

HIGHLINE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

The Beacon

OCTOBER 2022



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Our mission is to provide our members with reliable, high-quality electricity and other needed services, which will improve their economic and social well-being and provide significant long-range benefits for our communities, our state and our nation.

HEA OFFICE HOURS

Holyoke: M-F | 7:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

Sterling: M-F | 8 a.m.-4:30

Ovid: M-Th | 9 a.m.-1 p.m.



Touchstone Energy®

WHAT'S IN A MAILBOX?

BY DENNIS HERMAN GENERAL MANAGER

I just saw a newspaper article discussing the upcoming protest of a local post office in Colorado. The root of the complaint is the fact that citizens living in town were required to pay for a post office box, while rural residents received delivery at no charge.

The article immediately took me back 15 years. For the first 10 years of our marriage, Trudy and I lived in the farmhouse where her dad grew up, but it was time for us to move closer to town. Our three kids were 3, 6 and 9 at the time of the move, and it's safe to say they were excited and apprehensive as moving day got closer.

We were working through the logistics of the upcoming move when we eventually came to the topic of mail. I remember sharing my opinion with Trudy that we should just get a post office box since we would be within only a few minutes of town. I may have reached this conclusion because it was also the easy way out from my perspective: I wouldn't have to get a mailbox installed at the house in addition to dealing with all the other tasks that come with moving. My daughter Josie, the 6-year-old, overheard this conversation and quickly interjected that we couldn't get a post office box because we were "mailbox people."

Having a mailbox was an important part of her life. It was synonymous with living in the country and living a rural lifestyle. It meant a leisurely stroll with Mom, Dad or maybe the whole family to retrieve the mail each day.

As this memory of our move 15 years ago came flooding back to me, it occurred to me that we truly are "mailbox people." But my definition of that term has expanded over time.

I have spent most my life living in or near small towns in rural America. In that time, the majority of the people I have encountered



DENNIS HERMAN

have been "mailbox people," though it has nothing to do with where you live or where you receive your mail. So, how do they earn that distinction? By their participation and actions in their community. Mailbox people are always quick to assist a neighbor in need. This assistance comes in many forms: a meal delivered to a grieving family; a workday to assist an injured community member; or a fundraiser organized for a family in distress. Mailbox people are also quick to volunteer their services or donate their hard-earned money to organizations and causes that make the community a better place for others, even those that may not benefit them personally. They are willing to make personal sacrifices to keep their communities viable for future generations. They understand the value of paying it forward.

In many ways, cooperatives embody many of the same values. While providing safe, affordable and reliable electric power is our number one priority, we at Highline Electric Association also strive to improve and sustain the communities that we call home through multiple community programs, including:

- College scholarships
- Safety education programs
- Dolly Parton Imagination Library book program
- Donations to first responders
- Economic development loans
- Energy-efficiency rebate program
- Rural energy savings loans

Highline understands the value of paying it forward, too.

And if you're wondering — Trudy and I still have a mailbox today.

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE **NATIONAL COOPERATIVE MONTH**

Visit your local Highline office during the month of October and enter your name for a chance to win a **\$50 bill credit**.



Must be a Highline member to win. Visit HEA office for details. Board members, employees and spouses are not eligible.



BREAKFAST BURRITOS

October 14 | 8 a.m.

Join Highline Electric for a FREE Santiago's breakfast burrito at any one of our offices as we celebrate YOU, our member.

Supply is limited; first come, first served.

Programs and Benefits Available to Members

Quick facts about programs and benefits that Highline Electric Association has available to members. Interested? Call, visit us online at www.hea.coop or email info@hea.coop with questions.

AUTO PAY | Put your account on auto pay to save time and money. Call to set up automatic recurring withdrawals from your preferred financial institution, credit card or debit card.

ENERGY EFFICIENT REBATES | Rebates are available on LED bulbs, smart thermostats, electric motors, lawn mowers and more. Visit our office or go online for more details.

RURAL ENERGY SAVINGS PROGRAM | This program helps rural families and small businesses achieve cost savings by providing loans to qualified consumers to implement durable cost-effective energy-efficiency measures.

CAPITAL CREDITS | When you pay your electric bill, a portion of that goes directly toward your investment in our electrical system. Not-for-profit electric cooperatives return any profits, or margins, to their members in the form of capital credits.

YOUTH PROGRAMS | Leadership Camp, Washington D.C. Youth Tour and 14 scholarships are available to dependents of HEA members.

MOBILE APP | Access your account, pay your statement, view usage and more on the HEA mobile app when you create an online account with a user name and password.

LOANS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES | Highline is seeking to improve the quality of life in rural areas through its Revolving Loan Fund and Rural Economic Development Loans. Loans must meet certain criteria; please contact HEA if you're interested.

RENEWABLE ENERGY | Highline allows for net metering renewable energy installed behind the meter. Please visit www.hea.coop or call if you're interested in installing renewable energy on your property.

This association is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

NEED HELP WITH YOUR HOME HEATING COSTS THIS WINTER?



Nebraska's Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program helps low-income households stay safe and healthy by providing financial assistance to offset the costs of home heating and cooling. LIHEAP particularly helps households that pay a high portion of household income for home energy to meet immediate home energy needs. **Heating season runs from October 1 to March 31.** A person may apply to receive assistance from LIHEAP by calling ACCESSNebraska at 1-800-383-4278 or visit the ACCESSNebraska website at <https://dhhs-access-neb-menu.ne.gov/start/?tl=en> to fill out an application.

Colorado's Low-income Energy Assistance Program is a federally-funded program that helps eligible hard-working Colorado

families, seniors and individuals pay a portion of their winter home heating costs. The goal is to help bring warmth, comfort and safety to your home and family by assisting with heating costs. **LEAP will begin accepting applications for the 2022-23 season on November 1.** Please call 1-866-HEAT-HELP (1-866-432-8435) for more information.



SCENES FROM THE SUMMER FAIR SEASON

Highline Electric Association is a proud sponsor of county fairs and the Colorado State Fair Junior Livestock Sale each year.

We at HEA congratulate all of the 4-H and FFA kids in the communities we serve for their success at the livestock sales this summer.

Congratulations to all!



Lucinda Mares, Julesburg



Ainsley Kramer, Holyoke



Bella Campbell, Julesburg



Avery Funk, Merino



Tenley Becker, Holyoke



Congratulations to the following employees who observe an HEA employment anniversary in October:

Jill Baumgartner, 33 years
Lukas Bracelin, 5 years
Tadius Huser, 4 years

Justin Wert, 3 years
Christopher Yanez, 1 year

I-76 AND EXIT 180: A Stop for New Technology

Most drivers traveling to or from Denver through the north-eastern plains of Colorado might approach exit 180 on Interstate 76 without much thought. But for electric vehicle drivers traveling the route, that's about to change.

Thanks to your local electric cooperative, Highline Electric Association, and its partnership with Tri-State Generation and Transmission and the Colorado Energy Office, the Wagon Wheel Conoco at exit 180 in Julesburg is home to the second-in-the-state single-phase DC fast-charging station.

The FreeWire® Boost™ Charger 150 is located at an ideal place for EVs to hook up for a fast charge when driving along I-76 to or from Denver. The interchange is 180 miles from the Denver metro area and the placement couldn't be more perfect, as the average range for most EVs is over 200 miles.

Highline's Manager of Member Services Tad Huser said this charger is designed for public use, and this location on the Interstate 76 corridor bridges the EV fast-charging gap between Fort Morgan, Colorado, and Ogallala, Nebraska.

Traditional EV fast chargers run on

three-phase power, which can be a less common setup in rural areas due to the infrastructure demands and upgrades often needed to install a typical EV fast charger.

"The FreeWire Boost Charger technology enables public EV fast charging at gas stations, convenience stores and restaurants that run on single-phase power," Huser stated.

Now for the specs: The Boost Charger 150 unit has an on-board 160-kilowatt-hour battery that can impart up to 150 kilowatts of power to a single user. If both charging heads are being used, the max power to each charging head is split and can charge at 75kW max each. Both charging heads are the CCS connector that is quickly becoming the international standard outside of Tesla's proprietary connector.

The fees at the station are \$0.25 per kWh and there is a parking/idle fee of \$0.10 per minute after 30 minutes of idle (plugged-in) time to incentivize unplugging and moving along once charging is complete. The station has a credit card terminal where users can swipe to pay. Users may also scan a QR code on the unit that takes them to the EV Connect mobile app where they can pay via their phone as well.



▲ HEA's new FreeWire Boost fast charger is located at the Wagon Wheel Conoco in Julesburg at exit 180.



▲ A Ford F-150 Lightning towing a trailer uses the FreeWire Boost fast charger in Julesburg.

2022 LOAD CONTROL PROGRAM HAS ENDED

Load control for 2022 is over. Please note these important dates for Highline Electric Association's 2023 load control program:

Letters will be sent to all irrigation landowners mid-November. All irrigation wells that were in the 2022 Load Control Program will be **automatically** enrolled in the 2023 program on the same option unless Highline is notified by **February 28, 2023**. Included in the letter will be a fact sheet detailing each load control option. If you have changes for the

2023 load control program, including tenant changes, please call our office and contracts will be sent to you.

The deadline to return executed contracts for the 2023 Load Control Program is February 28. No option changes, additions or deletions will be allowed after February 28.

Please watch for your letter and notify Highline of any changes you want for the 2023 program.



Daylight Saving Time Ends November 6