

# BIG FLAT — NEWS —

**WE REMEMBER AND  
HONOR THOSE WHO  
FOUGHT FOR OUR  
COUNTRY**

May 2021

[www.bigflatelectric.com](http://www.bigflatelectric.com)

## Committed to a co-op culture for all

Over the years, you've heard us expound on why and how Big Flat Electric is different—because we're a cooperative. Our business model sets us apart from other utilities because we adhere to seven guiding cooperative principles that reflect core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness and service to the greater good of the community.

Electric cooperatives, including Big Flat, have a unique and storied place in our country's history. We democratized the American dream by bringing electricity to rural areas when for-profit electric companies determined the effort too costly. Back then, cities were electrified, and rural areas were not, creating the original rural-urban divide.

Newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in rural areas. Today, that spirit of equity and inclusion is a vital part of our co-op DNA.

### Equal access for all

When our electric co-op was founded, each member had an equal vote in co-op matters. That sense of equity and inclusion is still how we operate today.

Big Flat Electric Co-op was built by and belongs to the diverse communities and consumer-members we serve. Membership is open to everyone in our service territory, regardless of race, religion, age, disability, gender identity, language or political perspective.

By virtue of paying your electric bill each month, you're a member of the co-op, and every member has an equal voice and vote when it comes to co-op governance. This ties back to our guiding principles of equitable economic participation and democratic control

of the co-op.

We encourage all members to vote in Big Flat Electric's director elections every October, and we invite all members to participate in co-op annual meetings to weigh in on discussions that set co-op policies and priorities.

### Inclusion

While our top priority is providing safe, reliable and affordable energy, we also want to be a catalyst for good in our community. Because we are your local electric cooperative, co-op revenues stay right here in our community. In turn, we invest in our diverse community base through scholarship programs, charitable giving, educational programs and more. We strive to make long-term decisions that improve and enrich the communities we serve.

While today's world is radically different than it was when Big Flat was founded, our cooperative values have stood the test of time and remain just as relevant today.

## Inside:

- ★ Practice DIY safety
- ★ Business in Focus: Wholesome Beef Direct
- ★ May is National Electric Safety Month



Ranching family Tricia and PJ Kimmel (middle), along with sons Shane (left) and Trever (right) have started a new venture selling their beef directly to customers called Wholesome Beef Direct. | Photo by Lindsey Steyee Photography

**P**J and Tricia Kimmel of Wholesome Beef Direct are not new to marketing or adding new ventures to their ranching operation north of Harlem, Montana in the Turner area.

Though she retained the graphic design and printing side of her business, Tricia recently printed her last *Tricia's Trader*, a semi-weekly shopping publication that went out to Montana's Hi-line for 18 years. Tricia said, "I have shuttered *Tricia's Trader* to allow me to focus my time and energies on a new enterprise here at the ranch."

That new business is called Wholesome Beef Direct. Tricia

said, "PJ and I are excited to see what we can make happen. We think if we can master the marketing, we can help not only our own ranch, but other regeneratively minded ranchers as well."

## Wagyu and Angus herd

The Kimmel Ranch focuses on two breeds in their livestock. The herd consists of mostly Black Angus commercial cattle with a handful of full blood Wagyu, and Wagyu influenced Angus bred for superior, highly marbled meat. The Wagyu breed was developed in Japan for the consumer looking for rich, healthy, scrumptious meat.

Currently, their ranch is stocked mostly with yearling grass cattle. Tricia said, "This allows us to reach the high stock densities we need to achieve optimum soil health improvement and carbon sequestration by utilizing high intensity cell grazing with frequent moves to "grow our grass up".

The yearlings are sometimes grazed on nearby farmers' cover crops. It's a win-win situation for both our neighbors and us, as they get revenue off fallowed land that used to only cost them in inputs.

The cattle really shine up on it. It can also be grazed in the winter, but most of our cattle are usually gone by September so we

graze it before they ship. Most of the cattle are shipped out in early fall, but we retain some back for beef for our urban customer base through Wholesome Beef Direct.”

Wholesome Beef Direct has an e-newsletter that will be used to:

- ★ Share beef recipes.
- ★ Keep customers updated on upcoming beef availability.
- ★ Offer a drawing every two to four weeks for door prizes that will include beef (of course), wine, cutting boards, local honey, Kamut flour, etc.
- ★ Send updates about what is happening at the ranch, including pictures of the kids and the cattle.

## Offering Solutions

Wholesome Beef Direct offers solutions for problems non-rural consumers often have:

- 1) *Not enough freezer space* — They will mail or deliver meat as needed and provide meat locker storage.
- 2) *A large up-front investment* — They have layaway plans and are working on short-term low-interest financing options.

At this time, customers can buy a quarter, half, or whole beef that is processed locally.

“Our goal is to reach companies who might like to offer beef as an employee perk, and secondly to reach individual consumers in urban and suburban regions,” the Kimmels said.

Check out their website <http://www.wholesomebeefdirect.com> and subscribe to the mailing list. Wholesome Beef Direct can be reached by calling 844-406-BEEF (844-406-2333).



*Trever Kimmel stands in a field of cover crop the Kimmels formulated for northern Montana called Montana Dryland Mix. The mix is sorghum, millet, sunflowers, hairy vetch, and forage turnips and radishes. The cattle love it, and it helps neighboring farmers build soil health on fallowed acres. | Photo by Patrick Kimmel*

## *Kimmel Chicken Fried Steak with Homemade Seasoned Breading*

4-6 cube steaks, depending on their size.

Heat oil in a pan on high while preparing the breading, about 1/2" deep, enough to cover steaks.

Breading:

Mix in a bowl -

2-3 c. Kamut white flour (any flour will work, though)

2 Tbsp. salt

1/2 tsp. ground whole black pepper

1/4 c. Paprika

1-2 Tbsp. Garlic Powder

1-2 Tbsp. Onion Powder

1 Tbsp. Curry Powder

1 tsp. turmeric

2 Tbsp. Basil

2 Tbsp. Mrs. Dash Seasoning

In a small bowl, crack two eggs, and dilute with 1/2 c. cool water. Beat with fork.

Be sure your cube steaks are thoroughly thawed. Coat each steak in breading mixture, then dip in egg/water mixture. Coat again in breading. Gently drop into heated oil and cook to desired doneness. Serve.



## Generate Safely.

Never use a portable generator indoors.

Do not plug generators into standard electrical outlets.

Use heavy-duty extension cords to connect appliances into the generator.

Start the generator before connecting appliances.

## OUTAGE REPORTING

Call 654-2040

M-F 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

AFTER HOURS ONLY OUTAGE #  
654-7400

DARREN DEMARAIS

Line Superintendent...654-7261



Get smart about electrical safety.  
May is National Electrical Safety Month.



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