

Watts New

February 2017

Tammy Mills, Editor

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

Happy 2017 everyone! I am sure you have heard this from others but, what the heck happened to 2016?! The year flew by! And yes, as I get older, the years tend to go by much faster than when I was a kid! I hope everyone had a great Christmas and New Years, and were able to share this special time with family and friends!

To catch you up on some happenings over the last couple of months, we had an outstanding Veterans Day Recognition at the REA office! This year we asked people to loan us their old uniforms to display during our Open House and give us a little story behind each one. We had one member that brought in his Vietnam uniform, his father's WWII uniform, his grandfather's WWI uniform and a replica of his great-great grandfather's Civil War uniform! This was quite the display! We had several other uniforms on display, some with pictures of the planes they flew in or the ships they were stationed on. It was impressive, and we look forward to expanding the display this year! Thanks to everyone who participated! And thanks to all those who have served, no matter the time period; they have all helped to preserve the freedoms we enjoy today!



As I have mentioned previously, for several months a committee of staff, board members and our attorney, Steve Sherard, has reviewed the REA By-Laws to bring them up to date with current State Statutes and recommended best practices. We have finally completed the recommended changes. These changes will be presented at the REA's Annual Membership Meeting on March 15 at the 4H Building in Wheatland. We hope everyone can be there and we look forward to seeing you there! The Annual Membership Meeting is a unique event for electric utilities, as Electric Cooperatives are the only type of electric utility that hold such an event. This meeting is YOUR meeting; YOU are the member-owners of this utility! As you are the member-owners of Wheatland REA, Wheatland REA is a member-owner of Tri-State Generation and Transmission, which is also an electric cooperative. Tri-State has 43 members that are all member-owners and participate in the governance of the utility pretty much the same way Wheatland REA's nearly 2000 members participate in our governance, one member; one vote. The Co-op business model is unique in the electric utility industry, no other electric utility has a business model where the members are also the owners and have such a direct say in the governance. The Cooperative is here to serve the members, not the other way around. We, as Cooperative employees need to be attentive to the members' needs and listen to the members. While we have a business to run, we still need to listen to our members and see if we can come up with reasonable solutions to members' concerns. We need to remain aware that we are stewards of our members' money, and we need to ensure we are using these funds for the overall good of the Association. Electric Cooperatives were built on the concept of sharing for the overall good of all members, however, we need to maintain a balance of the good of the individual member, versus the good of the overall membership.

We have heard comments that perhaps Electric Cooperatives have outlived their purpose since much of America is no longer rural. I absolutely disagree with this thought and Wheatland Rural Electric Association is a perfect example of why these Cooperatives are still needed today. Wheatland REA averages about two meters per mile of line and when the cost of building line is \$30,000-\$40,000 per mile and that mile will only serve an average of two meters, you don't have to look too hard to see that very few for-profit companies would be interested in taking on such a liability. Our purpose is to provide affordable electricity and improve the quality of life for our Member-Owners. We continue to do our best to serve you, our member-owners. If you have any concerns or questions please give us a call and we will be happy to help. As this is your Cooperative, please plan on attending the Annual Membership Meeting on March 15 at the 4H Building As always, it is a pleasure to serve you!

Watts New is a publication of
Wheatland Rural Electric
Association
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www.wheatlandrea.com
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(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

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From the office of RKA.....

Happy 2017 to all of you! I would like to wish you all a prosperous and happy New Year! As the co-op moves into the New Year, it is not without its changes and events.

The first change which will be apparent to you, as a member, is the increase in rates effective January 1, 2017. The first bill you will see this increase on is the February bill. Please, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me. I would be more than happy to assist you in explaining the new rate structure.

The next change that affects you as the a member is the annual meeting. This year it will be on March 15th. We will have the Wellness Fair again. There will be an information flyer in your March bill about the fair. Your Cooperative will pay for a member and their spouse to have the basic blood draw which is the chemistry panel. There will be other tests you can take at your expense. If you do not receive a flyer, please let me know or stop by the office. Hope to see you all there!

Like other cooperatives around the nation, we are experiencing a change in staff due to retirements. When I started here 7 years ago, I was one of the "newbies". Now, I am one of the "oldies" (only in longevity!!!). It is inevitable, and we as management must be positive and proactive when looking for new employees. The biggest constant in each and every employee retirement, is the plethora of knowledge and information that leaves the cooperative. If only there was a way to export all the information from their brains before they leave, it would make the transition much easier!!! If you have ever been involved with the hiring of new employees, it is without a doubt, a very difficult experience. Sometimes you feel that a roll of the dice would be easier. I believe it is extremely important, and necessary, to find people that will truly believe in and grasp the value of a cooperative. They must understand that each and every member is important and necessary for the success of this cooperative.

So, with each and every year, I always set a personal goal to read so many books throughout the year. As I read different books, I will let you know my recommendations. The first book attempt for this year is a book titled "Resisting Happiness". Just the title alone, grabbed my attention. Because really, who would resist being happy?!? On the home front, the kids are doing well. My son has one more semester of college and my daughter will be completing her junior year. She will also be turning legal age this year. Like, what is up with that? Dogs are doing well, especially the young one. We have managed to keep him out of the vet clinic for 7 weeks now! AMAZING!!! He is definitely a bird dog because he does keep bringing me pigeons, from the yard when he has been out. No comment.....

Any questions please call!

Until next month.....



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**DON'T LET THE PRICE OF HEATING
YOUR HOME SCARE YOU!**



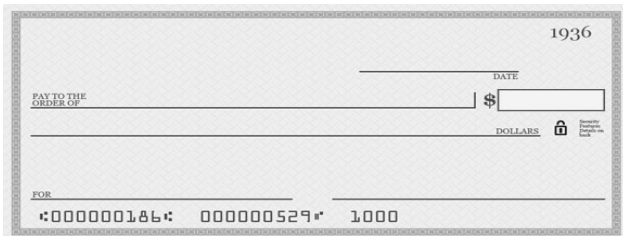
Come in and see us at Wheatland REA. Let us show you what a Steffes Heater can do for your home and your bill.



Electric Thermal Storage forced air central furnace system.

CAPITAL CREDIT CHECKS

We will be distributing Capital Credit Checks at this year's Annual Meeting. Be sure to attend!
March 15th



DON'T FORGET TO APPLY FOR WHEATLAND REA SCHOLARSHIPS! WE HAVE SEVERAL AVAILABLE FOR A TOTAL OF \$3400 IN SCHOLARSHIPS.



DEADLINE IS:
FEBRUARY 15TH

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFO:
WHEATLANDREA.COM

OR CALL US AT:
307-322-2125

DON'T WAIT!!!!

Lightning season is just around the corner!

Protect your expensive appliances and equipment. See us for your Surge Protection needs!

Meter socket surge protectors, lease one for only \$4.95 a month.



Fun Facts about February

- It is the shortest month of the year.
- The Welsh call February "y mis bach" which means "little month".
- It is the third month of winter.
- In the Southern Hemisphere February is a summer month the equivalent of August.
- The month is named for the Latin word februum which means purification.
- Together with January, it was the last of the months added to the Roman calendar.



ELECTRIC SAFETY DRAWING



CONTEST!



Sponsored By:

Wheatland REA, The Town of Wheatland, Arby's Restaurant

1ST PLACE (EACH GRADE K THROUGH 6): \$100.00

PLATTE PRIDE CERTIFICATES

2ND PLACE (EACH GRADE K THROUGH 6): \$50.00

PLATTE PRIDE CERTIFICATES

3RD PLACE (EACH GRADE K THROUGH 6): \$25.00

PLATTE PRIDE CERTIFICATES

ALL ENTRIES (EACH GRADE K THROUGH 6):

ARBY'S ADVENTURE MEAL

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT YOUR DRAWING IS:

*****March 01, 2017!*****

*******IF YOU DON'T ENTER, YOU CAN'T WIN!*******

Drawings must have the following information PRINTED on the back.

Artist's name and parent's name
Parents' daytime phone number
School, grade, and teacher's name

Must be a drawing of a line person or line persons working safely on a power line.

Must have people in picture.

May have a safety saying or tip printed on drawing (Optional).

Do Not put "Wheatland REA" on any vehicles in the picture.

Make your drawing colorful!!!

Pay attention to detail.

Drawings must be on 8 1/2 X 11 copy/printer paper only!

No computer drawings, must be your own work.

Drawings may be mailed to: Wheatland REA
2154 South Rd.
Wheatland, WY 82201

Drawings may be delivered to the REA office at 2154 South Rd. in Wheatland.

Schools may group their contest entries to be picked up by Wheatland REA.

For questions or pick-up of drawings, please call:
Wheatland REA at 322-2125.

www.wheatlandrea.com



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Energy Tip!

Save energy and money by lowering your water heater thermostat to 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

This will also slow mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.



Source: energy.gov

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

MARCH 15TH

80th ANNUAL
MEMBERS' MEETING
PLATTE CO. 4-H BUILDING

