

# SPRING AND SUMMER – full of challenges and opportunities!

Thus far, our weather this year has been a bit different with amazing snowpack levels in the mountains providing water for our reservoirs but also causing flooding in parts of our state.

In this summer season, as well as all the others, weather governs our lives in Wyoming in many different ways, which makes this issue's article on the **services available from the National Weather Service** particularly timely.

Despite our high snowpack levels this year, low precipitation is the norm and has many folks across the state reevaluating water use in landscapes. Two articles address some of the possibilities for change – the picture essay on **how to build a rain barrel** and the **Rocky Mountain native plants photo quiz**.

Other folks are considering how to harness other, more plentiful natural resources, such as our fabulous solar wealth. Two articles address how to make the sun work for you through **generation of electricity by photovoltaic panels** or through the **capture of heat and light in high tunnels**, which extend our often-short growing seasons. In the latter article, the author gives great ideas for uncommon crops to grow in these handy structures.

Two other articles provide practical information to address common challenges experienced by horse owners in our state – **turning trash into treasure through proper composting** of horse manure, and how to **control those annoying bot flies** that plague our equines.

As summer swings into full-gear, I also hope you were able to attend the beginning sessions of our new webinar series in May on mountain pine beetle and grasshoppers! We often hear from folks who would have liked to attend one of the many workshops across the state but were unable. Hopefully, the webinars will help fill this gap – all you need is a computer with speakers and an Internet connection. We recorded and posted them on the barnyardandbackyards.com website to view any time convenient for you.

I hope summer is bringing you all the bounties it has to offer!

*Jenny Thompson*



*Jennifer Thompson*

