



**HIGH  
PLAINS  
POWER**

**NEWS**

Your Touchstone Energy<sup>®</sup> Cooperative  
The power of human connections



MEMBER NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2010

# Manager's Message

Dear Members: \_\_\_\_\_ by Jeff Hohn



## Tri-State Announces No Rate Increases

At the September Board Meeting, the staff of Tri-State presented the 2011 budget to the Board. Following the presentation, the staff recommended to the Board that there will not be a change in the rate structure for 2011. The Board unanimously voted to accept the staff's recommendation. Therefore, there **will not be a rate increase for 2011.** High Plains Power is not expecting to have a retail rate increase for 2011 either. We are beginning the 2011 budget process, so we are not sure what the result will be, but we don't foresee a requirement for a rate increase. We are not expecting to see rate pressure until 2012, but will keep you informed of our financial requirements.

### STORAGE HEATERS

With the mornings becoming increasing cooler, it is time to think about our heating systems. Those of you with storage heaters will, by the time this newsletter is distributed, be on the winter season on/off peak rates. Now is the time to see if your storage heater is working before the weather turns cold.

The beauty of the storage heaters is that they are generally maintenance free. It will be to your advantage to check to see if your heater is working properly

early in the fall so that you do not have problems in the dead of winter.

Because of the number of member/owners that have storage heaters, we are in the process of contacting area electricians to assist us with any repairs. As of this writing, we don't have a list of electricians together yet. We are hoping to have this list by the time this newsletter is published.

I also wanted to let everyone know that Tri-State has not changed the on-peak and off-peak times. These times will remain the same again this year. They are very aware of problems that not only our member/owners are having, but also the member/owners of all the other Cooperatives are having. We will continue to stress the need for lengthening the charge time, but for this year everything is going to stay the same.

### BUILDING

I thought that I would give you a quick update on the new office/warehouse that we are building. There hasn't been much of a change from the pictures that you saw last month. About all that has changed, is the floor of the administration building has been poured. They

*(continued on page 4)*

### Inside:

Cooperative Month...2 & 3  
Lehto Retires.....4



**O**ctober is National Cooperative Month. Since 1930, Cooperative Month has celebrated the fact that cooperatives make a difference because they are different.

Democratically governed businesses, cooperatives are organized under the Seven Cooperative Principles, anchoring them firmly in the communities they serve and ensuring that they are closely regulated by their consumers.

At High Plains Power, we strive to commit to you our members. We

cover a big area in parts of Fremont, Natrona, Carbon, Big Horn, Park, Hot Springs and Washakie counties.

A lot of our commitment comes through donations and sponsorships to Wyoming Public Television, county fairs and rodeos. We also donate to county 4-H councils, FFA programs and provide educational scholarships. High Plains also contributes to after prom parties and graduation parties hoping to keep our youth safe after these big celebrations. Donations are also made to local search and

rescue, fire departments and sheriff departments.

Safety demonstrations at schools, highway departments, and fire departments are also done on a yearly basis.

### **Operation Round Up**

Contributions through the Operation Round Up Foundation are given to members of High Plains Power.

Through the help, of you, the members, the Foundation has been able to donate monetary assistance to members who have had mishaps such as fires or medical needs. Operation Round Up has also awarded students with scholarships.

This is all possible because of the member/owners who have agreed to donate to the Foundation by having their electric bills rounded up to the nearest dollar and those few cents contributed to the Round Up program.

To learn more about this worthy cause, please call our office or you may find information about it on our website, [www.highplainspower.org](http://www.highplainspower.org).



# The Power of Membership

Now, as always, it's a good time to be a member of an electric cooperative. Not only are co-ops locally owned and controlled—by you, our members—they are locally run to serve your needs.

While many High Plains Power, Inc. electricity consumers pay power bills to companies that answer to far-away stockholders who demand a healthy profit every quarter, local members call the shots at electric co-ops like ours. Co-ops aren't under pressure to keep rates high enough to generate big profits. Instead, co-ops try to keep your bill as low as possible while providing high-quality service. Co-ops invest money in excess of operating costs back into the business locally or return the excess (known as margins) to you in the form of capital credits.

And unlike the boards of directors of investor-owned utilities who keep an eye on generating profits for people living far away, your co-op's directors (fellow members, by the way) have only one thing in mind: keeping lights on safely, reliably, and keeping costs affordable in our local community. That's why you elected them. And that's what's so great about co-ops. If you don't like the direction your co-op is taking, you have the power to change the leadership through democratic means.

You may know the history of the electric cooperative movement, how seven decades ago rural residents banded together to bring the conveniences of electricity to their communities when investor-owned utilities would not extend service.

The associations they formed, on the same democratic principles as this great nation, are as strong and relevant today as they were back then.

But co-ops are not just products of a proud past. These days, Americans from all walks of life have come to recognize the co-op approach—members working together to achieve price and service benefits—can work for other needs just as effectively as it delivered affordable power to rural Americans.

The seven principles upon which electric co-ops were founded—voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, and members' economic participation, among others—are as meaningful today as they were when electric co-ops began in the 1930s.

Leadership at High Plains Power, Inc. shares the same concerns as you, our members. We are accessible. You can give us a call or send us an e-mail and know someone here is listening. And at our annual meeting in March 2011 visit with us in person and share insights on how you want your business operated.

In these days of economic turmoil, folks who receive electricity from co-ops are lucky. As locally owned and operated businesses, electric co-ops understand the people they serve. Directors and employees at your co-op share the same values and have the same pride of place as you do because it is our community, too. We act like neighbors because we *are* neighbors.

That's the cooperative difference.

## Seven Cooperative Principles:

1. *Voluntary and Open Membership*
2. *Democratic Member Control*
3. *Member's Economic Participation*
4. *Autonomy and Independence*
5. *Education, Training, and Information*
6. *Cooperation Among Cooperatives*
7. *Commitment to Community*

*Continued from page 1 -  
Manager's Message*

are scheduled to begin erecting the administration building on September 13<sup>th</sup>, so we should have some pictures next month that will show the framing of the building.

They are still in the process of pouring the footings of the warehouse. As of this writing, they are about 2/3 of the way done. They are scheduled to have the footings completed by the week of September 6<sup>th</sup>. With the cold weather quickly approaching, they are planning on erecting the building before pouring the floor. This will give the floor some protection from the elements. We are still on schedule for a June 2011 move in date.

If you would like to contact me for any reason, my email address is [jhphp@wyoming.com](mailto:jhphp@wyoming.com).

## Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)

LIEAP applications are available at the High Plains Power office. Be sure to submit the applications early so it can assist you during the winter months. Eligibility is based on income. If you have any questions, please contact the High Plains Power Customer Service department.

## Lehto Retires



Allen and Diane Lehto

On June 12, 1978 Allen Lehto began his lineman career at Riverton Valley Electric. After over 32 years of service, Lehto retired on September 15th.

Lehto's easy going and pleasant disposition will be missed.

He always had many stories and smiles and never seemed to get worked up over what may seem as stressful situations.

We wish you the best, Allen and hope you enjoy retirement to its fullest!

High Plains Power

# NEWS

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Phone 307-856-9426  
1-800-445-0613  
[www.highplainspower.org](http://www.highplainspower.org)

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