

# Watts New

October, 2020

From The Desk Of . . . Don Smith, Manager

Last week, as I was thinking about what to write in this article, I just knew I had to talk about the dramatic end to summer with the sudden snow and ice. Then, as is typical of Wyoming weather, we are back in 90-degree temperatures! So much for the “end” of summer! My prayers are with those who are dependent on Mother Nature.

This article will hit your mailboxes in mid-October but there are a couple of November events I want to mention so you can get them on your calendar. First is, of course, voting in the general election. I wish we had more say at the national level, but we can do what we can on a more local level. I believe this election will set the stage for national direction, and we need to make sure Wyoming’s voice is heard loudly! Please exercise your right to vote! The second event is our Veterans Day Open House, here at the REA office. This has become an annual event that increases each year. Every year we have more uniforms and stories of service men and women who have served this great country! Please come and enjoy the displays and visit with some of those veterans who served to protect our freedoms. Coffee and donuts, friends and fellowship! Festivities run from 9:00 to 3:00 on Veterans Day, November 11. If you have your uniform, or a friend or family member’s uniform, (from any time period) that you would be willing to loan us for display, contact Al Teel at the REA office, and he will help you. Hope to see everyone at this Open House!



On the Tri-State front, we have received some very good news from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The FERC has ruled that they have approval authority over any cost determined for a Tri-State member wanting to withdraw from, or reduce, their Tri-State membership. This basically overrules the Colorado Public Utilities Commission’s (CPUC) decision that the CPUC had jurisdiction. As I said in a previous article, the CPUC did not have the best interests of Wyoming in mind, and the CPUC decision would have been very harmful to the Wyoming Tri-State membership. This FERC decision gives us great peace of mind going forward. I am sure there will be legal challenges to the FERC decision in the future, but this is a great step. We will continue to keep you informed.

A while back, I was in a store somewhere (I really don’t recall where) and I came upon a sign that hit a chord with me. With a slight edit, the sign read:

“Our MEMBERS are the most important visitors on our premises.  
They are not dependent on us; we are dependent on them.  
They are not an interruption of our work, they are the purpose of it.  
We are not doing them a favor by serving them.  
They are doing us a favor by giving us an opportunity to do so.”

I believe this is the essence of a Cooperative. You may recall that most, if not all, of my articles close with a statement such as “it is a pleasure to serve you”. I truly believe this. It is why Wheatland REA is here, to serve YOU, the member/owners of this Association. We have to keep the good of the entire Association in mind, and not do more for one than we would another; as Jason says, “The good of the member, versus the good of the membership”. We are not here to make a profit, like Rocky Mountain Power or Black Hills Energy, who exist to make money for their shareholders. We are here to serve you. Wheatland REA is a not-for-profit association that was created, and exists, to provide the member/owners a quality of life and the ability to do what they need to do. We are here for the good of membership.

As I have said, it is truly a pleasure to serve you! Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns, or how we can better serve you. I hope you are able to study the election topics and exercise your right to vote as you see fit. I look forward to seeing you at some of the Veterans Day activities around town, as we recognize those who have served and preserved our rights in this blessed country!

Thanks for being the great member/owners that you are!

**Watts New is a publication of  
Wheatland Rural Electric  
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**Tammy Gonzalez, Editor**

**REA WINTER HOURS  
Monday - Friday  
8:00 AM - 4:30 PM**

**OUTAGES-OPEN 24/7**

**OUTAGE PHONE NUMBERS  
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From the office of RKA...

Happy Fall!!! Even though Mother Nature is a little confused about what season it is with the warmer temperatures, I still love this time of year. I love the cooler nights and the many colors and scents of autumn.

The United States Senate passed a bill on September 14, 2020 declaring October as "National Cooperative Month". In previous years, we've had an open house for our members, but because of the COVID-19 situation, we will not be doing that this year. We want to be vigilant in keeping everyone safe and healthy!!

In our September, 2020 Board meeting, the audit for the 2019 operating year was presented and approved by the Board of Directors. Since the audit was approved, you will be receiving a letter in the mail about your capital credit allocations. The allocations are based on the operating margins for the year 2019. Remember, this is **NOT** a notice about the capital credit retirement checks that we will send out in the spring. If you have any questions about the letter, please feel free to give me a call.

We've had quite a few calls from members receiving delinquency notices, advising us that they made their payment on-line. I would like to share some information regarding on-line bill pay. There are two basic types of on-line bill pay: (1) using our wheatlandrea.com website or (2) using the website of your bank. When you use our website, you can either pay by credit card or by e-check. The payment will post to your account on the same day you make the payment, or on the specific date you select. When you pay us through your bank's website, the timing for when we receive the payment is different. For example, if I go on my bank's website and set up the REA as a vendor, and set up the payment for the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, the bank will pull the funds from my account on the 15<sup>th</sup>, but a check is sent to the REA for the payment. The process time for the check to be cut and then mailed to the REA is a range of 7-10 days. So, if I have set it up for the 15<sup>th</sup>, the REA is not going to receive my actual payment until the 22<sup>nd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> of the month. In this example, I would receive a delinquent notice because my payment was received after the 17<sup>th</sup> of the month. I hope this helps with some of the questions about the timing of online payments.

As we race into the final quarter of 2020, it is time to reflect on what has happened over the current year, and set our goals for next year. I look back at 2020 and feel that it was "survival of the fittest". Literally, every day was something new with the pandemic, and therefore, every day we had to change our game plan. I had to change my "norm" to make things work; it made us, as management, think WAY outside the box, and sometimes just implement something "right off the cuff". Is that a bad thing? Absolutely not! So, in looking forward, we will look at "outside the box stuff" that might make us more efficient, more community oriented, and better yet, provide even better service to our members! We are working on the 2021 budget, and hopefully will complete it soon. In the past, I've had the thought process that the budget is the solid foundation upon which to approach the new year. Well, after this year, I know that whatever happens, nothing is set in stone, and that the budget is just a guideline.

At home... the patio is completed, and I am loving it!!! As all remodeling goes, we have other projects to complete now. The house and garage are going to get a new color. We need to get fence up for the doggies, and there is a cement pad that is waiting to have a shed built on it. We are still fishing but not quite as much as previously. We see our luck running out with the weather and need to get these projects completed. Our daughter is doing well in Cheyenne and is working on her BSN. I cannot say enough how proud I am of her. Our son has been a tremendous help with all our projects. I am pretty sure there were days that he just rolled his eyes at his parents!!! As for the dogs, they are waiting for pheasant season, which is right around the corner!!

Until next month...



**Ladies, please read important notice below...  
and share with your husband!**

**11/5/20: National Men Make Dinner Day!**

***A Quick Reminder!***  
***We returned to winter hours at Wheatland REA.***  
***Monday-Friday***  
***8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.***

**Got Heat?**

**An Electric Thermal Storage (ETS) Furnace and an Air-source Heat Pump Combination is the answer!**



**It heats in the winter (for 6.208 cents per KWH off-peak rate), and gives you air conditioning in the summer!**

**Now is the time to start. We can size an ETS unit that's right for you.**

**Call 307-322-2125 for details!**

**PUBLIC POWER PEOPLE\***

**Jack Finnerty, Secretary/Treasurer, Wheatland REA (Wheatland, Wyo.)**

Jack Finnerty was born in Cheyenne, Wyo., in 1939 and became a cowhand at six years old. He has been a cowboy ever since. Rodeo was a big part of his life and an extension to hone and fine-tune his cowboy skills. He won many awards for bareback, bull riding, calf roping, steer wrestling, and team roping. In 1997 he was inducted into the National Senior Pro Rodeo Association's Hall of Fame. In 2018, he was recognized with the Craig Thomas Cooperative Service Award from the Wyoming Rural Electric Association. Last year, Jack was inducted in to the Wyoming Cowboy Hall of Fame.

But for all the accolades he receives, he gives back just as much. Last month, Jack, along with his son, Matt, received a commendation from the non-profit organization Heroes and Horses. Finnerty had hand-tied 22 halters and donated them to the organization, which offers combat veterans the opportunity to find themselves through horsemanship and ranching.

And since 1979 he has also proudly served on the Wheatland REA Board of Directors.



Above: Jack, second from right and Matt, second from left, along with two unidentified individuals showing some of the halters Jack makes.

# ENERGY STAR

## REBATE PROGRAM

**REBATES**

Wheatland REA gives rebates for Energy Star rated appliances.

Just look at the yellow energy guide on your appliance to find out if it qualifies for a rebate.

Rebates must be applied for within 120 days of purchase.

This is what you are looking for.

**Are you "Energy Conscious"?**

**Here are some "Energy Saving" tips:**

1. Turn off lights when you leave a room. Install LED bulbs when replacing light bulbs. They cost more, but last a lot longer and use less electricity.
2. Shorten your shower. Seven-minute showers can save up to \$60.00 per person per year in water heating costs when compared to a 15 minute shower.
3. Comparison shop for appliances. Compare energy efficiency ratings and annual operating costs. In a short time, energy savings from a high-efficiency appliance can more than make up for a higher initial cost.
4. Don't block heating or cooling vents. Doing so wastes energy and keeps your home from being as comfortable as possible.

\*First published in NWPPA's The Line, Sept. 10, 2020

# VETERANS DAY

**November 11th**

*Wheatland REA is very proud of our Veterans. If you, or someone you know has military memorabilia, we would be honored to include it in our Veterans Honor Display. Let the community see what you or a loved one did for our freedom.*

*For more information, please call 322-2125 and ask for Al.*

## **VETERANS' OPEN HOUSE**

**Who: EVERYONE, VETS & NON-VETS**

**What: OPEN HOUSE AND VETS' HONOR DISPLAY**

**Why: TO HONOR OUR VETS**

**When: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11TH, 9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.**

**(UNLESS IT BECOMES NECESSARY TO CANCEL  
DUE TO CURRENT PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS)**

**Where: WHEATLAND REA AT 2154 SOUTH ST.  
IN WHEATLAND, WY**

**YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE A VETERAN TO VISIT OUR OPEN HOUSE.**

**HELP US HONOR OUR VETERANS.  
STOP IN AND SEE THEIR DISPLAYS AND WATCH  
HISTORY COME TO LIFE BEFORE YOUR EYES!**

**HAPPY  
HALLOWEEN!  
PLEASE WATCH  
FOR  
TRICK-OR-  
TREATERS  
AND REMEMBER  
TO CHECK THEIR  
CANDY.**



***November 3rd- VOTE!!***

***Remember... If you do not exercise  
your right to vote, you have no right  
to complain about who gets elected!***



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative   
The power of human connections®

[www.wheatlandrea.com](http://www.wheatlandrea.com)