



Kilowatt Korner

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If you've heard it once, you've heard it a thousand times- we love being your electric co-op! Conversely, White River Electric Association is also a co-op member, and we love that too. The nationwide cooperative network helps WREA experience the value of being part of something bigger and offers perks to our members right here at home.

In the past seventy-eight years, we've experienced great benefits from being part of a team. The sixth cooperative principle is *Cooperation Among Cooperatives* and for White River Electric, it's one of the most valued of the seven cooperative principles. Instead of competing with other Colorado electric cooperatives, we connect resources, collaborate, share ideas, vent frustrations, and propose solutions that strengthen our respective communities. Through the practice of sharing industry knowledge among co-ops, and the experience of thousands of colleagues at our fingertips, WREA is afforded resources that would otherwise come at a cost for businesses. It's proven to be a good gig for our small-town co-op with direct benefits that have been shared with our community.

Most notably is Basin Electric Power Cooperative's Charitable Giving Program. When it comes to the spirit of giving, Basin Electric wins BIG! As a member of Basin Electric, WREA is eligible to solicit financial support for local non-profit organizations when an event/mission meets certain criteria established by Basin Electric. This year alone, and at no additional cost to WREA, Basin Electric awarded \$23,500 to eleven different organizations within our community. The support is far reaching, and we are incredibly grateful for the impact this program has had since WREA began participating in 2013. In total, WREA estimates over \$160,000 in donations have been granted to Meeker organizations by Basin Electric in the past decade. This, in addition to a \$1,000 scholarship that is awarded to one Meeker student each year, makes Basin Electric one of our most generous cooperative partners. We cannot thank Basin Electric enough for their continued support of our community.

WREA's wholesale power provider, Tri-State G&T also awards two \$500 scholarships to Meeker students annually and sponsored a handful of Meeker events to the tune of nearly \$6,000 this year. However, Tri-State's most impactful contribution to WREA members has been through the creation of the beneficial electrification rebate program. Although slow to gain traction in Meeker, the rebate program has been in existence for more than a decade. In 2023, Tri-State G&T returned over \$16,804 in rebates to WREA members who purchased electric outdoor power equipment or electric appliances, installed heat pumps, or retrofitted incandescent lighting to LED in homes or businesses. WREA recognizes that, through cooperative partnerships, we can continue to make a difference in the lives of our members.

Working in tandem isn't just for cooperatives. Recently, our community witnessed the power of coming together and optimizing resources to help support the future of The Herald Times. Big kudos to those at The Herald Times for raising your hand and acknowledging that you could use a boost. Hats off (that handsome Lyttle hat) to the community who responded so generously and thank you to the Rio Blanco Historical Society for stepping up, digging deep, and helping create The Lyttle Project. We are eager to see what lies ahead.

As we pull back the curtain on 2024, the WREA board and staff thank you for being active and engaged members and we wish you a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.