



WHEATLAND
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

NEWS

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FROM THE MANAGER

Independence and Issues Important to Co-ops

July 4th is the time we celebrate our nation's independence. In the midst of apple pies, hot dogs, fireworks and parades, I can't help but think about the independent streak that inspired groups of rural Americans around America's countryside to band together and improve their quality of life.

Aside from President Franklin Roosevelt's promise of federal aid in the form of low-interest loans and engineering expertise, rural Americans didn't have much help in bringing electricity to their homes and workplaces. They pulled together and did it themselves.

Today, electric cooperatives form a vast network across the country, from coast-to-coast. Electric co-ops are in 47 states, serving 42 million people—a different world from 1935, when much of the U.S. remained without electricity. This Fourth of July, as we recognize and celebrate our country's independence, I'll also tip my hat to the Wheatland Electric Cooperative founders who beat incredible odds to make life better for themselves and their neighbors.

I'd also like to report on the recent NRECA Legislative conference in Washington D.C. A group of more than 20 cooperative representatives from Kansas, along with other cooperative representatives from across the country, met with their respec-

tive congressional staffs to discuss five areas of focus.

- ▶ **Support for the Rural Utilities Service:** Kansas legislators were asked to sign on to a letter supporting a \$ 5.5 billion RUS loan level. This program does not cost the taxpayers; instead it is projected to earn more than \$ 130 million for the federal government in interest.
- ▶ **Electric Reliability & Forest Protection Act:** Kansas legislators were asked to support this act that would ensure grid reliability and consistent access to power line right of ways.
- ▶ **Electric Cooperative Energy Tax:** Kansas legislators were given an explanation on the need for electric cooperatives to receive a tax credit for geothermal, nuclear and carbon capture technologies.
- ▶ **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program:** Kansas legislators were given reasons for helping maintain the current program for low-income members.
- ▶ **Endangered Species Act:** Kansas legislators were asked to show support for this act that would modernize the current Endangered Species Act and advocate common sense methodologies and science to be utilized.



Bruce Mueller

Until next time, take care.

Sharing Success

Wheatland Partnership has Provided \$60,000-plus to Local Non-Profits

Wheatland Electric and CoBank recently renewed their Sharing Success program, bringing their combined total donations to \$60,000. Since the fund's inception in 2012, Wheatland and CoBank have each donated \$30,000 to the program. Since renewing the fund in May, four \$1,000 grants have been awarded.

The **HAMILTON COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL ORGANIZATION** recently received a \$1,000 grant for their ongoing renovation and restoration of the local Veterans Memorial building. The building was constructed in 1949 as a joint venture between the local VFW and American Legion Posts. Used regularly throughout the years, the building served as a popular place to hold family gatherings, dances, community events and veterans' activities. Lack of funding

and regular maintenance in recent years left the building in a severe state of disrepair. In January 2015, local veterans, with the support of the local community, undertook the task of raising funds to restore the building.

The restoration project received a \$1,000 grant from the Sharing Success fund in 2015 as part of their initial fundraising efforts. To date, more than \$168,000 has been raised along with another \$5,000 in donated materials. The project is nearing completion with the remaining repairs being focused on final restoration of the building's kitchen.

Another recent recipient of a Sharing Success grant was the **CITY OF CALDWELL**. The city recently began the process of raising funds for a splash pad project adjacent to the city swim-



The City of Caldwell receives a \$1,000 grant from the Sharing Success fund to assist with their new splash pad project.

2013

- ▶ Russell Child Development
- ▶ Caldwell Public Library
- ▶ Holy Family School
- ▶ Wichita Co. Economic Development
- ▶ Harper Hospital District #5
- ▶ Greeley Co. Library
- ▶ K-State Research & Extension-Scott Co.
- ▶ K-State Research & Extension-SW Area Office
- ▶ Hamilton Co. Library
- ▶ Wichita Co. Health Center
- ▶ Scott Community High School

2014

- ▶ Caldwell Public Library
- ▶ Bad Boyz Boxing Club
- ▶ Greeley Co. Library
- ▶ Harper Hospital District #5
- ▶ Golden Belt Human Society
- ▶ Scott Recreation Commission
- ▶ Wichita Co. Arts Alliance
- ▶ Scott Co. Development
- ▶ Breast Cancer Unity Project
- ▶ Great Bend Community Theatre
- ▶ Viola Township Library
- ▶ Hamilton Co. Economic Development



Wheatland presents the Hamilton County Veterans Memorial Organization with a \$1,000 grant to help complete the Veteran's Memorial building renovation project.



The Veteran's Memorial building as it looks today after extensive remodel and repair.

ming pool at the city park. Projected costs for construction of the splash pad are \$90,000. The city plans for the new splash pad to be a free summer entertainment option for its citizens.

THE KANSAS CHILDREN'S SERVICE LEAGUE (KCSL) was also the recipient of a \$1,000 Sharing Success grant in June. KCSL is a not-for-profit organization that serves nearly 600 children and families within southwest Kansas. KCSL applied for the funds to assist with the cost of installing rubber matting to their playground in Garden City. The matting represented a significant upgrade and added long-term potential for cost savings over the traditional material of pea gravel that they had been using.

One other recent recipient of Sharing Suc-

cess funds was the **MELVIN O. KUDER SENIOR CENTER** in Tribune. The center received a \$1,000 grant to assist with the cost of building a community garden. Initial plans call for the construction of six raised beds with another three in the works, pending additional funding. The center plans to allow community members to bring as many plants as they want and will have additional plants available for purchase that they plan to start from donated seeds.

The Sharing Success program was created in 2012 through a partnership with one of Wheatland's partner banks, CoBank and the Scott Community Foundation. CoBank's Sharing Success program matches contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis, from a minimum of

Continued on page 16-D ▶

2015

- ▶ Harper Hospital District #5
- ▶ Family Crisis Center
- ▶ City of Syracuse
- ▶ Sumner Co. Hospital District #1
- ▶ Barton Co. Young Professionals
- ▶ American Legion Post 27
- ▶ The Great Bend Foundation
- ▶ Caldwell Public Library
- ▶ Hamilton Co. Public Foundation
- ▶ Greeley Co. Library
- ▶ Scott City Elite
- ▶ Harper Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ Vets for Veterans
- ▶ Hamilton Co. Library
- ▶ Golden Belt Community Foundation

2016

- ▶ Dixon Township Library
- ▶ Bad Boyz Boxing Club
- ▶ Harper Hospital District #5
- ▶ Scott Co. Extension Office
- ▶ Wichita Co. Arts Alliance
- ▶ City of Caldwell
- ▶ Syracuse Elementary School
- ▶ City of Holcomb-Holcomb Police Department
- ▶ Southwest Grapplers Wrestling Club
- ▶ Caldwell Public Library

2017

- ▶ Harper Art Association
- ▶ Magic's Hope
- ▶ Harper Hospital District #5
- ▶ Kansas Children's Service League
- ▶ City of Caldwell
- ▶ Hamilton Co. Veterans Memorial Organization
- ▶ Melvin O. Kuder Senior Center

Grant Recipients

Sharing Success Grants

Continued from page 16-C ▶

\$1,000 up to a maximum of \$5,000. That first year, Wheatland contributed \$5,000 to the Scott Community Foundation to create the Wheatland Electric Sharing Success Fund. CoBank matched the donation made by Wheatland, giving the fund a balance of \$10,000 to distribute to local non-profits. Each year since, Wheatland and CoBank have continued to donate \$5,000 each to the program. Since inception, the fund has awarded 57 grants totaling more than \$48,000 to non-profits across Wheatland's service territory in Kansas.

"The Sharing Success program continues to be one of our most valuable tools for giving back to the communities we serve," said Bruce Mueller, Wheatland general manager. "We are thankful to CoBank and the Scott Community Foundation for their partnership on this great program. Over the last five years we've made a huge impact in our communities, together helping more than 40 separate organizations achieve their mission."



Representatives for the Melvin O. Kuder Senior Center in Tribune receive a \$1,000 grant for their community garden project.

Other organizations and projects that have received funding through the program include, among many others, schools, hospitals, park projects, libraries and community theaters.

The Scott Community Foundation continues to accept applications on Wheatland's behalf for the Sharing Success program. Non-profits interested in receiving funding from the Wheatland Electric Sharing Success Fund should contact the Scott Community Foundation at 620-872-3790 for further details.



Representatives from the Kansas Children's Service League (KCSL) receive a \$1,000 grant for their playground project from Wheatland and the Scott Community Foundation.



KCSL will use their grant proceeds to help replace the existing pea gravel with rubber matting that will last longer and be a more kid-friendly surface.

Cultivating Safety in Agricultural Practices



Look up and look out: Failure to notice overhead power lines could be a deadly oversight. Make sure to stay 10 feet away from lines—above, below, and to the side.

One of the most dangerous jobs in the U.S. is farming. Among the hazards faced by farmers, farm workers and family members is contact with electrical equipment. However, with proper planning and safety procedures, the risk can be greatly reduced:

- ▶ **Keep a 20-foot minimum distance around power lines**—above, below, and to the side.
- ▶ **Use a spotter** when moving machinery around the farm. It can be difficult to judge how close a piece of machinery is to an electrical hazard from the driver's seat.
- ▶ **Use caution when handling long items** such as irrigation pipe, ladders and rods. Coming too close to a power line can cause electricity to arc, or “jump,” to conducting material or objects.
- ▶ **Be aware of increased height** when loading and transporting tractors on trailer beds. Many tractors are now equipped with radios and communications systems that have tall antennas extending from the cab that could make contact with power lines.
- ▶ **Avoid raising the arms** of planters, cultivators and truck beds near power lines.
- ▶ **Never attempt to raise or move** a power line to clear a path.
- ▶ **Remember**, even non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, tires, ropes and hay will conduct

electricity depending on dampness, dust and dirt contamination.

Overhead electric wires are not the only source of electrical contact that can result in a serious incident. Pole guy wires, used to stabilize utility poles, are grounded. However, when a guy wire is broken it can cause an electric current disruption. This can make those neutral wires anything but harmless. If you hit a guy wire and break it, call the utility to fix it. Do not try to fix it yourself.

If your equipment does contact a power line, stay in the cab and call for help; the electric utility needs to be notified. Even if a line has landed on the ground, there is still potential for the area to be energized. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until the electric utility arrives.

If leaving the cab is necessary, as in the case of fire, the proper action is to jump—not step—with both feet hitting the ground at the same time. Do not allow any part of your body to touch the equipment and the ground at the same time. Hop to safety, keeping both feet together as you leave the area. Once you get away from the equipment, never attempt to get back on or even touch the equipment before the power has been shut off.

Review these safety procedures with your family and farm workers before beginning work this season—their lives depend on it.

Get to Know Your Co-op Staff

Luke West

Manager of Safety, Compliance and Policy
12 years in Garden City

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

My wife, Brandi, and I have three kids: Brylee (8 years old), and Arlee and Kasyn (3-year-old twins). Our family has a Yorkshire terrier named Tank.



Luke West

WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

Scott City

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

Spend time with family and friends. In the summers we enjoy camping at the lake, and we go on annual snow ski trips. I like to go hunting when my wife lets me.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE BOOK OR MOVIE?

Lonesome Dove

WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

My wife and kids.

WHAT WOULD YOUR IDEAL JOB BE?

A fighter pilot.

WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU IN YOUR LIFE AND WHY?

My Dad. He taught me the importance of honesty, integrity and respect.

SAFETY

Tip of the Month

Spring and early summer is the peak season for severe weather outbreaks in the United States. It's also a time to be sure you and your family have a plan in place should severe weather and tornadoes strike. If you have not already, take the time and make a plan

Appreciating Electricity a Penny at a Time

BY CURTIS CONDON, EDITOR OF *RURALITE MAGAZINE*



I'm old enough to remember when penny candy actually cost a penny. For a nickel, you could buy enough candy to rot your teeth out, as my mother used to say.

But what does a penny buy these days? Not much. The government can't even make a penny for a penny anymore. According to the U.S. Mint, it now costs 1.5 cents to produce one.

About the only thing of value you can still get for a penny is electricity. You might call it "penny electricity."

No, I'm not kidding. Think about it.

To make the math easier, let's say the average rate for a kilowatt-hour of electricity is 10 cents. That is 60 minutes of 1,000 watts of electricity for a dime, so a penny of electricity equates to 100 watts. It's enough to power a 9-watt LED lightbulb—the equivalent of a 60-watt incandescent bulb—for 11 hours, all for only a penny.

Where else can you get that kind of value?

How many eggs will a penny buy? How much milk, bread, coffee, medicine or gasoline?

Gas has come down from its stratospheric levels of several years ago, but there is still no comparison to the value of electricity. For example, if a gallon of gas costs \$2.50 and your car gets 25 miles to the gallon, you can drive 176 yards—about two blocks—on a penny's worth of gas.

I will take 11 hours of lighting for a penny over a two-block drive any day.

The value is just as evident when powering things other than lighting. Take, for instance, your smartphone. Using the same 10 cents per kWh price, penny electricity allows you to fully charge your iPhone more than 18 times for a penny. You can charge it once every day of the year for about 20 cents total.

Not impressed? Well, how about these other examples of what you can do with just a penny's worth of electricity: power a 1,000-watt microwave on high for 6 minutes; run a 200-watt desktop computer for 30 minutes; watch 2.5 hours of your favorite shows on a 40-watt, 32-inch, LED television or 1.3 hours on a 75-watt, 75-inch mega TV.

The examples are endless.

We are fortunate electricity is such an excellent value because we have a huge appetite for it. We tend to forget that.

Electricity is not expensive. It's that we use it for so many different things: lighting, heating, cooking, cooling, refrigeration, cleaning, washing, pumping, entertainment, communications—even transportation these days.

Few corners of our lives are left untouched by electricity.

Unfortunately, we don't always appreciate it. When our monthly electric bill comes, we open it and may complain about the cost. It's a knee-jerk reaction ingrained in us as consumers. We don't stop to think about the value we received for the money.

Early in my career, I had the pleasure to interview an elderly woman who vividly remembered the day electricity came to her farm. Her name escapes me, but I do remember she proudly showed me the worn, dog-eared membership certificate the co-op issued to her husband.

"You young people will never know what it was like to have electricity for the very first time," she said. "It was glorious. Nowadays, you take it for granted."

Her farm was energized in 1940. She said the price of electricity at the time was slightly less than a penny a kilowatt-hour—true penny electricity.

A lot has changed since then. Wages and the cost of living today are a far cry from 1940, when the average annual wage was less than \$150 a month and the average cost of a house was \$3,920.

But one thing that hasn't changed is the value of electricity. In 77 years, its price has risen much slower than the rate of inflation.

A penny in 1940 had as much buying power as 17 cents today, which means the residential price of electricity—which now averages 12 cents a kWh nationally and less than 10 cents in the Pacific Northwest—is actually a better deal today than it was in 1940.

So to my way of thinking, the value of electricity is like the bygone days of penny candy, and it's OK to indulge yourself a little. But, unlike penny candy, penny electricity won't rot your teeth out.

CO-OP CONNECTIONS SPOTLIGHT

Co-op Connections Card Savings

HIGH CALL OUT-FITTERS is the best little western store in central Kansas. High Call offers the most complete selection in western fashion for men and ladies.



Boots, denim and apparel from Cinch, Ariat, Cowgirl Tuff, Cruel, Rock&Roll, Stetson, Roper, Tin Haul, Double J Saddlery and many more! Stop in today and get your denim Buy One Get One Half Off when you use your Co-op Connections Card.

Use your Connections Card at these other local businesses for more great savings. For a complete list of deals visit www.connections.coop/weci.

- ▶ D'Mario's Pizza, Harper
- ▶ Cornerstone Interiors, Great Bend
- ▶ Gifts, Etc., Scott City

Still need a Connections Card? Contact your local office for more information on how to start saving now!

Get to Know Your Co-op Staff

Matt Scheeter

Warehouse Foreman
16 years in Garden City

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

My wife, Kellie, and I have been married 21 years this April. We have two boys, Caleb, 12, and Carson, 17, and a dog named Pepper.



Matt Scheeter

WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

Garden City

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

Spend time with family and coach my son's baseball team.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE VACATION?

Arizona for MLB spring training with my family.

WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

My wife and two boys. They are "my everything."

WHAT WOULD YOUR IDEAL JOB BE?

MLB baseball player.

WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU IN YOUR LIFE AND WHY?

My mom and dad. They taught me how to treat EVERYONE with respect, and how to be a great parent.



Rebates Available to Upgrade Your HVAC

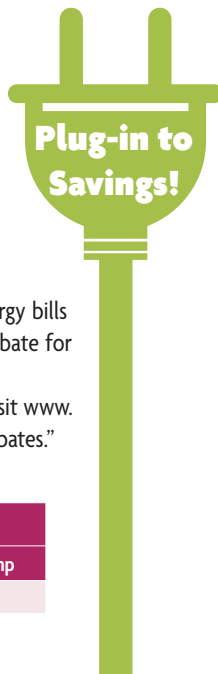
Save Energy, Save Money

Did you know that Wheatland offers rebates to residential members for the installation of energy-efficient heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems?

Heating and cooling a house often accounts for the majority of a household's monthly energy costs. Many homeowners have a great opportunity to save energy and money by installing a more efficient HVAC system.

Essentially, higher efficiency equates to lower monthly energy bills and improved comfort. For example, you could receive a \$410 rebate for a four-ton (48,000 BTU) heat pump.

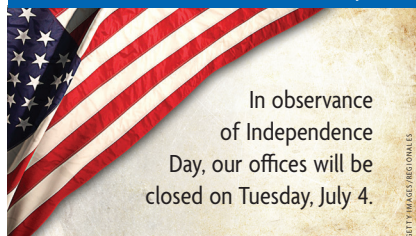
For eligibility requirements or to download a rebate form, visit www.weci.net and click on the "Energy Education" tab and then on "Rebates." You can also contact any local office.



Rebate Levels			
BTU	Min SEER	Central A/C	Heat Pump
Up to 36,000*	13	\$200	+\$150

*Add \$30 for each ½ ton above 3 ton (36,000 BTU)

Offices Closed on July 4



In observance of Independence Day, our offices will be closed on Tuesday, July 4.

A DAY *in the* LIFE

BY SHAWN POWELSON



Steve Hageburg
Substation Technician
10 years in Harper

I met **STEVE HAGEBERG**, substation technician at our warehouse in Harper. As we headed out, Steve informed me that our first stop would be at a local grain elevator where he needed to “kill out” the power so an

electrician could make a few repairs to the elevator’s electrical system.

Upon arrival at the co-op, Steve visited briefly with the electrician and then told him that he’d get the power disconnected so he could make the necessary repairs. Next, Steve retrieved a long stick from his service truck. He referred to it as an “extendo” and then proceeded to extend or telescope the stick up to a height of about 30 feet. Using the extendo, he opened three fuses. With the fuses open, power was now disconnected from the grain elevator. Once the electrician completed his work, Steve closed the fuses to restore power. Now we were off to meet serviceman Shawn Ryan in Conway Springs.

Steve explained that though Shawn works mostly alone as a serviceman, occasionally some jobs require a second person. “Any time we’re working with primary, there has to be two people,” he explained. “For safety reasons, there needs to be someone else to watch from the ground just in case.”

After a brief stop to help Shawn, we were off to the Mayfield substation. On our way, we discussed Steve’s duties, which include substation checks a minimum of once a month. As a part of the checks he makes sure the equipment is operating correctly, monitors transformer loads, makes repairs as necessary and periodically clears the substation of bird’s nests. In addition to his monthly checks, he performs annual infrared tests and takes oil samples of the substation transformers.

sub-sta-tion *noun* 1. the interface between parts of the electric distribution and transmission systems. These fenced off areas step down the voltage in the transmission lines to one that is suitable for the distribution system.

Today we were taking an oil sample that was outside of his normal annual sampling process. There had been a few recent issues relating to the transformer and he wanted to make sure the problem wasn’t with the transformer itself. After showing me the process for taking the sample, Steve walked me around the entire substation pointing out how the various pieces of equipment all worked together to make the substation function properly. He pointed to the charred remains of a pile of bird nests he had recently cleared out then pointed to the beginning stages of new nests being built all around the substation. “I have a day here and there to clean these out. They have all day, every day, to put them back,” he said with a smile.

As we headed back to the office, we talked about Steve’s family and hobbies. He told me he’d been married for about three years and he and his wife had a 15-month-old little boy. “Keeps us busy,” he added. He’s also recently taken up home beer brewing, and he and a friend have put together quite the brewing facility in Steve’s garage.

As we finished up our day together, I asked Steve his favorite part of the job. “I like it when we have new problems or something out of the ordinary. I like the diagnosis process and trying to figure out what’s wrong and how to fix it,” Steve replied. He added, “Even when things are working right, I like studying and figuring out how things work, so I know why it’s not when the time comes.”

Sounds like a guy who likes what he does and is always working to be better at it. Thanks for sharing your day with me, Steve.

SHAWN POWELSON, Manager of Member Services and Corporate Communications