

Even though Basin Electric is taking a proactive stance on all the EPA regulations, does that mean that we should stick our heads in the sand, not stay informed, and just assume all is going well?!? What would happen to this county if Basin Electric happens to close this plant down? What is going to happen to your electrical rates if the EPA keeps enforcing regulations that cause companies to invest millions and millions of dollars in their power plants to make them even more environmentally friendly? Just some food for thought.

So, on the home front, we have a new puppy named Drake. He is a wired hair Griffon, just like our older dog, Grizz. I am sad to say that our long-time companion, Deuce, is no longer with us. The pup keeps us busy!!! I guess that's what happens when you become empty nesters...you keep getting dogs!!!!

Until next month...

OPEN MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY 8:00 AM TO 4:30 PM

"Like" us on Facebook!

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
The power of human connections®



32 LOCAL BUSINESSES ACCEPTING THE "CARD"

(You must present your Co-op Connections Card at the time of purchase!)

BUFFALO LODGE & GRILL: Free fountain drink with meal. 100 Buffalo Rd., Chugwater, 307-422-3248, M-S 8:00AM to 8:00PM, Motel open 24 hours daily.

CHEYENNE COFFEE COMPANY: 10% off your coffee order when you present your Co-op Connections Card. 479 Olson Rd. Wheatland. 307-351-0247. Give us a try. We are sure to become your new "favorite" brand of coffee.

CHUGWATER CHILI: 10% off all purchases, in our store and on our website, www.chugwaterchili.com. 210 1st St., Chugwater, 307-422-3345.

CONSOLIDATED MANUFACTURING ENTERPRISES (CME): 10% off in-store items except welders, gases, cylinders, and coolers (not valid with other offers). We are fully equipped and capable of performing a variety of services. We carry a wide variety of industrial supplies, safety equipment, welding supplies, FR clothing and iron. 2556 South St., Wheatland, 307-322-1803 or visit us at: www.cmewy.com. M-S 8:00AM to 5:00PM, closed Sunday.

COUNTRY GIRLS EMBROIDERY: 10% off purchases of \$50.00 or more. 1160 Hwy 313, Chugwater, 307-630-3999, M-S 8:00AM to 5:00PM.

DRUBE SUPPLY/HARDWARE HANK: 15% discount on all Carhart Clothing. 609 16th St., Wheatland, 307-322-4808, M-F 8:00AM to 6:00PM, Sat. 9:00AM to 6:00PM. Sun. 1:00PM to 4:00PM.

FRENCHMAN VALLEY COOPERATIVE: \$.03 discount per gallon of gas or diesel at the pump. You must show your card to the clerk before you fuel to receive the discount. \$25 gift card with the purchase of four new tires. Full service gas station, propane outlet, products and services for the agricultural customer. 305 16th St., Wheatland, 307-322-2988.

HOBO'S CLOSETS: 10% discount on room rent for six months with a six month agreement, plus one month rent free if pre-paid for six months. Total equals more than 1 1/2 months free for a six month agreement. Must present your Connections Card. We offer clean, dry and secure inside storage with 24-hour, 7-day access. 1001 14th St. Wheatland, WY. Call: 307-322-9554 or 307-241-0427 for appointment.

HOWSHAR HARDWARE: 10% off all VALSPAR paint. 18 S. Wyoming Ave., Guernsey, 307-836-2611, M-F 8:00AM to 5:00PM, Sat. 8:00AM to 4:00PM.

LARAMIE PEAK MOTORS: 5% discount on all mechanical repairs-parts and labor. Offer not available on already discounted menu priced maintenance items. Cannot be combined with other promotional offers. Present Co-op Connections card at time of service write up. 2305 16th St., Wheatland, 307-322-2355 or visit us at: www.laramiepeakmotors.com. M-F 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM, Sat. 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

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. Fresh soups and salads made in-house. Please present Co-op Connections Card at time of purchase. 302 B St., Glendo, WY, 307-735-4616, 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM (winter) and 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM 7 days per week.

FOR A COMPLETE LISTING, VISIT:



www.wheatlandrea.com

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
The power of human connections®

**WINTER HOURS BEGAN
SEPTEMBER 28TH!
OPEN MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY
8:00 AM TO 4:30 PM**

**Would you like to explore new
career opportunities?**



**Plan to attend Platte County's 1st
public career fair!**

**This is a wonderful opportunity for young
and old alike! The career fair is open to
EVERYONE!**

**2015 PLATTE COUNTY CAREER FAIR
PARTICIPANTS**

**BANNER HEALTH/PLATTE CO. MEMORIAL
HOSPITAL
BANNER HEALTH/WHEATLAND MEDICAL CLINIC
BASIN ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE/LRS
BRITZ & CO.
CONSOLIDATED MFG. ENTERPRISES
LARAMIE PEAK MOTORS
STEIL SURVEYING
TRI-STATE GENERATION & TRANSMISSION, INC.
WHEATLAND RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION
WYOMING CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION
EASTERN WYOMING COLLEGE
LARAMIE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
WESTERN NEBRASKA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
WYO TECH-LARAMIE
MILITARY RECRUITERS/ARMY
MILITARY RECRUITERS/WY AIR GUARD
MILITARY RECRUITERS/WY ARMY GUARD
PLATTE CO. SHERIFF'S DEPT.
WY HIGHWAY PATROL
WYOMING WORKFORCE
MILITARY RECRUITERS/NAVY
PLATTE VALLEY BANK
MILITARY RECRUITERS/AIR FORCE
CASPER COLLEGE
WHEATLAND VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT
SHERARD REALTY
BOB RUWART MOTORS
MILITARY RECRUITERS/USMC**

EVERYONE'S INVITED! TO... THE PLATTE COUNTY CAREER FAIR

WHEN? NOVEMBER 24, 2015

(10:00 AM UNTIL 6:30 PM)

WHERE? PLATTE CO. 4-H BLDG.
WHY? GET INFORMATION ABOUT HIGHER
EDUCATION, FIND A NEW CAREER,
FIND A NEW JOB!

SEE PAGE 3 FOR A LIST OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYERS, COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND TRADE SCHOOLS RECRUITING AT THE FAIR.

EXTENDED HOURS

To ensure everyone has an opportunity to attend, we are extending the fair hours.



Your Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative
The power of human connections[®]

For more information, please contact:
Al Teel
Wheatland Rural Electric Association
2154 South St.
Wheatland, WY 82201
307-322-2125
al@wheatlandrea.com

Businesses, this is a great opportunity for you to interview and recruit prospective employees! It also helps you support your industries' future labor needs.

WATCH OUR FACEBOOK PAGE FOR FAIR UPDATES!