

# SPARKS

**Board applications are due on Monday, March 13!**

Seats in District 12 and District 15 will be up for election. Our Board usually meets on the fourth Monday of the month to discuss progress, issues, as well as the state of the cooperative. Board members are required to keep up to date on industry trends, as well as legislative matters. Board members serve three-year terms. Applications can be found online at [www.highwest.coop](http://www.highwest.coop). Applicants will be publicly announced no later than **Thursday, May 4**, and ballots for the election will be sent out **Thursday, May 25**. Election results will be announced at our annual meeting on **Thursday, June 15**.

**“A GEM OF A STORE”**

In 2004, a little “gem of a store” opened its doors in Potter, Nebraska. Since then, it has provided creativity and joy to the town of Potter and surrounding communities. This year, A Collective Gathering will be celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> year of business!

The building where this store is located was built in the late 1910’s, which housed many different businesses throughout the years. When the Potter Historical Foundation acquired this building, someone suggested that the community needed a flea market. At first, people were skeptical of the idea, but to keep the large building from being vacant, a flea market was created.

Now, A Collective Gathering has 30 booths with 22 different vendors. There is even a waiting list to be a vendor!

A Collective Gathering would not be possible without its management team and volunteers that help work the store. Everyone who helps with the store is a volunteer and the volunteers go above and beyond by not only working at the store, but also helping with cleaning, upkeep, snow and leaf removal on sidewalks, greeting tourists, and directing visitors to other local attractions.

Many specialty items can be found here including handmade pottery by a local artisan, collectible rocks, handmade wheat weaving by a local artisan, Nebraska souvenirs, home and wall décor, seasonal items, jewelry, and gift food items.

A Collective Gathering also sells tools, linens, furniture, dishes, and toys. A Collective Gathering has something for everyone!

This business is not just a flea market. A Collective Gathering was a sought-out adventure that has helped grow the community and support other local businesses. This business creates a space for creativity and community.

If you are ever driving through Western Nebraska, make sure to stop at this gem of a store located at 326 Chestnut, Potter, Nebraska.

**Creamy Garlic Pasta**

- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 pound spaghetti
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 3/4 cup heavy cream
- 1 1/2 tablespoons dried parsley

Heat olive oil in a medium pan over medium heat. Add garlic and stir for 1 to 2 minutes. Add butter and stir until melted. Pour in 3 cups of chicken broth; add pepper and salt. Then bring to a boil. Add spaghetti and cook until tender or for 12 minutes. Add more chicken broth if the pasta starts to stick to the pan. Add Parmesan cheese, cream, and parsley. Mix thoroughly and enjoy!

\*This recipe is from allrecipes.com.

**For recipe submissions, please email [sparks@highwest.coop](mailto:sparks@highwest.coop).**

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Closed on Fridays

Cheyenne Service Center  
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Cheyenne, WY 82009  
Monday-Thursday: 8 AM-5 PM  
Closed on Fridays

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# SPARKS

Globally, this past year has presented many financial difficulties, but it has also affected individuals within our communities. High West Energy has experienced financial challenges within our own operations with the cost of everyday amenities rising including fuel, housing, utilities, and even food. With costs of everyday amenities rising, the cost of wholesale electricity is also increasing. We are doing everything in our power at High West Energy to maintain our rates, as well as doing everything we can internally to provide affordable power.

This past year we implemented a 4-day work week, which has allowed our employees to accomplish tasks more efficiently for the benefit of our members. It has also provided cost-saving measures, such as fleet maintenance coordination and facility energy savings. This new schedule has allowed us to maintain our fleet more regularly while eliminating downtime, which helps prolong the longevity of our fleet. We are also finding that not only are the vehicles more expensive, but they can also be a challenge to find.

We also implemented a work management system, which has improved our internal communications and efficiency within the office. Utilizing the workflow has allowed our employees to oversee all parts

of internal communications, as well as monitor progress or issues before our employees go into the field. This is a cost-saving measure as we are aware of our materials before going into the field and can better manage our time for both the members and the cooperative.

Another cost-saving measure is we now create Sparks and our annual report in-house. We have been utilizing the skills of our current employees and evaluating our structure to exploit our talents and expertise internally.

Although there are many cost saving measures we have implemented this past year, holding our annual meeting online also provided significant savings for the cooperative. Not only did we save money holding a virtual annual meeting, but it was also the most-attended annual meeting in years.

While the cost of many amenities is rising, it is our goal to provide our members with safe, reliable and competitively priced energy and services. The last year has been difficult with recovering financially from COVID-19, the effects of the war on Ukraine, supply chain issues, and inflation, but we remain focused on what we can do for the financial stability of the cooperative and our members.



**Jared Routh**  
CEO/General Manager

**Youth Energy Camp is July 9-13, 2023 at Camp Comeca in Cozad, Nebraska. This is an all-expense paid camp! Students must be a high school student and a dependent of a High West Energy member. Applications can be found on our website at [www.highwest.coop](http://www.highwest.coop)!**

## HIGH WEST ENERGY

### Board of Directors

Michael Lerwick	District 11	307-630-1277
Gary Smith	District 12	307-649-2375
Ed Prosser	District 13	307-630-8364
Jerry Burnett	District 14	970-895-3386
Damon Birkhofer	District 15	308-235-7296
Kosha Olsen	District 16	307-214-4940
Kevin Thomas	District 17	308-879-4396

*\*Meetings are typically held on the fourth Monday of each month.*

### Leadership Team

Jared Routh	CEO/General Manager
Dave Crouse	Chief Information Officer
Josh Gorman	Chief Financial Officer
David Golden	Engineering Manager
Konnie Keehnen	Member Services Manager
Carol Macy	Employee Services Manager
Marv Powell	WAFB Operations & Wiring Manager