


## Big Horn REA Board Authorizes a \$525,000 Capital Credit Retirement

When you signed up to receive electric service, you became a member-owner of Big Horn REA. Your cooperative is not-for-profit. We do not exist to make money for shareholders – we exist

only to provide reliable electricity to our members. One benefit of being a member of a not-for-profit co-op is that excess revenue is returned to you as capital credits. How does that work?

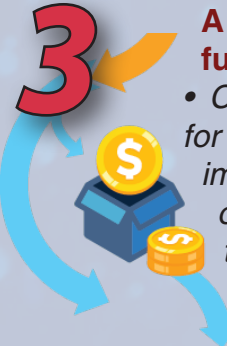
**1 Money comes in from members when they pay their electric bills.**

- Electric bills can be thought of as each member's fair share of the funds needed for their cooperative to run.




**3 A little bit is set aside for the future.**

- Capital credit funds are retained for a period of time for long term improvements and maintenance of the Co-op equipment, to ensure reliable service. This keeps rates lower by offsetting the need for the Cooperative to borrow funds.




**2 Money goes out to pay Co-op expenses.**

- Members' dollars are pooled together and used as operating capital so that the Co-op can provide reliable service and pay Co-op expenses.



**4 Any funds left over are returned to members at a later date.**

- Capital credits are allocated to members based on their energy purchases. When the financial condition of the Co-op allows, capital credits are retired (paid) to each member in the form of a check, typically just in time for the holiday season.
- Because capital credits may not be retired for several years, it is important to keep the Cooperative informed of your current address.



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**Our office will be closed December 26th and January 2nd for the Holidays. Please call 1-800-564-2419 in case of outage or emergency.**

Big Horn's office staff Jazmin Jara, Aileen Schriener, Dotti Brown and Heather Lawrence presented a check to Wyoming State Parks staff Heather Jolley and Lyndi Speiser. This contribution is being made for the 2023 Outdoor Kid's Day event.



*Season's greetings*

*The holiday season is the time when we cherish old traditions and enjoy creating new ones. We're wishing all our members a merry and bright holiday season, and we look forward to serving you and our community in 2023!*

*Merry Christmas!*

# The Lineman's Christmas Eve

by Kevin Hughes

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house not a creature was stirring 'cause the power was out. How could this happen? What trouble could be? The house is all dark, even the lights on the tree. The lineman's asleep all cozy and warm, his power apparently was spared by the storm. Deep into slumber but soon to awake, 'cause a tree on the line has caused it to break. The calls swamp the office, "MY POWER IS OUT! Get them here quickly because I carry clout." The dispatcher calls and with a hint of despair he informs the lineman the lines need repair. In three or four hours the trouble is found, you see the road didn't pass



where the tree went down. After walking through snow and fighting the storm, the line is now clear and the power is on. And now it's the morning the kids shout with glee and their eyes shine as bright as the lights on the tree. The lineman goes home now, as tired as can be.

The storm just ignored it was his Christmas Eve. He's not asking for praise or for you to applaud, 'cause according to him, it's just part of the job. But please just remember, as you pick up the horn, and you call to the office he may be out in the storm.

## Big Horn Rural Electric Offers Scholarships

**B**ig Horn Rural Electric Company will be awarding scholarships to recognize and encourage the continuing education of the cooperative's member-students. In addition, the Mike Lowe Memorial Scholarship is being offered to an applicant who plans to attend an approved regional electrical line-worker training program. Applicants must be current members or dependents of current members receiving electricity at their primary residence from Big Horn Rural Electric.

Wyoming Rural Electric Association is also offering a \$3,000 electrical line-worker scholarship to encourage, promote, and educate line-workers for careers with Wyoming's electric cooperatives. This scholarship is available to high school graduates and older "non-traditional" students interested in a career in the electric industry. Applicants do not have to be members of Big Horn Rural Electric to qualify. Applications for all scholarships are available at the office of Big Horn Rural Electric, 415 South St. in Basin, on the web-

site at [www.bighornrea.com](http://www.bighornrea.com), and at each of the area high schools. **All applications are due by February 3, 2023, by the end of the business day.** Offering scholarships is just another way that Big Horn REA practices the cooperative principle of Concern for Community.



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Blocked air vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and increase pressure in the ductwork, which can cause cracks and leaks to form. Make sure all air vents are unobstructed from furniture, drapes or other items to ensure sufficient circulation throughout your home. If necessary, purchase a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture.



Source: energy.gov



2022

Loading...



2023

Your Touchstone Energy Cooperative



# Manager's Message

The year of 2022 is coming to an end. At Big Horn, it allows us to reflect back on the progress made in 2022 and make plans for a successful 2023.

Through October 2022, Big Horn has built 72 new services. Of those services, 51 were residential, 20 were irrigation and 4 were large general services. During the entire year of 2020 and 2021 there were a total of 64 and 63 new services respectively. The services in 2022 were completed in a timely fashion given considerations relative to supply chain issues. Big Horn has worked diligently with vendors in securing the needed materials and equipment to build and upgrade services. Without question within the last two years almost all materials have increased in costs at least 100% and some have increased nearly 400%. Two years ago, a pole cost \$485, that same pole is now \$712. A transformer that costs \$850 one year ago, is now close to \$3,000 and has a lead time from order to delivery of over two years! Now more than ever it is important that our members contact Big Horn in the early planning stages for any new services/upgrades. Further, in the November 2022 issue of Big Horn's Highlights it is noted that a Project Planning Sheet can be completed to help meet a member's electrical requirements.

Big Horn REA has noted in the newsletter that our power supplier Tri-State Generation and Transmission is reviewing their wholesale power rates. Tri-State is experiencing increased costs of generating and distributing power. Further, Tri-State continues to balance its mix of generating resources with its overall objective of providing reliable power.

Speaking of costs and rates --- Big Horn does not plan on a rate increase for the year of 2023! Big Horn has not raised its retail electric rates to fund Big Horn's operations since 2015. That will be 8 consecutive years without a rate increase on the behalf of Big Horn. Tri-State is projected to determine any rate change requirements in 2023. Big Horn has not passed through a wholesale rate change from Tri-State since 2017. Your board members and employees

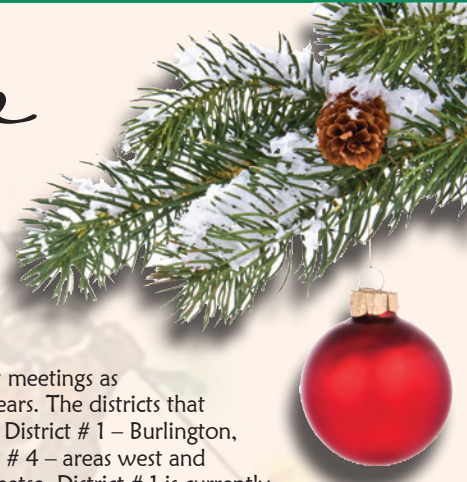
have worked diligently in maintaining and managing cots while at the same time providing quality electric service.

For the year of 2023, in place of an "Annual Meeting" Big Horn will hold five district meetings as has been done the past two years. The districts that will have a board election are District # 1 – Burlington, Emblem and Otto and District # 4 – areas west and south of Burlington and Meeteetse. District # 1 is currently served by Sara Schlattmann and District # 4 is served by John Fernandez. Please read the upcoming issues of the newsletter for more information.

One item that is of priority for Big Horn REA in 2023 will be to execute an Operating/Maintenance agreement with the Bighorn National Forest and Custer National Forest. Big Horn has over 90 miles of line on Forest Service property. Trees and vegetation that are in the right of way area and outside the right of way area create outages and the potential for forest fires. Along with trying to secure permission to remove trees on the forest land, Big Horn is considering to bury the overhead lines. Such a project would be at considerable cost. Big Horn is attempting to secure grants to potentially fund a portion of an overhead to underground project. We will keep our members updated on the progress of maintaining lines on the Forest Service and possible project/cost options.

On behalf of the board of directors and employees, we want to say we sincerely appreciate working for you the member/owners and want everyone to practice safety near electric lines and equipment.

Merry Christmas and Best of Wishes for 2023. We look forward to serving you in 2023.



## HIGHLIGHTS

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Box 270 VOLUME 43 NO. 11  
Basin, WY 82410 (307) 568-2419  
FAX 307-568-2402 1-800-564-2419  
bhrec@bighornrea.com  
www.bighornrea.com

**MANAGER: Jeff Umphlett**  
(307) 899-8153  
jeff@bighornrea.com

### Staff and Crew

Dotti Brown Anthony Nelson  
Rusty Burden Bill Phillips  
Clint Getzfreid Aileen Schriner  
Todd Herman Tristen Snyder  
Jazmin Jara Greg Tharp  
Heather Lawrence Justin Workman  
Shane Mulloy

### For Outages or Trouble

Call the office number: **ANYTIME**  
(307) 568-2419 or 1-800-564-2419

After 5 p.m., weekends and holidays all calls will be answered by our professional answering service, who will contact the appropriate person(s).

Big Horn Rural Electric Company is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### Board of Directors

John Joyce ..... President  
Manderson • 568-2514  
jnjoyce56@gmail.com  
Willie Bridges..... Vice President  
Cowley • 548-2545  
willieb@pryormtng.com  
Steve Helburn ..... Secretary  
Greybull • 765-2900  
stevehelburn@gmail.com  
Sara Schlattmann ..... Treasurer  
Otto • 921-2024  
hortonwyo@gmail.com  
John Fernandez ..... Director  
Meeteetse • 272-1553  
john@bighornrea.com