

# SPARKS

DECEMBER 2024

*Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a bright New Year from your High West Energy family! May your holiday season be filled with warmth, joy, and the comfort of reliable energy.*

## BOARD APPROVES \$1.6 MILLION IN CAPITAL CREDITS FOR 2024

We are thrilled to announce that High West Energy's Board of Directors has voted to retire approximately \$1.6 million in capital credits—patronage dividends—to our valued members. High West Energy was founded by our members, and we're here because of you, so it's time to share in our success!

"It's a great thing to be able to announce this retirement while absorbing a 6% rate increase from our power supplier mid-year and continuing to navigate the record inflation rates on material and labor investments," said Jared Routh, CEO and General Manager of High West Energy.

### WHAT ARE CAPITAL CREDITS?

Members of cooperatives share in the ownership, construction, maintenance, and growth of the co-op. When you move into a home or establish a business in our service territory, you become part of our co-op family, and a capital credit account is set up in your name.

At the end of every fiscal year, any funds remaining after expenses have been paid are allocated to each member's patronage capital account based on the electricity they used the previous year. The Board will then determine if the cooperative is financially healthy enough to retire a portion of that allocated capital, which members receive as capital credits.

"Returning capital credits is our way of saying thank you to the members who make us who we are. We're proud to share our success with those who help build it every day."

*-Jared Routh, CEO/General Manager*

### HOW WILL I RECEIVE CAPITAL CREDITS?

For all members receiving \$50 or less in dividends, the amounts will automatically be applied as a bill credit. This bill credit would have been on the bill members received in November. Members who are receiving more than \$50 have several choices as to how they will get their payout.

- You can apply the dividend to your bill.
- You can donate your patronage dividends to Operation RoundUp®, an account used to offer financial support to other members in a time of loss or need.
- You can receive a check for the full amount in the mail.

If you became a member in 2023, you will get a check automatically unless you call to request one of the other options listed above.

If you received a dividend in 2023, you will get this year's dividend in the same way you received last year's unless you call to request a change.

We will automatically credit your capital credits to your account if you have a past-due balance.

If you move, please provide us with your new address so we can continue to refund eligible patronage dividends in the future. In addition, when a member passes away, the patronage account is available for estate retirement. A representative of the estate should contact High West Energy to settle the patronage account. We are here to help, so if you have any questions or concerns, please contact our office.

HIGH WEST ENERGY

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*The mission of High West Energy is to serve our members and communities by providing safe, reliable and competitively priced energy and services.*

### CONTACT US

307-245-3261

[www.highwest.coop](http://www.highwest.coop)

### MAIN OFFICE

6270 County Road 212  
Pine Bluffs, WY 82082

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Thursday  
7:30 AM - 5 PM

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mike Romsa, District 11

Gary Smith, District 12

Jessica Crowder, District 13

Jerry Burnett, District 14

Damon Birkhofer, District 15

Kosha Olsen, District 16

Kevin Thomas, District 17

### HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

Email your ideas to:  
[sparks@highwest.coop](mailto:sparks@highwest.coop)

*For updates, follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn!*

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

# Powering Local Dreams, One Festive Bite at a Time

This story begins with a milk cow named Josie, who inspired Cody and Coralee Smith, owners of Josie's Creamery, to start making ice cream. They began selling their creations at the WY Fresh Farmstand, under the WY Food Freedom Act, where it quickly gained popularity. Motivated by this success, the Smiths applied to Penn State's Ice Cream Short Course, a highly competitive program. In January of 2024, the Smiths were able to participate in the program where they learned "a wealth of information in food science, equipment, manufacturing processes, and about the ice cream industry as a whole," said Coralee Smith.



Coralee Smith perfecting the mint chocolate chip ice cream.

This is where the idea for Josie's Creamery began. Now, Josie's Creamery provides custom made pasteurized ice cream to Laramie County and surrounding areas that doesn't contain any preservatives, additives, artificial flavoring or colors. The Smiths have made over 20 flavors since the beginning, rotating and bringing new flavors in and out.

"We are a small family business serving our local area with all-natural premium

delicious ice cream," Smith said. "We love bringing smiles and happiness with each scoop!"

Not only does Josie's Creamery provide a great service to this community, but it has also seen great support from other members in the community.

The Smiths were able to purchase equipment by selling one of their pickups, and they were also able to establish and license a commercial kitchen that became available in Burns, WY. Premium, clean label, pasteurized ice cream base mix and natural flavors, were necessary to their business model and fortunately they found two companies that provided exactly what they needed. Even when they needed help making ice cream when their kids went back to school, people from the community stepped up to provide support.

While ice cream is the feature of this business, the process behind it is even sweeter.

They begin with a custom made pasteurized plain base mix containing real natural ingredients and then add natural flavors and colors to handcraft each batch. Batches run through the batch freezer, which then turns the liquid into a soft serve consistency. Other ingredients such as homemade cookie dough or fruit are then added to the batches. Once this process is complete, the ice cream is then hand packed into small containers and placed in a hardening cabinet, which preserves the small ice crystals and contributes to the smooth, creamy texture.

Josie's Creamery is currently offered at Texas Trail Market and Bluffs Bakery in Pine Bluffs; Lucky Buffalo Farmstand near TA truck stop in Burns; Home on

the Range Meat Processing near Sapp Bros in Cheyenne; WY Fresh Farmstand and Town Square Marketplace in Cheyenne; Bear Mountain Beef near LaGrange and Big Hollow Food Coop in Laramie. The ice cream is available in cups, pints, quarts, half gallons, gallons, and 3-gallon tubs.

"It's been amazing to watch the pieces fall into place. Our community has been extremely supportive and loves our ice cream."

- Coralee Smith

The creamery is open every Tuesday from 3:30 pm to 7 pm for Two Scoop Tuesdays and occasionally opens the shop for Special Scoop Days to "support community events such as Burns Day, craft fairs, ball games and corporate/non-profit meetings," Smith said.

What began as a dream is now a reality—an idea that blossomed into a cherished local creamery. Just as their ideas have evolved into every batch of ice cream, our commitment to safe, reliable, and competitively priced energy fuels the dreams of small businesses in our community. From the first scoop to the final swirl, our power keeps the magic alive, helping a local creamery craft the treats our community loves.

"It has been amazing to see how God has opened doors; providing the resources, people and direction we've needed at each step in the process," Smith said.

Follow Josie's Creamery adventures on Facebook, Instagram at (@JosiesCreamery), or visit their website at [www.JosiesCreamery.com](http://www.JosiesCreamery.com).