



An Equal Opportunity Provider & Employer

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WHEATLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

NEWS

WHEATLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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200 10th St., P.O. Box 1446
Great Bend, KS 67530

Harper — 620-896-7090

906 Central, P.O. Box 247
Harper, KS 67058

Leoti — 620-375-2632

101 W. F St., P.O. Box 966
Leoti, KS 67861

Scott City-Main — 620-872-5885

101 S. Main St., P.O. Box 230
Scott City, KS 67871

Syracuse — 620-384-5171

206 N. Main, P.O. Box 1010
Syracuse, KS 67878

Tribune — 620-376-4231

310 Broadway, P.O. Box 490
Tribune, KS 67879

FROM THE MANAGER

Mail-In Voting a Historic Success

I want to thank all our members who attended **WHEATLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S 2024 ANNUAL MEETING**.

For the first time in cooperative history cooperative members voted for trustee representation by mail. Nearly 10% of the co-op's voting membership voted by mail-in ballot. Read more about election results on Page 12B.

This was also the sixth year of holding **CONCURRENT REMOTE ANNUAL MEETINGS** across the WEC service territory, offering our cooperative membership and employees the ability to attend and participate in the annual meeting remotely.

A total of 527 individuals, including 383 registered members and guests, were in attendance on April 24 across eight meeting locations.

This defines exactly what our second cooperative principle is all about: **DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL**. Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their cooperative members, who actively participate in setting policies and

making decisions. Elected representatives (trustees) are elected from among the membership and are accountable to the membership.

During the meeting we presented videos of the **2023 FINANCIAL REPORT** and the **2023 ANNUAL SUMMARY**, telling the 2023 WEC story. You can view the videos at www.weci.net/annual-meeting or on our YouTube channel.

Our **2023 ANNUAL REPORT** was provided to every member in attendance and can also be downloaded on our website at the same link. I encourage you to view a copy today and direct any questions you have our way.

During the meeting, WEC employees and trustees were also recognized for service awards ranging from five to 30 years. You can find a list of these awards on Page 12D.

High school juniors who were selected to attend this year's Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., and



Bruce W. Mueller

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SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Always lock your doors and wear your seat belt to protect you from being thrown from the vehicle in a crash. Be aware of your surroundings — **PAY ATTENTION!** Check your mirrors frequently and scan conditions 20 to 30 seconds ahead of you. Keep your eyes moving.

CO-OP MEMBERSHIP ELECTS NEW TRUSTEE AND TWO INCUMBENTS FOLLOWING

2024 ANNUAL MEETING

Historic voter participation achieved through mail-in voting

For the first time in cooperative history, Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc. (WEC) members voted by mail-in ballot — resulting in a 193% increase in voter engagement compared to last year!

Election results, including one new trustee and two incumbents, were announced during the WEC Annual Meeting on April 24, 2024, in Great Bend, and by live feed at seven remote meeting locations across southwest and central Kansas. Newly elected to WEC's 10-member board is **KEVIN WHITE** (1682 Road Q, Tribune, Kansas) who will serve as District 3 trustee. White ran against another candidate, John Niehues (612 Haskell St., Tribune, Kansas), and secured just over a two-thirds of the total vote: 1,065 versus 508. Both White and Niehues were nominated by WEC's Nominating Committee, comprised

of seven co-op members representing each of WEC's seven districts.

White will replace outgoing trustee Mike Thon, Tribune, who was elected to the board in 2018 and served two three-year terms. District 3 serves members across Greeley County, Kansas, and portions of Kiowa and Cheyenne counties in Colorado.

Co-op members also elected **JOHN L. SULLIVAN** (5906 16th Street Terr., Great Bend, Kansas) in District 6, which serves Great Bend. Sullivan will begin his first three-year term; he was first appointed to the board to replace an outgoing trustee in 2022.

This year's theme — **Illuminating Connections** — allowed us to highlight some of the ways we create powerful connections across the communities we serve.

Community Solar was a main topic at this year's meeting. The new subscription-based program allows homeowners and renters to purchase shares of solar generation and receive an adjustment on their bill.

Members attending at any of our eight locations were eligible to win one of more than 50 door prizes and were entered into a drawing for our grand-prize giveaway. Alice Bennett, Harper, was the grand-prize winner of a backyard/patio package including a protective TV box, smart TV, furniture set, rug and lights.



TRUSTEE ELECTION RESULTS



KEVIN WHITE
District 3



JOHN L. SULLIVAN
District 6



MARK ARNOLD
District 7

MARK ARNOLD (203 S. Market St., Caldwell, Kansas) was reelected in District 7, which covers portions of Harper, Kingman, Sumner and Sedgwick counties. Arnold will begin his third, three-year term. He was first appointed to fill a vacated seat in 2016 and was later elected by the cooperative membership in 2018.

Both Sullivan and Arnold ran uncontested and were also nominated by the WEC Nominating Committee. Trustees are limited to six three-year terms on the WEC Board of Trustees.

A total of 1,918 ballots were cast in this year's election, representing 9.55% of the co-op's total voting membership of 20,087 eligible voters. This year's election was managed by Survey and Ballot Systems, an independent third-party.

Last year, a total of 654 registered members at the 2023 annual meeting cast their ballots in person or by proxy and approved bylaw changes allowing trustee elections to transition to mail-in voting beginning in 2024.

In 2024, a total of 527 individuals, including 383 co-op members, attended WEC's Annual Meeting across eight meeting locations: Great Bend, Scott City, Leoti, Tribune, Syracuse, Garden City, Harper and Caldwell.

This year's theme —

ILLUMINATING CONNECTIONS

— provided WEC with a unique and enlightening opportunity to share the **CONNECTIONS** WEC works to create every day — through the energy we deliver, the partnerships we build, the projects we support and new programs we implement — all with the goal of **EMPOWERING** the communities we serve.

Members at each location were able to ask questions and offer comments in real time, enjoy a meal and take home a set of outdoor string lights as a thank you from WEC.

Alli Conine, WEC's director of member services and corporate communications, recognized 14 high school seniors in WEC's service territory who were awarded \$1,000 scholarships.

\$75 BILL CREDIT

WINNERS

Congratulations to the winners of our \$75 bill credit giveaway! These members attended the WEC Annual Meeting in one of eight meeting locations — we thank you for your engagement and participation in your co-op!

TERESA CINK
Caldwell

MARK GOUDY
Deerfield

JOHNNY GEIL
Garden City

JON BRIEL
Great Bend

HARLAN DAVENPORT
Great Bend

TINA KOOCHEL
Great Bend

**HARPER UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH**
Harper

DEANNA KENNEDY
Modoc

TERRY BOY
Syracuse

RANDY CRITTENDEN
Tribune

Continued on page 12D ►

Co-op members gather at WEC's 2024 Annual Meeting on April 24 at the Great Bend Events Center. Members also attended seven other meeting locations in Scott City, Leoti, Tribune, Syracuse, Garden City, Harper and Caldwell.



2024 SERVICE AWARDS

5 YEARS

ALEX FRANCO | GARDEN CITY

JESSE HARBRIGE | LEOTI

JAMES SWANSON | GREAT BEND

10 YEARS

MARIO DIAZ | GARDEN CITY

BECKY LOPEZ | GARDEN CITY

15 YEARS

CLINTON GULICK | HARPER

BOB HISS* | GREAT BEND

NATHAN PORTER | LEOTI

KYLE STRICKERT | GARDEN CITY

DEBBIE STONESTREET | SYRACUSE

TRENT SUCHY | GREAT BEND

20 YEARS

NICK BUEHLER | SCOTT CITY

25 YEARS

MATT RILEY | SYRACUSE

30 YEARS

BRUCE LOY | LEOTI

CURTIS PETERSON | GARDEN CITY

*INDICATES BOARD MEMBERS

2024 ANNUAL MEETING

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High school juniors selected to attend the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., and Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp near Steamboat Springs, Colorado, were also recognized.

Board President Mark Arnold presented service awards, ranging from five years to 30 years, to WEC employees and trustees.

The primary new business included the announcement of trustee election results.

An annual meeting summary video and 2023 financial report are available on WEC's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/@wheatlandelectric.

The **2023 ANNUAL REPORT** was provided to members attending



The Great Bend High School Madrigals perform at this year's meeting on April 24, 2024.

and can also be downloaded at www.weci.net/annual-meeting.

Thank you to all of the members who attended this year's meeting. If you have any questions, please contact your local WEC office or email memberservices@weci.net.

SCAN TO VIEW OUR
ANNUAL MEETING VIDEOS 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Board President Mark Arnold speaks to members during the meeting.

Mail-In Voting a Historic Success

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Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp near Steamboat Springs, Colorado, were also recognized. All winners are listed on Page 12F.

WEC recognized 14 high school senior scholarship winners, who will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship to continue their education. Find out more on Page 12G.

In 2023, WEC paid \$750,000 in capital credits approved by the WEC Board of Trustees based on the 2022 financials.

Thank you again for attending our 2024 annual meeting! Members with questions may contact their local office or memberservices@weci.net.

UNTIL NEXT TIME, TAKE CARE.



POWER PLAY

Thursday, June 27

GARDEN CITY WIND

FIRST 200 PEOPLE:
FREE HAMBURGERS & HOTDOGS!
CLINT LIGHTNER FIELD | GAME STARTS AT 6:30 PM CDT
First 50 people get in free! | Serving at 6pm




POWER PLAY



Treat Bend! Join us for a

POWER PLAY

Thursday, July 11

FREE HAMBURGERS + HOTDOGS
FIRST 200 PEOPLE
GIVEAWAYS! PRIZES!




serving at 6 p.m.
AL BURNS MEMORIAL FIELD
GATES OPEN AT 6:30 P.M. CDT

POWER PLAY

2024 Youth Program Winners Selected

Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc. (WEC) is excited to announce that **JOSHUA FULTON**, junior at Scott Community High School, and **ALLY HOWARD**, junior at Great Bend High School, have been selected to serve as our delegates at the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., later this summer.

In addition, **BROOKE BECK**, junior at Conway Springs High School, and **ANNA BIEL**, junior at Wichita County High School, have been selected to represent WEC at the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, also later this summer.

To apply, eligible juniors complete an online application, including a written essay about a family, social, or school situation in which their leadership made a difference. Our four selected delegates were shortlisted from these applications and selected following extensive interviews by our WEC Board of Trustees.

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour brings students to Washington, D.C., providing Fulton and Howard with the opportunity to meet their elected officials on Capitol Hill, meet with nationally recognized speakers, tour historic landmarks and museums, attend a performance at the Kennedy Center, cruise on the Potomac River, and build meaningful connections with peers from across the country.

Beck and Biel will join 100 other high school youth



Bruce W. Mueller (right), CEO/general manager of WEC, recognizes Anna Biel (left), a junior from Wichita County High School, at WEC's annual meeting in Great Bend on April 24, 2024.



Member Services and Key Accounts Manager Mary Hoisington (right), surprises Brooke Beck (left) with the news about her selection as a camp delegate at Conway Springs High School earlier this year.

representing cooperatives from Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. At camp, students will learn about the cooperative business model, develop leadership skills, and listen to nationally recognized speakers. They also have the opportunity to raft the Colorado River, tour the Craig Generation Plant, attend a high-voltage safety demonstration, and participate in other activities, building memories that will last a lifetime.

Applications for these opportunities are accepted each fall and must be submitted by the January deadline. Juniors who reside in WEC's service territory that are a legal dependent of an active member receiving service from WEC are eligible to apply. See our website for more information at www.weci.net/youth-tour-program.



Great Bend High School junior Ally Howard (left) will represent WEC at this year's Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. She is pictured with Mary Hoisington, WEC member services and key accounts manager.



Scott Community High School (SCHS) junior Joshua Fulton (middle) will represent WEC at this year's Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. Pictured from left are: Samantha Garcia, WEC member services and key accounts manager, Fulton and Matt Bayer, SCHS principal.

14 LOCAL STUDENTS *Awarded \$1,000 Scholarships*



INNSLEE ALBRIGHT
Chaparral High School



ALIVIA BACON
South Haven High School



EMILY DRYDEN
Holcomb High School



GEORGIA FAHRMEIER
Garden City High School



WYATT GARDNER
Wichita County High School



NEVAEH HAHN
Syracuse High School



MAYA JONES
Argonia High School



ADDY NICHOLSON
Great Bend High School



HAYLEE OSNER
Conway Springs High School



ALEXIS POWELSON
Scott Community High School



JACKSON RISLEY
Caldwell High School



BROOKLYN SHEETZ
Norwich High School



ALYSSA SMITH
Deerfield High School



IAN TARMAN
Greeley County High School

Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc., announces 14 high school seniors will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship.

Scholarships are awarded to local students who attend one of the 13 high schools in our service territory. In addition, at least one at-large scholarship is awarded to a student whose parent/guardian is a member of WEC, but does not attend one of the schools in our service territory.

A panel of the WEC Board of Trustees reviews applications and selects scholarship recipients. Students and their families were recognized during the WEC Annual Meeting in Great Bend on April 24.

Congratulations to these talented students — we wish you continued success in the years ahead! To learn more about our scholarship program, visit www.weci.net/scholarship-program.



APPLY NOW!

Our Sharing Success Fund is available for new grant applications starting June 1! Non-profit and other community-based organizations are encouraged to apply for a \$1,000 grant. Apply online! www.weci.net/sharing-success-program





You won't want to miss this...

June 19 4-7 PM

Dry Lake Brewing

Tropic like it's HOT

HAPPY HOUR IS ON US!

SPECIALTY DRINKS DOOR PRIZES
PORK CARNITAS PINEAPPLE SAISA
TROPICAL GRAZING TABLE

GREAT BEND
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
AFTER HOURS



Dry Lake Brewing
1305 Main St. • Great Bend