

the

Wheat Belt

Connection



Merry
Christmas

WE ARE BLESSED-CELEBRATE

DECEMBER 2019



CONGRATULATIONS

TO MERCEDES HEIDEMANN OF WEST ELEMENTARY

THIS YEAR'S WINNER OF THE

WHEAT BELT

CHRISTMAS COVER CONTEST



Wheat Belt Connection

Editor

Pam Wieser

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Drawing Winner

Yolanda Hruska

Congratulations to Andrew and Whitney Hurt, our October "Lucky Winners!" The Hurts are residents of Cheyenne County, and have been Wheat Belt customers since 2008. They have a son, Conner, and a daughter, Austin, who are very involved in athletics, 4-H, and help with raising cattle. Andrew has refereed basketball for over 15 years. Both Andrew and Whitney enjoy all sports and have supported many kids through volunteer coaching roles.

Andrew is a loan officer at Platte Valley Bank and Whitney is the Principal/SPED Director at Sidney Public School Central Elementary.

The Hurts received a \$50 credit for their prompt payment. If you would like to be included in our next drawing, and avoid the \$5 delinquent fee, please send your payment before the 15th of the month. For your convenience, we offer several options. Please give us a call or visit wheatbelt.com, and select the Customer Services menu.

2019 Nebraska DEQ

Clean Diesel Rebates For Diesel Irrigation Engine Replacement

If you have considered electrifying your Diesel Irrigation motor, but found that conversion costs are just too high, you might consider applying for the Clean Diesel Rebate Program.

You can go on line for the application and instructions at <http://deq.ne.gov/NDEQProg.nsf/OnWeb/NCDGP> according to a notice received at Wheat Belt extending the deadline.

There are a number of stipulations that must be met to qualify, and the deadline for the 2019 application process is January 17, 2020.

**DEADLINE
JANUARY 17, 2020**

Quotes to Ponder

*"What did the Christmas Turkey say to the computer?
What? Google, Google Google!"*

Unknown

*"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like
wrapping a present and not giving it."*

Unknown

*"If you want your grandchildren to visit, buy the
fastest Internet available, and then brag about it."*

Unknown

*"In the end, it's not the years in your life that count,
it's the life in your years."*

Unknown

"To learn to succeed, you must first learn to fail."

Michael Jordan

*"Try not to become a man of success, but
a man of value."*

Albert Einstein

*"Man's best successes have come after his
biggest disappointments."*

Unknown

*"When you die, they say your life flashes before you.
Let's hope the memories are worth seeing"*

Unknown



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Tim Lindahl
General Manager

Tim's Tidbits

**2020
Rate
Changes**



Wheat Belt Public Power remains committed to serving your electricity needs in the most safe, efficient, and reliable manner. Every dollar that we charge you for electricity is used to purchase and deliver that electricity to you. If we collect any amount over what it costs, that amount gets invested back into the infrastructure.

There is a great deal of complexity to keep the lights on and keep them affordable. We manage this complexity with long-term planning. We have long-term financial plans, infrastructure plans, strategic plans, and modernization plans. Today I want to focus on our long-term rate plan. How we purchase electricity and how you use it play a significant role in our costs. We recover our costs through the rates that we charge you. Over the years, these costs change, usage changes, and opportunities present themselves. In 2017, we commissioned a "Cost of Service" study by an outside engineering firm. This study determines what costs need to be in what rates in order to insure fair rates to everyone. The study concluded that we needed to make some rate changes to keep things as efficient and fair as possible. We created a five-year rate plan to align our rates with our costs.

Your board of directors approved rate changes that will go into effect January 1, 2020, that reflect year three of this five-year plan. We recognize that some of you may see a slight increase on what you spend, while others a slight decrease. The continued alignment of our rates will allow us to operate much more financially efficient, meaning that we can keep rates lower longer and

more of your hard-earned money in your pocket. Keeping our rates fair for everyone is good for all of us and is a goal we strive daily to maintain. We continue to work on alternative rates, which can allow you to manage your electricity usage around higher and lower pricing during different times of the day. We have several "Time of Use" rates available, and as we continue to expand our updated metering system, we will continue to add additional "Time of Use" pricing options for your consideration. You should have received a rate booklet in the mail that contains the newly enacted rates.

We strive to keep our rates low. Our overall retail rate per kWh is right at average among rural systems in the state of Nebraska, while our cost of power is 6th highest (making up about 67% of our budget). We are also the 5th least dense system, meaning that we have significantly more miles of power lines per customer than the average. We will continue to work hard to keep your energy affordable, reliable, and safe.

We are extremely thankful for each of you and for the role you play in making Western Nebraska a great place to live. From all of us at Wheat Belt, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

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Christmas Cover Contest Winners

Congratulations to Madison Frerichs of
Leyton Elementary School
Madison is a Fifth Grade Student
Her Teacher is Mrs. Jill Bartling



Reserve Champion Winner

Have you thought about going geothermal with your next heating and cooling system? Geothermal comfort systems tap into the stored energy in the earth to provide savings of up to 70% on heating, cooling and hot water. With the renewed Federal Tax Credit (26% in 2020), you will see your payback even faster.

Christmas Cover Contest Winners



Congratulations to Shreyash Banoth of
Sidney West Elementary School
Shreyash is in the 6th Grade
Mrs. Kate Waite, Teacher



First Place Winner

Hybrid heater, also known as a heat pump water heater, often needs the least amount of space. It sucks up air and uses the heat to generate two to five gallons of hot water per minute. Water heaters can consumer 10 to 20 percent of your monthly usage. Super insulated water heaters can also save you \$\$\$. Check with a trusted distributor for more information!

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS**

Christmas Cover Contest Winners

Honorable Mention goes to Kaydence Whatley
of West Elementary School in Sidney



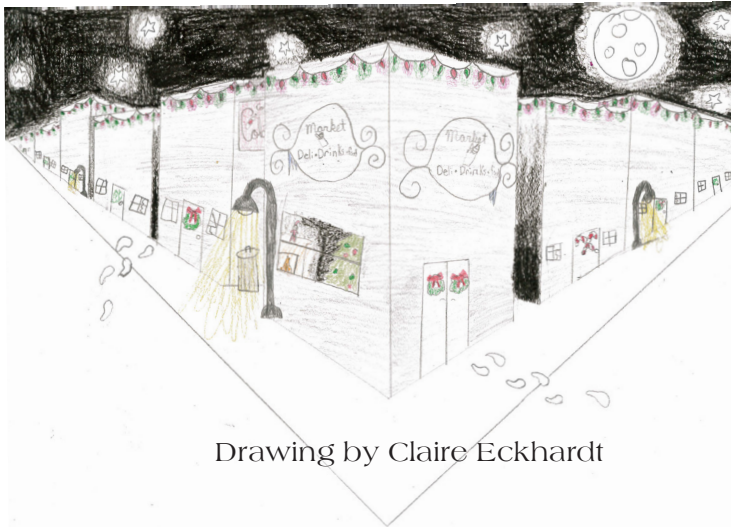
Why not start the New Year off with a plan to make life simpler! Auto-pay is easy, fast and secure. Payments are taken directly prior to delinquent notices being sent. Go on-line to www.wheatbelt.com or call the office 308-254-5871, to sign your authorization for payment, and then cross paying your utility bill off your list of things to do!

Christmas Cover Contest Winners



Special thanks to all the teachers and students who helped us share the wonders and imaginations of our youth this Christmas season, and to Cindi Egging for judging our contest!

This year, we decided to share a few of the many entries that we enjoyed!



Drawing by Claire Eckhardt



Drawing by Evan Edwards



Drawing by Aubrey Campbell

"Tis the Season - Beware of Phone Scammers: Power supply customers have been becoming the preferred scamming target! Remember Wheat Belt will not call you for your credit card information, ask for a "green dot" card payment or bank wire. We do an automated courtesy call to let you know if your service is delinquent as well as the required notice. We expect you to contact us with payment or to go on-line to pay! If you have any questions, please call the office.

In Lieu of Tax Line Item

For 2020, those accounts within the limits of a city or village will see a separate line item for "In Lieu of Tax." The following explains the Nebraska - Chapter 41 Regulation. Prior to 2019, those costs have been spread among the rate classes and embedded in the charges.

REG-41-004 POWER DISTRICTS AND CORPORATIONS

004.01 Every public power district and irrigation district that was organized to provide electricity and paid in lieu of tax in 1957 shall continue to pay annually that same amount of property taxes assessed against said property in 1957 so long as it owns said property.

004.02 The county treasurer receiving the 1957 in lieu of tax shall distribute the payment to the political subdivisions and the state based upon the 1957 distribution.

004.03 Any public power district or irrigation district that sells electricity at retail within an incorporated city or village shall by April 1 of each year, make an in lieu of tax payment to the county treasurer of the county in which the city or village is located. The in lieu of tax payment shall be five percent (5%) of the gross retail sales collected from within the city or village, for the previous calendar year less the amount of the 1957 in lieu of tax that was allocated to the city or village.

004.04 The county treasurer receiving the five (5%) percent gross in lieu of tax shall distribute the payment to the city or village from which the retail revenues were collected, the school district located in that city or village and to the county. The distribution shall be based upon the proportionate share the individual levies in the preceding year bore to the total of such levies.

004.05 Public power and irrigation districts are subject to the motor vehicle taxes and fees imposed under Neb. Rev. Stat. Sections 60-3,186 and 60-3,190.

004.06 Property of public power districts and irrigation districts that is leased to a private party for purposes other than a public purpose as defined in Regulation Property Owned by the State and Governmental Subdivisions, shall be subject to taxation as if the property was owned by the lessee. See Property Owned by the State and Governmental Subdivisions Regulation, Chapter 15.

004.07 The assessor shall obtain information concerning the in lieu of taxes from the county treasurer and report such information as required by the Property Tax Administrator on the Certificate of Taxes Levied Report.

(Neb. Rev. Stat. Sections 60-3,186, 60-3,190, 70-651.01, 70-651.03, 70-651.04 and 70-651.05, R.R.S. 2003, 77-702 and 77-1613.01, R.S. Supp., 2007.)

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