

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
 101 Main, P.O. Box 230, Scott City, KS 67871
 620-872-5885
 www.weci.net

**WHEATLAND
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

NEWS

**Wheatland
Electric
Co-op Inc.**

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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**
2300 Broadway, 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**
N. Hwy. 25, P.O. Box 966
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

**Committed to a
Co-op Culture for All**

Over the years, you've heard me expound on why and how Wheatland Electric Cooperative Inc., is different. We are different because we're not just a company – we're a cooperative. Our business model sets us apart from other utilities across the country because we adhere to seven guiding cooperative principles:

1. Voluntary and open membership
2. Democratic member control
3. Members' economic participation
4. Autonomy and independence
5. Education, training and information
6. Cooperation among cooperatives
7. Concern for community

We take our mission – **DELIVERING ENERGY FOR LIFE** – seriously because we know the electricity we deliver fuels those crucial fans in the grain bins after harvest time, keeps life-support equipment running, and lights up our athletic fields.

Electric cooperatives, including ours, have a unique and storied place in our country's history. We democratized the American dream by bringing electricity to rural areas when for-profit electric companies determined the effort too costly. Back then, cities were electrified, and rural areas were not, creating the original rural-urban divide. Newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in rural areas. Today, that spirit of equity and inclusion is a vital part of our co-op DNA.



Bruce W. Mueller

Equal Access for All

When Wheatland Electric was founded in 1948, each member contributed an

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SAFETY
Tip of the Month

At least two people die each day from carbon-monoxide poisoning in the winter months – three times the fatality rate recorded in August and July. Unintentional, non-fire related carbon-monoxide poisoning is responsible for approximately 450 deaths and 21,000 emergency room visits each year.



Committed to a Co-op Culture for All Continued from page 16A ▶

equal share in order to gain access to electricity that benefited individual families as well as the larger local community. Each member had an equal vote in co-op matters. That sense of equity and inclusion is still how we operate today.

Wheatland Electric was built by and belongs to the diverse communities and members we serve across southwest, south-central Kansas, and eastern Colorado. Membership is open to everyone in our service territory, regardless of race, religion, age, disability, gender identity, language, political perspective or socioeconomic status.

By virtue of paying your electric bill each month, you're a member of our co-op. Every member has an equal voice and vote when it comes to co-op governance. This ties back to our guiding principles of equitable economic participation and democratic control of the co-op.

We encourage all members to vote in our board of director elections during our **73RD ANNUAL MEETING, WHICH WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, AT THE GREAT BEND EVENTS CENTER IN GREAT BEND, KS.** As in years past, we will also hold remote meetings at locations in each of our other districts, so that members across our wide service territory – from Towner, CO to Harper, KS – can participate.

We know members of our community have different needs and perspectives, and we welcome diverse views on all issues. The more viewpoints we hear, the better we are able to meet the needs of all members in our service area.

Inclusion

While our top priority is providing safe, reliable, and competitively priced electricity and services, we also want to be a catalyst for good in our community. Because we are your local electric cooperative, co-op revenues stay right here in our community. In turn, we invest in our diverse community base through scholarship and grant programs, charitable giving, educational programs, and more. We strive to make long-term decisions that improve and enrich the communities we serve.

While today's world is radically different than it was when Wheatland Electric was founded in 1948, our cooperative values have stood the test of time and remain just as relevant today. We recognize that today's co-op members expect more, and my pledge to you — the members we proudly serve — is to promote a cooperative culture of inclusion, diversity and equity for all.

UNTIL NEXT TIME, TAKE CARE.

ENTER OUR 2021

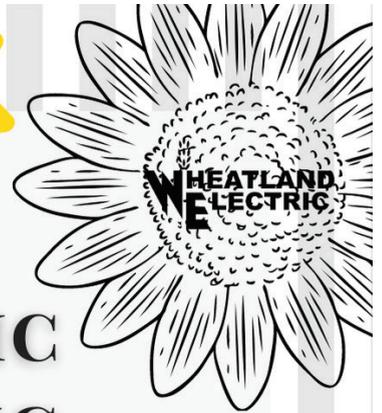
Valentine's Day Coloring Contest!

Happy Valentine's Day! Wheatland Electric is holding a coloring contest for our mini members! Prizes are available for our winners in the following age categories: 4 and under, 5 to 8, and 9 and older.

Starting Feb. 1, download our coloring sheets at <https://www.weci.net/enter-our-valentines-day-kids-coloring-contest>. Make sure and email your entry to sdonecker@weci.net by 11:59 P.M. CST on Feb. 14, 2021. Entries can also be submitted on Facebook @Wheatland Electric via message. Be sure to include your child's name, age, and Wheatland member's name (i.e., parent or guardian). **OUR WINNERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED FEB. 16!**



Save the Date



WHEATLAND ELECTRIC 73RD ANNUAL MEETING



APRIL 14, 2021

GREAT BEND EVENTS CENTER

Join us in Great Bend or a remote location near you!

Wheatland Electric Returns \$1 Million in Capital Credits to Members in 2020



Kevin Corbett, plant manager at Great Bend's Redbarn Pet Products (right), accepts a check from Regan Reif, member services and key accounts manager, for their 2020 capital credits refund.



Jason Baker, general manager at the Scott Cooperative Association (left), accepts a check from Alli Conine, manager of member services and corporate communications, for their 2020 capital credits refund.

In true cooperative spirit, Wheatland Electric returned \$1 million in capital credits to its members in 2020.

Most members who were eligible for a credit saw the refund on their August and December electric bills. But since capital credits are based on electricity used (kilowatt-hours) in addition to duration of membership, some larger businesses and organizations belonging to our cooperative received much more, including members like the Scott Co-op Association in Scott City, the City of Lakin, and Redbarn Pet Products in Great Bend.

Every year, Wheatland trustees evaluate the financial condition of the cooperative to determine if it can retire capital

credits. One of our seven cooperative principles is members' economic participation. Through our capital credits program, it's one more way it pays to be a cooperative member!

Questions? Learn more at <https://www.weci.net/capital-credits> or contact your local Wheatland office today.



Trey Grebe (far right), assistant general manager, presents a capital credits check to members of the Lakin City Council on Jan. 13, 2021.



Putting Employee Protection and Equipment Safety First

At Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc., safety is our number one priority. Regularly scheduled testing and inspections are built into our cooperative policies and everyday practices to make sure our employees and the equipment they're using is meeting the highest safety standards.

At the helm of our safety department is **QUINTEN WHEELER**, our manager of safety and compliance as of July 2017. Wheeler, a graduate of Kansas State University who has been with Wheatland since 2007, is here to ensure that our cooperative and its 140-plus employees are safe and compliant every day.

In addition to serving on Wheatland's executive leadership team, the former journeyman lineman visits each line crew every month to observe day-to-day operations and continuously improve safety practices across all levels of our organization.

This past January, Wheeler along with members of our line crews in every district we serve, completed testing of hot line tools – including shotguns, extendos, and layout arms – and other personal protective grounds and equipment.

Hot line tools, which can range from a few feet long to nearly 25-30 feet long, must be designed and constructed to withstand 100,000 volts of electricity per foot.

In addition, personal protective grounds, also referred to as ground chains, are protective devices that are installed after opening or deenergizing lines to protect the lineman while they're doing the work required.

Their resistance must also be tested, and any failures must be quickly rectified, or even replaced when necessary. During annual testing and inspection, all tests, changes, and modifications are always carefully recorded and tracked. These annual inspections are just one of many regularly scheduled tests followed by our cooperative, always at or above national standards for safety.

In addition to testing of hot line tools, other annual inspections or compliance checks include DOT truck and trailer inspections, aerial bucket and digger tests, hazard communications, spill prevention, emergency response and preparedness, pole top rescue, and more.

Pole top rescue, performed annually in the fall, includes

all line crew members, including foremen and supervisors, and involves rescuing a hurt mannequin at the top of an electric pole in under four minutes. The time constraint ensures that in the event of a real-life scenario, a hurt line worker can be rescued quickly enough to perform CPR or other necessary life-saving actions.

Of course, a lot of testing is required more than once per year. For example, gloves and sleeves worn by line crew members must be reissued every 60 days. Two pairs are inspected and tested by a third-party organization and, as always, replaced when needed.

Line hose, blankets, and other special equipment used by line crews are also inspected biannually, as are bucket liners, at least once by a third-party professional organization. These tools and equipment are only required to be inspected or tested once per year, according to Wheeler, per Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) rules.

It's one more way Wheatland goes above and beyond when it comes to meeting safety standards and putting employee safety first. Safety is no accident!



Cody Ellis, journeyman lineman, runs a hot stick tester along the length of a layout arm at the Scott City warehouse with the assistance of Quinten Wheeler, manager of safety and compliance.



LAYOUT ARMS – A layout arm, also called extension arm, is used when an electric line or insulator needs replacement. They must withstand 100,000 volts per foot and are tested annually to ensure safety and compliance.



In the electric industry we have an abundance of acronyms and abbreviations that our members might not understand. We're here to break down our alphabet soup!

CERTIFIED LOSS CONTROL PROFESSIONAL

QUINTEN WHEELER, our manager of safety and compliance, has completed an intensive program in electric utility safety and loss control. The Certified Loss Control Professional, or CLCP, is a credential awarded to individuals who complete the requirements of the Loss Control Internship (LCI).

The LCI program, co-sponsored by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and the National Utility Training and Safety Education Association (NUTSEA), gives attendees the preparation and skills needed to successfully manage challenging safety and loss control issues. From environmental issues, to disaster recovery, emergency procedures, and workplace violence, CLCPs become prepared to take preventative measures and corrective action within their organization. We are fortunate to have someone like Quinten leading our safety efforts!

Showing Our Lineworkers Some Love

This February, we want to show our lineworkers some love! Through all types of stormy weather — rain, wind, hail, snow, and more — our linemen are there, helping us deliver safe and reliable energy for our most basic daily needs! Thank you to those who put their lives on the line every day!



Cody Ellis
Journeyman Lineman, Scott City



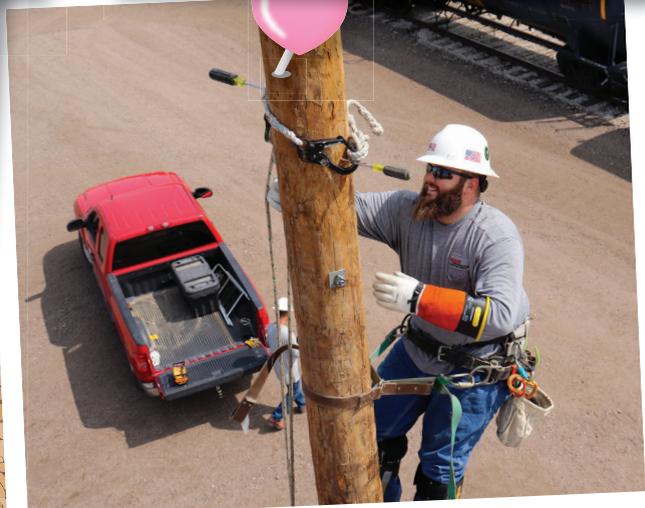
Derek Callaway
Journeyman Lineman, Caldwell



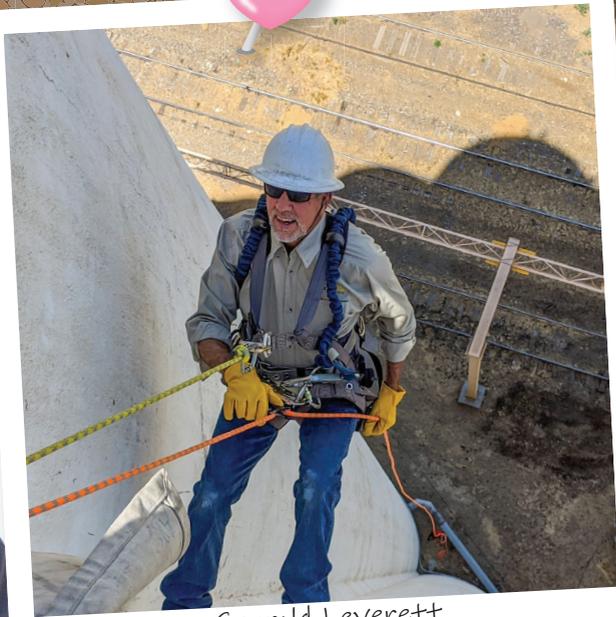
Brandon Ritchie
Journeyman Lineman, Great Bend



Nate Porter
Journeyman Lineman, Leoti



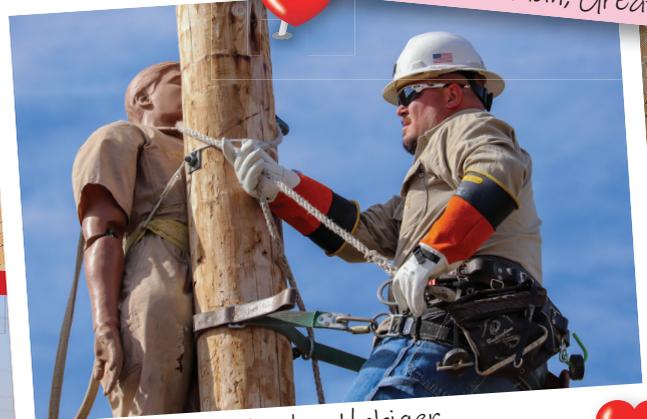
Cody Strecker
Substation Maintenance Journeyman, Garden City



Gearold Leverett
Wireless Tower Technician, Wheatland Broadband



Dax Walk
Line Foreman, Great Bend



Jordan Habiger
Journeyman Lineman, Scott City



Clinton Gulick
Line Foreman, Caldwell



Kelley Burch
Area Wide Supervisor, Leoti



James Swanson
Lineman Apprentice, Great Bend



Our Vision

Wheatland Electric Cooperative will provide essential services that are safe, reliable, and competitively priced to enhance the lives of our members.

CONGRATS TO OUR CAPITAL CREDITS HARVEST DAYS BILL CREDIT WINNERS!

\$200 Winner

Adrienne Malchow | Scott City

\$50 Winners

Tiffany Enriquez | Great Bend

Justin Newman | Harper

Pablo Martinez | Finney County

Helen Cheely | Great Bend

Thanks for helping us stay connected with you!

Congrats to our 2020 Holiday Lights Contest Winners!

1ST: CURTIS & MELISSA WINTER (CONWAY SPRINGS)
2ND: BROCK DRYDEN (HOLCOMB)
3RD: MICHELLE WRIGHT NIX (SCOTT CITY)

HONORABLE MENTION:
 BARBARA COMBS-HAREMZA (HOLCOMB)
 SARA HAYDEN (GREAT BEND)

Visit our YouTube channel (search "Wheatland Electric" at www.youtube.com or go to <https://youtu.be/upBtP2Mbffs>) to view a video of our winning entries!

A special "thank you" to our member-owners who took the time to respond to our recent online Member Satisfaction Survey.

Our goal is to exceed your expectations in the service we provide. We appreciate your feedback!

