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NEWS

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For more information, call us at 620-767-5144 or visit our website at www.flinthillsrec.com.

THIS INSTITUTION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.

FROM THE MANAGER

Co-ops Power Communities With Purpose

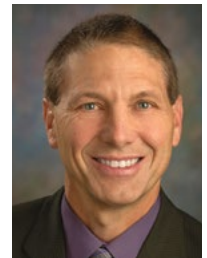
Communities come in all shapes and sizes. Some are based on geographical proximity, some are based on shared interests or hobbies, and some communities can even be found in virtual spaces like social media groups. Regardless of where or how they are formed, communities can bring people together and create a sense of belonging.

Flint Hills REC is deeply committed to our consumer-members, and we're glad you are part of the electric cooperative community.

This month, more than 30,000 cooperatives across the U.S. are celebrating National Co-op Month. It's a time to reflect on all the aspects that set cooperatives apart from other types of businesses, but more importantly, it's a time to celebrate the power of co-op membership.

Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit utilities that are built by the communities they serve. For Flint Hills

REC, our mission has always been to provide you with safe, reliable and affordable power. We care about your quality of life, and because we are locally operated, we're uniquely suited to meet our members' evolving energy needs.



Chuck Goeckel

Beyond the business of electricity, our employees and directors are equally invested in our local community. Why? Because we live here, too. That's why we work hard to support local economic development projects, youth programs and scholarships, charitable giving initiatives and additional programs that make our community a better place to call home.

All co-ops, including Flint Hills REC, are guided by seven cooperative principles that embody the values and spirit of the cooperative movement. These seven principles are a framework

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October is National

CO-OP MONTH

Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit, community-led utilities. Because we are a co-op, we can adapt to our local members' needs, providing the programs and services you care about most.

That's the power of co-op membership.

Co-ops Power Communities With Purpose *Continued from page 12A* ▶

to help all co-ops navigate challenges and opportunities while remaining true to our purpose:

1 OPEN AND VOLUNTARY MEMBERSHIP: Co-op membership is open to anyone who can use the co-op's services.

2 DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL: Members make decisions that shape the cooperative. Why? Because co-ops are created by the members, for the members.

3 MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION: Members contribute money to the co-op to make sure it runs smoothly now and in the future. At Flint Hills REC, this happens through paying your energy bills.

4 AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE: Co-ops are independent and can operate on their own, which ultimately benefits the members.

5 EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION: Co-ops continuously focus on education to ensure employees, and the board of trustees have the training and information

they need to make the co-op successful. At Flint Hills REC, we also provide electric safety training for our members and their families. This helps spread the safety message and ensure safety around the co-op's electric infrastructure.

6 COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES: Co-ops share with and learn from other cooperatives. We help each other out in times of need because we want other co-ops, and ours to thrive.

7 CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY: All cooperatives work for the greater good of the local communities they serve. Co-ops give back to their communities to help them thrive and grow.

This October, as we celebrate National Co-op Month and the power of membership, we hope you will recognize the many aspects that set electric cooperatives apart. Our mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable power. Our purpose is people — the local communities we're proud to serve.

Cybersecurity Tips for a Safer Digital World

Did you know the average household with internet access owns about 17 connected devices? That figure covers a wide range of electronics, including smart phones, computers, streaming devices, smart speakers, home assistants and more. Given our increasing reliance on internet-connected technologies, the likelihood of new cyber threats is ever-present.

Flint Hills REC is deeply committed to ensuring our local system is safe and secure. We routinely monitor and manage cyber risks, and we work together with other co-ops to share the latest advancements in cybersecurity measures that make us stronger. But you can help, too.

When we all work together to stay safe online, we lower the risk of cyber threats to our systems, online accounts and sensitive data.

October is National Cybersecurity Month, and while good cyber hygiene should be practiced year-round, we'd like to share a few cybersecurity tips to help you bolster your online safety.

- ▶ **LEARN HOW TO SPOT AND REPORT PHISHING ATTEMPTS.** Phishing occurs when criminals use phony emails, direct messages or other types of digital communications that lure you to click a bad link or download a malicious attachment. If you receive a suspicious email or message that includes urgent language, offers that seem too good to be true, generic greetings, poor grammar or an unusual sender address, it could be a phishing attempt. If you spot one, report it as soon as possible — and don't forget to block the sender. (If you receive a suspicious work email, report it to the appropriate IT contact. Suspicious messages delivered to your personal email or social media accounts can also be reported.)
- ▶ **CREATE STRONG, UNIQUE PASSWORDS.** When it comes to passwords, remember that length trumps complexity. Strong passwords contain at least 12 characters and include a mix of letters, numbers and symbols. Create unique passwords for

each online account you manage and use phrases you can easily remember.

- ▶ **ENABLE MULTI-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION WHEN AVAILABLE.** Multi-factor authentication (also known as two-factor authentication) adds an extra layer of security to your online accounts. These extra security steps can include facial recognition, fingerprint access, or one-time codes sent to your email or phone.
- ▶ **UPDATE SOFTWARE REGULARLY.** Software and internet-connected devices, including personal computers, smartphones and tablets, should always be current on updates to reduce the risk of infection from ransomware and malware. When possible, configure devices to automatically update or notify you when an update is available.

Let's all do our part to stay cyber smart and create a safer digital world for all. Visit www.staysafeonline.org to learn about additional cybersecurity tips.



Flint Hills REC Empowers Student Leader at Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp

LUKE BUDKE, representing Flint Hills REC, participated in the 47th Annual Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp (CYLC) July 12-18, 2024. Near scenic Steamboat Springs, Colorado, this event brought together 79 student leaders from Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado and Wyoming, sponsored by 44 participating electric and agriculture cooperatives.

Budke was selected by Flint Hills REC because of his exemplary leadership skills, academic prowess, involvement in extracurricular activities, and strong character as demonstrated in his application and interview.

Throughout the camp, students learned about the cooperative organizational structure and operation by forming a candy cooperative. To successfully operate their cooperatives, students collaborated with their peers, elected a board of student directors, appointed a general manager, formed committees, and engaged in daily membership meetings. In addition to these experiences, participants attended seminars covering leadership, conflict management, and co-op career pathways. The agenda also featured sessions on electric safety and avian protection by HawkQuest, and a tour of the Craig Power Station.

CYLC wasn't just about professional development; it also embraced the spirit of camaraderie and adventure. Students ventured to Mount Werner, downtown Steamboat Springs, and went whitewater rafting on the Colorado River. Students also participated in various recreational activities including a volleyball tournament,

swimming, a talent show and a dance.

"I believe that Craig Hillier and Craig Zablocki speeches were most moving and effective," explained Budke. "The ambassadors and counselors inspired me the most. I wish I knew how to have a 'yes and' mindset."

"At Flint Hills REC, we are invested in empowering young leaders. That's why we're excited to continue supporting the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp," said Travis Griffin, member services manager. "It's our way of giving students the chance to step up and make a real impact in our community."

Flint Hills REC sponsors the trip for one student each year. For more information on how to send students to camp, contact Travis Griffin at 620-767-5144.

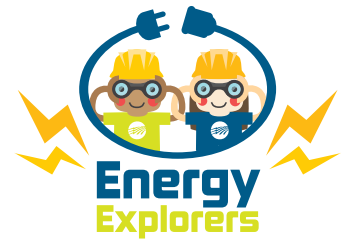


Luke Budke poses in front of Elk River during Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp July 12-18.

7 COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

Did you know electric co-ops are guided by a set of Seven Cooperative Principles? These principles ensure co-ops like ours remain focused on member needs, community impact and co-op values.

Complete the crossword below to learn more about the cooperative principles. Use the word bank to check your work.



ACROSS

- 2. **COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES:** Co-ops _____ and learn from other co-ops.
- 5. **AUTONOMY & INDEPENDENCE:** Co-ops are _____ and can operate on their own.
- 6. **MEMBER ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION:** Members _____ money to ensure the co-op runs smoothly.
- 7. **OPEN & VOLUNTARY MEMBERSHIP:** Co-op membership is open to _____ .

DOWN

- 1. **CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY:** Co-ops give back to their local _____ to help them thrive and grow.
- 3. **EDUCATION, TRAINING & INFORMATION:** Co-ops focus on _____ to ensure employees and members have the info they need.
- 4. **DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL:** Members get to make _____ about the co-op.

2 ACROSS: SHARE; 5 ACROSS: INDEPENDENT; 6 ACROSS: CONTRIBUTUTE; 7 ACROSS: EVERYONE; 1 DOWN: COMMUNITIES; 3 DOWN: EDUCATION; 4 DOWN: DECISIONS