

FEBRUARY
2021

UNITED NEWSLINE

Information for the members of United Power, Inc.

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2020: A Year in Review

IMPORTANT DATES

FEBRUARY 12	Director Nomination Deadline Petitions due by 4 p.m.
FEBRUARY 15	Presidents' Day Offices Closed
APRIL 14	Annual Meeting & Director Election

The events that will come to define this past year were unpredictable. Even as work and home life looked different during this time, United Power has continued to work hard behind the scenes to provide the same level of service to our members despite unexpected limitations. Though the cooperative took certain steps for the health and safety of both members and employees, we continued to work toward providing safe, reliable and affordable power in 2020.

A United Response to COVID-19

Although 2020 had its share of defining moments, perhaps nothing will come to

define it more than the pandemic that arrived on the scene midway through March, forcing United Power to temporarily close its offices to the public. Recognizing the impact certain COVID restrictions could have on members, the cooperative took immediate action to provide help and relief.

The cooperative became one of the first in the state to announce a temporary halt to disconnects for nonpayment, making the decision prior to Governor Jared Polis' statewide executive order. In the weeks that followed, the Board of Directors approved an allocation of \$250,000 in unclaimed capital credits to the Co-op Cares Fund. The fund was established to help members who were financially impacted by the pandemic pay balances on their account. Toward the end of the year, the Board approved an additional allocation of \$300,000, including \$250,000 to help support members in 2021. Among other relief efforts, the cooperative also retired capital credits to members several months early, getting cash back to members at a time when they could use the relief. Additional information about the cooperative's ongoing COVID-19 response is available online at www.unitedpower.com/coronavirus.

Round-Up Gets Involved

Considering the many families struggling because of the pandemic, Operation Round-Up distributed additional funds to nonprofits providing services to help United Power members. In addition to the continued support of several partner organizations, Round-Up provided \$10,000 each to the Food Bank of the Rockies and the Weld Country Food Bank, helping provide thousands of meals for United Power members and their families.

Contactless Payment Options

United Power has provided members with a variety of contactless payment methods for several years. Members are able to make payments quickly and easily using our free online account management tool, SmartHub, or the United Power mobile app. With these tools, members can schedule their own payments or enroll in Auto Pay, which ensures payments are made on time every month. Members may also make payments over the phone by calling 866-999-4485. United Power also invested in new ways for members to make contactless payments, installing kiosks



www.unitedpower.com

Report an Outage 303-637-1350
Customer Service 303-637-1300

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Member Choice Grant Nominations



Many nonprofit organizations operate within United Power's service area, helping meet member needs and bringing value to the communities we serve. In 2020, United Power introduced a new program, Member Choice Grants, offering members the opportunity to nominate one of those nonprofits to receive support from the co-op.

These grants help area nonprofits continue working toward accomplishing their mission and ensures we are supporting causes our members truly care about.

Nominations for 2021 Member Choice Grants are now open. Recipients will be announced in the newsletter throughout the year.

For more information on Member Choice Grants or to nominate a nonprofit, go to www.unitedpower.com/memberchoice.



ENERGY SAVERS

Keep up on your HVAC system.

A little do-it-yourself maintenance ensures your heating/cooling system doesn't have to work as hard to keep your house warm. Swap out your air filters at least once every three months.

New Kiosk in Fort Lupton

United Power members living in and around Fort Lupton now have access to a new payment kiosk. The new kiosk is located inside the Bank of Colorado's Operations Center, 605 4th St.

Payment kiosks are hassle-free and easy to use. To make a payment, bring your United Power account number and a form of payment. Kiosks accept cash, credit card or check payments. Cash and credit card payments made using the kiosk are applied to your account immediately, and accounts subject to disconnection are restored immediately upon payment.

Over the past few years, the cooperative has seen a steady increase in demand from members who prefer to use self-serve and digital account and payment options, and a corresponding reduction in visits to our offices.

"The installation of payment kiosks demonstrates our commitment to providing the types of services our members want," said Francis Ashu, Member Services Director. "Through our many convenient account management and payment options, we are able to provide the same level of quality service without costs associated with operating a storefront location."

United Power now operates four payment kiosks, conveniently located throughout the service territory, with the addition of the Fort Lupton kiosk. The other kiosks are located at the cooperative's office locations in Brighton, Carbon Valley and Coal Creek.



Payment Kiosk Locations

NEW Fort Lupton

Bank of Colorado (Operations Center)
605 4th Street
Fort Lupton, Colorado

Kiosk Hours: Mon - Fri, 7 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Brighton Office

500 Cooperative Way
Brighton, Colorado

Kiosk Hours: Mon - Fri, 5 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Coal Creek Office

5 Gross Dam Road
Golden, Colorado

Kiosk Hours: Mon - Fri, 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Carbon Valley Service Center

9586 E I-25 Frontage Road
Longmont, Colorado

Kiosk Hours: Mon - Fri, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

More info at www.unitedpower.com/payments.

Newsletter Going Digital

United Power has been investing more resources in electronic communication options over the past year in an effort to get members important information in a more timely and efficient manner. In 2021, the cooperative will begin offering members a digital newsletter containing relevant information about the cooperative, electrical safety, energy efficiency tips and more.

To ensure you are receiving electronic communications from the cooperative, including the upcoming digital newsletter, make sure your contact information is up to date. You can check your contact information and make necessary changes using the free online payment portal, SmartHub, or through

the United Power mobile app. You can also submit an email update request on our website at www.unitedpower.com/account-updates or by calling our Member Services team directly at 303-637-1300.

Updating your email through Member Services will not update the login email you use for your online account. If you need to update your online account email, you can do so under My Profile tab in SmartHub or the mobile app.

While the digital newsletter will provide members with similar helpful information as the physical newsletter, United Power will continue offering the physical newsletter to members, as well.

Co-op Responds to Unusual Challenges in 2020

at its office locations in Carbon Valley and Coal Creek. The cooperative later added a kiosk at the Brighton office location and recently in Fort Lupton at the Bank of Colorado's Operation Center. More information about kiosks can be found on page 2.

Supporting Causes Members Care About

United Power unveiled its Member Choice Grants program in 2020. The new program allowed members to nominate area nonprofits to receive grants from the cooperative, ensuring our continued support for causes you care about. The six nonprofits selected to receive grants in 2020 were focused on providing for the essential needs of others who were trying to navigate difficult circumstances. The program was renewed for 2021, and nominations are now being accepted at www.unitedpower.com/memberchoice.

Wildfire Rebuild in the Mountains

Several wildfires burned throughout Colorado during the summer and fall of 2020, representing the worst wildfire season in the state's history. Thousands of acres were burned in rural parts of the state, impacting a few neighboring cooperatives. When the East Troublesome Fire consumed more than 100,000 acres overnight near Granby and Grand Lake in October, Mountain Parks Electric received significant damage to its system. United Power joined four other state cooperatives in dispatching crews and equipment to help rebuild parts of the system to quickly and safely restore power to as many of their members as possible.

Fifth Utility Solar Farm

Despite difficult circumstances, United Power was also busy behind the scenes maintaining its reputation as one of the nation's most forward-thinking and innovative cooperatives in 2020. Toward the year's end, United Power energized the Platteville Solar Farm, its fifth utility scale solar farm, directly adjacent to the Rattlesnake Solar Farm near Platteville. With the addition of this new facility, the cooperative now has more than

43 megawatts of solar connected to its system, in addition to approximately 6,000 residential rooftop systems.

Investing in EV Resources

Electric vehicles are gaining popularity across the country, and there's significant interest and adoption within the United Power service area. United Power provided several opportunities for members to look at potential investments in EVs this past year. In October, United Power hosted a live virtual event to dispel myths and hesitations about EVs and provide education on how an electric vehicle could be right for you and your family. Earlier in the year, we also rolled out a new online resource, called ChooseEV, to help answer member questions about either all-electric or plug-in hybrid vehicles. For more information on ChooseEV, go to page 6.

No Rate Increase for 2021

In December, United Power announced there would be no rate increase for the new year, which could not have come at a better time for many members, especially those who were impacted by the pandemic. Rates were able to remain stable thanks to the forethought of cooperative leadership, who recognized the financial impact of the pandemic and took immediate action to reduce spending in various departments. Other factors that allowed for stable rates included another strong year of growth in both membership and load.

As we move into this new year, the cooperative also remains in discussions with its wholesale power provider, Tri-State Generation & Transmission, in hopes of being able to reduce current rates and offer more competitive rates in the future.

United Power responded to unprecedented and unpredictable circumstances in 2020. These situations helped us find new ways to communicate with members without sacrificing the same level of service you have come to expect from the cooperative. Responding to new challenges will inform us for years to come as we continue to provide our members with safe and reliable power.

2021

ANNUAL MEETING & DIRECTOR ELECTION

WEDNESDAY APRIL 14, 2021

12:00 p.m. Mail-in ballots must arrive at P.O. Box
6:30 p.m. Virtual Meeting Begins
Registration details will be posted online

The 2021 Annual Meeting will be held virtually. Members will be able to participate over the phone or watch the livestream online.

www.unitedpower.com/annual-meeting

BALLOTING DEADLINES

Balloting in the 2021 Director Election will be conducted via MAIL-IN VOTE ONLY.

FEBRUARY 12, 2021

Director Nominations by Petition Deadline at 4 p.m.

MARCH 15, 2021

Ballots are mailed to members

APRIL 14, 2021

Mail-in Ballots must arrive at the P.O. Box by 12 p.m.

MEET THE CANDIDATES

If conditions allow, United Power will host Meet the Candidate Forums where you can hear directly from each of the candidates vying to serve on the Board of Directors. The following events are free to members. RSVPs are not required.

THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 2021 | 6:30 p.m.

Riverdale Regional Park, Rendezvous Room
9755 Henderson Road, Brighton, CO 80601

FRIDAY, MARCH 19, 2021 | 7:30 a.m.

Coal Creek Canyon Community Center
3158 Highway 72, Golden, CO 80403

MONDAY, MARCH 29, 2021 | 6:30 p.m.

Carbon Valley Service Center
9586 E. I-25 Frontage Road, Longmont, CO 80504

TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 2021 | 7:30 a.m.

Fort Lupton Recreation Center
Multi-Purpose Room 3
203 S. Harrison Ave, Fort Lupton, CO 80621

Meet the Candidate forums subject to change or cancellation.



Careful with Space Heaters this Winter

When used safely and properly, portable space heaters provide a nice relief from the rigid chills of winter temperatures, which can often invade poorly insulated or ventilated rooms in older homes. Although space heaters are safe to use indoors because they don't require combustion, they still pose burn and fire hazards and should be used with caution.

Before operating, review the manufacturer's instructions, including warning labels. Space heaters may seem like simple, easy to use electronics, but each brand and version has its own unique quirks and features. It's better to be safe than sorry. After reviewing the instructions, inspect the space heater for cracks or broken plugs.

Next, be sure to place the heater in a safe location. They should be located at least three feet away from anything that can burn, such as

clothing and other fabrics, papers, rugs, etc. Do not place space heaters on furniture, such as chairs or tables, but on a firm, flat location on the ground. Finally, place space heaters away from heavily trafficked areas.

Space heaters place a heavy load on an outlet. For that reason, do not plug any other electrical devices into the same outlet. Extension cords or power strips could also overheat and result in a fire, so plug the heater directly into the wall outlet.

Most importantly, never leave space heaters unattended. Turn it off before you leave a room or go to sleep, and don't let animals or children play too close to the heater. When you're done using the space heater, always unplug it and store it safely.

READER REWARDS

FEBRUARY 2021



Three Winners Every Month!
1st place: \$100 Bill Credit
2nd place: \$50 Bill Credit (two winners)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Mail entry form to: United Power • Reader Rewards
500 Cooperative Way • Brighton, CO 80603

Reader Rewards Online

www.unitedpower.com

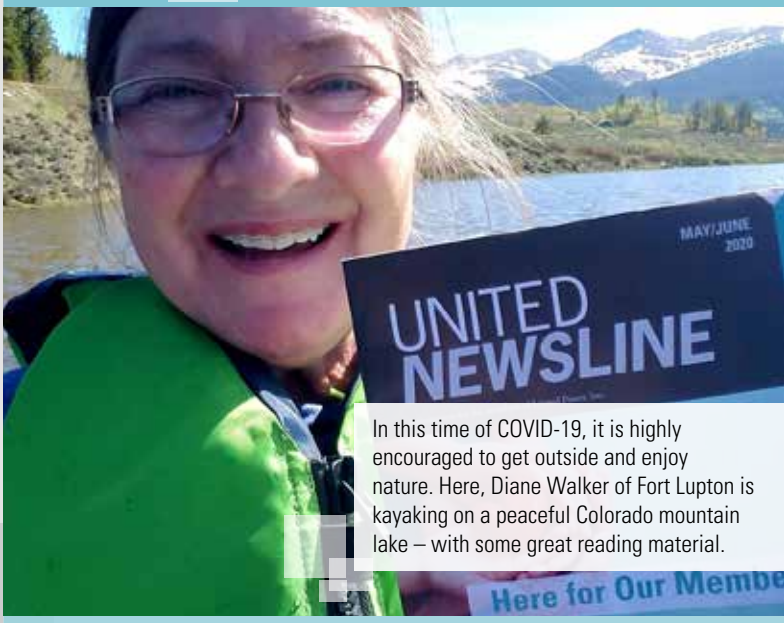


Save a stamp! Visit www.unitedpower.com and click on 'News & Community' to enter Reader Rewards online. Answer the question below with your online entry:

What is the name of United Power's new online EV resource?

By submitting this entry I agree to allow United Power to publish my name in subsequent issues of United Newsline if I am selected as a winner.

UNITED POWER PRIDE



In this time of COVID-19, it is highly encouraged to get outside and enjoy nature. Here, Diane Walker of Fort Lupton is kayaking on a peaceful Colorado mountain lake – with some great reading material.

United Power Pride Photos

Snap a photo with the *United Newsline* and you'll get a \$100 bill credit if we print it. Submit your photo along with your name, address, email and a description of the photo online at www.unitedpower.com/unitedpowerpride.



RECIPES



Pasta with Vodka Sauce

- 3 Tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 medium yellow onion, diced
- 3 medium garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- Pinch red pepper flakes
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 6 oz can tomato paste
- 14.5 oz can whole, peeled tomatoes
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 lb tubular pasta, cooked (reserve 1/2 cup water)
- 1/4 cup vodka
- 2 oz freshly grated parmesan

Melt butter over medium heat in a dutch oven. Add onions, garlic, red pepper and season lightly with salt. Cook, stirring frequently, until onions are soft but not browned, about 15 minutes. Add tomato paste and cook, stirring, until tomato paste is fragrant and thick, about 3 minutes. Stir in canned tomatoes with liquid. Bring to simmer and cook, stirring often, crushing the tomatoes roughly with a spoon until sauce has thickened, about 10 minutes.

Add cream and stir to combine. Transfer to blender and blend until very smooth. Return sauce to pot, and season with salt. Add vodka and bring to gentle simmer. Add cooked pasta and 1/2 cup pasta water, and increase heat to high, cooking until sauce has thickened.

Share Your Recipes

Earn a free gift if we publish your recipe.

- ONLINE: www.unitedpower.com
- MAIL: United Power Recipes
500 Cooperative Way
Brighton, CO 80603

Democracy at the Co-op

Member Votes Determine Board Representation

United Power members have the unique opportunity to have a say in the future of their electric cooperative. Each year our members' votes in the director election determine who will represent them on the co-op's Board of Directors.

United Power invites participation from its members. Members have a finger on the pulse of their communities and understand what's important to them. As an electric utility, your participation in the annual election is critical to helping the co-op better serve its members.

Every Vote Matters Equally

United Power is a not-for-profit cooperative owned and controlled by the members it serves. When you become a member, you automatically receive the benefits all other members share, including the right to vote for board representation. Your vote always matters. As a member, your vote carries equal weight as any other member's vote, regardless of what kind of account they have or how large it is. This is a cooperative principle known as "one member, one vote." Director candidates must also live within United Power's service territory, so you know you'll be voting for someone who understands your community's needs. They could even be your friends or neighbors.

Running for a Board Position

The primary difference between an investor-owned utility (IOU) and cooperative is democratic control. IOUs make decisions to appease stakeholders and shareholders who might not live in the same state, let alone the same community. Any United Power member in good standing is eligible to run

for a position on the cooperative's eleven-member Board of Directors. Directors serve three-year terms in one of four geographical districts. Although directors must live in one of these districts, members vote on an "at-large" basis, explained in more detail next.

Voting in the Election

The cooperative mails director ballots in March and encourages all members to cast votes in the election. Although directors live in a specific geographic district, they represent all members and are therefore elected on an "at-large" basis. This means members may cast a vote for a director in each district and not just their own. Directors serve in geographic districts to ensure adequate accessibility for members and to provide a representative cross-section of United Power's member base in their leadership role. Learn more about voting policy at www.unitedpower.com.

Your vote always matters. To learn more about a director candidate, consider attending one of our Meet the Candidate events. **(Details on page 3.)** Candidate statements will be available online after February 12.

2021 Director Election

This year, four positions on United Power's board are up for election at the 2021 Annual Meeting & Director Election, scheduled for Wednesday, April 14, 2021. Members may submit their ballots via mail-in ONLY. More information about how to complete your ballot may be found online at www.unitedpower.com/annual-meeting.

Interested in Electric Vehicles?

United Power Has You Covered with a Free Online Resource

Electric vehicles have continued to improve and advance over the past few years, and as they have improved, so too has interest and intrigue. More people now rely on EVs for their daily lives than ever before, thanks in part to continued development of vehicles, rapid adoption by consumers and growth in the local and national charging infrastructure. If you've been interested in learning more about purchasing an EV for yourself, there has never been a better opportunity to do so, and your cooperative is here to take that journey with you. United Power recently launched ChooseEV, a free member resource to help you learn more about EVs and how they may impact your energy usage.

ChooseEV is the hub of information on electric vehicles for United Power members. Here you can find facts about electric vehicles, benefits of ownership and tips for how to purchase your own EV. If you're already determined to buy an EV for you or your household and are curious what models are available to meet your needs, ChooseEV provides a comprehensive list of models. It even includes a list of plug-in hybrids, in case you're on the fence or undecided about purchasing a fully electric model. For peace of mind, you'll also find a map of charging stations and a helpful calculator to help determine your savings potential for driving an EV. (Savings difference calculates the monthly cost to drive a gas-powered vehicle compared to electric or hybrid, but also provides members with an expected amount to anticipate seeing on their electric bills.)

As this year goes on, United Power is excited to take this journey with you as we look at new ways to serve our EV members. Stay tuned in the upcoming months for updates about the cooperative's investment in electric vehicles.

To check out our ChooseEV resource for yourself or to research more information about your upcoming EV purchase, go to www.unitedpower.com/chooseEV.



Calculate your expected savings on driving an electric vehicle using the ChooseEV Savings Calculator, pictured above at www.unitedpower.com/chooseEV.

Employees Raise More Than \$4,000 for Food Bank of the Rockies

Seeking an opportunity to give back during the holiday season, United Power employees participated in a virtual food drive to raise funds for the Food Bank of the Rockies in December. In the two weeks before Christmas, employees donated more than \$2,000 to the food bank, which the cooperative generously matched, bringing the total to more than \$4,000.

For each dollar donated, the Food Bank of the Rockies was able to provide four meals to individuals and families facing food insecurity and in need of assistance. Thanks to the contributions of United Power employees, the

food bank was able to provide nearly 17,000 meals. The Food Bank of the Rockies was selected as the partner for the employee drive because of its accessibility for members across the service territory.

"We wanted to help our communities and our members, and this was a safe-distance solution that allowed us to reach as many members as possible," said Laurel Eller, Senior Communication Specialist. "Employee giving is a rich tradition and our employees have been very generous this season. We thank all of them for helping make this virtual food drive a success."



Demand at food banks quadrupled last year as many local families faced food insecurity for the very first time. The Food Bank of the Rockies distributed more than 100 million pounds of food for the first time ever in 2020, which provided more than 83 million meals for those in need. To learn more or support the Food Bank of the Rockies, go to www.foodbankrockies.org.



The Myths of Energy Efficiency

As your cooperative, we want to provide you with the most useful information and applicable resources to help you save on bills. In a previous newsletter, we tackled some common energy efficiency myths. This follow up to that article dives into a few more myths to help you make more informed decisions.

Reducing Energy Use is Too Expensive

The first and most common misconception about energy efficiency is cost. There's a stigma associated with it that assumes it's far too expensive to be worth it, which is incorrect. While members can begin to see increased savings by upgrading insulation and replacing old appliances, many of the immediate steps you can take toward using energy efficiently are behavioral changes. Some of these will be addressed below, but others include turning off lights when you leave a room, limiting use of kitchen and bathroom vents, closing doors to empty rooms while heating or cooling systems are running, and remembering to close your curtains in the summer – and conversely open them in the winter – to keep sunlight from affecting the temperature inside your home. **Myth or Truth: Myth**

Adjusting the Thermostat Saves Energy

Adjusting your thermostat up or down a few degrees, depending on the season, can help you save energy. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates this little behavioral change could save consumers as much as 10 percent per year on their energy bills. Since heating and cooling our homes accounts for approximately half of our annual energy usage, that could result in significant savings. To see additional savings on your energy bills, you can adjust the thermostat a few more degrees when you and your family won't be home. It is recommended to practice adjusting your thermostat 6-8 degrees when your home will be empty for several hours, such as when you're at work. It's important to note you may not see savings from this practice when you're only away from the home for a couple hours. This practice is easily paired with a smart thermostat, which can either adjust your thermostat automatically based your location relative to the home or on a pre-programmed schedule. If you and your family are traveling for the holidays, you can set your thermostat to an even lower temperature, roughly 50 degrees, to both save energy and protect your pipes from winter temperatures. In certain situations, it may even be possible

to turn your system off altogether, such as a family vacation in the summer or at night when you can allow Colorado's mild climate to cool your home naturally by opening windows. **Myth or Truth: Truth**

Ceiling Fans Keep Rooms Cool

Sitting in a room with a running ceiling fan may feel more comfortable than a room without one, but that's not because the ceiling fan is actually cooling the air in the room. Instead, the room feels cooler because the ceiling fan keeps air in the room flowing constantly, cooling those who are in the room rather than the air itself. To use ceiling fans efficiently, run them only in occupied rooms while adjusting your thermostat up a few degrees. Leaving a ceiling fan running in an empty room just wastes energy. **Myth or Truth: Myth.**

Setting Thermostat Higher Heats Home Faster

No matter what temperature you set your thermostat, your furnace will work equally as hard and fast to meet that goal. The only difference achieved by setting the temperature to a higher degree is that the system will work for a longer period of time, therefore using more energy. The same applies to air conditioners when set to a lower temperature than desired. **Myth or Truth: Myth**

Appliances Don't Use Power When Turned Off

You may have heard the term "vampire loads," but do you know what causes them? When you turn off an electronic device or appliance, many don't actually turn off. They go into a "standby" mode, which still draws a small amount of energy. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates these loads are approaching nearly 10% of our annual energy usage, due in large part to the increased number of electronics we use daily. To save energy, make sure your electronics are turned off rather than in standby and unplug unused chargers. Using a smart power strip may be an effective way to combat these loads, as well. **Myth or Truth: Myth**

Using energy more efficiently isn't as difficult as you may believe. Many of the quickest ways to see results are to make small behavioral changes. If you're curious about more ways you can save, check out our website at www.unitedpower.com/energy-tips or contact an Energy Management Specialist at 303-637-1300.

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A new United Power payment kiosk is now available for members to use at the Bank or Colorado's Operation Center in Fort Lupton.

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Democracy at the Co-op

United Power encourages its members to participate in director elections.

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Holiday Food Bank Donation

United Power employees donated more than \$4,000 to Food Bank of the Rockies.

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Energy Efficiency Myths

Part of becoming more energy efficient is separating fact from fiction.

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- t**.....twitter.com/UnitedPowerCoop

- Member Services**..... 303-637-1300
- Outage Line**..... 303-637-1350

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- 1st Place:** Aaron Riemer, Keenesburg
- 2nd Place:** Dennis Howell, Frederick
Tracy Wagers, Commerce City

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