



Kilowatt Korner

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For WREA, our members are the most important piece of the cooperative puzzle. Without dedicated and supportive members, WREA would not have existed for the past seventy-eight years. Cooperatives around the world aim to follow the same set of core principles, the 7th of which is “Concern for Community”, and that principle is at the heart of everything we do. WREA is fortunate to serve members who make fulfilling a concern for community feel effortless. During last Friday’s WREA Member Appreciation event, our concern and appreciation for our members was reciprocated and- believe us when we tell you- we felt it! A giant “Thank you” to the WREA membership for making our annual meeting and member appreciation event an enormous success and a fun evening shared with friends.

In total, WREA welcomed approximately 700 dinner guests and 365 members registered for appreciation gifts. We recognize that events like this don’t occur without the combined efforts of MANY hard-working organizations who make Meekerpalooza and the farmer’s market a fun event all summer long. We’re honored to have been invited to collaborate, and participate in, the final Meekerpalooza of the summer. Mostly, we are grateful for the infectious energy that our community partners bring when hosting a successful event.

In case you missed it; here’s a recap of information shared at the 78th Annual Membership Meeting:

WREA DIRECTOR ELECTION: In total, WREA received 318 returned ballots, which included approval of the 2022 Annual Meeting minutes. White River Electric membership re-elected the two un-opposed incumbents, Hal Pearce and Bryce Ducey, for 3-year terms representing the Town of Meeker District seats. Members who cast ballots will be eligible to have their name drawn for a box of 4-H meat which will be awarded in September.

ANNUAL MEETING: WREA has seen a lot of changes in its seventy-eight years and the battle to stay ahead of changing regulations is a tough one. Right now, nearly 36% of WREA power comes from renewable sources. Legal requirements keep pushing that renewable number higher—and, unfortunately, mandates come with higher costs. Also, as all of us know, if the sun isn’t shining or the wind isn’t blowing, these resources don’t generate electricity. Along with our power supplier, Tri-State G&T, we’re working to balance these renewable resources with reliable, cost-effective, and always-available fossil fuel power plants. Along with some planned transmission line improvements locally, we are doing everything we can to make sure your lights stay on at the lowest cost possible.

Tri-State has not had a wholesale rate increase since 2017 but recently announced that there will be a 6.36% average wholesale rate increase in January 2024. Although we don’t know the exact impact on our members at this time, WREA will communicate those details to the membership as they become available. In the meantime, WREA will work to manage the rising costs of materials in a competitive supply market. Everything from materials to the cost of labor continues to rise. Items like transformers, poles and meters have fallen victim to increasing costs and a tight supply chain. This often means waiting 12 months or more for an order to be fulfilled, and having to pay more for items that are critical to WREA’s infrastructure. Notwithstanding the fact that WREA has lost 30% of its sales in the past three years alone, WREA remains a financially stable cooperative. We continue to invest in facilities that will deliver safe and reliable power at the least cost possible.

Along with our partners at Tri-State G&T and Basin Electric, we are proud to be involved in sponsoring so many local organizations, events, and clubs, as well as individual students through scholarships. This is one of the things that makes cooperatives like ours a special and a meaningful part of the community. In the past year, WREA members have received over \$7,000 in energy efficiency rebates, compliments of Tri-State. Basin Electric matched \$16,500 in grants to organizations in our community whose events encourage economic growth and embrace our history and culture. Additionally, our front office staff regularly work in tandem with members to seek energy assistance. Since this time last year, organizations like LEAP and Energy Outreach Colorado have provided nearly \$23,000 in assistance to members of WREA and we recognize that the assistance could not have come at a more critical time for many.

Being a cooperative member has many perks, but one of the most popular is the payback of capital credits. In mid-August, WREA will return more than \$1.5 million in capital credits from our cooperative and from Tri-State to members who had electric service in 2008.

During this year’s event, we enjoyed meeting new members who recently decided to call Meeker home. We welcome you! The WREA board and staff is honored to represent and work on behalf of ALL our members to fulfill our concern for, and commitment to, this community. Thank you for another great event and another great year.