



**WHEATLAND
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

NEWS

**Wheatland Electric
Cooperative, Inc.**

Bruce Mueller—General Manager

Board of Trustees

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Wes Campbell

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Trustee

Charles Ayers

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Vic Case

Trustee

Katie Eisenhour

Trustee

Bob Hiss

Trustee

John Kleysteuber

Trustee

Mike Thon

Trustee

District Offices

Garden City

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P.O. Box 973

Garden City, KS

67846

620-275-0261

Great Bend

2300 Broadway

P.O. Box 1446

Great Bend, KS

67530

620-793-4223

Harper

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P.O. Box 247

Harper, KS 67058

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Leoti

N Hwy 25

P.O. Box 966

Leoti, KS 67861

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Scott City-Main

101 Main Street

P.O. Box 230

Scott City, KS 67871

620-872-5885

Syracuse

206 1/2 N Main

P.O. Box 1010

Syracuse, KS 67878

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310 Broadway

P.O. Box 490

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FROM THE MANAGER

It's Annual Meeting Time



Bruce Mueller

I'd like to cordially invite you to Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc.'s 69th Annual Meeting on April 19, 2017, at the Wichita County Community Building, 502 East M St., in Leoti. We look forward to visiting with you and enjoying good fellowship. We would also like to take the opportunity to highlight Wheatland's accomplishments in the past year and our goals for the upcoming year and beyond.

Wheatland will present 11, \$1,000 scholarships to the winners of our scholarship program, who are children of Wheatland Electric members. We will also announce the two winners of the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., and two winners of the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

As I mentioned in last month's article, the Annual Meeting is the opportunity for you to exercise one of the greatest benefits of being a member of Wheatland Electric, by voting for

the upcoming board of trustees.

Wheatland Electric is not owned by far away investors. It's run by a democratically elected board of trustees, a board who is given the privilege to serve because of your vote. Our trustees are members of your community. They are concerned with the issues you face every day because they face them too.

So make it a point to attend Wheatland Electric's Annual Meeting and exercise your right as a member of the cooperative and vote.

Lunch will be provided along with

an attendance prize and the chance to win great door prizes. I'm looking forward to seeing you there.

Before I close, April 10 is National Lineman Appreciation Day. Wheatland linemen are incred-

ibly talented and dedicated. They risk their lives every day so we can all enjoy the benefits and conveniences that electricity brings to our daily lives. I want to say thank you to each and every one of our linemen, thank you for your hard work and dedication to keeping the lights on. It's a pleasure to work with you.

Until next time, take care.

April 2017						
S	M	T	W	U	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23/30	24	25	26	27	28	29

We look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting on April 19.

Operating Statement for year ended 12/31/2016 (Unaudited)	
Revenues	
Electric Operating Revenue	\$98,165,538
Expenses	
Cost of Power	59,033,098
Operations & Maintenance	7,480,986
Administrative & General	9,063,145
Depreciation	9,474,807
Interest	6,039,747
Taxes	3,599,571
Other	103,446
Total Expenses	94,794,800
Operating Margins	3,370,738
Non-Operating Items	
Interest Income	701,757
Income from Equity Investments	2,693,835
Loss from Subsidiaries (1)	(947,400)
Other Capital Credits	744,777
Margins Without Sunflower Capital Credits	6,563,707
Sunflower Capital Credits (2)	6,246,843
Total Margins	12,810,550

(1) Water and Broadband operations. (2) This amount is Wheatland's share of 2016 earnings of Sunflower Electric Power Corp. This allocation is not in cash and will be available to Wheatland's members at such time as it is paid out by Sunflower.

Wheatland Electric Balance Sheet as of 12/31/2016 (Unaudited)	
Assets	
Electric Plant	\$276,872,576
Non-Electric Assets	76,640,570
Less: Depreciation	(99,701,491)
Net Plant	253,811,655
Investments	88,930,725
Cash & Short-Term Investments	3,050,006
Receivables	12,937,216
Materials & Supplies	3,465,022
Prepayments & Other	316,656
Other Current Assets & Deferred	4,965,858
Total Assets	367,477,138
Liabilities	
Long-Term Debt	214,967,290
Payables	39,094,090
Other Liabilities	7,312,460
Total Liabilities	261,373,840
Equities	
Patronage Capital	105,103,023
Other Capital	1,000,275
Total Equities	106,103,298
Total Liabilities and Equity	367,477,138

Official Notice of Annual Meeting for Wheatland Electric Members

The 69th annual meeting of the members of Wheatland Electric will be held Wednesday, April 19th, at the Wichita County Community Building, 502 East M Street, in Leoti, Kansas.

Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m. CDT. The business meeting will convene at 12:30 p.m. The following matters will be addressed:

- ▶ Reports of officers, trustees, committees and employees
- ▶ Election of trustees of the cooperative
- ▶ Any other business which may come before the meeting
- ▶ Adjournment

The 2016 nominating committee consisted of the following members:

- ▶ **District 1 - ED CUPP**
- ▶ **District 2 - MILAN REIMER**
- ▶ **District 3 - DALE WETZEL**
- ▶ **District 4 - MARVIN GRABER**
- ▶ **District 5 - ROBERT BUERKLE**
- ▶ **District 6 - MATT HOISINGTON**
- ▶ **District 7 - KIM MILLER**

The following trustees have been nominated by the nominating committee for the position of trustee:



Katie Eisenhour



Vic Case



Stacey Addison-Howland



John Kleysteuber

- ▶ **District 1 - KATIE EISENHOUR**, 1106 Myrtle, Scott City
- ▶ **District 2 - VIC CASE**, 204 S. 6th, Leoti
- ▶ **District 4 - STACEY ADDISON-HOWLAND**, 911 N. Norris, Syracuse
- ▶ **District 5 - JOHN KLEYTEUBER**, 6310 E. Old Post Rd., Garden City

Additional nominations may be made from the floor during the meeting.

Operating Statistics (Electric)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Operating Revenue (Electric) (x 1000)	\$112,834	\$119,443	\$101,347	\$92,043	\$98,166
Energy Sales (kWh) (x 1000)	1,129,923	1,125,896	839,735	817,838	811,444
Average Revenue (\$/kWh)	\$0.0999	\$0.1061	\$0.1207	\$0.1125	\$0.1210
Cost of Power (x 1000)	\$80,056	\$84,264	\$66,163	\$58,545	\$59,033
Total Purchases (kWh) (x 1000)	1,175,614	1,166,542	884,996	859,192	854,492
Average Cost of Power (\$/kWh)	\$0.0681	\$0.0722	\$0.0748	\$0.0681	\$0.0691
Other Operations & Maintenance (x 1000)	\$17,552	\$17,003	\$16,852	\$17,026	\$16,647
Total Operations & Maintenance (x 1000)	\$95,441	\$101,267	\$83,015	\$75,571	\$75,680
Gross Operating Margin (x 1000)	\$17,393	\$18,176	\$18,332	\$16,472	\$22,486
Gross Operating Margin (\$/kWh)	\$0.0154	\$0.0161	\$0.0218	\$0.0201	\$0.0277
Depreciation Expense (x 1000)	\$7,426	\$7,809	\$7,774	\$8,186	\$9,475
Property Taxes (x 1000)	\$3,322	\$3,685	\$3,452	\$2,499	\$2,956
Other Taxes (x 1000)	\$513	\$572	\$644	\$588	\$644
Interest Expense (x 1000)	\$3,662	\$3,937	\$4,764	\$5,029	\$6,040
Operating Margin (x 1000)	\$2,470	\$2,173	\$1,698	\$170	\$3,371



youth tour starts **HERE**

Meet Wheatland's Youth Tour Winners



JUSTIN BROWN

Caldwell High School
Camp Winner

1. What is your favorite subject in school?

My favorite subjects in school are algebra and math.

2. What are your future plans?

Attend Kansas State University and major in agribusiness; Work for a large farm co-op/company in the U.S. as a business/marketing executive.

3. How did you hear about the program and what made you decide to apply?

Our school counselor gave me information on the trips, and I decided to apply because I knew it would be a great honor to get this opportunity.

4. What are you most looking forward to on your trip?

I'm looking forward to the friendships and memories I will create with the other winners. I'm also ready to learn leadership skills I can bring back to Caldwell and use in everyday life.



PAYTON GARRISON

Norwich High School
D.C. Winner

1. What is your favorite subject in school?

My favorite subject in school is American history.

2. What are your future plans?

I am currently undecided but plan to attend a community college to study pre-med.

3. How did you hear about the program and what made you decide to apply?

I found out about the trip through my guidance counselor, Mrs. Hibbs. I decided to apply for the youth tour because my older sister, Derian Garrison, was a youth tour winner along with a senior teammate of mine, Erin Hall. It is also an amazing opportunity to see our nation's capital and learn about history.

4. What are you most looking forward to on your trip?

I am most excited to see the Smithsonian museums! I have always wanted to visit them. I am also excited to learn about the history while visiting D.C.



ROSSIEL REYES

Great Bend High School
Camp Winner

1. What is your favorite subject in school?

My favorite subject in school is a tie between math and English.

2. What are your future plans?

I plan to go to college and get an undergraduate degree in political science and then, hopefully, attend law school.

3. How did you hear about the program and what made you decide to apply?

Marcos Martinez attended youth tour last year, and he explained how much fun he had—I was immediately interested! Later, my counselor Mrs. Wolters emailed me to see if I was interested in applying. I decided to apply because I could not pass up this amazing opportunity.

4. What are you most looking forward to on your trip?

I am looking forward to connecting with students from different states, making friends, and gaining new knowledge and experiences.



ARELY YANEZ

Greeley County High School
D.C. Winner

1. What is your favorite subject in school?

My favorite subject in school is human anatomy and physiology because it is interesting to learn about how the human body and mind work.

2. What are your future plans?

I've decided to attend Kansas State University and explore my career interests in the open option program.

3. How did you hear about the program and what made you decide to apply?

I first heard about the trip from my school counselor. I decided to apply because it seemed like a great opportunity to expand my leadership skills, and there is no better place to do this than at our nation's capital!

4. What are you most looking forward to on your trip?

I am looking forward to learning more about electric co-ops, and our nation's government, and sightseeing, but overall, I'm looking forward to growing as a person.

STAYING ON TRACK

Local High School Vocational Technology Club prepares for upcoming ElectroRally Competition

Until a few years ago, the electric class was a little more than a novelty. Now it's only a matter of time before the track is ruled by electricity rather than gasoline. Great Bend High School's Vocational Technology Club (VTC) began 12 years ago. **TRAVIS STRAUB**, a woodworking teacher and VTC sponsor, acts as the ElectroRally instructor. His goal is to educate students and give them practical hands-on experience with different projects including building an electric vehicle (EV).

Wheatland Electric sponsors the Great Bend and Scott City high school ElectroRally programs, where teams build electric and solar powered cars and compete to see who can complete the most laps in an hour.

"This is a steady race of endurance. You cannot go full throttle unless passing someone or you are close to the end of a race and need to finish strong," said **JACE SCHWAGER**, junior, Great Bend High School ElectroRally team member. "You will run out of battery so it is a test of managing the car as well as racing it."

Schwager is one of four active members in the Vocational Technology Club. **JARED DIVIS**, **TRISTEN MILLIGAN** and **CALEB STRAUB** are also a part of the VTC. These four have been busy retrofitting two electric vehicles. It's no surprise that the Great Bend team has a red and a black electric vehicle (red and black are their school colors). The red car (388), commonly referred to as "Old Faithful," races in the Standard Class. It differs from the black car (488) in multiple ways: it utilizes zero-turn steering, has a steel chassis and has two 12-volt batteries.

Before each race, the VTC members plan to modify the EV's gears based on the design of each course. "Old Faithful" will compete in its first race in Scott City. The course in Beloit is fairly flat with tight turns and an "S" curve, compared to the course at Olathe Northwest High School which has more gradual turns and has longer straightaways.

Straub tries to take a backseat when the kids are making modifications to their cars. He encourages them to ask questions, but they make the decisions, right or wrong. Sometimes lessons are learned the hard way.

"Last year at the Olathe race, the boys should have

changed the gears because of how the course is designed,” said Straub. “They chose not to and they were unable to finish the race. I think they learned from that experience and won’t make the same mistake twice.”

The 488 car will race in the Experimental Class for the second year in a row. The VTC bought this electric vehicle from Lacrosse High School and has since made many modifications. This car boasts a chrome moly chassis, not a steel chassis. The chassis is the backbone of the vehicle. While weight is a prevalent concern, it is actually only one of several factors that contributes to a successful EV. Reliability is the key to winning and that’s the focus of each class period as they work on the cars.

“The most challenging piece of working on the cars is the fine tuning,” said Divis. “We have been aligning three wheels on the 488 car and adjusting the brakes for the last few months. It’s challenging and time consuming and that’s why I love it.”

Something new and exciting this year for the Great Bend team is the addition of headsets and microphones to help team members communicate while on the track. In previous years, the only way to communicate was with a “drive-by,”—the driver would yell as they went by to check on their speed, mechanical problems, etc. The Bluetooth headsets and microphones will take their communications to the next level.

In addition to Wheatland’s sponsorship of



(Left to right) Tristen Milligan, Jared Davis, Caleb Straub, and Mr. Travis Straub take "Old Faithful," their Standard Class electric vehicle, out for a test drive before the ElectroRally in Scott City on Wednesday, April 26, 2017.

the ElectroRally program, the Great Bend team has multiple sponsors that make the program possible: Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, Midwest Energy, O’Reilly Auto Parts, Parts, Inc., Somebody’s Body Shop, Oversize Warning Products Inc., Jackson Motorsports, Jackson Sand Cars, Golden Belt Bicycle Company and Office Products Incorporated.

Wheatland also helps organize the Sunflower ElectroRally held each spring at the Scott City Airport and provides volunteers who help with the course setup and take down, grill hamburgers and hotdogs for all of the race participants and whatever else is needed to help make the race a success.

Make plans to attend this year’s race on Wednesday, April 26.



Jace Schwager and Jared Divis take the hood off of the 488 car so they can install the batteries.



The 488 car is driven around Great Bend’s skate park by Jared Divis to check the brakes and alignment.

Get to Know Your Co-op Staff

Bruce Loy

Journeyman Lineman
23 years in Leoti



Bruce Loy

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

I have been married to Sheri for 23 wonderful years. We have 2 kids: ShayReah, 21, she is a junior

at Kansas University; and Kendrix, 14, she is in 8th grade at Wichita County Junior-Senior High School. Our family has one dog named Razz and one cat named TJ.

WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

I lived the first eight years of my life in Nothern Illinois, then I moved to Macksville until 1991 when I moved to Leoti.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

I enjoy hunting, fishing and watching sports.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE TEAM?

Pittsburgh Steelers and Kansas Jayhawks.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE VACATION?

Cancun and any time spent with family.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE BOOK?

The Bible. It is God's word and I read it daily.

WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU IN YOUR LIFE AND WHY?

My father. He is a hardworking Christian man who has always been full of encouragement.

Take a Ride on the Touchstone Energy Balloon

The Touchstone Energy hot air balloon is returning to Wheatland territory in Western Kansas! Join us on Saturday, April 15, 2017, for *Wind and Wheels* at the Wichita County Fairgrounds in Leoti. Wheatland members can expect a day full of family fun and activities for all ages and an opportunity for a free tethered hot air balloon ride*.

Touchstone Energy's hot air balloon team last came to Wheatland's territory in 2014 at the Showdown on the Plains Air Show and BBQ Festival in Scott City. The balloon quickly stole the show, as Wheatland members and attendees lined up throughout the morning for their chance at a free tethered ride.



The weather was amazing and we used every drop of gas the balloon team brought with them!

Wheatland is excited to sponsor the Touchstone Energy hot air balloon again this year at *Wind and Wheels*. In addition to the balloon, attendees can expect a day packed full of fun. Activities of the day will include a car show, giant kites, kite flying, a bike scavenger hunt, a rocket launch and much more! For more details about *Wind and Wheels* please visit www.windandwheels.org. We hope to see you there!

**Inflation of the Touchstone balloon and tethered rides are weather dependent.*

Bonine Named 2016 Citizen of the Year

On February 18, at the 95th Annual Chamber Meeting and Banquet hosted by the Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development, our very own Wheatland Electric Board Member, **DAN BONINE**, was recognized as the 2016 Citizen of the Year.

Bonine began his banking career with Merchants National Bank in Topeka and accepted a position at American State Bank in Great Bend in 1976. In 1999, he began working at First Kansas Bank, where he retired as the President and CEO in 2007. Bonine has served the following entities: the USD 428 Board of Education and Education Foundation, BCC Foundation, CKMC Hospital Foundation; Mid-Kansas Economic Development Commission, Great Bend Day Care Board, Presbyterian Church, Kiwanis Club, Kansas 4-H Foundation, Boy Scouts, Petroleum Club, Kansas Bankers Association, Golden Belt Swim Club, and Wheatland Electric.

Bonine is well known in his com-



Board of Trustee's Treasurer Dan Bonine receives the 2016 Citizen of the Year.

munity for his leadership, mentoring and volunteerism. He has worked with the youth as well as spent many hours helping Great Bend's economic development. We know he'll continue doing great things for the community and Wheatland Electric. Congratulations, Dan!

Wheatland to Award \$11,000 in Scholarships

Wheatland Electric will announce the winners of its 2017 scholarship program at its 69th Annual Meeting on April 19, 2017, in Leoti. Wheatland will give away a total of \$11,000. Recipients were judged on their academic performance, school activities, career goals and a 1,000-word essay.

The Wheatland Board of Trustees again voted to make one \$1,000 scholarship available to each of the high schools in Wheatland's service territory for 2017: Argonia, Caldwell, Chaparral, Conway Springs, Deerfield, Great Bend, Greeley County, Holcomb, Norwich, Scott County, South Haven, Syracuse and Wichita County.

More than 45 students applied for the scholarships. The \$1,000 awards will go to students who plan to attend an accredited two- or four-

year college, technical or vocational school. Once the winners are announced, Wheatland will write checks directly to their schools of choice.

In addition to unveiling its scholarship recipients, Wheatland will also recognize the winners of the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour and the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp trips, and members will vote for the 2017-2018 Board of Trustees. Attendees will enjoy a lunch catered by Webb's BBQ, and each member in attendance will receive a gift. Members will also have the opportunity to enter a drawing for great door prizes. Wheatland's Annual meeting provides a great opportunity for members to learn more about their cooperative, ask questions and have a voice in their electric cooperative.

#ThankALineman on Lineman Appreciation Day



Wheatland linemen aid Ninnescah Electric after Winter Storm Jupiter in January.

On Monday, April 10, 2017, Wheatland Electric will join cooperatives from across the nation to recognize the employees who keep the lights on.

We proudly recognize all electric linemen for the work they perform around the clock and in particular the 70-plus linemen at Wheatland for their service to the co-op and our members.

Perhaps you have seen them raising their bucket trucks in howling winds and torrential rains, or in freezing, icy conditions. They work around the clock near high-voltage power

lines until electricity is restored to every member in our co-op community.

In addition to aiding members in our local service territory, lineworkers are always willing and eager to volunteer when a neighboring community, county or state is in need after a major outage occurs.

Please join us by taking a moment to personally thank a lineman for the work he or she does.

Use #ThankALineman in your social media posts on April 10 to show support for our Wheatland linemen who make our lives easier every day.

Get to Know Your Co-op Staff Brandon Ritchie

Journeyman Lineman
8 years in Great Bend

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

My wife, Jill, and I have three daughters and three dogs.

WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

Pawnee Rock



Brandon Ritchie

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

I enjoy hunting, fishing and grilling out.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE VACATION?

Anywhere in the mountains.

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR IDEAL JOB?

Sitting on a beach taste testing new beer.

WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

Becoming a father.

WHAT IS SOMETHING NOT MANY PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT YOU?

I secretly drink out of the milk jug and put it back in the fridge.

SAFETY Tip of the Month

Improperly operating switches or outlets may indicate an unsafe wiring condition, which could be a fire hazard. Contact a qualified electrician if this occurs.

A DAY *in the* LIFE

BY SHAWN POWELSON



Lynn Freese

Director of Consumer Services and Water
38 years Scott City

The first thing you notice when you meet **LYNN FREESE** are the suspenders. I can't recall a time I've ever seen him without them. Not far behind the unmistakable suspenders are the long list of "Lynnisms" he is prone to using or as he says, "I

speaking Okie." Spend more than a few minutes with him and you're bound to hear a few. Like his usual response when you ask how he is, "Upright and movin'" or his customary line as he exits my office, "off we stampede like a herd of turtles." And those don't even begin to scratch the surface.

Today, we met up with the manager of safety/policy and documents, Luke West, and the three of us toured our water systems operation. Recently, Lynn has been spending a few hours a month with Luke as part of Wheatland's succession planning initiative. Wheatland has adopted an active approach in being intentional about the transfer of knowledge from long-tenured employee like Lynn, to a younger generation of employee, in preparation for retirement of key staff over the next five to 10 years.

Our tour began with an explanation of the water treatment plant operations. Before we made it out of the office, he had already given me one of those quotable Lynnisms when he quipped, "Don't take life so seriously, the worms won't care when you're dead." Wheatland currently has three certified Class IV water system operators on staff, two of which work full time in the water division and the third is Lynn. Wheatland's water division processes and delivers approximately seven million gallons of water daily to three wholesale customers. Part of that system includes a wellfield comprised of 28 quarters of land (approximately seven

square miles) and 14 wellhouses. The wellfield was where we were headed to next.

While at the wellhouse, we inspected the damage caused by the recent wildfire. The fire burned the native grass off the top of the land, which is what holds the soil (largely comprised of sand) in place. Because of the fire, the sand immediately began to blow and had even started to fill some ditches. During our tour, we assessed several of the strategies Wheatland had employed to try and hold the soil/sand.

In addition to his water responsibilities, Lynn also oversees our consumer services department which consists of 14 consumer services representatives (CSRs) and a consumer services manager. The CSRs are essentially the face of Wheatland. Lynn's team assists members with a myriad of questions ranging from billing to establishing a new service and everything in between.

Lynn is also our resident tariff/rate class guru, math whiz and Wheatland historian. I'm certain he's forgotten more than I'll ever know as it relates to rates, calculations and all things Wheatland. I often ask him a question that involves a calculation, and he'll tilt his head back, stare up at the ceiling and start reciting numbers out loud and then look back at me and give me an answer. He calls it grenade math. I call it impressive.

It would probably take me three segments of Day in the Life to cover Lynn's entire scope of work at Wheatland appropriately. But alas, he only gets one. As we finished our time together, I asked Lynn his favorite part about working at Wheatland. "The people, not just the employees but the members, too. You help them and they say thanks and you develop some long-term friendships over the years," he said. Trust me when I tell you he's a friend you'd like to have. Suspenders and all!

SHAWN POWELSON, Manager of Member Services and Corporate Communications