

# Women in Rural Electrification

## 2024 WIRE Officers

- Gwen Vitosh, President (Norris PPD)
- Judith Woods, President-Elect (South Central PPD)
- Carol Oertwich, Secretary-Treasurer (Stanton County PPD)

## A NOTE FROM YOUR WIRE PRESIDENT

Hello everyone! Happy Spring to you all! I for one am very ready for warmth and sunshine with measurable moisture for the farms and yards. This past Winter was not that bad, so we can be thankful for that!

Our WIRE Annual Meeting for 2024 will be December 5, 2024, at the Younes Conference Center North in Kearney, starting at 8:00 a.m. with breakfast, followed by our annual meeting and then a very fun craft project. No one needs to be 'artistic' as there will be a lot of helpers there to

assist us. We can't wait to see you all there. It would be delightful to have one or more people from each of our 34 districts in attendance. The meeting and craft will be done by 11:00 a.m. or so. Everyone will then be free to meet friends for lunch and shopping.

In 2023, we had 40 participants for the WIRE craft project which was painting snowman door hangers. The Rustic Patch of Kearney brought all the supplies and did a great job of making sure our snowmen were all perfect. It was a great

turnout, and it was so much fun! There were no two snowmen painted the same way. We received a lot of positive feedback after the event. In 2024, we will do a similar craft project. We will have more details in the Fall. Keep in mind that we will need RSVPs for the craft project to get adequate supplies.

In this newsletter, we want to explain several items that I personally did not understand when I was first introduced to WIRE! After I (for the most part) got it figured out, with the help of many friends in WIRE, I fell in love with what WIRE does, the importance of what we do, and what we, together, can accomplish.

## 100% WIRE

### Membership 2024

- Burt County PPD
- Butler PPD
- Cuming County PPD
- KBR RPPD
- Norris PPD
- South Central PPD
- Stanton County PPD
- NREA

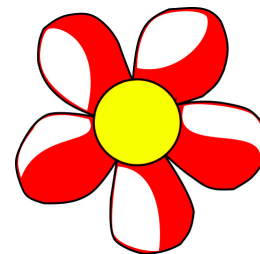
## WIRE MEMBERSHIP AND PURPOSE

**What is WIRE?** WIRE is *Women In Rural Electrification!*

**Who can be a member of WIRE?** Spouses of general managers and directors and also female employees of all districts are invited to be a member of WIRE and attend the WIRE Annual Meeting and craft event. Dues are ONLY \$5.00 per YEAR! PLEASE help educate the spouses of new directors and managers who may not know the important financial support WIRE provides for our youth in Nebraska.

You can send your dues to Rachael Black, at NREA, P.O. Box 82048, Lincoln, NE 68501, any time before the annual meeting in December or you can pay your dues at the annual meeting. It seems most efficient to me to send a check to Rachael at NREA for the total of all my directors' spouses and myself by October 31. That way our district has accomplished 100 percent WIRE membership, and we achieve honor roll status and receive our 100 percent

certificate at the annual WIRE meeting. The ladies pay me back at the annual meeting or whenever, and it is very simple. Our 100 percent WIRE membership certificate is proudly displayed at the District's main office.



# WIRE MEMBERSHIP AND PURPOSE

**What does WIRE do?** The purpose of WIRE is to assist the NREA board of directors and managers in achieving the Association's objectives and to support the **NREA Youth Energy Leadership Camp** and offer scholarships annually to youth attending the camp that meet certain criteria.

WIRE Youth Energy Camp scholarships are available to children and grandchildren of managers, employees, and directors. They are **NOT** required to reside in a district territory, and they **DO** need to be either a freshman, sophomore or junior in high school. The

leadership camp is five days and held in July each year. It is educational, and gives students a chance to explore electricity, electrical safety, and the inner working of a rural electric system and explore a future in the electric industry. In 2023, WIRE presented Youth Energy Camp scholarships to three youth who attended camp at Camp Comeca, near Cozad.

Please help spread the word to all eligible youth! If you have interest in being a volunteer counselor this summer or know someone interested in attending, contact Wayne Price in the

NREA Office at (402) 475-4988 or [wprice@nrea.org](mailto:wprice@nrea.org).

Another purpose of WIRE is to offer **college scholarships** to students in utility line schools in Nebraska: Northeast Community College in Norfolk, Metro Community College in Omaha, and Western Nebraska Community College in Scottsbluff. As of this date, WIRE can offer two scholarships a year at \$1,500 each.

Lastly, WIRE can provide a \$2,000 scholarship to help one youth Ambassador attend the **NREA Youth Tour in Washington, DC**.



The DC Youth Tour provides an opportunity for young people to learn and grow in their knowledge and interest in the public power system and learn about our connections in Washington, D.C.

# SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

**How does WIRE raise funds for camp scholarships, Ambassador Scholarship, and college scholarships?**

First, WIRE members pay \$5 annual dues. Another way of raising funds is WIRE holds two big events once a year at the NREA

Annual Meeting in December. We **sell tickets** at the annual meeting to win "**Raffle**" items donated by WIRE members, and we hold a "**Silent Auction**" for items donated by WIRE members.

We had, for several years, held a craft fair, but that

event was discontinued as of 2023.

*thank you*

*Just a quick note of thanks to our outgoing President, Courtney Giesenhausen. We appreciate everything you have done for WIRE! Thank you for all of your hard work benefitting WIRE!*

# RAFFLE AND SILENT AUCTION

All **WIRE "Raffle"** items and **WIRE "Silent Auction"** items are donated by spouses of general managers, directors and employees of the 34 Nebraska member systems (PPDs and cooperatives).

The more items we have, the more dollars we raise. Most districts will reimburse the cost of the item. I personally have always brought two items every year, one for the WIRE raf-

file and one for the WIRE silent auction.

I keep the annual meeting in mind all year, and if I see a great buy on an item, I get it. I do not ask the district to reimburse, but I could. I spend \$50 - \$70 on each item. I find some good deals throughout the year.

These items are **not** for the "**NE-ACRE Live Auction**" or the "**NREA Door Prizes**".

Those activities are separate from all WIRE donations. Keep the men in mind when choosing a **WIRE "raffle"** or **WIRE "silent auction"** item. They purchase a BUNCH of raffle tickets and they bid on the silent auction" items too.

# WIRE MEMBERSHIP AND PURPOSE

## What are all the donated items for?

There are **FOUR** activities that have items brought in at the NREA Annual Meeting each year. The **"NE-ACRE Live Auction"** and the **"NREA Door Prize"** donated items are totally separate from the **WIRE "Raffle"** and **WIRE "Silent Auction"** items. One-third of the 34 NREA membership is asked to bring a **NREA door prize**. The NREA member-systems are divided into three regions that rotate to determine who brings items to the annual meeting. The NREA office will notify the districts when it is their turn. Any district general manager, director or employee can donate a **"NE-ACRE Live Auction"** item. This ACRE auction is held during the NE-ACRE Annual Meeting at the NREA Annual Meeting. These two donations should NOT be confused with the **WIRE "Raffle"** and **WIRE "Silent Auction"**. This is all confusing! My hope here is to try to explain it to make it easier to understand. Please ask questions if you have any. My cell number is (402) 806-2174 or you can call the NREA office and talk to Rachael (402) 475-4988.

## WIRE SILENT AUCTION AND RAFFLE

The **2023 WIRE "Silent Auction"** had 12 items to bid on and raised \$650. The **2023 WIRE "Raffle"** had 12 items and raised \$1,437. Molly Williams, Burt County PPD, chaired the Silent Auction and volunteered to chair it again in 2024 with her wonderful helpers. Lori Stolcpart, KBR RPPD, chaired the raffle, and she volunteered to chair the raffle again in 2024. Thank you, ladies!

They will accept help if anyone is interested in volunteering.

For the 2024 events, these districts volunteered to bring a **WIRE "Silent Auction"** items: Norris PPD, Stanton County PPD, Burt County PPD, South Central PPD, Perennial PPD, Dawson PPD, and Elkhorn RPPD. This is seven items for the silent auction. It would help to have a lot more items!

In 2024, these districts volunteered to bring a **WIRE "Raffle"** item: Norris PPD, KBR RPPD, Dawson PPD, Loup Valleys RPPD, South Central PPD, and Perennial PPD and two \$100 cash prizes from WIRE. This is eight items. Again, it would be very beneficial to have a lot more items. You don't have to sign up to bring something, just bring an item, label it with your name, district, and event the donation if for and give it to Molly or Lori. Thank you!

If your district is not noted here, please bring an item for either the **WIRE Silent Auction** or the **Raffle**. It is really fun to see the wonderful items brought in! Thank you!

During the 2024 WIRE meeting, a motion will be made to divide Nebraska's 34 districts in half, alphabetically, top half and bottom half. The top half will be designated to bring a WIRE Silent Auction item (Burt County PPD to McCook PPD), and the bottom half will be designated to bring a WIRE Raffle item (Midwest ECC to Wyrulec Company). The following year, these will flip, as in top half bring WIRE "Raffle" and bottom

half bring WIRE "Silent Auction" item. If this motion receives a second, the motion will be discussed and voted on. Please be thinking about the discussion on this. If anyone has any other items they would like on the agenda for the annual meeting, please call, text, or email me: (402) 806-2174 or [ricelodge@diodecom.net](mailto:ricelodge@diodecom.net) or you can email Rachael at [rblack@nrea.org](mailto:rblack@nrea.org).

**Thank you**, districts who had 100 percent WIRE membership by meeting time in 2023. This is where all the directors' spouses and the manager's spouses have paid their \$5 dues by October 31. Dawson PPD, Burt County PPD, Butler PPD, Cedar-Knox PPD, Cuming County PPD, Elkhorn RPPD, KBR RPPD, Norris PPD, Perennial PPD, Polk County RPPD, Roosevelt PPD, South Central PPD, & NREA were all 100% participants! I know more districts got to 100% after the meeting. Congratulations and thank you ALL!

**The 2024 WIRE officers are:** President, Gwen Vitosh, Norris PPD; Vice President, Judy Woods, South Central PPD, and Secretary/Treasurer, Carol Oertwich, Stanton County PPD. Thank you, ladies, for serving your WIRE organization! Being an officer to lead the WIRE organization is quite simple, fun, and rewarding. NREA's Rachael Black and Tina Schweitzer do most of the work and are there to help every step of the way. Thank you, ladies! We meet once a year at the annual meeting and that's all! Please consider volunteering to be Secretary/Treasurer in 2025 and work your way up to president. Three years fly by so fast!

The November 2023 meeting saw the inclusion of the Pledge of Allegiance at our WIRE meetings. We feel this is a great addition. Lastly, all WIRE breakfast/meeting/craft attendees are encouraged to wear Christmas attire to the WIRE event in December. There will be an award for the "best dressed!" Get creative if you like! Home-made is fun to do (DIY)! We feel this is a fun way to get in the Christmas spirit! Thank you all for all your support in what **Women In Rural Electrification** - "WIRE" does! We need to stay passionate about what we do, which is to **help our youth become interested and invested in the electric industry.**

