

# WOEC Current News and Notes From the Co-op: Be Festive and Energy Smart this Holiday Season!

By Sarah Rossi

The holiday season is full of cheer, family time, and wonderful foods. It is also a time for extra energy usage. Your electric bill can escalate due to the many appliances being used to cook those delicious holiday dinners, all the light strands decorating the outside of your house, the lighted miniature Christmas villages, inflatable Santa/snowman/snow globe, and those lighted reindeer that just happen to be hanging out in your yard. Add to all that energy usage the extra heating needs that the cold weather brings, and all the time you spend baking those tasty Christmas confections and you have started your own personal energy crisis.

The good news is that with a few energy saving modifications, the bill might not have to be as bad as previous years. Please look at the suggestions below for decorating and cooking/entertaining ideas to help you use energy wisely this holiday season.

### Decorating:

- Consider replacing older strings of holiday lights with more energy efficient lights emitting diodes, LEDs. Most stores now sell LED lights, and many of the new outside Christmas decorations are already made with them.

Minimize fire hazard risk with LEDs, as they are shatterproof, shock resistant, safe to touch, and shouldn't overload your electric circuits. LEDs save up to 80-90 percent of your decorative lighting energy costs, and use 10 times less energy than incandescent mini-lights and 100 times less energy than standard bulbs.

- Wait until dark to turn on your Christmas lights and make sure to turn them off before you go to bed. Six hours or less of daily use is a good goal to aim for.

- Using holiday lighting wisely can lower power consumption. Timers and photo cells can help reduce power usage by turning the lights on at dusk and turning them off at a desired time. Just make sure that the timer you use is rated to handle the total wattage of your lights.

- Fiber optic trees and decorations are the ultimate in energy efficiency. In most cases, they use a single light bulb located in the base of the unit to light the entire decoration. That makes them energy smart and budget smart.

- Turn your room lights off when your tree lights are on. The lights on your Christmas tree may provide more than enough lighting to navigate around the room.

- Christmas lights are nice, but so are candles. Set up luminaries along your walkway and use candles throughout your home to achieve a beautiful holiday glow, without adding to the electric bill. Just be sure to use them safely and never leave them unattended. Also the new LED flameless candles are great for giving a room that candle glow without the dangers of an open flame, all with one little battery that lasts a very long time.

### Cooking/Entertaining:

- Use your microwave and toaster oven for small holiday cooking tasks, and save the oven for big cooking tasks.

- The holiday season is a big time for baking. Make the most of your oven and the energy that goes into heating it, by cooking several dishes at once. Remember: it takes the same amount of energy to heat a full oven as it does a nearly empty one.

- Whether preparing holiday feasts or simply doing some baking, don't be tempted to open the oven door. Every time you do, the temperature goes down 25 degrees, forcing your oven to work harder and use more energy.

- Use lids on your pots; foods cook faster (meaning less energy use) when the lid is on and you use the right

cookware. There is a lot to be said for proper tools in the kitchen, and investing in the right cooking instruments can actually help you cut back on your energy use while helping you create delicious holiday treats.

- Don't pre-rinse your dishes. Dishwashers today are powerful enough to clean without the necessity of pre-washing everything. Just scrape the big stuff off and put them in the dishwasher to cut back on water use and energy by letting your dishwasher fulfill its purpose on its own.

- While entertaining guests, you can turn the thermostat down. The extra bodies in the house means extra warmth at no cost to you.

- Remember entertaining guests after dinner can be as simple as playing some board games, or taking a walk around Vernonia to look at Christmas lights and decorations. The important part of the season is spending time with your family and friends.

A few simple changes can make a big difference in your energy bills. Using just a few of these tips can keep you festive and energy smart without your family and friends even noticing the difference. Enjoy the Holidays!

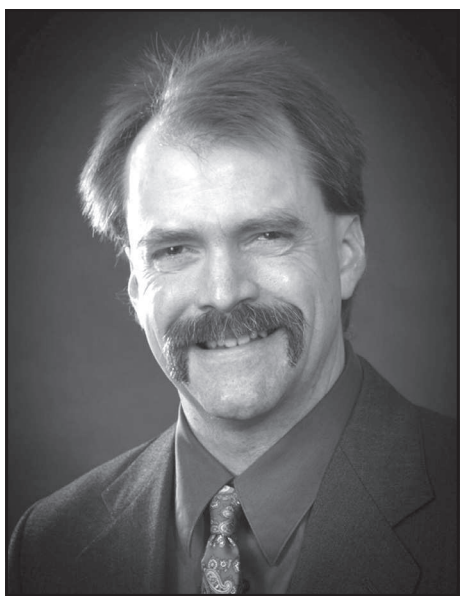
## Wauna FCU Announces Employee of the Quarter

Congratulations to Brian Franck at the Vernonia Branch, recognized by coworkers as Employee of the Quarter for the 3rd Quarter, 2012. Brian is a Member Services Representative, and specializes in assisting members with their transactions, helping to provide clear answers to their questions, and generally to bring a little cheer to anyone who visits the branch.

Brian is a resident of Vernonia and joined Wauna Federal Credit Union in 2005. He previously held titles of Loan Officer and Mortgage Loan Officer for the Credit Union. He was nominated for a variety of reasons including one he is well known for throughout the organization: "Brian is willing to do whatever it takes to help get the job done right," reports Vernonia Branch Manager Pam Weller. "He is the first person to volunteer whenever something extra is required

by a member or a coworker, and he helps to bring a smile to those around him."

Congratulations to Brian Franck, our Employee of the Quarter!



## Wauna FCU Recognizes Whitton for 5 Years

Sue Whitton is being celebrated for five years of service as an employee of Wauna Federal Credit Union. She is currently the Operations Manager for the Vernonia Branch, and has previously served as a member services representative and a new accounts specialist. "Sue has been an integral part of branch operations," stated Pam Weller, Vernonia Branch Manager. "Members, coworkers, and visitors benefit from her combination of excellent operations skills, strong management background, and her cheerful personality. Everyone feels happy when Sue is in the room. In addition, Sue is very active in the community." Sue Whitton and her family reside in Vernonia. Congratulations to

Sue Whitton for five years of excellent service to Wauna Federal Credit Union.



Vernonia's Voice is published twice each month on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday. Look for our next issue on December 25th.

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711 Bridge Street, Vernonia  
(503) 433-4278  
kavila@kaptanskraft.com