

Rural Power

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Please send any story ideas to ruralpower@kec.org.

Legislator, economist featured at KEC's 73rd Annual Meeting

Representatives of Kansas electric cooperatives gathered in Topeka Jan. 24-27 for KEC's 73rd Annual Meeting. The attendees discussed issues and challenges facing the co-ops, listened to a wide range of speakers and participated in special presentations and events.



Rep. Steven Johnson recaps his view on several legislative issues during the KEC Annual Meeting.

The meeting opened Monday with Representative Steven Johnson, who was a Youth Tour participant in 1983. He credits the Youth Tour for giving him a deeper understanding of rural issues and for better preparing him for his future leadership positions. He recapped his views on several legislative issues including the school finance formula, sales tax exemptions, the state budget, and the water plan.

Jasper Schneider, Acting Administrator of the Rural Utilities Service, provided his vision for the RUS program. Then Dr. Barry Flinchbaugh, Professor of Agricultural Economics at Kansas State University, outlined his views on the direction of our nation's economy in a humorous and candid presentation.

"This is the most complicated and longest farm bill in my lifetime...not only in how long it took to pass it, but also in the number of pages," Flinchbaugh said. "There is still a lot of uncertainty, and our economy doesn't like uncertainty."

He also reviewed lessons learned from previous farm bills and issues still to be decided in current farm policy and politics.

During the annual meeting luncheon, professional storm chaser and photographer Stephen Locke spoke to more than 400 attendees. He showed a series of time-lapse videos of various storms throughout Kansas and the Midwest.

Bruce Mueller, Wheatland General Manager and Chair of the Kansas Touchstone Energy Executive Council, presented the Power+Hope



Dr. Barry Flinchbaugh outlined his views on the direction of our nation's economy.

Award to three deserving cooperative representatives. (See Power+Hope article on p. 3).

Additional speakers featured on the agenda included Bob Patton, Senior Principal of Co-op > Directions, Bob Muirhead, Midwest Energy's Director of Economic and Community Development and Board Member of the Heartland Community Foundation, Svetlana Pushkareva Hutfles, Executive Director of the Kansas Association of Community Foundations, Bill Drummond, Executive Director of the Mid-West Electric Consumers Association in Denver, and Nicki Fuller, Executive Director of Southwestern Power Resources Association.

During the Business Session, KEC's CEO Bruce Graham provided the "State of the State-wide" report and reviewed the activities and accomplishments of the association in 2014.

KEC's Dave Holthaus and Kim Christiansen gave a legislative briefing. The attendees also heard reports from Ed Wiltse, KCRE; Phil Irwin, Federated; Miranda Stokes, CoBank; Wilma Stainbrook, KEC Auxiliary.

The KEC Loss Control, Safety and Compliance Department recognized cooperatives that earned "No Lost Time" Accident Awards, and those that received Safety Achievement Certificates for 2014.

Kansas legislators were the focus of the evening during KEC's Annual Legislative Reception. Approximately 100 members of the Kansas Legislature dropped by the reception to visit with cooperative constituents. Many other state officials were in attendance, as well.

The KEC Auxiliary raffle and quilt auction raised \$3,807. The KEC Auxiliary raffle and quilt auction raised

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KEC to host stop of Sen. Pat Roberts Listening Tour

The office of Senator Pat Roberts selected KEC's headquarters as a stop for the Senator's agriculture industry listening tour. Sen. Roberts will be at KEC on Wed., Feb. 18. His office will issue invitations to a variety of agriculture groups and media outlets.

NRECA's Directors Conference

The Directors Conference is scheduled for March 30-31 in Reno, NV. Speakers are Gen. Michael V. Hayden, former Director of the CIA and cyber security expert, and Amy Walter, National Editor of The Cook Political Report. Attendees can register for the conference and pre-conference training on cooperative.com.

For directors needing credits, the following courses will be offered prior to the conference on March 28-29: 2600 Director Duties & Liabilities, 2610 Understanding the Electric Business; 2620 Board Operations & Process; 2630 Strategic Planning; 2640 Financial Decision Making; 913.1 Co-op Foundations; 918.1 Grass-roots Strategy; 957.1 How to Evaluate & Improve Board Performance; and 958.1 Succession Planning.

Twin Valley's Dan and Kathy Peterson named farm family of the year

Dan and Kathy Peterson were honored as Kansas Farm Bureau Farm Family of the Year during Kansas Farm Bureau's 96th Annual Meeting in Manhattan on Dec. 1. Dan is Twin Valley's Board President.

One family in each of the Kansas Farm Bureau's 10 geographic districts is selected each year for the Farm Family of the Year award. The award recognizes families for their service and leadership in their communities.

The Peterson's farm consists of 80 acres of hay and 200 acres of pasture for their 60 cow-calf operation. They rent out 200 acres of cropland where wheat, corn and soybeans are produced. Over 3,000 linear feet of terraces have been built on their farm as part of their conservation work. In addition, their farm is surrounded by 3.5 acres of quail habitat.

co-opcalendar

FEBRUARY

- 19 **MDM Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka
- 20 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays
- 22-25 **NRECA Annual Meeting**, Orlando, FL

annualmeetings

FEBRUARY

- 27 **Brown-Atchinson – lunch at 11 a.m.**, meeting at 12:45 p.m., Cooperative Headquarters, 1712 Central Ave., Horton

MARCH

- 3 **Nemaha-Marshall – lunch at 11:30 a.m.**, meeting at 1 p.m., Axtell American Legion, 207 5th Street, Axtell
- 3 **Flint Hills – dinner at 5:30 p.m.**, meeting at 7 p.m., Herington Community Bldg., 810 South Broadway, Herington
- 5 **Heartland – meeting at 7 p.m.**, Ft. Scott Community College, Ellis Art Center, 2108 S. Horton, Fort Scott
- 9 **Bluestem – meeting at 7 p.m.**, Rock Creek High School, 9355 Flush Road, St. George
- 12 **Butler – dinner at 5:30 p.m.**, meeting at 7 p.m., Circle Middle School, 14697 SW 20th Street, Benton
- 16 **Lyon-Coffey – dinner at 6 p.m.**, meeting at 7 p.m., Burlington High School, 830 Cross Street, Burlington
- 21 **Pioneer – lunch at 11:30 a.m.**, meeting at 10 a.m., Health Fair 7-12 p.m., Grant County Civic Center, 1000 W. Patterson, Ulysses
- 21 **Sumner-Cowley – lunch at 11:30 a.m.**, meeting at 1:15 p.m., Wellington High School, 1700 E. 16th Street, Wellington
- 24 **Ninnescah – dinner at 6 p.m.**, meeting after meal, Municipal Building, 117 West 3rd, Pratt
- 26 **Doniphan – dinner at 6:30 p.m.**, meeting at 7:30 p.m., Doniphan West, S. Campus, Hwy 20 West, Denton

APRIL

- 1 **Kaw Valley – dinner at 5 p.m.**, meeting at 6:30 p.m., Kaw Valley Warehouse, 1100 Auburn Road, Topeka
- 7 **Ark Valley – dinner at 6:30 p.m.**, meeting after meal, Kansas State Fairgrounds, 2000 North Main, Hutchinson
- 7 **Sedgwick County – dinner at 6:30 p.m.**, meeting at 7 p.m., Cotillion Ballroom, 11120 W. Kellogg, Wichita
- 7 **Prairie Land – lunch at 12 p.m.**, meeting at 12:45 p.m., Cooperative Headquarters, 14935 U.S. Hwy 36, Norton
- 8 **DS&O – dinner at 6:30 p.m.**, meeting at 7 p.m., Sterl Hall, 619 N. Rogers, Abilene
- 9 **Radiant – dinner at 5:30 p.m.**, meeting at 7 p.m., Cooperative Headquarters, 9346 Jewell Rd., Fredonia
- 9 **CMS – dinner at 5:30 p.m.**, meeting at 6:30 p.m., S. Central Middle School, 302 S. Jefferson Rd., Protection
- 10 **Alfalfa – dinner at 5 p.m.**, meeting at 7 p.m., Cherokee High School, 412 E. 5th, Cherokee, OK
- 14 **Victory – dinner at 6 p.m.**, meeting at 7 p.m., Western State Bank Expo, 11333 Hwy. 283, Dodge City
- 15 **Wheatland – lunch at 11:30 a.m. MST**, meeting at 12:30 p.m. MST, Syracuse Fair Building, 806 S. Main, Syracuse
- 16 **Twin Valley – dinner at 6 p.m.**, meeting at 6:30 p.m., Labette HS Cafeteria, 401 High School Ave., Altamont
- 17 **Rolling Hills – dinner at 5:30 p.m.**, meeting at 6:30 p.m., NCK Technical College, E. U.S. Highway 24, Beloit
- 28 **LJEC – meeting at 7 p.m.**, McLouth Elementary School, 217 Summit Street, McLouth

MAY

- 5 **Caney Valley – dinner at 5:30 p.m.**, meeting at 7 p.m., Cedar Vale School Gym, 500 Dora, Cedar Vale
- 13 **Western – lunch at 12 p.m.**, meeting at 1 p.m., Cooperative Headquarters, 635 S. 13th Street, WaKeeney
- 15 **Sunflower – lunch at 12 p.m.**, meeting at 8 a.m., Prairie Land Headquarters, 14935 U.S. Hwy. 36, Norton

JULY

- 21 **Lane-Scott – dinner at 6:30 p.m.**, meeting at 7:30 p.m., Fairgrounds, 745 N. 7th, Dighton

SEPTEMBER

- 10 **Tri-County – dinner at 5:30 p.m.**, meeting at 6 p.m., Texas County Activity Ctr., 5th & Sunset, Guyman, OK

OCTOBER

- 19 **Midwest Energy – meeting at 10 a.m.**, FHSU Campus Robbins Ctr., One Tiger Place, Hays

NOVEMBER

- 18 **KEPCo – dinner at 6 p.m.**, meeting at 4 p.m., Geary County Convention Ctr., 310 Hammons Dr., Junction City

Co-op representatives receive Kansas Touchstone Energy Power+Hope Award

As part of the KEC Annual Meeting luncheon on Jan. 26, three recipients were awarded the Touchstone Energy Power+Hope award.

This employee and trustee recognition program honors co-op employees who have gone the extra mile to help those in need. It recognizes those who have been generous, selfless and giving—someone who helps others while expecting nothing in return. Each recipient received a plaque and also received a donation that was awarded to the charity of their choice.

Two co-op employees and one trustee received the award this year: Barry Madden, Member Services Director, Prairie Land; Tom Everett, Meter Reader, Caney Valley; and Jack Newcomb, Board Trustee, Caney Valley.

Madden received the award for establishing the 2014 Norton County Honor Hunt with his sons, Casey and Clay, to honor disabled Kansas veterans. With this program, eligible veterans applied and the winners were individually guided on an all-expense paid rifle, muzzle-loader or bow deer hunt, throughout Norton County on December 3-5. A banquet was held on the final day of the hunt and was open to the public to show their respect and appreciation to the veterans.

Madden chose to have his donation go to the Norton County Honor Hunt.

“The award means very much to me and my family who were also very involved with the honor hunt, along with around 90 other community members,” Madden said. “This was one of the most rewarding experiences and it was such a heartwarming feeling to be around the veterans.”

Madden stated that one veteran gave him a Vietnam challenge coin to encourage the continuation of the hunt.



Prairie Land's Barry Madden receives the Power+Hope Award for establishing the 2014 Norton County Honor Hunt.



From left: KEC's Bruce Graham, Caney Valley's Jack Newcomb and Tom Everett, and Wheatland's Bruce Mueller. Newcomb and Everett are honored with the Power+Hope for helping to save a man's life.

Another participant included his Purple Heart in the thank you note sent to his guide.

“That stunned his guide and everyone else,” Madden said. “It just shows how much the veterans really appreciated the event.”

Everett and Newcomb received the award by ultimately saving

a man's life. In August, Everett was in eastern Chautauqua County checking meters when he came upon an overturned tractor. The tractor had hit a barbed wire fence and a metal post had come down and stabbed the farmer in the thigh.

“He'd been there for two hours, and nobody had been by,” Everett said. “The leg that wasn't pinned was hanging, and so he was having to hold himself up with just his arm strength on the fender of the tractor.”

Knowing Newcomb lived nearby, Everett drove to his house for help. They both rushed back and with a chain and pickup. Everett and Newcomb were able to raise the tractor enough to pull the man to safety.

The victim was flown to Wichita and underwent surgery to save his leg. While his leg was saved, three toes had to be amputated.

Everett's donation went to the Wounded Warrior Project in Topeka. Newcomb's donation was given to Friends of Chautauqua County Animal Shelter located in Sedan.

This award mirrors the National Touchstone Energy Power+Hope Program, which was created in 2009. The Kansas Touchstone Energy Executive Council modified the national program in 2013 to become a statewide employee and trustee recognition program. Co-ops are asked to nominate worthy applicants every fall.

Sumner-Cowley employees give \$1,000 to local elementary school for technology upgrades

The holiday season has come and gone, but Sumner-Cowley employees have carried the giving spirit into 2015 by donating \$1,000 to Country View Elementary School in Winfield.

The Sumner-Cowley employees have a long-established “Employees Club.” Funded through the sale of scrap metal, the employees meet monthly to determine how to best give back to their community.

“The use of these funds has been approved by the SCEC Board of Directors, which has granted the Employee Club the

latitude to flex our philanthropic muscles by seeking out and pursuing charitable endeavors,” said Jared McIntire, Director of Member Services. “With this latitude comes the flexibility that allows the Employee Club to make positive impacts in the communities we serve, lending a helping hand when and where it is needed.”

The employees recently selected Country View, the lone school served by the co-op, which is the last of the rural schools in Unified School District 465.

“We wanted to do something different

and give back to one of our own,” stated McIntire, who is also an alumnus of Country View.

“We are very appreciative of the support Sumner-Cowley has given our school,” said Nancy Burger, Country View Principal. “The money will be put to good use in purchasing needed technology.”

Through these types of donations, Sumner-Cowley is able to demonstrate and emphasize a concern for community and to help foster scholastic achievement of the local elementary students.

LJEC's Jennifer Fisher appointed to safety group

LJEC's PR/Marketing Specialist, Jennifer Fisher, was newly appointed as a delegate for Safe Electricity's Member Assembly.



Jennifer Fisher

The assembly is a public awareness program of the Energy Education Council and consists of delegates from 17 states that represent varying interests within the electric industry.

Assembly members share ideas, educate and promote electric safety for the betterment of the industry. Fisher's goals as a delegate include sharing educational tools that are available through Safe Electricity not only for LJEC's members, but for all communities.

"LJEC has a responsibility to its nearly 7,000 member-owners in Northeast Kansas to ensure the most up-to-date programs and services available to them. The tools through Safe Electricity certainly fit that bill. My involvement will have a direct effect on our membership and the local community," Fisher stated.

Fisher joins KEC's Carrie Kimberlin, Midwest Energy's Mike Morley, Prairie Land's Anna Foley, and Radiant's Ann Fitzmorris, who have served on the assembly since its inception.

For more information about Safe Electricity, visit www.safeelectricity.org.

jobmarket

Ark Valley seeks Journeyman Lineman

Ark Valley is seeking a journeyman lineman. Applicants should hold a journeyman lineman certificate or three years equivalent experience plus a certificate from a power lineman vo-tech or OJT program and have a valid Class A CDL.

Qualified candidates should mail a resume and cover letter to Jim Sherry, Ark Valley Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 1246, Hutchinson, KS 67504-1246, or fax to 620-728-5550, or email to jim.sherry@arkvalley.com.

KEC's 73rd Annual Meeting, continued

\$1,257 for KEC's youth programs.

The KEC Board of Trustees met to elect officers for 2015.

Prior to the meeting, a CCD course and two board leadership courses were offered. Terry Holzer facilitated the 957 – How to Evaluate and Improve Board Performance. Bob Patton facilitated both the 2600 – Director Duties and Liabilities and the 958 – Succession Planning: Developing the Purpose-Driven Organization.

KEC hosted its 10th annual Expo,

as well as a breakfast that featured a professional pancake flipper from Chris Cakes of Wichita. Available this year were two iPad breakout sessions that featured tips and tricks for tablet devices.

In addition, the KEC Auxiliary held its own program on Jan. 26. Connie Larson described the Barn Quilt Art project, and Jane Marshall presented her cookbook *Teatime to Tailgates: 150 years at the K-State Table*.

Officers elected, retired trustees honored at KEC Board Meeting

At the KEC Board of Trustees meeting, held following the adjournment of the KEC Annual Meeting on Jan. 27, the 2015 KEC Board officers were elected: Ralph Phillips, President; Kathleen O'Brien, Vice President; Keith McNickle, Secretary; and Patrick Riley, Treasurer.

In addition, Bruce Graham, KEC's CEO, honored the two KEC board members for their years of service. Gary Burton of Flint Hills and Joe Conley of Kaw Valley were each presented with a framed certificate of appreciation for serving on the KEC Board and a gift card.



From left: KEC President Ralph Phillips, KEC CEO Bruce Graham, and Gary Burton, who is stepping down from the Flint Hills board.



From left: KEC President Ralph Phillips, Joe Conley who has retired from the Kaw Valley Board, and KEC CEO Bruce Graham.

upcoming training

KEC's IT Summit

KEC has created an IT Summit for those cooperative employees who manage their cooperative's information technology needs. This new training will be held at the Drury Inn, Wichita, on Thursday, April 30.

Topics include a discussion on security assessments by NISC's Sean Wiese, and virtualization and storage technology by the Davenport Group. The agenda also includes a roundtable discussion for the attendees.

To make a hotel reservation, call the Drury Plaza Hotel Broadview at 1-800-325-0720 and refer to the Group number of 2232792 to secure the \$116 rate. Hotel reservation cut-off date is April 3.

