



BIG FLAT NEWS



April 2023

www.bigflatelectric.com

CAPITAL CREDITS

2022 ALLOCATIONS TO BE ISSUED THIS MONTH

In April 2023, each Big Flat Electric Cooperative member who received and paid an electric bill during 2022 will be issued a Capital Credit Allocation Notice through the mail.

Cooperatives are distinctly different from investor-owned utilities. For-profit electric utilities generate margins on behalf of investors and shareholders. In an electric cooperative, such as Big Flat Electric, any margins (revenues remaining after all expenses have been paid) are allocated to members in proportion to their electric usage payments. The more electricity you use, the more shares of the cooperative you own. That's the power of cooperative membership.

Capital credit allocations DO NOT represent available funds. Over time, allocations may be paid out to members as funds are available. Payment is known as a capital credit retirement. The decision to retire capital credits rests solely with our Board of Directors, and is dependent on the financial condition of the cooperative and the provisions of our bylaws. Big Flat Electric's current retirement cycle is 18 years, and we generally issue capital credit retirement checks in October of each year.

For the year 2022, Big Flat Electric's margins for allocation totaled \$593,062. Each active member received their allocation as a credit to their individual

capital credit allocation account. The balance in your account is the sum of your allocations earned to date, minus any retired (paid) capital credits to date.

Your capital credit allocations never expire or go away. Once in your account, they are yours. Please notify our office of any future address changes so that you will receive your available payouts when processed. Allocated capital credits shown on your recently mailed allocation notice may not be used to pay electric bills or any other debit you may owe Big Flat Electric.

If you have any questions, please call the office at (406) 654-2040. Thanks! RM

NATIONAL LINEWORKERS APPRECIATION DAY

APRIL 18, 2023

*WHEN THE
LIGHTS GO OUT,
SO DO THEY!*

#THANKALINEWORKER

**YOU'VE GOT FRIENDS IN
HIGH PLACES.**



Big Flat Electric Cooperative linemen from left: Leif Sorenson, Nathan Veit, Brenden Johnson, Joe Hould, Ross Hasler and Erik Simanton | **PHOTO BY SHAWNA MYERS**

Local beef in Ma

PHILLIPS COUNTY CATTLEWOMEN AND RCAN WORKING TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE BEEF PROGRAM IN THE MALTA SCHOOL SYSTEM

STORY BY SHAWNA MYERS | BIG FLAT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Local producers have really stepped up according to Taylor French, current President of the Phillips County CattleWomen organization.

I met with Taylor about PC CattleWomen working toward getting local beef into the Malta Schools meal program. They have partnered with Rural Communities & Agricultural Neighbors (RCAN) in this process. Grants were obtained, and after contact with Big Timber, Rosebud County and Winnett schools about their experiences, some of that input was used to tailor the Malta School's program. Support from the Malta Superintendent, administration and Ronda Simanton, who coordinates the food plan, were a huge help with getting this program up and running.

PC CattleWomen and RCAN faced several hurdles during this process. First off was getting the schools approval for the program. It was harder to coordinate with the larger volume needed for a Class B school, and fundraising was needed to offset some of the costs. Getting information out to the producers about animal sizes and approved processing locations, along with the logistics to make this happen, was very important.

For beef to become part of a school meal program it must be processed at a USDA-licensed slaughter and processing facility. At this time, Bear Paw Meats in Chinook is the only place that can be used for processing. There are other places available, but PC CattleWomen and RCAN chose to stay within the 70 miles allowed without having to follow certain regulations. If they were



Kayden Green, a Malta student, is enjoying a local beef burger during lunch. | PHOTO COURTESY OF PHILLIPS COUNTY CATTLEWOMEN

to use a USDA-licensed facility outside of 70 miles, it would involve purchasing a refrigerated truck and getting special approval from the county sanitarian as far as the vehicle used and how to keep the processed beef below a certain temperature. Hi Line Packing in Malta is in the process of obtaining its USDA certification. In the future it will make transporting and processing a lot easier having two facilities.

The beef for this program is 100-percent donated by local producers. In the past, PC CattleWomen and RCAN had to turn away donations due to a few factors. One factor is they must book processing dates in advance with Bear Paw Meats and some producers have beef ready before it can be processed. Another factor is Bear Paw Meats only accepts 1,400 – 1,500-pound animals, and the animal must

be able to walk off the trailer. Having two processing facilities to work with will help with the processing factors of timing and size. PC Cattlewomen and RCAN can accept beef that is already processed, but this also must be processed at a USDA-certified facility with the paperwork and receipt showing this information, plus be within the 70 miles for transporting.

Malta School system uses on the average 4,000 pounds of beef per year, which is approximately eight to nine head, depending on size of animal. During this school year, six head were donated, which was better than expected, but didn't quite fully meet what was needed for the full year. After this school year ends, PC CattleWomen and RCAN will have a better idea of how many and how far out to book processing dates, plus have a better

Malta schools



Katie Brown of Rural Communities and Agricultural Neighbors and Eric Witmer, a City of Malta employee, are filling freezers with processed beef. | PHOTO COURTESY OF PHILLIPS COUNTY CATTLEWOMEN

idea of how many head will be needed to provide for a full school year. Malta Schools' freezers can only hold 600 pounds at a time, but at the old Armory, which offers a secure location, additional freezers are kept, and proper temperature is maintained. Taylor said the City of Malta has been great to work with.

PC CattleWomen went into Malta's fourth and fifth grade science classes to talk about and allow students to understand the food supply chain, and how important it is to know where their beef comes from. The Beef in Schools program provides healthy and fresher beef to the Malta Schools meal program. From the point at which beef is butchered to a student's plate can be as little as 14 days. The feedback from students has been very positive. They say the hamburger patties are way better, and other schools have found there is less water waste, along with better smell and color.

PC CattleWomen and RCAN continue to do fundraising in hopes

to have a nest egg built so that they can help defray some of the producer costs. They also accept cash donations to help toward transporting and processing. If you are looking for more information about this program, they have a meeting tentatively set for April 19. Watch in the Super Shopper, PC News and KMMR for further information.

Events and fundraisers can also be found on the Facebook pages of "Phillips County CattleWomen" and "RCAN - Rural Communities & Agricultural Neighbors." If you wish to speak with someone, Taylor French and Katie Brown are available as well. Taylor can be reached via email at tfrench05@outlook.com and Katie can be reached at katie@ruralcan.org.

PC CattleWomen and RCAN welcome all persons or parties interested in helping support the local beef in our schools for healthy and fresher meals. Please do not hesitate to contact them for more information.

RM



Use SmartHub and save time, eliminate late fees

Big Flat Electric Cooperative encourages our members to visit our website at bigflatelectric.com, click "Pay Bill Online" and register as a new user. This bill pay option has many advantages such as selecting date of payment and amount, managing payment accounts, setting up auto pay, viewing billing and payment history, and managing your personal information.



PHOTO SPOTLIGHT



Photo by **Leif Sorenson**, Big Flat Electric Cooperative Lineman

MARCH 1966: DISTRICT 3 CLASS C TEAMS



Turner Tornados - Winners of the Class C District 3 Championship



Turner Cheerleaders - Back row, left to right: Cherry Travis, Nancy Kegel, Julie Simon. Front row, left to right: Nancy Mohar, Mike Doyl, Nita Nutton.



St. Paul's Mission "Braves."



Whitewater High School "Penguins."



Hogeland Hawks - Third-place winner at the District 3 Class C Tournament at Malta.

Along Our Lines

April 1963 – BFEC Newsletter

Mr. and Mrs. George Soennichsen of North Saco are remodeling their kitchen and installing electric heat in several rooms in their homes

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Reed, Jr., and family moved from the Pitsch place near Hogeland to the Lawrence Walker house in Hogeland.

Security lights have recently been installed for the Christian and Missionary Alliance and Marvin Zitzlesperger in Hays

The Big Flat crew has completed re-routing some line near Chapmen. The line required re-routing due to damage in flood irrigation.

Mr. and Mrs. Willie Dull and family of Havre have moved to the former B.I. Anderson place south of Malta. We would like to welcome the Dulls as new customers on our lines.

William Dorn is visiting in the Los Angeles, California vicinity

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BIG FLAT ELECTRIC

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