

WHEATLAND  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

# NEWS



## Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Bruce Mueller—General Manager

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### District Offices

<b>Garden City</b> 2005 W Fulton P.O. Box 973 Garden City, KS 67846 620-275-0261	<b>Scott City—Main</b> 101 Main Street P.O. Box 230 Scott City, KS 67871 620-872-5885
<b>Great Bend</b> 2300 Broadway P.O. Box 1446 Great Bend, KS 67530 620-793-4223	<b>Syracuse</b> 206 1/2 N Main P.O. Box 1010 Syracuse, KS 67878 620-384-5171
<b>Harper</b> 906 Central P.O. Box 247 Harper, KS 67058 620-896-7090	<b>Tribune</b> 310 Broadway P.O. Box 490 Tribune, KS 67879 620-376-4231
<b>Leoti</b> N Hwy 25 P.O. Box 966 Leoti, KS 67861 620-375-2632	

### FROM THE MANAGER

## Giving Back is the Co-op Way



Bruce Mueller

Cooperatives across the globe adhere to the same Seven Cooperative Principles that guide all of our decisions—from how we run the co-op, to how we engage with our local communities. Concern for community is the seventh principle, and it is one that all employees of Wheatland Electric value year-round. But during the holiday season, concern for community seems especially important.

Electric cooperatives have a proud history of giving back. At Wheatland, we give back through a number of member programs and initiatives like Sharing Success, Youth Tour, scholarships and our Cram the Van food drive. As we shared with you in last month's magazine, our Sharing Success Fund has now awarded more than \$42,000 in grants to non-profits since its inception in 2012.

Each year, Wheatland sends students on an all-expense paid trip to Washington D.C. and the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, Colo. as part of the Youth Tour program. In addition, Wheatland awards up to \$13,000 in scholarships each year to seniors graduating from

one of the 13 high schools in our service territory. (See pages 16-F and 16-G for more information on next year's trips.)

Wheatland Electric members help us give back, too. Through our Cram the Van food drive you helped us collect 4 ½ tons of food for our local food banks this year (as always, all donations stay in the communities in which they are donated). Over the past three years more than 11 ½ tons have been donated by way of this program. (See the pages 16-D and 16-E for a complete summary of this year's Cram the Van food drive.) We couldn't do this without you, and we thank you for partnering with us in giving back. So many families go without on a daily basis and struggle to make ends meet. This struggle can be especially hard during the holiday season. Because of you and the Wheatland employees and trustees who worked hard to make Cram the Van a success, Christmas will be better for many families in our communities.

Lastly, in this month's local pages you will see a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year greeting from all the Wheatland employees (including the Water & Broadband divisions) and Board of Trustees. We hope that you have a Merry Christmas and wonderful holiday season.

**Until next time, take care.**



**General Manager & Trustees**

*Not pictured: Bruce Mueller, Wheatland General Manager*



**Executive Team**

*Not pictured: Bruce Mueller, Wheatland General Manager*



**District 1—Scott City**



**District 2—Leoti**



**District 3—Tribune**



**District 4—Syracuse**

*Wishing You And*

**HAPPY H**

*From All of Us at*

**MERRY**  
**CHRISTMAS**



Accounting Department—Garden City



Wheatland Broadband—Scott City

Your Loved Ones

HOLIDAYS

Wheatland Electric

and HAPPY NEW YEAR



Water Division—Garden City



District 7—Harper



District 5—Garden City



District 6—Great Bend

# Cram the Van Tops 11.

**2 ½ ELEPHANTS.  
11 ½ TONS.**

What do these have in common? Well, that would be how many tons of food Cram the Van has collected in the last three years. Get the picture? That's a lot!

Wheatland recently completed our third annual Cram the Van food drive, collecting 9,363 pounds (more than 4 ½ tons) of food and \$1,206.65 for local food banks and the people they serve in Kansas. Every donation collected in a particular community stayed in that community to benefit its local food bank.

We set out with the goal of topping 10 tons in total donations and with the help of you, our generous members, we blasted right through it. This year's drive lasted just over six weeks and featured 11 stops in 10 different communities as the big red van made its way throughout Wheatland's territory. Donations were also collected at our seven offices and two other drop off points in Conway Springs and Caldwell.



Mission Mart Food Bank volunteer Mark Aldredt helps representatives from Wheatland and Bullseye BBQ unload a delivery of 2,380 pounds of food items that were collected at the Harper Cram the Van event.

We challenged our members to help Cram the Van with non-perishable food items or cash donations for your local food bank and you responded—to the tune of more than 4 ½ tons this year—2,300 pounds more than last year!

“When we started this event three years ago, we didn't know what to expect,” said Bruce Mueller, general manager of Wheatland “We were just hoping to make a positive impact in the communities we serve. I don't think anyone imagined anything like this. Our members have really gotten behind this program. This was our biggest year yet and to surpass 11 tons in total donations is incredible. Thank you to everyone who helped to make this year's drive a success, we couldn't do it without you.”

At most Cram the Van events, Wheatland served a meal and, in ex-

## One Bite at a Time

Over the last three years, Cram the Van has helped fight local hunger one bite at a time. This year, Wheatland members collected 9,363 pounds (more than 4 ½ tons) of food items for the third annual Cram the Van. Since the creation of the program, a total of 23,059 pounds (or 11 ½ tons) have been collected. To put that into perspective, 11 ½ tons is equivalent to 2 ½ elephants.

The average African elephant weighs between 4 and 7 tons. At an average of 4.5 tons per elephant, 2 ½ African elephants would weigh approximately 11 ½ tons.

# 5 TONS in Donations

change, its members “paid” in the form of canned goods and cash donations. Cram-the-Van events varied from cooking hamburgers at home football games to grilling hot dogs and brats in front of community grocery stores. The final event of the annual drive has quickly become a community favorite in Scott City and a big source of donations. The event, complete with two food slides that drop donations directly into the van, pumpkin decorating, marshmallow roasting, hayrack rides, a pumpkin seed spitting contest and a free meal, is a fun time for all.

“These events are a lot of fun. We enjoy being out in the communities and getting a chance to interact with the members and joining forces for a good cause,” said Shawn Powelson, manager of member services and corporate communications for Wheatland. “It’s a lot of work but it’s very rewarding. Making the deliveries to the local food banks is one of my favorite parts. I love seeing the looks on their faces when we start unloading, literally, a ton of food at some locations. They’re always so appreciative of the donations, whether it’s a ton or a few hundred pounds.”



Wheatland General Manager Bruce Mueller and staff deliver 2,680 pounds (1.3 tons) of food to Hope’s Closet, the local food bank in Scott City.



Above: Employees from Wheatland’s Great Bend office present the Barton County Food Bank with 1,320 pounds of donations.

Below: Wheatland, the Conway Springs High School and Hired Man’s Grocery and Grill team up to donate \$1131.65 and 348 pounds of food to the Mission Mart in Conway Springs.



Wheatland representatives drop off 755 pounds of food to Gary Salmans and the Wichita County food bank to help with their annual Thanksgiving box distribution.



## 2016 By the Numbers

- ▶ CALDWELL – 460 pounds
- ▶ CONWAY SPRINGS – 348 pounds and \$1,131.65
- ▶ FINNEY COUNTY – 400 pounds
- ▶ GREAT BEND – 1,320 pounds
- ▶ HARPER – 2,380 pounds
- ▶ LEOTI – 755 pounds
- ▶ SCOTT CITY – 2,680 pounds and \$25
- ▶ SYRACUSE – 400 pounds
- ▶ TRIBUNE – 620 pounds and \$50

> **4.5 TONS**

# Attention High School



Each year, students from Kansas join more than 1,700 youth in Washington, D.C., to attend the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Next year's Youth Tour is scheduled for June 8-15, 2017.



Marcus Martinez makes a rubbing of a name at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

## Don't Miss These Leadership Experiences

Wheatland Electric will be selecting three students to take an all-expense-paid trip in the summer of 2017.

Two winners will be chosen to join over 1,700 young people in Washington, D.C., for the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Delegates will fly to our nation's capital to visit with government officials and the many historic sites. To see what's in store, visit <http://bit.ly/dcytvideo2015>.

Two winners will be chosen to attend the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, Colo. Campers will stay

## Scan these Codes to Get More Information

Washington, D.C.



Steamboat Springs, Colo.



**Being in D.C., I have had the opportunity to see first-hand the true values that our country upholds—one being respect. So many diverse countries can be seen here and each one is respected and seen as an equal. The second would be integrity. I have seen the integrity of a soldier as he stood guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.**

**ERIN HALL, 2016 YOUTH TOUR PARTICIPANT**



Bre Akiu represents Wheatland Electric at the 2016 Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp.

# hool Juniors

I was inspired by the World War II veteran, Frank Matthews, who talked to us and told of his experiences in the Marines and at Iwo Jima. Realizing the sacrifices people made for our country encourages me to want to do more.

MARCOS MARTINEZ, 2016 YOUTH TOUR PARTICIPANT

at the scenic Glen Eden Resort in the beautiful Rocky Mountains. At camp, they will join winners from other cooperatives in Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming to form one of the most outstanding leadership camps in the country. Get more information at <http://bit.ly/CYLCVideo>.

Both trips are funded entirely by Wheatland Electric Cooperative. All you need is spending money for souvenirs and a desire to have a great leadership experience. The winners

will gain knowledge and experience that will help them grow as they pursue their future career.

For more information or to apply, contact your guidance counselor at one of these participating high schools: Argonia, Caldwell, Chaparral, Conway Springs, Deerfield, Great Bend, Greeley County, Holcomb, Norwich, Scott Community, South Haven, Syracuse or Wichita County. Children of Wheatland employees are not eligible to apply. Applications are due by **FEB. 1, 2017**.

The people I spent the week with inspired me. We all got along great and worked together to get the most out of our camp experience. BRE AKIU, 2016 CAMPER



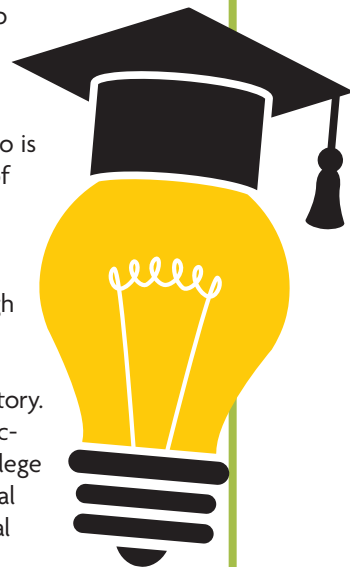
During the 2016 Cooperative Youth Leadership camp, Kansas and Oklahoma campers tour Trapper Mine, located in Craig, Colo., where coal is mined to fuel three local generation plants.

## Wheatland Offers 13 Scholarships

Applications for Wheatland Electric's Empowering the Next Generation Scholarship Program are now available. Wheatland will award 13 \$1,000 scholarships to graduating seniors going on to a post-secondary institution.

Those who qualify for the scholarship must:

- ▶ Have a parent/guardian who is a member of Wheatland Electric.
- ▶ Attend one of the 13 high schools in Wheatland's service territory.
- ▶ Attend an accredited college or a technical or vocational school.



Children of

Wheatland employees are not eligible to apply. Seniors who meet the qualifications will need to complete the application found on Wheatland's website [www.weci.net](http://www.weci.net) under the Community Tab by **FEB. 1, 2017**.

A committee will then choose the winning applicant from each school, and the scholarships will be awarded at the Annual Meeting in April 2017.

**Application  
Deadline  
Feb. 1, 2017**

## Get to Know Your Co-op Staff

### Corbin Spellman

Staking Engineer  
16 months in Garden City



Corbin  
Spellman

#### TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

My wife, Crystal, and I have been together for 19 years. We started dating as juniors in high school and married six years later. We have three children: Reghan, 13, Bradyn, 11 and Easton, 2. We have a German shepherd named Sarge.

#### WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

My wife and I were both born and raised in Emporia. We moved to Garden City in 2005.

#### WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE TEAM?

Boston Red Socks

#### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE BOOK OR MOVIE AND WHY?

My favorite book is the Bible. It is an instruction manual for LIFE.

#### WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

My favorite thing to do is spend time with my family. I especially enjoy hunting and fishing with them. Reghan likes to hunt and Bradyn likes to fish with me. I cherish the time I get to spend with them sharing experiences and my love for the outdoors.

#### WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE VACATION?

Last May, we took a couple weeks off and drove to Sedro Woolley, Wash. We got to see so many beautiful places and experience things we had never done before. My children got to see the ocean for the first time.

#### WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

I am most proud of my family. My wife is amazing and continues to be an inspiration to me on a daily basis. Our children are so different in their personalities but each of them shares a common trait—big hearts. I am blessed and humbled that they have been entrusted to me.

## Reality U Provides Real-Life Perspective

Applying concepts and strategies learned in the classroom to real life situations is one goal of any good educational system. Getting students to think about the future and prepare for that future is a goal of parents and educators alike. It can be difficult for youth to understand just what it takes to support oneself in the real world, but Reality U helps provide them with a new perspective.

Reality U is a program run by Pando Initiative, a company headquartered in Wichita, that provides support to teachers and students by helping them connect education and their futures. Wheatland Electric recently helped sponsor a session at Great Bend Middle School with Teresa Mazouch, member services representative, serving as the company representative at the Utility booth.

Prior to attending the Reality U session, the students complete a survey by answering questions about where they see themselves at age 26. The questions cover everything from jobs to family status to shopping and entertainment preferences. Then, the answers are paired with school performance records to create a personal profile, and each student is assigned fictional jobs, salaries and families.

Then the fun begins. Students must make ends meet using their salaries to purchase all of the necessities of life: home, transportation, utilities, groceries, student loan payments, childcare (if they have been assigned children), etc. Each “necessity” has a booth the student must visit. The students carry a passport (much like a checkbook register) to keep track of their spending and ensure they do not end up with a negative balance after visiting all of the necessary booths. If the student is “married” they must find their assigned

spouse and work together to make decisions on major purchases such as home and transportation.

The program includes several scenarios to represent real life situations. For example, some of the students are divorced and have to take into account alimony or child support; some are in the military; and some have dolls representing babies (that cried often). If the student goes over budget, there is a booth to help them decide how to fix the problem, whether it be returning a purchase or getting a second job.

Students walk away from the exercise with a clearer understanding of the responsibilities of adulthood. For some, it serves as a wake-up call, but overall, it helps students see that they can take control of their futures by continuing to work hard and improve their performance in school and everyday life. When surveyed four to six weeks after Reality U, teachers have reported marked increases in students' classroom attendance, participation and good behavior.

Reality U is recommended for students in 9th or 10th grade. Each session lasts a minimum of 75 minutes and can accommodate up to 75 students. The Pando Initiative began Reality U in 2002, and has brought the program to schools throughout Kansas. For more information, visit [Realityu.org](http://Realityu.org).



Teresa Mazouch, member services representative at Wheatland, helps a student sign up for electric service during the Reality U session at Great Bend Middle School.