

JUN + 2020

WYOMING

RURAL ELECTRIC NEWS

WREN

Working at a Co-op

**Niobrara and PRECorp
highlight jobs in
rural electric**

★
AARON & JENNY WUERKER

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Wyoming**



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MAGAZINE

THE WREN MAGAZINE WYOMING RURAL ELECTRIC NEWS

*The official publication of the
Wyoming Rural Electric Association*

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and insulators on power lines
near Burns in April.

PHOTO BY KELLY ETZEL DOUGLAS

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'I Find Your Lack of Faith Disturbing'

– DARTH VADER



SHAWN TAYLOR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It takes some creativity (and help from my kids) to stick with my Star Wars theme and come up with an applicable quote for my column. It's also been a struggle to decide what to write about during these unprecedented times. I hope you all enjoyed the guest column last month by my friend Pennie Hunt. As we start to come out of our shells and get back to some sense of normalcy it is important to keep the faith.

That faith can be in God and asking him to watch over and protect us all; in elected officials trying to open our towns, cities, businesses, states and country back up; in family and friends that have comforted one another and hopefully made each other laugh when most people wanted to cry; or it can be faith in our teachers who have been doing their best to keep our kids up to speed in the virtual learning environment. My hope is that our collective faith can be in all of these.

Unfortunately I have seen firsthand the lack of faith that many people have expressed over the past three months and for once I agree with Darth Vader ... it is disturbing. I've mainly witnessed it expressed towards elected officials and educators.

When "the 'rona" hit, elected officials from the White House to governors, mayors, city and county officials scrambled to figure out what to do first and foremost to keep people safe, and then eventually how to save our economy. All of these decisions have been extremely difficult and they have been questioned at every turn. I'm not saying our elected officials shouldn't be questioned — they should

and they signed up for it — but I think they need to be given the benefit of the doubt and we should see how things shake out before we start calling for their heads. I know this is easier said than done, particularly because this is an election year so people from all parties are going to judge and question each others' motives and agendas when millions of people are still living in fear, either because of the virus or because their livelihoods are threatened, or both.

I've heard many people say that when this is all over, teachers deserve a huge raise, and I would agree with that. I've always felt that teachers are undervalued and underpaid, but seeing how my kids' teachers and administrators have stepped up to this challenge has been truly remarkable. Unfortunately they too have been questioned and second-guessed by many frustrated parents. But we need to come together as a community and as a country and keep the faith and work together — it is far more productive than the alternative.

On a more upbeat note, one place where I feel that faith has remained strong has been in our rural electric cooperatives: your cooperatives. The directors, management and employees of the cooperatives made changes immediately to deal with the pandemic and protect one another, protect our members and keep the lights on, seemingly without any hiccups. Those changes and decisions were not easy and did cause some disruption (not with the power), but again, as we start to come out of this your co-op will always be there for you. So, keep the faith.



— CONCERN FOR — COMMUNITY

If you're familiar with electric cooperatives you know this is one of the guiding principles in our not-for-profit business model. It's part of who we are proud to be. During these challenging times, our cooperative family is here for you. We are responsibly doing our part to help power you through the unknown. There are a million things on your mind, making sure the lights stay on, shouldn't be one of them. Because whatever the future holds, we'll power it.



TRI-STATE

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CO-OP YOUTH

Wyoming's rural electric cooperatives are proud to support our youth, giving college scholarships and lineman scholarships. In addition, our co-ops sponsor high school students on the NRECA Youth Tour in June and Youth Leadership Camp in July.

THIS MONTH:

High Plains Power's Noah Gans attended Youth Leadership Camp in 2016 and spoke at the co-op's annual meeting in 2017. He was awarded a college scholarship by High Plains Power in 2018.



Interested in applying for a scholarship, D.C. Youth Tour and/or Leadership Camp? Contact your local rural electric cooperative! See the insert in the center of the magazine for contact information.

PHOTO BY MARA GANS



NOAH GANS



HOMETOWN:

Lander

HIGH SCHOOL:

Lander Valley

YEAR OF GRADUATION:

2018

COLLEGE:

Bowdoin College in Maine

MAJOR STUDY INTEREST:

Computer Science and Sociology

WREN: Tell us about your studies and interests.

NG: I'm currently planning on majoring in both computer science and sociology at Bowdoin College. Although I never would have guessed that I would be studying these, they provide a good academic balance, and cater to my interests and skills. Computer science is all problem solving, and it's great to sit down and work through problem by problem until you've built the goal program. Computer science also addresses my love of building and designing. As a kid I loved working with wood and other materials, and although coding is not building with physical material, it's still great to be able to have a blank canvas to build whatever program I want. My love of sociology is rooted in my joy of understanding how people make decisions and function as a society. Coming from a place (Wyoming) very different from the location of my college, I bring a unique perspective to the table that most East Coasters do not have.

WREN: How have your hometown, family and/or friends influenced you?

NG: My home is very important. I always say to friends at college that the people whose homes are most different from the East Coast environment are the people that have the most pride in where they come from. I am no exception. At Bowdoin, I'm one of the only Wyoming students I know, and love sharing stories about home and activities with friends. Wyoming shaped my values into a love of outdoors, appreciation for different people, tolerance for adversity, appreciation for the simpler things, and a non-complainer attitude. Some of these values and attributes are lacking at Bowdoin, and this difference has led to my successes with others and having a group of friends who share these values.

WREN: What are your plans for the future?

NG: With the spread of COVID-19 my life has been filled with uncertainty, but I have been lucky enough to be offered a position to work (remotely) for NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratories this summer. Afterwards, I will hopefully go back to college next fall, study abroad in New Zealand in the spring, and return the following year for my senior year. Related to career, I see myself possibly working in software engineering for some time, but would like to eventually shift into applied computer science.

LINEMAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND



A GOOD PROBLEM IS STILL A PROBLEM, BUT WITH YOUR HELP, OURS CAN BE FIXED.

Due to its popularity and the generosity of our board, and increased interest in the trade, WREA's Lineman Scholarship Program is in danger of running out of funding.



WHAT IT IS

The WREA Lineman Scholarship offers scholarships year-round to one or more individuals, including recent high school graduates who are interested in a career as a lineworker and plan to attend an approved regional lineworker training program.



CANDIDATES

To be considered, applicants must submit the application form, a resumé describing their education and work experience, three letters of recommendation and a transcript of grades. (If the candidate has not attended an educational institution in the three years prior to submitting the application, the transcript is not necessary.)

Candidates must submit their scholarship application to the Wyoming Rural Electric Association; they are then passed on to the WREA board for consideration.

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Over the past several years the board has awarded many scholarships, donating a total of \$146,540.00 since 2015.



FUNDING

For over a decade, the scholarship's main source of funding has come from a fundraising golf tournament during the Cody Hotline School. Vendors, cooperatives and others who do business with cooperatives have been solicited for donations to the fund. It has been very successful, raising as much as \$20,000 in some years.



APPRECIATION

We appreciate your support!

During the last few months, WREA members and friends have contributed to the scholarship fund. A heartfelt "thank you" to everyone who has reached out!

*But we aren't done yet.
If you haven't already, please
consider donating to the WREA
Lineman Scholarship fund.*

DONATIONS CAN BE MADE BY:



Calling the WREA Office
Manager, Robin Feezer:
(307) 634-0727



Mailing a check to the WREA Office:
2312 Carey Ave. Cheyenne, WY 82001
Make check out to WREA Lineman Scholarship

Annual Meeting Roundup

At this time of year in any other year, almost all of the Wyoming Rural Electric Association's 11 utility cooperatives would be finished with their annual meetings. Members would have had the chance to elect board members, share a meal, and possibly bring home a door prize.

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and statewide ban on gatherings of large groups of people, cooperative leadership had to decide how to proceed. Each of the cooperatives made a decision based on their particular membership's needs.

01 WREA BOARD MEETS VIA ZOOM

The Wyoming Rural Electric Association board of directors canceled a planned meeting in Powell but was able to gather on May 7 via the online meeting platform Zoom. During the meeting, board members heard presentations by Dan Surdam with Stitches Acute Care clinics and Tri-State CEO Duane Highley. The board also discussed funding for the Lineman Scholarship.

02 CO-OPS ADJUST ANNUAL MEETINGS

High West Energy and Lower Valley Energy will hold their 2020 annual meetings online. High West members will be asked to vote by ballot, and will have an annual meeting live online on June 18. Lower Valley will hold their annual meeting on Facebook Live on June 25.

Carbon Power & Light and Big Horn Rural Electric Association have sent out mail-in ballots in lieu of annual meetings.

At the time of printing, Powder River Energy Corporation is hoping to hold its 75th annual meeting in person on August 22.

03 BRIDGER VALLEY GOES LIVE - ONLINE

On May 12, Bridger Valley Electric Association hosted its annual meeting on Facebook Live. The usually well-attended meeting was moved online due to the concern that a large gathering could spread COVID-19. It was the first, and hopefully last, time for a virtual event, Board President Kim Charles said.

"The virtual meeting may be the next best thing to an in-person meeting, but in my opinion it is a good thing to meet with membership in person, listen to their concerns, make new friends and get some good ideas from those who really own our company," Charles said.

During the 22-minute meeting, Charles had good news: the Bridger Valley board of directors had met and discussed how to help local businesses and individuals affected by the virus. They were able to give more than \$30,000 in financial help.

Two seats were up for election on the board of directors, but only the incumbents had filed petitions for the seats, so they were seated by the board for another 3-year term. The two incumbent board members are Gary Nix and Clark Anderson.

General Manager Jud Redden gave infrastructure updates during the online meeting, noting upgrades throughout the system to provide safe and reliable electricity.

Charles took questions over the phone and online, but no questions were asked. Instead, Charles read a comment from Facebook user Brad Moosman who wrote, "Not a question, but everyone at BVEA does an amazing job!"



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Co-op Helps Students Learn Online

PHOTO COURTESY OF BRIDGER VALLEY ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION



Bridger Valley Extreme's Preston Morwood connects internet for a household in Robertson.

Area schools were still in session when Bridger Valley Electric Association (BVEA) and GT Nix Construction began planning for them to shut down.

"I figured it was coming," said Jace Nix, vice president of GT Nix Construction. Nix talked with the local school district and BVEA Manager Jud Redden. They wanted to help the students and families who didn't have an internet connection at home if their school closed due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

BVEA and GT Nix Construction decided to sponsor all of the students, kindergarten through college, who needed internet access to keep up with their schoolwork. GT Nix Construction paid the installation fee and BVEA sponsored the monthly service fee through the end of the school year.

The service helped students keep up with online learning, research, study

assistance, alerts and information from school districts. College students used the internet to continue their courses from home after campuses shut down.

"I was just shocked that there was this much need for it," said Roger Tims, internet manager for BVEA. Tims expected to connect at least three families in the area, but connected 33 families.

The combined installation fees covered added up to \$2,100, and three months of service charges were valued at \$5,400.

Bridger Valley Electric and GT Nix Construction were already set up to help with this kind of crisis. Bridger Valley Electric has operated an internet connection arm, Bridger Valley Extreme Access, for 14 years. GT Nix Construction President Gary Nix is a BVEA board member. Gary Nix is also Jace Nix's father; Jace runs operations for the company.

Virtual Emergency Department Visits at Cheyenne Regional Medical Center

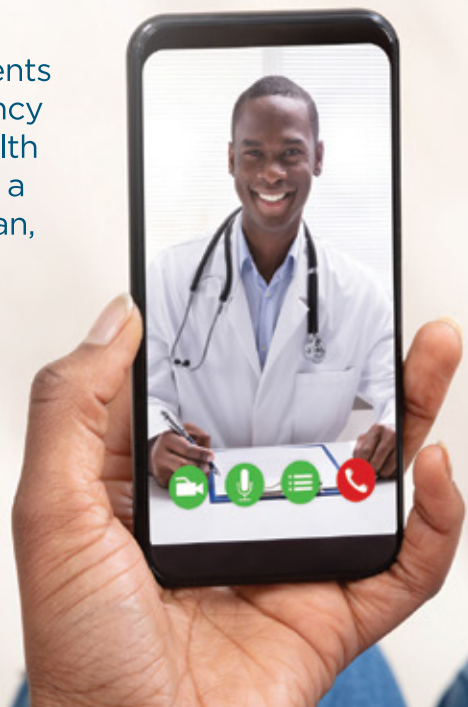
Cheyenne Regional Medical Center is now offering virtual visits to its emergency department for patients with symptoms of COVID-19 or who need emergency care for **non-life-threatening** conditions. A telehealth visit with CRMC's emergency department includes a secure face-to-face video assessment by a physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner.

Initiate a virtual Emergency Department visit, by visiting cheyenneregional.org/virtualED from a smart phone, tablet or computer with video capability.

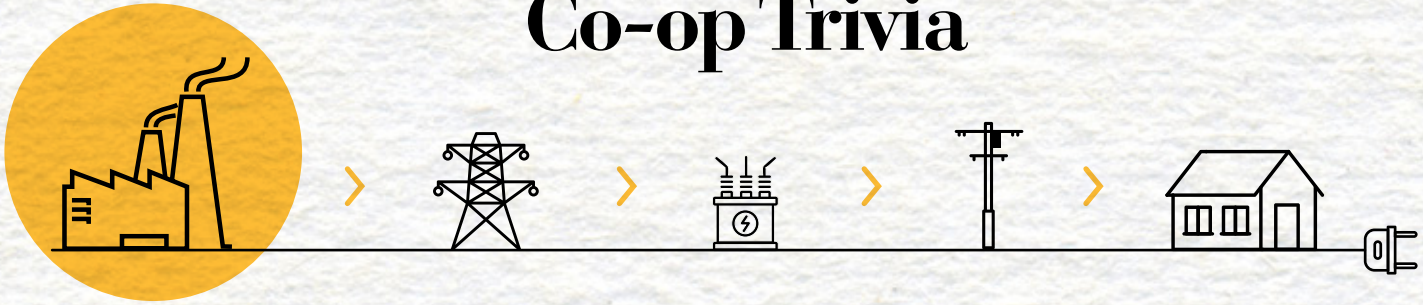


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Co-op Trivia



The electricity that powers your home can seem as simple as the flip of a switch. But that electricity arrived because of a complex, coordinated system overseen by your rural electric cooperative. As a member-owner of your cooperative, you oversee that system!

Starting this month, WREN magazine will highlight the infrastructure that powers your home and business, from generation facilities to the appliances in your home.

GENERATION AND TRANSMISSION

Generation is the process of converting mechanical energy into electrical energy, or electricity. In Wyoming, we generate electricity using coal-fired power plants, natural gas power plants, dams, wind turbines and solar arrays.

Generation and transmission cooperatives (G&Ts) own and operate both power generation facilities and the high-voltage transmission lines that carry the facilities' power.

Wyoming's rural electric cooperatives buy power from four cooperative G&Ts: Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Deseret Power Electric Cooperative, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association and Members 1st Power Cooperative. Lower Valley Energy buys power from the Bonneville Power Administration, which operates under the U.S. Department of Energy.

Rural electric cooperatives are utility cooperatives: they provide the systems that bring electricity to your home and business.

Bank Branches Not Accessible?

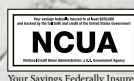
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New Energy Economy

Coal power is under pressure – from carbon emissions, from the markets, from cheaper competition and from politics – was the consensus of four electric generation and transmission CEOs.

Duane Highley of Tri-State Generation and Transmission, Paul Sukut of Basin Electric Power Cooperative and Kimball Rasmussen of Deseret Power participated in a panel discussion during the Wyoming Rural Electric Association's annual meeting Feb. 26. Rocky Mountain Power's Gary Hoogeveen gave a separate update on the second day of the meeting.

All four CEOs noted the recent pressure on Tri-State to close coal plants in Colorado, and expected that trend to continue.

In Wyoming, coal-fired Dry Fork Station, owned by Basin, and Laramie River

Station, which is owned by a consortium of utilities including Basin and Tri-State, are both expected to remain open for many years to come.

"We want to maintain our 'all of the above'," Sukut said, meaning Basin plans to keep using coal-fired power plants while building renewables. He said carbon capture and XPrize research at Dry Fork Station in Gillette "will be the cleanest coal plant in America once we find a way to capture that carbon and sequester it."

WREA directors noted that solar power is not currently available at night without a battery capacity that isn't ready to support large-scale demand, and that wind and solar subsidies could be unfairly moving the market.



Basin Electric Power Cooperative CEO Paul Sukut, left, Deseret Power CEO Kimball Rasmussen and Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association CEO Duane Highley talk about the new energy economy in Cheyenne Feb. 26.

PHOTO BY KELLY ETZEL DOUGLAS

"You haven't heard us talk about 100% renewables because we don't know how to get there," Hoogeveen said that the technology isn't available yet.

But the CEOs agreed that prices for gas, wind, solar and hydro power are much lower than that of coal-fired power plants with or without the subsidies.

The utility leaders had a positive outlook for their industry.

"I think we have to look forward with hope," Rasmussen said. "I don't think we are walking off a cliff; I think we are climbing higher mountains."

Protect yourself from the sun's harmful rays

- Stay in the shade, especially during midday hours.
- Wear clothing that covers your arms and legs.
- Wear a hat with a wide brim to shade your face, head, ears, and neck.
- Wear sunglasses that wrap around and block both UVA and UVB rays.
- Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher, and both UVA and UVB (broad spectrum) protection.



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Voting in the 2020 Elections

ADAPTED FROM THE OFFICE OF THE WYOMING SECRETARY OF STATE



CALENDAR CHECK

08
18

Primary Election

Polls are open 7:00 am to 7:00 pm

11
03

General Election

Polls are open 7:00 am to 7:00 pm

On August 18 and November 3, Wyoming's voters will have a chance to choose the president, one U.S. senator, one U.S. representative and half of the state's legislators. Some county officials and mayoral seats are also up for election.

The local county clerk's office handles local voting information, including polling places, local candidate filing, voter registration and absentee ballots. The secretary of state's office receives statewide and national candidate filing information and assists with elections, including reminding voters what options are available.

"Due to concerns related to COVID-19, I want to remind every voter that you have a choice on how you vote in the 2020 elections. Voters can choose to vote in person at a polling place or send an absentee ballot request to their county clerk. Voters should make the choice that works best for them during these unprecedented times," Secretary of State Edward Buchanan said in a press release.

You may register to vote by contacting the local county clerk's office. Voting registration closes two weeks before the

VOTING ABSENTEE?

The secretary of state's office lists these rules:

- Absentee ballots are available from the county clerk.
- Any registered voter can obtain their absentee ballot as early as 45 days prior to the election or any day after contacting their county clerk's office, but not on Election Day.
- All absentee ballots must be received in the county clerk's office no later than 7 pm on Election Day.

election, however Wyoming voters may register and vote absentee at the county clerk's office after registration closes, or at the polls on Election Day.

To register to vote you will need to meet eligibility requirements and provide information such as an identification card issued by a local, state or federal agency.

For more information visit the secretary of state's website at sos.wyo.gov or contact your local county clerk.

Wills, Trusts & Probate

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EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE 2020 CENSUS

The census data provides monetary funds for Wyoming. Wyoming towns and counties each received about **\$600/person** from state tax distribution based on census data in the 2019 fiscal year.

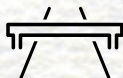
CENSUS INFORMATION IS USED IN WYOMING FOR PLANNING AND FUNDING



NEW SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION



MEDICARE DISTRIBUTION



ROADS AND BRIDGES



POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENT LOCATIONS



LIBRARIES AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS

THE CENSUS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

The census will not be mailed to P.O. Box addresses. Instead, a census worker will bring a postcard or questionnaire to your home.

How to identify a census field representative:

The representative must present an I.D. badge with:



THEIR PHOTOGRAPH



A DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE WATERMARK



AN EXPIRATION DATE

The representative will have a letter from the director of the U.S. Census Bureau and can provide the number for the regional office for verification. Wyoming residents can also call 211 for census information.

THE CENSUS IS SAFE

The U.S. Census Bureau is bound by law to keep your answers strictly confidential. Data cannot be used for law enforcement purposes or to determine personal eligibility for government benefits.

The census will NEVER ask for:



SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS



BANK OR CREDIT CARD INFORMATION



MONEY



ANYTHING RELATED TO POLITICAL PARTIES

CENSUS TIMELINE

2010

The last census took place 10 years ago.

MARCH

Census information was sent by mail. Some households received a postcard, others received a questionnaire.

APRIL

Reminder letters were sent out.

MAY

Census workers began visiting homes that haven't responded.

OCTOBER 31

Because of delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the census will close in October instead of July.

2030

The next census will take place 10 years later.



MAKE SURE YOU COUNT!

Wyoming's rural electric cooperatives encourage you to participate in the 2020 Census.

For more information call 211, log onto 2020census.gov or visit your local library.

Sources: Wyoming Department of Administration & Information Economic Analysis Division, Wyoming State Library.

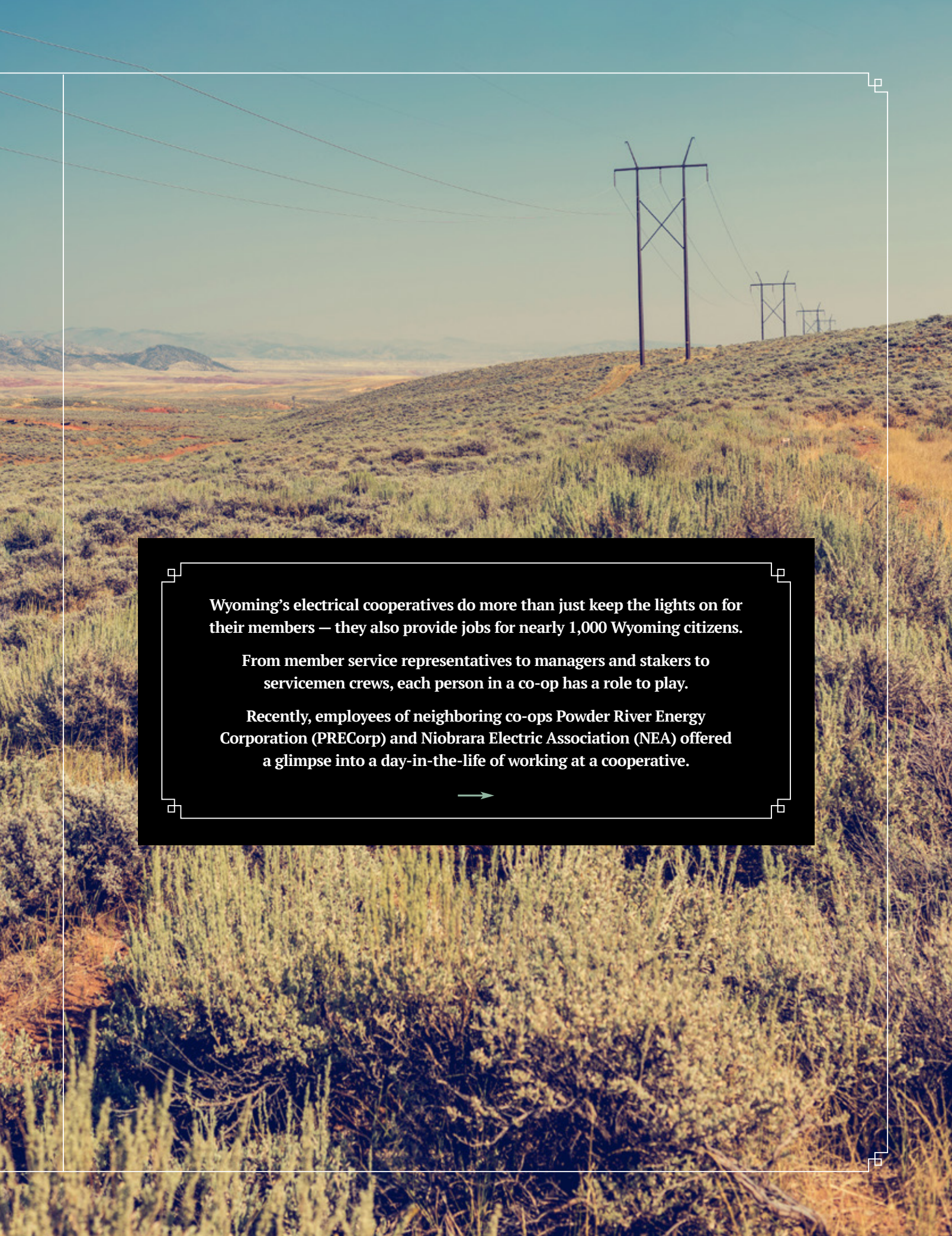


CENTERPIECE

WORKING AT A RURAL ELECTRIC CO-OP

**Niobrara and PRECorp highlight
jobs in rural electric**

BY ELIZABETH SAMPSON



Wyoming's electrical cooperatives do more than just keep the lights on for their members — they also provide jobs for nearly 1,000 Wyoming citizens.

From member service representatives to managers and stakers to servicemen crews, each person in a co-op has a role to play.

Recently, employees of neighboring co-ops Powder River Energy Corporation (PRECorp) and Niobrara Electric Association (NEA) offered a glimpse into a day-in-the-life of working at a cooperative.



PRECorp employs 120 people and serves 27,582 meters in Campbell, Crook, Johnson, Sheridan and Weston counties in northeastern Wyoming.

If an electrical co-op can be compared to a body with each part having its own job to do, **TIM VELDER** could be considered the voice of PRECorp. He has been the marketing and communications specialist there since 2011, and it is his job to share information with members and the employee team. He also works on event planning, scholarship programs, website and social media updates and advertising.

“The most important duties involve the immediate needs of the membership: whether it is a year-long effort to educate them on the installation of new programs, technology, or rate adjustments; or emergency communications about outages; or new safety or energy efficiency tips,” Velder said in an email.

During the first weeks of the spread of COVID-19, Velder was in charge of daily communications to the employees about PRECorp’s response to the pandemic. He has been posting daily updates on the landing page of their website and employee information portal. At the same time, he worked to help members who were struggling.

“We have also been monitoring the needs of our members who have been adversely affected and offering help with food assistance where we can,” he wrote.

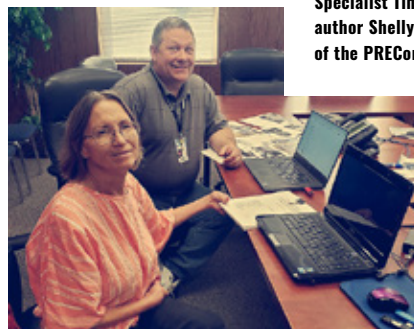
PRECorp member service representatives are the face of the cooperative to their members. **LINDA TOKARCZYK** and others in the member service team help PRECorp members when they call or come into the office. They assist with processing payments, initiating new services, answering billing questions and providing information.

PRECorp Serviceman Kent Hatling, left, assists Meter Service Technician Heidi Harris during apprenticeship training.





Member Service representative Linda Tokarczyk, far left, volunteers with the Hulett Senior Citizens for their annual fundraiser during motorcycle rally week in August.



PRECorp Marketing Communications Specialist Tim Velder meets with local author Shelly Ritthaler during the writing of the PRECorp 75th Anniversary Book.

“I think it is great working for a co-op because it is a member-owned company that we serve.”

“We are often our members’ one-stop source for information and resolution,” Tokarczyk said in an email. “Member service reps are called upon to be knowledgeable about virtually every aspect of PRECorp’s day-to-day workings, and if we are not able to help members and others directly, we contact those who can be of assistance.”

Tokarczyk was a long-time member of PRECorp before she started working there in May 2017.

“I have a great deal of appreciation for the great service I have received over the years, and I am proud to now be part of that extraordinary team,” she wrote.

She said letting members and co-workers know they are appreciated and valued is the best part of her job.

“It is especially satisfying to have a member interaction end in a positive way that builds mutual respect for one another,” she said. “When I am able to facilitate that outcome, it is very rewarding.”

Serviceman **KENT HATLING** spends his days leading the servicemen crew for PRECorp, which focuses on ratio burden testing transformer-rated metering sites and meters.

“We have a set amount of sites that we test yearly,” Hatling said in an email. “These sites range from 120/240 volt single phase services up to 69 kilovolt three phase services.” His crew also completes single-man maintenance of electrical services and works with members on usage and power quality issues.

Near the end of 2018, Hatling and his crew started working on installing PRECorp’s new Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), replacing an older meter reading system. The new system can provide instantaneous data when needed.

“The AMI system has more than new meter-reading capabilities,” Hatling said. “With the two-way communication we can have near real-time outage detection. With the new meters’ programing we can bring back voltage information to know what the voltage is at any point in the system, and also watch for power quality issues such as voltage fluctuations and blinking lights.”

Hatling, who has worked for PRECorp for more than 18 years, said he enjoys helping members with any issues they have and getting the power back on after an outage.

“I think it is great working for a co-op because it is a member-owned company that we serve,” he added. ➡



PHOTOS COURTESY OF POWDER RIVER ENERGY CORPORATION

Niobrara Electric Association (NEA) is on the eastern border of Wyoming and includes Converse, Goshen, Niobrara and Platte counties. With territory that extends into Nebraska and South Dakota, NEA has 18 full-time employees and serves 3,074 meters.

KEVIN INMAN assumed the role of manager for NEA in March, heading up the organization right as COVID-19 started affecting communities around the nation.

On top of the typical management work — things like working on the cooperative’s annual budget and holding board meetings — Inman is also dealing with keeping employees safe during a pandemic.

“It’s a crazy time,” he said. “When normal comes I will have been through some pretty rough times.”

Despite starting his new job during an unusual time, he is glad to be working at a co-op. With a career that has spanned both co-ops and large private companies, he is qualified to say working for a cooperative has some distinct advantages.

“With a co-op you can change things,” Inman said. “You can say, ‘this isn’t working, we need to look at a better solution.’” He said while working for large corporations it was impossible to make even the smallest changes for the better because there were too many decision-makers spread across too many states.

“With a co-op it’s smaller,” he said. “It’s more like a family.”

Inman isn’t alone in his assessment of a co-op being like a family.

“I just love the family atmosphere of a co-op and knowing that you are working for one goal—and that’s keeping the power on and keeping everyone going in the right direction,” said NEA’s **DOUG LYTLE**.

A Lusk native, Lytle started as a warehouse coordinator for NEA in 2015 and has moved into being a staking technician, which means



NEA Manager Kevin Inman began working at the co-op in March.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF NIOBRARA RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION



Doug Lytle, warehouse supervisor and staking technician, poses in the warehouse at Niobrara Electric Association.



Niobrara employees include, from left, Bookkeeper Kacy Hladky, Office Clerk JoAnn Moore, Payroll/Work Order/IT Administrator Chris Rejda, Benefits Administrator Twyla Barker and Billing Clerk Julie Hageman.

“With a co-op it’s smaller. It’s more like a family.”

he lines out the path of new electrical lines, and places stakes in the ground to mark where poles, ground lines and wires will go.

He also works on mapping, making sure all the new lines are included in the co-op’s digital map. Not only that, he is also the warehouse supervisor. Doing many different jobs is just a regular day for Lytle, he said.

“Everybody has to wear a different hat at some point and not only do their job, but help out with somebody else’s job too—and that’s what is great,” he said. “Our manager went out and helped set poles the other day.”

Though the logistics of multiple tasks can be daunting, Lytle enjoys the variety. He also likes seeing the impossible be done when helping out the line crew.

“Watching the way they can get things done that normal people would say isn’t possible is just amazing,” he said.

After more than 30 years of working in everything from billing and payroll to handling work orders and being the head of IT, **CHRIS REJDA** has gathered many great memories with the co-op.

She recalls a storm that really showed how co-ops operate. The storm damaged more than 300 poles, but linemen came in from all over to help.

“Over 100 linemen came to our co-op to help us rebuild,” she said. “They got it done in about a week. To see that go together was absolutely flooring.”

One summer she worked extra hours to complete a map marking all the meters NEA had. She said they had hired some college students to start the mapping process, but they didn’t have time to finish the map.

“When they left, they left me with a religious map — it was holier than thou,” Rejda said with a laugh. “I worked weekends and days off running around the system with one of the best fleet trucks — the plow — and the GPS unit they left us and filling in the holes of this map.”

She said working at a co-op is a job that typically pays well and has excellent benefits and is well suited to someone who enjoys a rural lifestyle.

“If you have a little country in you, it ain’t gonna hurt a bit,” she said. “And a sense of humor goes a long way.” **W**

Elizabeth Sampson lives in Cheyenne with her husband and young daughters.



01

What do Lineworkers do?

Lineworkers work with electric systems that bring power to your home. They rely on safety training and equipment to protect them when installing or repairing electrical systems in all kinds of weather.

Are you interested in becoming a lineworker? You've come to the right place!

02

Lineworkers in Wyoming

The Wyoming Department of Workforce Services counted 440 people working with electrical utility and transmission equipment in March 2019.

Among those counted, 160 worked at WREA co-ops across the state. The average wage for all 440 workers was between \$39 and \$44 per hour.



How to Become a Lineworker

First you'll need to attend lineworker college. After graduation you'll spend 8,000 hours (that's 4 years!) on the job as an apprentice, working alongside a journeyman. When you complete your training you become a journeyman and can train a new apprentice.

03

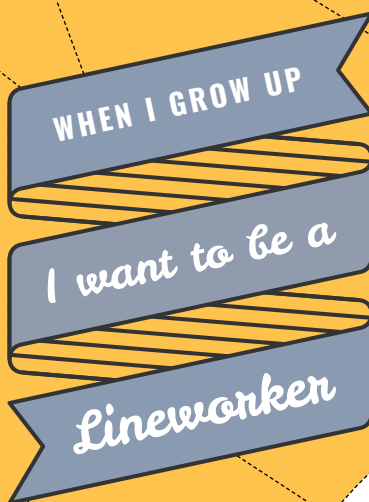


04

Tools of the Trade

What does a lineworker need to work every day?

Circle the correct items.



05

Electrical Safety Quiz

1. What material does NOT conduct electricity?

- A. wood
- B. rubber
- C. water
- D. kite string

2. How far away should you be from a fallen power line?

- A. 35 feet
- B. 45 feet
- C. 75 feet
- D. 100 feet

Answers: 1) b. rubber does not conduct electricity. Water conducts electricity very well, wood and string can conduct electricity. 2) all of the above - stay at least 35 feet from a downed power line and call 9-1-1!

Lineman scholarships are available through the WREA, for information turn to page 7.

Read about the lineman scholarship program in the August 2018 issue of WREN magazine, available online at wyomingrea.org/wren-magazine/wren-archive.



Artists Aaron and Jenny Wuerker of Buffalo paint power lines and landscapes.



PHOTO COURTESY OF AARON WUERKER

AARON & JENNY WUERKER



Art to Help People “See” Wyoming

BY NEVA BODIN

Wyoming, known for its ranching, coal and oil industries, also has many other occupations alive and well, art being one of them. And two Wyoming artists, Aaron and Jenny Wuerker, capture the beauty of the land and its industries in their artwork, sharing the essence of our state.

Aaron, who grew up on a ranch in Iowa, and Jenny, who is from New England, have made Buffalo their home for the past 25 years. They are members of Powder River Energy Corporation.



← A tour of the Wuerker's website, CrazyWomanFineArt.com, shows the partnership between these artists, the area and its resources. The Wuerkers' paintings create an understanding and kinship with Wyoming for the viewer.

Aaron's landscapes incorporate architectural and industrial subject matter while Jenny's scenes are the wide open vistas. Aaron's settings typically include such objects as power lines, irrigation pivots and tanker trucks set against the geological topography.

"We have this geometrically shaped landscape we live in with buttes and mesas and horizon lines. Something that's unique to this part of the country is the geometry

of the landscape that's not unlike some of the best man-made structures I like to highlight. The harmony of the man-made and the natural ... it's a celebration of our landscape," said Aaron.

He likes the outside, being around cattle and agricultural areas. His earlier paintings were done plein air (painting outdoors in natural light) as most of Jenny's landscapes continue to be done.

Aaron received a Master of Fine Arts at Yale University, started his career as an illustrator using watercolor as a medium, and taught art history for a time. Jenny has a Master of Fine Arts from the American University. Her work is represented

BELOW: View from Tisdale Divide by Jenny Wuerker



by a gallery in Denver. She also teaches art part time. Together they own the Crazy Woman Fine Art Gallery in Buffalo, now open to the public by appointment and used as their studio.

The Wuerkers have a son and daughter, both teenagers and both interested in art. "They make some interesting work when they've been able to take classes," said Aaron.

Insight into Aaron's inspiration for his art is found in the statement on his website, "My work has always returned to a realist vision of the landscape, fueled by the austere beauty of common sights. Manufactured objects lend a geometry that celebrates the hard lines of the mesas and tepee buttes of the Western Plains where I live.

LEFT: Portal II by Aaron Wuerker

"I try to focus on the way these mechanized forms mimic the horizon line, or frame natural elements in the landscape. I like to think that there's a silent poetry in this interaction that defines an iconic American landscape."

In his creations, you will see landscapes with man-made objects that co-relate with the forms of nature. Aaron said, "I'm interested in how the shapes can be put together to make a strong composition. If it happens to be things to help people see the world differently or see some mundane plain industrial object in a more aesthetic way, that's great."

To exist as an artist in Wyoming, Aaron said, "We find commercial outlets and ways to make art accessible. ... There're times we have made our income fully from art." His wife's pictures are large panoramas that "find their way into corporate offices. I've been blessed to have collectors that are interested in my work and acquire things on a regular basis."

Aaron acknowledges artists may need other pursuits. "I'm a property manager. That's my primary livelihood." Although his wife and he "make a steady income on the paintings. You have to do something to meet with the sporadic income of art," he said.

He also works as a hunting guide part of the year. He does this with his camera or iPad as a constant companion, capturing scenes which will later become paintings. "The image on the iPad has got that back illumination and is a better source [to paint from], it's a little more like painting from nature," he said.

His start in watercolor has led him to use oil paint thinned to a glaze-like consistency. Aaron paints on a board he preps with an acrylic gesso. He works on a white background and feels this, plus the glaze, allows his skies to "glow with an inner light."

"I'm not trying to make a social commentary on man-made objects," Aaron said of his scenes. Rather, he enjoys seeing how those things react, or line up with Wyoming's terrain. And by illustrating it, he hopes to "burn that into people's memory, and in the future they will see the world that way." **W**

Neva Bodin is a Casper-based freelance writer, registered nurse, painter and poet.



**LEFT: Buttes in Grid
by Aaron Wuerker**



ABOVE: Triangles II by Aaron Wuerker

IMAGES COURTESY OF AARON WUERKER

Esther Hobart Morris

The Unembellished Story of the Nation's First Female Judge

BY KATHRYN SWIM CUMMINGS

"Esther Morris has never had a good biography and deserves one. Kathryn Swim Cummings's 'Esther Hobart Morris: The Unembellished Story of the Nation's First Female Judge' fills the bill, and more. ... Cummings's biography situates Morris's personal life amid the events of America's epic mid-nineteenth century national history: the Women's Rights Movement, the Civil War, and westward expansion, as well as the growth and politics of Wyoming Territory."

—Will Bagley, Author of "South Pass: Gateway to a Continent"

"Wyoming's nickname is the 'Equality State' because it was the first government to guarantee women's suffrage. Esther Hobart Morris is a significant part of Wyoming's history and legacy. Morris not only established her place in history but she continues to embody the strength and resilience of women in the West."

—Affie Ellis, Member, Wyoming State Senate

"Kathryn Swim Cummings has written the first comprehensive biography of Mrs. Morris, adding substantially to our understanding of this complex historic figure. Through the generous use of primary sources, she enables Esther and others to speak to us today."

—Michael A. Massie, Former Curator,
South Pass City State Historic Site

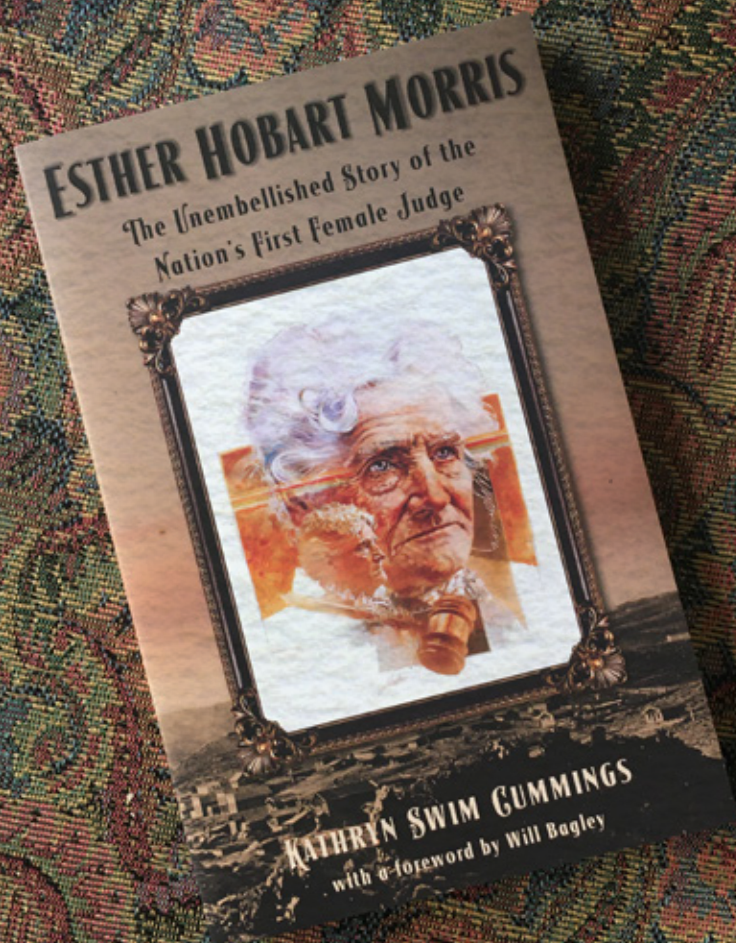
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APRIL'S
BOOK WINNER:



**RANDY
TAYLOR**
OF DUBOIS

RULES

- Brands use capital letters, numbers and a handful of symbols such as: / (slash), – (bar), ○ (circle), + (cross), □ (box), ◇ (diamond), ^ (rafter), etc.
- The position of each symbol affects the way the brand is pronounced. For example:
 - “Lazy” – on its side
 - “Reverse” – backwards
 - “Crazy” – upside-down
 - “Crazy Reverse” – upside-down and backwards
 - “Tumbling” – tilted 45°
 - “Walking” – horizontal lines attached to the bottom of the symbol like feet
 - “Flying” – horizontal lines attached to the right and left of the top
 - “Running” – slanted, curvy or italicized
 - “Rocking” – attached to the open side of a quarter circle (like a rocking horse)
- The position of symbols relative to each other is important too!
 - “Connected” – symbols that touch
 - “Conjoined” or “combined” – symbols that share a side
 - “Hanging” – symbols stacked and touching (the bottom one is hanging)
- Call the brand from left to right, top to bottom, or outside to inside.

Call the Brand

BY KENDRA SPANJER

Brands used to identify livestock—and deter theft—use a language of symbols all their own. Recognizing a brand is one thing, but “callin” it (pronouncing it out loud) takes practice! Rules vary by region and personal preference, but the basics used in this puzzle are described here.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 35



EXAMPLE:

N-N

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Create Your Own





Modern Branding

BY DR. MEGAN BEAVERS

Nothing is more Wyoming than the scene of friends and family gathered around a hot fire amongst a pen of calves, with several branding irons smoldering in the orange flames and smoke, ready to use. Men and women on horseback sort off one at a time for the crews on the ground to vaccinate, brand and castrate.

echoes through the canyons and trees green with spring's arrival. When the work is done a feast and cold beer wait for all to share. It is a long-lived Western tradition now in a fine dance with new modern methods.

It has been a long time since I attended a branding. My parents ran a cattle ranch for a little while, so I was lucky enough to be there for some brandings, although I was young. My grandmothers still made big homecooked meals like when my grandfathers were alive. I wish I could have been to a branding with either of my grandpas, but they passed too soon for that to happen.

The sound of momma cows calling for their babies

We had a more modern flare (for the time) to our brandings. We used motorized vehicles to gather cattle from the sage. I was bareback on my horse but contributed little: my old mare wasn't too cowy so we just meandered behind enjoying the ride. My dad had a tilting chute for calves, so we had no one on horseback roping and dragging — we just pushed calves up to the chute. My brothers and I were good at balancing on a bucking calf's back and pushing it up towards the catch. Our branding irons were heated with electricity.

After the calf was caught and tipped, I didn't really help do the dirty work. I was too busy petting the calf trying to soothe it, hoping to make a pet of it. I remember the

smell as the hot iron burned through the hair and into the flesh on the calf; the plume of smoke obstructing the view of my dad's face. He would dust away the burnt hair and check the brand to make sure it was adequate to mark that animal for life.

Some calves were born with horns — especially common in our herd of Herefords and Hereford crosses. I did not know then that a bull's genetics could give you a crop of calves born without horns entirely. Now I do. Definitely the easiest way to dehorn a calf is to have none in the first place. Dad had a bucket full of disinfectant and a set of dehorners used over several generations. He would

take it out, shake off the liquid and push it down on the horn nub and clap. After the horn was removed there was usually some blood that would spray from the artery supplying the horn, Dad on several occasions would hold the calf in a way to intentionally shower his precious little daughter. He would laugh. I would squeal.

Another bucket was near the back of the calf table. I knew dad would pull a leg and cut and remove a body part from the calf and throw them into a container of cool blood-tinged water. Mom always called them oysters and

that we were going to eat them later. I was old enough to know oysters came from the ocean and in Wyoming, I was confident that there wasn't an ocean nearby.

**I was old enough
to know oysters
came from the
ocean and in
Wyoming, I was
confident that
there wasn't an
ocean nearby.**

Later, when I learned what a Rocky Mountain oyster really was, I was grossed out. Who would eat those? But clearly, they had to be delightful because everyone would come over to eat them. I honestly cannot remember eating one by choice, but I am sure I did (snuck on my plate by my mom under the impression it was deep fried something) before I knew the truth. Vet school has pretty much secured my inability to eat this type of oyster ... or any other organ for that matter.

Now when I hear the echo of momma cows calling around the valley on a spring day, I remember the smell of the smoke, the dirt and blood on my face and the joys of spending time with my family ... even if it was slightly traumatizing at the expense of my trust in my father. **W**

Dr. Megan Beavers is a veterinarian in Farson.



PORK

APPLE TOPPED TENDERLOIN

- 1 - 1/2 CUPS HICKORY MARINADE, DIVIDED
- 1 (3-4 LB) PORK TENDERLOIN
- 1 (20 OZ) CAN APPLE PIE FILLING
- 3/4 TSP CINNAMON

In a baggie, combine 1 cup marinade and tenderloin, seal bag. Marinate in refrigerator for at least 1 hour.

Remove tenderloin, discard used marinade.

Cook tenderloin uncovered at 325 degrees for 1 hour, basting with 1/4 cup of the marinade. Let stand 10-15 minutes before slicing. In a saucepan combine pie filling, the extra 1/4 cup marinade and cinnamon: heat.

Serve heated apples over sliced tenderloin.

This is a recipe from my son Joe: it's his favorite thing to make, and he has made it for us and guests many times. He and I are both originally from Iowa, and we tell people you can't be from Iowa unless you know how to cook pork!

JOE IRVIN AND ANNE METZLER ★ RIVERTON

PORK DORITOS

- 1 LARGE BAG OF NACHO CHEESE DORITOS
- 1 PORK TENDERLOIN (BBQ, FULLY COOKED, SMOKED AND PULLED APART)
- 8 OZ SOUR CREAM
- 1 SMALL JAR OF JALAPENOS (OPTIONAL)
- 8 OZ SHREDDED CHEESE (COLBY JACK)
- 1 SMALL BOTTLE OF BBQ SAUCE

To make individual plate servings, cover the plate with as many Doritos as you want. Put 1 cup of pulled pork on top of Doritos. Add 1/4 cup of shredded cheese to pulled pork. Top with 3 tablespoons of sour cream and as many jalapenos as you want. Zigzag BBQ sauce over the top. Makes 4 plates.

JENNIFER ROBERTS ★ FARSON

SPARE RIBS ON THE BBQ

- 1 PACKAGE OF PORK SPARE RIBS
- SALT, PEPPER & GARLIC POWDER TO TASTE

Remove ribs from store package, rinse with cold water, pat dry with paper towel.

Cut ribs every other rib, so you have two ribs per serving. Decorate ribs with salt, pepper and garlic powder to taste, feel free to add any other spices you like. Let ribs sit at room temperature for about 10-15 minutes and preheat BBQ to 350 degrees.

Place ribs on the BBQ meat side down, set a timer for 5 minutes then flip the ribs and repeat for a total of 20-25 minutes. Preheat oven to 325 degrees, then remove ribs from BBQ and place in 13x9 inch cake pan and cover with foil, place in the oven for 1 hour.

Serve with BBQ sauce, baked beans, coleslaw or potato salad.

BETSY JENSEN ★ POWELL

P



AUGUST:
PEANUTS

SUBMIT
A RECIPE

Send complete recipe by July 10!

Please include your name, address and phone number.

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REGINA LEASTMAN ★ CARPENTER

Single-Wide Luxury

If a man's home is his castle,
then that makes me the queen,
Of a fourteen by seventy foot
American mobile dream.

There are no granite countertops,
no marble floors to shine:
Just one solid slab of vinyl
and every inch is mine.

No staircases or upper floors:
no sunroom down the hall.
Just three bedrooms and a toilet
all enclosed by paneled wall.

There are no elegant light fixtures
hanging overhead,
But last year we upgraded to a
torch lamp by the bed.

We have no fancy landscaping –
no exotic shrubs or trees.
But there's a humble patch of veggies
and tree line to catch the breeze.

Sometimes the stained-up ceiling
and worn down carpet on the floor
Can be a touch discouraging
and leave me wanting more.

But then I'll see the neighbor's rat race
to keep the banker paid;
In debt up to their eyeballs
before that first brick is laid.

Makes me grateful to my Maker
to be sippin' sweet iced tea
From the front porch of my castle,
livin' in single-wide luxury!

IT
MUST
BE
SPRING

WORLD WAR VETERAN

He's wearing orthopedic shoes,
a windbreaker and a smile.
From the looks of things, I'd say,
he's been sitting there quite a while:
Holding hands with his beloved
over a slice of pizza pie,
Two straws in one cup –
an ode to days gone by.
But what catches my attention,
and is holding it even now,
is the cap reading "World War Veteran,"
that's perched upon his brow.
You see, there's kindness in those eyes
that have seen the horrors of war;

A gentleness in the hands
that held a gun on foreign shores.
When I thank him for his service,
he thanks me and calls me "ma'am."
From a face that's filled with age spots,
I see a glimpse of a young man.
Busy people rush around us,
none stopping to shake his hand.
Such a simple gift for one
who's kept freedom in our land.
I hope I never forget –
as I was reminded again today –
To thank the World War veteran,
who paid a price I can't repay.

*I'm waking to birds as they twitter and sing,
Throw back the covers! It must be spring!*

*There's daffodils blooming and tulips galore,
Give a hearty "hello," spring's at the door!*

*Mr. Robin is back, so it must be true –
Winter is gone and all things are new!*

*Throw open the windows, leave the door wide,
We're running outdoors after four months inside!*

*Kittens are meowing, calves give a bawl,
They all agree, spring's best of all!*

*A warm hug from the sun, a kiss from the breeze,
Oh how I love it when spring aims to please!*

*I'm basking in sunshine, my heart fairly glows,
When a tiny white speck lands right on my nose.*

*One after another, they drift from the sky,
Covering the greenery and making my cry.*

*What could have done such a cruel-hearted thing?
Wait. I live in Wyoming ... it must be spring.*

We share a selection of WREN readers' creative writing (poems, limericks, haiku, short verse, and prose) every issue as space and content allow. To be considered for publication, please include the author's consent to be submitted, his or her mailing address, and confirmation that the work has not been published elsewhere. If you would like us to return your work, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING REGIONAL MAP



★
Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic,
events may be postponed or canceled. Please
call ahead before attending events.

FEATURED EVENT



RIDE THE DIVIDE

SAVERY
JULY 18 & 19

Tractor ride between Savery and Riverside crosses the Continental Divide at Battle Pass. \$70, Yampa Valley Antique Power Club members \$50. Antique tractors only.

INFO 970-270-2401
LITTLESNAKERIVERMUSEUM.COM

SOUTHEAST

01 | SOUTHEAST

CENTENNIAL

JULY 4-5

Centennial Valley Art Show and Sale: Benefit for the Centennial Valley Historical Association. 9a, Nici Self Museum, free to attend, info 307-745-9322.

ENCAMPMENT

JUNE 20

Rodeo: The Encampment Riverside Lions Club is tentatively planning a one day rodeo, info 307-327-5374.

LUSK

JUNE 27

Alumni Weekend: With BBQ, book sales and ice cream social. Info 307-334-2950.

MEDICINE BOW

FOURTH TUESDAYS

Bingo: 7p, Community Hall, info 307-710-4045.

SARATOGA

JULY 3-5

Good Times Valley Independence Day Party: Old-fashioned celebration with parade, fireworks, live music, art show, barbeques, reunions and kids' activities. Info 307-326-8855, goodtimesvalley.com.

JULY 4-5

Festival of the Arts: Well-known artists from around the region will compete. 19 Artist booths and 50 juried pieces. 10a, Platte Valley Community Center, donations welcome. Info 307-326-8187.

TORRINGTON

JUNE 27-28

Thunder in the Valley: Mud truck race. 5151 Liftstation Road, info 307-575-5720, mudracersassociation.org.

02 | NORTHEAST

GILLETTE

THROUGH DECEMBER

Campbell County Women in World War II: 9a-5p Mon-Sat, Campbell County Rockpile Museum, free, info 307-682-5723, abeenken@ccgov.net.

MOORCROFT

ONGOING

Senior Center Events: Third Thu Birthday and Anniversary Dinner, meat provided, bring a side dish. 5p social hour, 6p dinner; fourth Thu toenail clinic 9a, info 307-756-9550.

NEWCASTLE

FRIDAYS

Bingo: 7:30p, VFW Hall, free.

PINE HAVEN

JULY 3

Independence Celebration Fireworks Exhibition: Fundraiser for volunteer fire department, 8p, Keyhole Reservoir, donations accepted, info 307-756-9807.

UPTON

JULY 18-19

Fun Days: Info 307-468-2642.

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS

Outdoor Archery: 12-8:30p, 2741 N. Hwy 116, \$5, info 307-468-2506.

ONGOING

Upton Gun Club Events: 5-Stand Shotgun Course, 5p \$5; Trap Shooting, \$5, 5p. 2579 State Hwy 116N, info 307-281-9980, rrothleutner@yahoo.com.

03 | NORTHWEST

DUBOIS

JULY 4

July 4th Celebration: Events around town all day including parade, ice cream social, sidewalk sale and fireworks at dusk. Info 307-455-2556, duboiswyomingchamber.org.

JULY 13-27

National Fine Art Show: 9a-6p, Headwaters Arts and Conference Center, \$2/\$5 family. Info 307-455-2687, Headwaterscenter.org.

JULY 18

Museum Day: Family fun with an old-fashioned bake sale, pioneer stew and fry bread, blacksmithing, steam engines and live music. 11a-2p, Dubois Museum, info 307-455-2680, dwimmer43@gmail.com, fremontcountymuseums.com.

THURSDAYS STARTING JUNE 25

Farmers' Market: 4-6p, under the awning at Nostalgia Bistro. Info 307-455-2513.

FRIDAYS IN JULY

Friday Night Rodeos: Favorite family friendly event for all ages. Bull riding, bronc riding, team roping, barrel racing, rodeo clowns and calf roping. 7:30-10p, 5649 Hwy. 287/26, \$10, ages 5-12 \$5. Info 307-486-2214, Facebook.

LANDER**JULY 4**

Pioneer Days Rodeo and Indian Relay Races: Fireworks will take place, all other events are canceled. Info landerchamber.org.

JULY 15-19

International Climbers' Festival: Climbing clinics, competition, brewing tour, trail run, film festival, yoga, live music, art crawl, writer's clinic. Lander City Park and locations around Lander. Tickets and packages available. Info 307-349-1561, 307-332-3892.

WEDNESDAYS IN JULY

Eagle Spirit Dancers: Join in the Friendship Dance against the backdrop of the Wind River Mountains. Benches provided, but lawn chairs and blankets welcome. 7-8:30p, Museum of the American West. Info 307-335-8778, museumoftheamericanwest.com.

SATURDAYS

Farmers' Market: Fresh produce, meats, dairy, baked goods, homemade crafts and live music. 9-11:30a, Lander City Park, info facebook.com/landervalleymarket.

ONGOING

Art shows: Artists show their work at gallery. "Wild Silence" July 1-11, "Earth and Fire" July 18-31. Tue-Thu 10a-6p, Fri-Sat 10a-4p. Lander Art Center, free. Info 307-332-5772, landerartcenter.com.

ONGOING**Wind River Wild Horse Sanctuary**

Tour: Mon-Fri 10a-2p, Sat 11a-2p. 8616 Hwy. 287. \$35, \$15 for ages 13-18, under 12 free. Call to confirm, 307-438-3838, wrwhs10@gmail.com, windriverwildhorses.com.

RIVERTON**JULY 1-5****1838 Mountain Man Rendezvous:**

Learn fire starting with flint and steel, Dutch oven cooking, black powder shoots, flint knapping, teepee set-up, trap setting and more. End of Monroe Ave. Info 307-851-4059, 1838rendezvous.com.

THURSDAYS

Music Jam: Sing or play folk, classic, country, bluegrass, old time rock n' roll and more. 6:30-8:30p, Brown Sugar Roastery, free, info 307-856-2518.

SOUTH PASS CITY**ONGOING**

Carissa Gold Mine Mill Tour: Thu-Sun. No kids under 8. Reservations recommended, 307-332-3684., info@southpasscity.com, southpasscity.com/tours.

TEN SLEEP**JULY 18**

Ten Sleep Youth Rodeo: Free youth rodeo with events for everyone up through age 14. Info 303-507-5720.

THERMOPOLIS**JULY 1**

Air Force Band: 7p, Hot Springs State Park pavilion, info thermopolischamber.org.

JULY 4

River Dance: Dance to the sounds of Blackwater, fireworks at dusk. Hot Springs State Park lower terraces shelter, 8-11p, info thermopolischamber.org.



Send complete information for the August issue's events by **JULY 10!**

Please remember that events from the 20th of August to the 20th of September are included in the August issue.

Be sure to include the date, title, description, time, cost, location, address and contact information for each event.

Photos are always welcome.



Look for more events at wyomingrea.org/news.

QUESTIONS & SUBMISSIONS:

✉ wren@wyomingrea.org

☎ [307] 772-1968

✉ 214 W. Lincolnway Ste. 21C Cheyenne, WY 82001

💻 wyomingrea.org/wren-submissions

JULY 26

Romancing the West: Music and video, 7:30p Hot Springs State Park pavilion, info thermopolischamber.org.

AUGUST 20

Pack'n the Mail: 7p, Hot Springs State Park pavilion, info thermopolischamber.org.

04 | SOUTHWEST

FORT BRIDGER**JULY 3**

Treaty Day: 10a, Fort Bridger State Historic Site, free, info 307-782-3842.

JULY 4**Fourth of July Parade and Kids' Extreme:**

Parade through town begins at 11a. Kids' Extreme at Fort Bridger State Historic Site follows, with games, activities, prizes and refreshments. Free, info 307-782-3842.

JULY 18

Hands on History: Participate in quilting, canvas tents, tomahawk throwing, rope making and more. Lunch available for purchase. 10a-3p, Fort Bridger State Historic Site, \$5, \$3 residents, 17 and under free, info 307-782-3842.

TUESDAYS

Bingo: 6p, American Legion Hall, info 307-780-5489.

MOUNTAIN VIEW**SECOND WEDNESDAYS****Chamber of Commerce**

Community Luncheon: For business owners and individuals alike. \$15/plate, noon, Mountain View Town Hall, RSVP bvchamber@bvca.net, 307-787-6378.

ONGOING

Community Classes: Fitness, computer, workforce and kids' classes are available. Valley Learning Center, times and prices vary. Info valleylearningcenter.coursetorm.com or 307-782-6401.



01



02

01 | Badger Creek Fire, James Alsop, Laramie

02 | Ames Monument and forest fire sunset, Megan Shifflett, Laramie

03 | Eliminating the old and rotting pest trap in our neighborhood beautification effort, MaryAnne Smith, Torrington

04 | Big Creek Fire, Stas Banach, Encampment



04



03

JUST PICTURE IT

THIS MONTH:

FIRE



AUG (DUE JUL 10):

QUARANTINE

SEP (DUE AUG 10):

BRIDGES



05



06



07

05 | Southeast High School Homecoming bonfire in Yoder, Barb Becker, Torrington

06 | Combustion reaction – controlled burn, David Zimmerer, Lingle

07 | Thorne Divide Fire, Ruthale Newby, Moorcroft

08 | Watching the campfire, Hollie Gilbert, Harrisburg, Nebraska

09 | Crandall Creek ablaze, Jerry Longobardi, Meeteetse



08

09





10



11



12

- 10** | North Fork Fire in August 2016, Toby Sheets, Powell
- 11** | Spring cleanup bonfire, Anwyn Newswanger, Carpenter
- 12** | An old fire chief, Jana Ginter, Carpenter
- 13** | Children's volunteer fire department, Jennifer Roberts, Farson
- 14** | Breakfast in luxury, Ruth Zeller, Lovell
- 15** | Ryan Fire, Michelle Rakness, Encampment



13



14



15



✉ wren@wyomingrea.org
 ✉ 214 W. Lincolnway Ste. 21C Cheyenne, WY 82001
 📠 wyomingrea.org/wren-submissions

Please include your name, hometown and a title.

Please submit high-quality digital files* or an original we can scan, as well as details about the artwork, the artist's name, and the co-op. *Use the highest quality setting on your camera, or save digital artwork as a .jpg or .tif file with at least 300 dpi resolution. Don't use Kodak Easy Share®.

If you would like your work returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

CALL THE BRAND

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combined

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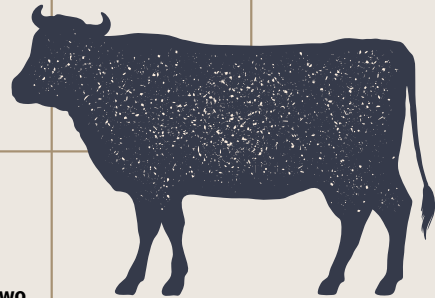
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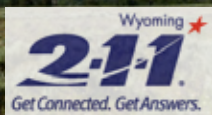
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PUZZLE ON PAGE 25

There are so many reasons we find ourselves where we do in life. Wherever you're at and however you got there, you're never alone. For resources on temporary housing and shelter, affordable housing, financial assistance grants, help paying bills or for groceries, and more — dial 2-1-1 and talk to a real person who's ready to listen to and serve you.



Dial 2-1-1 or 888-425-7138 or visit www.wyoming211.org



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Branding Time

BY CHUCK LARSEN

There's still a bit of "fresh" in the air when I arrive and the stillness of the morning is infringed upon by the sounds of trucks and trailers pulling in, the rattle of horse hooves on trailer floors, the nervous nickers and whinnies of saddle horses joining the voices of family, friends and neighbors who have gathered this day because ... it's branding time.

The riders are made up of a diverse group: husbands, wives, relatives, friends, neighbors and a smattering of the future generation of ranching; youngsters riding tried and true equine babysitters. There's a general "catching up" that goes on in the conversations held during the ride out for the gather. Topics might range from the past winter's happenings, family events, how calving season went, speculations on summer grasses and the weather.

Oh, and I'd be remiss if I left out the fact that there's a considerable amount of good natured joshin' that goes on ... there's always plenty of joshin'! On occasion, that conversation might be momentarily interrupted when hoots and hollers are sent to echo across the nearby hills, as the cool morning air lights the fuse of a cold-backed horse, causing it to break in two. At this point it's always the cowboy way to express words of encouragement to the ill-fated rider who has now garnished the attention of his ... pals: "Hang on!" "Don't weaken!" "Stick with him!"

Now, if this spur-of-the-moment bronc ride should happen to end in the horse's favor and nobody ends up





Holding a calf for branding.

PHOTOS BY LLOYD PRUET



Chuck Larsen, second from right, takes a break with the crew.

**It's that deep
down good
feeling to know
that a good job
has been done.**

worse for wear, cowboys are masters at expressing their genuine concern: "Are you sure (gag, snort, giggle) that you're OK?" "For a half a second there I sure thought you had him!" "If he hadn't bucked you off I'm sure you'd of rode him!" "Isn't that your wife's horse?" "You need to work a little on your dismount!" and then, "Maybe your kids will let you ride one of theirs!" Yes there's joshin', oh yes there's always joshin'.

Now the cattle being good mothers and possessing a keen maternal memory take note of the approaching riders and start talking to their calves. Some will nonchalantly start leading their calves off while others stand their ground, innocently refusing to betray where they have their babies hidden. As the gather converges, the din raised by the cows talking to their calves grows and is mixed with the shouts of the riders as they move the herd to the branding trap. For me there always seems to be a sense of relief when the cows and calves are tucked away safely in the trap and a sense of accomplishment, knowing with confidence that we've successfully gathered the whole bunch.

At this point a flurry of activity erupts as preparations are made for the upcoming work. Duties are divided up amongst the crew; in some cases the calves are sorted from the cows, vaccine guns need to be filled and readied, branding irons are placed to heat up in the branding fire, those of the crew designated to rope will tighten the cinches on their saddles (especially if one of them is the rider that

got bucked off earlier). When all is ready and the signal given, it's as if someone has released the brake and the gears of a well-oiled machine are put into motion. The entire scene is a portrait of teamwork; ropers dragging calves, wrestlers throwing and holding the calves, vaccinators inoculating the calves to prevent against disease, at least one person designated to the job of "modifying" bulls into steers, and the branders who place upon the calf the indelible mark of pride associated with that particular ranch.

I can't help but note that there is much more to all of this. Along with the acrid puffs of smoke from burning hair you'll note the easy handling of good cattle, the humble expertise of horsemanship, the coordinated efforts of the entire crew and on the side, the rite of passage as young learn from old; and smiles of the old when they see their teachings bear fruit. In all, it's a day of shared hard work and an overall sense of comradery and appreciation for family and friends. There's more than a smidgeon of pride that runs through the crew when the last calf is turned loose and it mothers up with its worried mom. It's that deep down good feeling to know that a good job has been done.

It's when I load my horse and head for home, filled to the brim and close to being foundered from a great after-branding meal, that I have time to reflect back on the day. I laugh to myself about the comments made in regard to my hunting a low spot to put my horse in so that I could drag my old bones up into the saddle (I did say there was a lot of joshin' didn't I?). I also take a moment to say a silent prayer to the Lord thanking him for the day spent with good folks, for the honor to be part of the crew, for it not being my horse that broke in two that morning, and last but not least I thank him for ... branding time.

W

Chuck Larsen managed Saratoga-based Carbon Power and Light for 23 years. He now lives in Hulett with his wife, Linda.

CATEGORIES

01. EQUIPMENT
02. FOR SALE
03. HORSES
04. LIVESTOCK
05. POULTRY
06. REAL ESTATE
07. WANTED
08. CRAFTS
09. OPPORTUNITIES
10. MISCELLANEOUS
11. BUSINESS CONSULTING
12. FOR RENT
13. HELP WANTED
14. DOGS
15. EMPLOYMENT SOUGHT
16. BUILDING SUPPLIES
17. TRAVEL & RECREATION
18. HEALTH
19. PERSONAL
20. FREE

02|FOR SALE

Brokenbackranchqh.com 2019 AQHA, APHA and quality grade quarter horse colts/fillies. Roans, Bay, Sorrels, Tobiano, Gray. 307-272-5509. Ten Sleep, 82442.

New & Used Coal Stokers, parts, service & advice. Available for most makes. Thanks. 307-754-3757.

Shaver Outdoor Wood Boiler Furnace. Aermotor Windmills and parts, cylinders, pipe, rod, submersible pumps, motors, control boxes, Hastings 12 ga. bottomless stock tanks and more. In business for more than 74 years. Herren Bros., Box 187, Harrison NE. 1-308-668-2582.

Surplus Equipment New and Used: Generators, air heaters, engine driven pumps, (all sizes), solar pumps, 3" and 4" polypipe, etc. A variety of types and sizes available. Call for pricing and details: Premier PowerPlants & Pumps, Farson, WY 307-273-9591.

07|WANTED

Antique Collector Looking For Oil Company Gas Pumps, Globes And Signs. Will pay fair market value! Also looking for general antiques for our antique shop. Please go to our website FrontierAutoMuseum.com. Located in Gillette WY, our passion is to preserve Wyoming history and the nostalgia of the past, especially Parco, Sinclair, Frontier, Husky and any car dealership along with all brands. We are also always looking for WY license plates and WY highway signs and State Park signs. Please call Jeff Wandler 307-680-8647 wandlerfrontier@gmail.com or daughter Briana Brewer 307-660-2402 bbrewer@frontierauto.net.

MOSS ROCK—Wyoming Moss Rock. We will buy your moss rock. All types, colors, and sizes are considered; the more moss the better, the more unusual the better. Call Gina for details, 307-761-1838.

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Send details to: PO Box 13557, Denver, CO 80201.

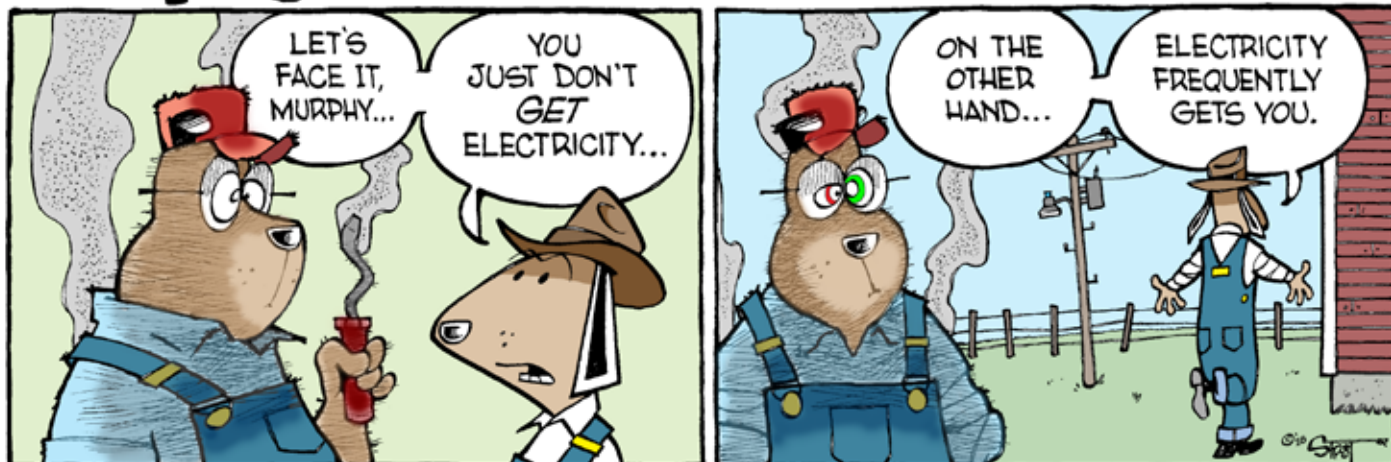
18|HEALTH

Medicare supplement plans for 65+ seniors. Which options might be best for you? Contact us for help guiding through the Medicare supplement process. Insurance Services, 40 years experience in the state of WY. Call Susan Burke, (307) 682-1449 or Carol Maras, (307) 686-0639.

20|FREE

Soon Church/Government uniting, suppressing "Religious Liberty" enforcing "National Sunday Law." Be Informed! Needing Mailing address. TSBM, PO Box 374, Ellijay, GA 30540, thebiblesaystruth@yahoo.com, 1-888-211-1715.

Murphy



DRIVE ELECTRIC

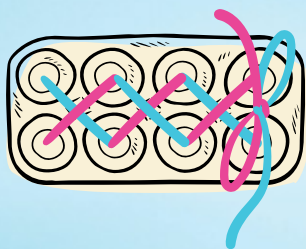
The average electric vehicle can save a driver who drives 15,000 miles in a year about \$850 annually on fuel. All-electric vehicles start to pay for themselves a long time before they reach the end of their expected lifespans, leading to significant savings over time.

-Fleet Carma



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ENCOURAGE YOUR KIDS'

Fine MOTOR SKILLS

Learning to tie their own shoes takes a lot of practice, as well as fine motor skills and visual perceptual skills. You can help your kids get off on the right foot by practicing together with this simple craft!



SUPPLIES YOU'LL NEED:

1 Egg carton

2 Shoelaces

(or yarn, heavy string, etc.)
Preferably in two different colors

1

Punch holes in the bottom of the egg carton

Let your kids help with this for a fun proprioceptive activity

2

Tie the laces together at one end and thread them through the holes in the egg carton

This encourages bilateral hand coordination

3

Now you're ready to practice

Help your kids with verbal cues at each step and lots of encouragement

★ For activities that support your kids' strong and healthy bodies, visit wyqualitycounts.org/wren ★



THIS MONTH'S ACTIVITY

DIY 3 INGREDIENT SIDEWALK CHALK PAINT!



WY Quality Counts, housed in the Department of Workforce Services, helps Wyoming parents and child care providers identify and create quality learning experiences for children, thanks to the funding of the Wyoming Legislature.



All WY Quality Counts activities are supported by the Wyoming Early Learning Foundations and Guidelines, as well as the Domains of Development, which include:

COMMUNICATION

SENSE OF SELF & RELATIONSHIPS

CURIOUS MINDS

STRONG & HEALTHY BODIES