

Women in Rural Electrification

2025 WIRE Officers

- President - Judith Woods (South Central PPD)
- President - Elect - Carol Oertwich (Stanton County PPD)
- Secretary - Treasurer - Amy Lehman (Perennial PPD)



Message From the WIRE President

I hope this finds all of you welcoming in fall. As I write this it is the first full day of a new Autumn season and it is raining lightly. AGAIN! Being a grain farmer in south central Nebraska, I am not complaining. We have been blessed by timely rains and with that has been the worst mosquito infestation I have ever witnessed in my 60+ years on this earth. In the spring newsletter, I praised our power district and lineman for getting us back up and running after a bad snowstorm we had and this summer has had its own weather events as well. Many of you experienced power outages and damaged poles. It has been a costly year for our power companies. I am forever grateful for having electricity in my home and for the men and women who keep it going.

It is going to be December soon and with that will come our annual Women In Rural Electrification (WIRE) meeting. We will be meeting on December 4th at the Younes Conference Center North in Kearney. It will begin with breakfast at 8:00 a.m. followed by our annual business meeting. If you

happen to have your Spring newsletter, please read through it again and if you have any questions about what WIRE is all about, please ask at our meeting. More than likely you will not be the only one with that same question. You can also find information on the NREA website at NREA.org. Choose services and it lists WIRE in the drop down menu. WIRE by-laws and the Spring newsletter are on the website.

Every year WIRE strives to have 100 percent membership in each of our 35 member-systems. In 2024, we had 12 systems that were recognized. To be a member, you only need to pay \$5.00 dues. Membership is open to all spouses of general managers and directors as well as employees of all NREA member-systems. To have 100 percent membership, all spouses of your manager and directors need to be members. You will have an opportunity to pay your dues at the annual meeting. Amy Lehman, Secretary/Treasurer will be set up in the commons area to take your dues or you can pay her at our meeting. Some systems have been known to send WIRE

dues in when they register for the annual meeting. Ask your managers what their common practice is. You can also send them to Rachael Black, NREA, PO BOX 82048, LINCOLN, NE 68501.

Our only fundraising will be held Wednesday night and end Thursday evening just before the banquet. We will have a raffle and a silent auction. Raffle tickets can be purchased Wednesday during the reception through Thursday evening. Silent Auction items can be bid on all day Thursday with bidding closing just before the banquet that night. Winners for both will be announced at the banquet. Items will be set out early Thursday morning in the commons area. If you are arriving on Wednesday you may leave them at the NREA registration area with Tina or Rachael. Lori Stolcpart, KBR RPPD, has stepped down from her role as chairman of the raffle. Ginny Lee and Marilyn Baker, KBR RPPD, have volunteered to step in for her, but they would also appreciate help as this is a job that takes many hands. Molly Williams will oversee the Silent Auction.

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WIRE Update - Annual Meeting

The following will provide an item for the WIRE raffle: **Miranda Johnson**, Elkhorn RPPD; **Heather Cox**, South Central PPD; **Carol Oertwich**, Stanton County PPD; **Amy Lehman**, Perennial PPD; **Michelle Turner**, Midwest ECC; **Gwen Vitosh**, Norris PPD; **Meg Becker**, Perennial PPD. Please mark these items "WIRE RAFFLE".

The following will be in charge of obtaining auction items: **Marilyn Baker**, KBR RPPD; **Heather Cox**, South Central PPD; **Molly Williams**, Burt County PPD; **Miranda Johnson**, Elkhorn; **Lynn Schellpeper**, Stanton County PPD; **Loup Valleys RPPD**; **Michelle Turner**, Midwest ECC; **Tina Kirby**, Butler PPD; **Lisa Suda**, Southwest PPD; **Lisa Hendrickson**, Perennial; and **Gwen Vitosh**, Norris PPD.

If you do not see your district represented or did not sign up for an item for either the Silent Auction or the Raffle we would welcome them when you arrive in Kearney. We want those tables full!

Officers in 2025 are Judy Woods, President; Carol Oertwich, Vice President; and Amy Lehman, Secretary/Treasurer. In 2026, Carol will move up to President and Amy will become Vice President. We will be taking nominations for Secretary/Treasurer at our business meeting. It is a three-year commitment as each year we move an officer up to fill the next position. However, it is not a very time-consuming endeavor. We meet for an officers meeting once a year at the annual meeting and then conduct the business meeting and activity. The president writes two newsletters each year and with Rachael and Tina's help, it is very easy.

Thank you to the NREA staff for all you do.

Please consider becoming a WIRE officer. WIRE is a worthwhile and important organization that leads our youth in the importance of our electric industry.

After the business meeting we can all create a craft together. This will be the third year we have done this and other than being fun and taking home something new for our homes, it helps us to have good conversations, laugh and get better acquainted with other woman across the state.

Last year we had 51 women registered. I have included a picture of what we will be making this year on the bottom of this page. We will be working with paint so bring an apron if you tend to be messy like me! The Rustic Patch gals will be guiding us through this project once again. They do an amazing job and will have everything you need in a kit. No artistic talent is required, just a fun and relaxing time together. A non-refundable \$35 fee will be billed for each WIRE member who has registered for the craft. You do need to sign up for the craft when you register for all the other events taking place at the NREA annual meeting. NREA sent sign-up information to the managers.

We will be having our second annual "best-dressed" Christmas contest. It was fun to see what was worn clear down to the accessories. You will be competing for a prize. We will vote on the person who has the most Christmas spirit! Last year our very own elf, Meg Becker from Perennial, was the winner. Be silly and have fun!!

We will end our morning by noon. This will give you plenty of time to go to lunch, shop, and have time for yourselves before the reception and banquet that evening.

October

Author Unknown

October's the month
When the smallest breeze
Gives us a shower
Of autumn leaves,
Bonfires and pumpkins,
Leaves sailing down—
October is red
And golden and brown.

October leaves are lovely
They rustle when I run
Sometimes I make a heap
And jump in them for fun.

Autumn leaves float quietly
down
And form a carpet on the ground.
But when those leaves are
stepped upon,
Listen for the crackling sound.

100% WIRE Membership 2025

- Burt County PPD
- Butler PPD
- Cedar-Knox PPD
- Cuming County PPD
- Dawson PPD
- Howard Greeley RPPD
- KBR RPPD
- Loup Valleys RPPD
- Midwest ECC
- Norris PPD
- PREMA
- South Central PPD
- Stanton County PPD
- NREA

