

WHEATLAND
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

NEWS



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District Offices

Garden City—620-275-0261
2005 W. Fulton, P.O. Box 973
Garden City, KS 67846
Great Bend—620-793-4223
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Great Bend, KS 67530
Harper—620-896-7090
906 Central, P.O. Box 247
Harper, KS 67058
Leoti—620-375-2632
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Leoti, KS 67861
Scott City-Main—620-872-5885
101 Main St., P.O. Box 230
Scott City, KS 67871
Syracuse—620-384-5171
206 1/2 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

Capital Credits, Concern for the Community, Giving and Merry Christmas

I'd like to focus this month's article on two of the seven co-op principles: Member Economic Participation and Concern for the Community.

Member Economic Participation

When you belong to an electric co-op, you're not a customer, you are a member — and a co-op owner. Wheatland Electric Cooperative (WEC) is a non profit distribution co-op. We buy electricity from our wholesale provider Sunflower Electric and Mid-Kansas Electric. They arrange for its transmission and distribution to our membership through WEC's power lines.

As an owner, the co-op shares its excess revenue — monies collected above what is required to run the business — and when it's economically feasible the co-op retires or pays out this excess money, called **CAPITAL CREDITS**, to you.

In October, Wheatland's Board of Trustees decided it was economically feasible to retire **\$500,000 IN CAPITAL CREDITS** based on the 2018 financial year. The Board of Trustees considered the impact the retirement would have on the financial strength of the co-op. Sunflower Electric's Board of Trustees also approved retiring capital credits to its membership (Wheatland is a Member). Of those capital credits, WEC has approved \$500,000 to be paid to the Wheatland membership, bringing the total retirement to **\$1 MILLION**. Member Economic Participation distinguishes electric cooperatives from investor-owned utilities and municipalities.



Bruce W. Mueller

Continued on page 16H ▶

SAFETY Tip of the Month

Animal-vehicle collisions are not only costly but can be dangerous. From 2001 to 2011, animal collisions contributed to more than 2,080 fatal crashes nationwide. Whether a deer, dog, cow or coyote, animals on the roadway are unexpected, and their actions can be erratic and unpredictable. Make it a point to scan the road and shoulders constantly while driving.



General Manager & Trustees



Executive Team – Scott City



District 1 – Scott City



District 2 – Leoti



District 3 – Tribune



District 4 – Syracuse

Wishing You and
HAPPY H
MERRY &
CHRISTMAS

GETTY IMAGES/SVELIANA_CHERRUTY



Wheatland Broadband – Scott City



Water Division – Garden City

Your Loved Ones

HOLIDAYS

HAPPY
NEW YEAR



District 5 – Garden City



District 6 – Great Bend



District 7 – Harper



From all of us at

**WHEATLAND
ELECTRIC**

Delivering Energy for Life

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Our offices will be closed on Tuesday, Dec. 24, and Wednesday, Dec. 25, for the Christmas holiday. We will be closed on Wednesday, Jan. 1, for the new year.

Member

SPOTLIGHT

ST. FRANCIS MINISTRIES

Seventy-four years ago, in Ellsworth, an Episcopal priest opened the doors of Saint Francis Boys' Home. This priest, Rev. Robert Mize Jr., noticed many young men getting lost in a system of reformatories, institutions and ultimately jails — unable to change their circumstances or even get help. From that first home, this ministry has grown and evolved, now serving in six states and four foreign countries and encompassing everything from drug and alcohol counseling to foster care and adoptions.

SAINT FRANCIS MINISTRIES is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to provide healing and hope to children and families. They strive to deliver quality services with respect and dignity.

The ultimate goal is to preserve the family, to give them tools to solve problems allowing families to stay together.

Saint Francis also offers residential programs that serve those with mental health and behavioral issues, adults with intellectual and development disabilities and survivors of human trafficking. They

also have international offices in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Costa Rica, where they focus on empowerment and entrepreneurship.

Saint Francis has a big heart for the communities they serve. This year, the Garden City office challenged its employees to bring donations for Wheatland's Cram the Van food drive. These donations will stay in the Garden City area to help struggling families.

Wheatland is proud to help Saint Francis during the holidays by offering employees the chance to buy gifts for children in need through the Christmas Wish List/Angel Tree Program. Wheatland has also awarded grants to this program in the past and is proud to do it again this year. To find out more about Saint Francis Ministries or to find a location near you visit saintfrancisministries.org.



St. Francis Ministries received a Sharing Success grant from Wheatland Electric and CoBank in 2018.



Garden City Saint Francis Ministries employees pictured with their donations to the 2019 Cram the Van food drive.

Annual Member Engagement Meeting

Members from Wheatland Electric's District 7 (Harper), board trustees and Wheatland employees gathered on Oct. 28 in Caldwell for Wheatland's annual member engagement meeting. Members shared a meal and heard updates from Wheatland Electric General Manager Bruce Mueller, Director of Operations Rick Klaus, and Director of IT and Broadband Jevin Kasselmann.

Mueller updated members on Sub Senate Bill 323, which became law on March 9, 2018, and provides protection for service territories of Kansas electric cooperatives. Mueller also shared information about the ongoing cost-of-service study and the possible benefits it will provide Wheatland members and the cooperative.

Klaus discussed the electrical infrastructure, technology and reliability improvements made to District 7 since the 2007 Aquila purchase. Members were able to see before and after photos of the infrastructure, learning about the improvements and reduction in outages per year.

Kasselmann shared technology advancements with the crowd. He showed the group the three drones used in operations and how they assist in photography, staking and improving the accuracy of GPS mapping. A special thank you to the District 7 members who joined us for this informational event.



Wheatland Electric General Manager Bruce Mueller presents information regarding Sub Senate Bill 323 to those gathered at the 2019 Member Engagement Meeting in Caldwell.



Wheatland Electric Director of Operations Rick Klaus presents information regarding improvements to District 7 substations.

Wheatland Retires \$1 Million in Capital Credits



Stop by your local Wheatland Electric office on Dec. 19 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. to enjoy refreshments and pick up your capital credits check.

Join us Dec. 19 from 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. at your local Wheatland office for Capital Credit Harvest Day. If you were a **MEMBER OF WHEATLAND ELECTRIC DURING 1987, 1988 OR 2018** you will be receiving a check or bill credit due to the recent retirement of capital credits.

Refreshments will be available and checks will be ready for pick up at your local office. Checks will be issued if the amount is greater than \$20. If the amount is between \$10-\$20 you will receive a bill credit. If the amount is below \$10, you will continue to accrue future capital credits until the amount exceeds \$10.

For a complete list of members receiving checks, visit weci.net/capital-credits. Inactive members should call 800-762-0436 to update mailing information to ensure the delivery of capital credit checks.

To learn more about capital credits, visit weci.net to watch our short feature video located at the bottom of the home page. The video explains how capital credits work and why they are an important part of the cooperative business model.



New Record! Cram the Van Collects 30,754 lbs. OF DONATIONS

At this time of giving, Wheatland Electric certainly has a great deal to be thankful for! As we wrap up our sixth year of Cram the Van, we couldn't be more amazed by the generosity of our members. We began our efforts in September and the next two months proved to be more amazing than we could have imagined.

Our events kicked off on Sept. 13, with our first Co-ops Care Charity Golf Tournament hosted in partnership with The Victory Electric Cooperative Assoc., Inc. at The Golf Club at Southwind in Garden City. All proceeds from the event benefited both our Cram the Van program and Friends of Wright Park Zoo in Dodge City. The event was hugely successful, and we couldn't have asked for better weather that day. Nearly \$7,000 was raised from the event and split between the two charities.

A week later, on Sept. 19, we hosted a lunch at Arts Park in Leoti. This event generated 869 pounds of food for the Leoti community. On

Sept. 24, we added a new event to our schedule by participating in the Great Bend Tribune's Women's Expo event. This was wildly successful for a new event and collected 983 pounds of food.

We wrapped up September with the Longhorn Festival Sept. 26 in Holcomb. As always, this event was a huge hit! For the second year, students of Holcomb schools participated in a school competition from Sept. 30 to Oct. 4. For the second year in a row, Wiley Elementary claimed the \$500 donation from Wheatland Electric by collecting the highest average of pounds in donations per student. Wiley doubled their total poundage from last year and brought in 1,360 pounds on their own. The Longhorn Festival and school competition efforts in Holcomb totaled 5,226 pounds of food collected for the community.

October was packed with nine events. The month began in Syracuse at the junior high volleyball and football games Oct. 3. The Syracuse community more than doubled their donations from the previous year by collecting 842 pounds of food for the Hamilton Co. Food Bank. A week later, we found ourselves in snowy Tribune attending the Greeley County junior high volleyball and football games. Students had participated in the school competition the week before and generated 690 pounds of donations for the Greeley County Food Bank. Greeley County Jr./Sr. High School won the competition and received \$500 by collecting slightly more donations per student than the elementary school. The same week, on another cold evening, the Caldwell community joined together to donate nearly 773 pounds of food to the Caldwell Community Food Bank, an increase of 250 pounds from 2018's donation amount!



Wheatland Electric General Manager Bruce Mueller, Executive Assistant Rhei Thurman, Area Wide Supervisor Walt Lovins and Key Accounts Manager Nolan Numrich present a check to Hope's Closet in Scott City.



Syracuse more than doubled their donations from the previous year by collecting 842 lbs. of food for the Hamilton Co. Food Bank. Way to go, Syracuse!

Scott City wrapped up the **FIRST NATIONAL BANK SCHOOL CHALLENGE** Oct. 17 and celebrated with hotdogs and hamburgers at the Scott City Middle School football game. Scott City Middle School claimed the \$500 school competition prize. Collectively, the school competition and football game generated over 1,820 pounds of donations for Hope's Closet.

On Oct. 18, the Wheatland team hosted Cram the Van events in both Great Bend and Conway Springs. Great Bend hosted an office lunch and later a tailgate at the Great Bend High School football game. These events added over



Students at St. Joseph Catholic School in Conway Springs enjoy their pizza party for collecting over 800 items for Mission Mart.



Riley Elementary School in Great Bend received second place in the Hiss-Sherman Wealth Management Group school challenge. Riley increased their 2019 donation amount by over 1,730 pounds compared to their 2018 total!

1,330 pounds of food to the Great Bend total. During the prior week, **HISS-SHERMAN WEALTH MANAGEMENT GROUP** sponsored a Great Bend school challenge raising nearly 8,000 pounds of food for the Community Food Bank of Barton County. This, coupled with the other donations in Great Bend, totaled nearly 10,300 pounds of food, an increase of over 75% from last year's total.

That evening, the **CONWAY SPRINGS CARDINALS CARE CHALLENGE** wrapped up and we hosted a tailgate at the Conway Springs High School vs. Chaparral High School football game. The schools, with cash donations included, collected 3,239 pounds of donations for their community food bank.

The next afternoon, the Cram the Van team provided lunch at the Harper Fall Fest event where 1,700 pounds of food were collected. And last, but certainly not least, our Cram the Van Finale was hosted in Scott City at the Spencer Flight and Education Center on Oct. 26. This event was a huge success, generating an additional 1,560 pounds of donations from the Scott City community, bringing their total 2019 donations to 3,562 pounds. The day was complete with pumpkin decorating, s'mores, face painting, hay-rack rides, Young Eagle Rides and a candy

**MORE THAN
15 TONS OF FOOD!**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ CALDWELL 773 pounds ▶ CONWAY SPRINGS 3,239 pounds ▶ FINNEY CO. 3,460 pounds ▶ GREAT BEND 10,288 pounds ▶ HARPER 1,700 pounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ HOLCOMB 5,331 pounds ▶ LEOTI 869 pounds ▶ SCOTT CITY 3,562 pounds ▶ SYRACUSE 842 pounds ▶ TRIBUNE 690 pounds
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TOTAL 30,754 POUNDS

drop to finish the day.

This year's Cram the Van effort was one for the books. It was a busy two months on the road, but well worth it to give back to the communities we are so proud to serve. We can't thank you enough for your generosity and support these past six years. A total of 30,754 pounds of food was collected in 2019 and nearly 100,000 pounds of food has been collected over the past six years. We're excited to have the Big Red Van back on the road next fall for year seven! We're hoping to break more records next year!

Capital Credits, Concern for the Community ... *Continued from page 16A* ▶

Harvest Days on Dec. 19

On Dec. 19, 2019, each WEC district office will host a Capital Credits Harvest Day. Each district office will have capital credits checks ready for pickup. **IF THE AMOUNT OWED IS LESS THAN \$20, WEC WILL CREDIT YOUR ELECTRIC BILL.** You may call your local area WEC office to find out if you're receiving a check or bill credit. Regardless, please come by! We'd like to visit with you, plus we'll have cookies and refreshments for all.

Wheatland Capital Credits from 1987, 1988 and 2018

The payout this year is for members of WEC in 1987, 1988 and 2018. Those WEC members will receive a percentage of capital credit retirements reflecting their contribution of capital to, and ownership of, the co-op during those years. Members will receive credits based on the amount of electricity used in the years retired and how long you have been a WEC member.

While 1987 and 1988 may seem like a long time ago, those funds helped Wheatland reduce the amount of money needed to borrow from outside lenders to build, maintain and expand a reliable electric distribution system. The Board of Trustees wanted to make sure our long-time members received capital credits along with our newer members.

Sunflower Capital Credits from 2003

Members who were members on the Sunflower Electric side of our service territory in 2003 will be receiving Sunflower capital credits through check or bill credit. This will exclude members who joined WEC through the Aquila

purchase. The Sunflower capital credits will be included on the same check or bill credit with the amount from each entity shown.

Inactive members or persons not currently purchasing their electricity from WEC but who were members during the years of the capital credit retirements will be receiving a check in the mail for their capital credits, if the amount is \$10 or more. It is very important WEC has the current mailing address of all inactive members to ensure the delivery of the capital credits checks. To confirm or update your mailing address, please call WEC at 800-762-0436.

Concern for Community

This is something all employees of WEC value year-round, but during the holiday season, concern for community seems especially important.

Electric co-ops have a proud history of giving back. At WEC, we give back through many member programs and initiatives like Sharing Success, Youth Tour, scholarships and our Cram the Van food drive. As we shared with you in October's magazine, our Sharing Success Fund has now awarded nearly \$85,000 in grants to numerous non profit organizations since its inception in 2012.

Each year, WEC sends students on an all-expenses-paid trip to the Electric Co-op Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., and the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. In addition, WEC awards 14 scholarships totalling \$14,000 in each year to seniors graduating from one of the 13 high schools in our service territory and one at-large high school.

WEC members help us give back, too. Through our **2019 CRAM THE VAN**

FOOD DRIVE YOU HELPED US COLLECT MORE THAN 15 TONS OF FOOD for our local food banks this year. These donations stay in the communities in which they were donated. Over the past six years, nearly 100,000 pounds have been donated through this program. For more details see Pages 16F and 16G. We couldn't do this without you, and we thank you for partnering with us in giving back. Many families go without food and struggle to make ends meet. This struggle can be especially hard during the holiday season. Because of you and the WEC employees and trustees who worked hard to make Cram the Van a success, Christmas will be better for many families in our communities.

Cost-of-Service Study Update

Lastly, in the past several months I have mentioned the cost-of-service study of the co-op's costs for providing electric service and the rates charged for this service. This study determines the revenue needed to cover the co-op's operating expenses and debt obligations and examines the equitability of the rates among the various consumer classes.

WEC will continue to update you with information in *Kansas Country Living* magazine as we finalize the cost-of-service process and calculate and complete the proposed new rate adjustments. Official meeting notice for the Board of Trustees to consider action on the proposed rate adjustment will be sent to members in a future issue of *Kansas Country Living* magazine.

We hope you have a wonderful holiday season. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Until next time, take care.

Enter Our Christmas Lights Contest!

Submit a photo or video of your Christmas lights via Facebook messenger or email to nnumrich@weci.net. Submission deadline Dec. 20 at 11:59 p.m. Wheatland will award **TWO WINNERS** from each district with a **\$50 BILL CREDIT**, and **ONE OVERALL WINNER** with a **\$100 BILL CREDIT**. Winners will be announced on Dec. 31.

**Deadline to enter is
Dec. 20 at 11:59 p.m.**