

Rural Power

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

KEC prepares for annual meeting, legislative reception

Electric co-op representatives from across the state will gather at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Topeka for KEC's Annual Meeting Jan. 25-28.

The agenda features an extraordinary speaker lineup, as well as educational opportunities and several fun activities. NRECA CEO **JIM MATHE-SON** will deliver a membership message. **REP. ADAM SMITH**, Chairman of the Rural Revitalization Committee, will speak about major issues expected during the 2020 legislative session. **"TROOPER BEN" GARDNER** of the Kansas Highway Patrol will share his experiences using social media to effectively communicate with the public and give us some great stories. **MIKE BEAM**, Secretary of the Kansas Department of Agriculture, will describe the State of Kansas Agriculture. **MIKE NASI**, a partner with Jackson Walker LLP, where he practices environmental and energy law, will present The Truth about the Texas Market. **GERARD BRAUD**, an expert in crisis communications, is the guy you call when it hits the fan. He will share how co-ops can prepare to provide effective communications before critical times.

Other speakers include **PHIL IRWIN**, President and CEO of Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange. There will be industry updates from KEPCo's **SUZANNE LANE** and Sunflower's **STUART LOWRY**.

The luncheon program features **MIKE RAYBURN** who is billed as the world's funniest guitar virtuoso. He is a two-time TED Talk Presenter, an innovative entrepreneur, and Hall of Fame speaker. Through his presentation *Become A Virtuoso - Elite Performance Mastery*, he will share simple, powerful tools that took him from playing empty bars to headlining Carnegie Hall (eight times!).

"I've heard Mike Rayburn several times and



Mike Rayburn, billed as the world's funniest guitar virtuoso, will use both his world-class guitar skills and his comedy as the KEC luncheon keynote on Jan. 27 in Topeka.

he is amazing," said **BRUCE GRAHAM**, KEC CEO. "This is a don't-miss event and promises to continue our run of outstanding keynote speakers and entertainers."

Graham will also report on KEC achievements and activities in the State of the Statewide presentation. There will also be a legislative briefing and safety awards presentation by KEC staff.

Crisis Communications Workshop

GERARD BRAUD will speak early on Tuesday as part of the regular agenda and will follow up with an in-depth workshop titled *5 Steps to Effective Crisis Communications* from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Jan. 28. See more information about the workshop on page 2.

KEC Social Hour

A social hour will be held on Sunday, Jan. 26 from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Legislative Reception

The Legislative Reception, co-hosted by Federated and the Kansas electric cooperatives, will be from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 27.

Directors' Training

Three courses will be offered prior to the meeting. All courses will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. On Saturday, Jan. 25, directors will have a choice between a CCD course and a Board Leadership course. Mike Guidry will facilitate **2600.1 DIRECTOR DUTIES AND LIABILITIES**, and Kevin Sump will facilitate **921.1 RISK OVERSIGHT: THE BOARD'S ROLE IN RISK MANAGEMENT**.

On Sunday, Jan. 26, Mary McLaury will facilitate the Board Leadership Course **913.1 COOPERATIVE FUNDAMENTALS, LEGACY AND ECONOMIC IMPACT**.

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KEC offers Crisis Communications workshop

It's been said that it can take a lifetime to earn a good reputation, but only minutes to lose it.

Crisis communications expert **GERARD BRAUD** has



Gerard Braud

developed a workshop that will reveal the secret to protecting your co-op's reputation and revenue, which requires meticulous planning before an event, constant preparedness throughout the year, and rapid response at the first sign of trouble.

Braud will give an overview during his presentation at the KEC Annual Meeting on Jan. 28 in Topeka. Following adjournment of the meeting, Braud will then facilitate an in-depth workshop from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., where board members and staff will learn about a battle tested, five-step process to help cooperatives prepare for and respond to any situation before it turns into a full-blown crisis.

Registration is \$40 per attendee and includes lunch. Deadline to register is Jan. 17. Further details about the training event were emailed to the cooperatives.

For more information, please contact Shana Read at sread@kec.org.

jobmarket

KEC promotes co-op careers by listing openings on the careers section of the KEC website: <https://www.kec.coop/careers>.

- ▶ 4 Rivers has linemen positions open.
- ▶ FreeState has multiple openings.
- ▶ KEPCo has an opening for an Administrative Assistant-Receptionist.
- ▶ Pioneer has an opening for a Communications Specialist.
- ▶ Prairie Land has multiple openings.
- ▶ Sumner-Cowley has an opening for the CEO position.
- ▶ Sunflower has multiple openings.

Send your open position listings to ruralpower@kec.org.

co-opcalendar

DECEMBER

- 12-13 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Kansas City
- 18-19 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka
- 25 **Christmas Day**, KEC Office Closed

JANUARY

- 1 **New Year's Day Holiday – KEC Office Closed**
- 17 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays
- 25-28 **KEC Annual Meeting**, Capitol Plaza Hotel, Topeka
- 28 **KEC's 5 Steps to Effective Crisis Communications workshop**, 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m., Topeka
- 28 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka

FEBRUARY

- 18 **KEC Day at the Capitol**, Topeka

Kansas Electric Cooperatives to host Day at the Capitol

KEC invites co-op representatives to attend the third annual "Day at the Capitol" event, scheduled for Feb. 18, 2020, at the Kansas Statehouse in Topeka.

Please plan to join in the all-day event including a luncheon meal with legislators, committee meetings, special presentations from legislative leadership, and an evening dinner with the greater Kansas City legislative delegation that didn't have an opportunity to attend a 2019 Co-ops Vote event.

"This is an expanded agenda to

provide more time for one-on-one visits and to invite Kansas City area legislators to get to know electric cooperatives and our leaders in a unique and fun evening event," said **TARA MAYS**, Director of Government Relations.

The Day at the Capitol will be in addition to KEC's annual Legislative Reception, which is held in conjunction with the January Annual Meeting.

KEC will send hotel information and other details directly to the cooperative managers. RSVP to Carol Dorr at 785-478-4554 or cdorr@kec.org.

Youth Tour Coordinators web conference available online

The recording from the KEC Youth Tour Coordinators web conference from Nov. 21 is available on the KEC website.

Topics covered during the web conference included a recap of the 2019 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour and the Cooperative Youth Leadership

Camp, as well as what is planned for the programs in 2020. Staff also reviewed promotional materials available through KEC's Publishing Services and *Kansas Country Living*. For more information about KEC's youth programs, contact Shana Read at sread@kec.org.

KEC Annual Meeting, continued

Silent and Quilt Auctions

KCRE will host its annual silent auction on Monday, Jan. 27. To donate items, please contact KEC's Carol Dorr. Attendees can also bid on two quilts crafted and donated by Rolling Hills member **LUANN WILSON**. There may be a Kansas quilt showdown as one quilt features Kansas State University and the other University of Kansas.

"Catch" Breakfast on Tuesday

Chris Cakes of Kansas City will cater breakfast in Heritage Hall on

Tuesday, Jan. 28 from 6:30 to 7:45 a.m.

Spouses Program

The Spouses Program begins in the Shawnee Room on Monday, Jan. 27 with a memorial program.

The spouses will attend part of the general session, and then will meet in the Pioneer Room where they will hear from **MARCI PENNER** with the Kansas Sampler Foundation. Following the presentations, the Spouses Program attendees will create unique home décor with **RUSTIC CREATIONS**.

Pioneer celebrates 1 million hours with no lost time

On Nov. 6, Pioneer Electric Cooperative recognized achievement of the significant safety milestone of exceeding one million employee hours worked without a lost time accident.

"It's a team effort," said **DANNY LAW**, Pioneer's Safety and Compliance Coordinator. "Our employees work hard to ensure that everyone stays safe. It's about working to ensure that each of us are able to safely return home at the end of the day."

Pioneer's management staff surprised employees with a catered lunch. There was also a presentation by **LARRY DETWILER**, KEC's Director of Loss Control, Safety, and Compliance.

"Pioneer's achievement hasn't been matched since KEC began tracking this information in 1991," explained Detwiler. "Pioneer's milestone illustrates



KEC's Larry Detwiler presents a certificate of recognition to Pioneer management, board, and staff for their safety milestone of exceeding one million employee hours worked without a lost time accident.

the emphasis the co-op places on safety."

Pioneer officially reached the milestone in late summer of 2019 and was recognized in the October edition of *Kansas Country Living*.

The cooperative credits a "culture of safety" as the reason for the milestone and is challenging employees to continue moving forward.

"We want folks to feel like they have a say in their safety program," said Law. "We ask them for feedback on safety meeting topics, give them the opportunity to serve on a safety committee, and discuss any 'close calls' from out in the field."

KEPCo board elects officers and executive committee

The Kansas Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. (KEPCo) Board of Trustees unanimously re-elected **DALE SHORT** as President during its Nov. 21 meeting in Mayetta.

Other officers unanimously re-elected were: Vice President – **DOUG JACKSON**, Manager of Rolling Hills;

Secretary – **STEVE FOSS**, Manager of FreeState; and Treasurer – **DEAN ALLISON**, Director on the DS&O Board of Directors. Also elected to the Executive Committee were: **MIKE MORTON**, General Manager of Bluestem; **CHARLES GOECKEL**, Manager of Flint Hills; and **KIRK THOMPSON**, Manager of CMS.

Kansas co-ops support #PassTheRURALAct



(From left) Co-op managers Chuck Goeckel, Flint Hills; Allan Zadorozny, Caney Valley; and Angie Erickson, Twin Valley; show their support of the RURAL Act.

Kansas electric co-ops show how important it is for Congress to pass the RURAL Act by promoting the #PassTheRURALAct social media campaign. Visit KEC's and Prairie Land's Facebook pages to see some of the ways the Kansas cooperatives have used social media to promote passage of this critical tax code fix.

Kansas is proud to have Representatives Roger Marshall, Steve Watkins, Sharice Davids, and Ron Estes, as well as Senators Pat Roberts and Jerry Moran signed on to the bill. They join more than 300 other co-sponsors in the House and 52 in the Senate.

Visit Cooperative.com for resources on how to incorporate this social media campaign at your cooperative.

Feathers of appreciation



During the KEC District 4 Meeting on Nov. 5, Victory Electric Cooperative Board member Kenny Wehkamp (left) presented a mounted Lesser Prairie Chicken as a token of appreciation to Bruce Graham for his work on the LPC endangered species act listing and as thanks for his career with the electric cooperatives.

Q Is the Rules and Regulations document still viable since the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) no longer regulates our cooperative?

A Yes, your rules and regulations are still a necessary document, regardless of your KCC regulatory status. Your co-op's electric service agreement or your current tariffs may refer to the rules and regulations for items such as security deposit, terms of payment, line extension, discontinuance of service, and meter testing.... [READ MORE.](#)

Each issue of *Rural Power* will feature an answer to a question or a solution to a problem provided by KEC to a member cooperative. Past answers are listed on [KEC's website](#).

Asked & Answered

KEC's 2019 Co-ops Vote event series concludes

This year's Co-ops Vote events featured a series of 21 events across the state that ran from June 5 through Nov. 25.

These community-focused programs co-hosted by KEC and its member co-ops included discussions on issues of interest to rural Kansans including the lack of access to high-speed, reliable broadband; renewable generation; retail wheeling; transmission and generation build out; and utility ratemaking for non-profit electric co-ops. KEC staff also outlined the economic impact electric co-ops have on their local communities.

"The Co-ops Vote events showcased grassroots work at its best, and we applaud co-op members for engaging elected officials and community thought leaders through these outreach efforts," stated **TARA MAYS**, Director of Government Relations.

Part of the outreach efforts can be quantified:

- ▶ 21 events hosted by 28 distribution co-ops
- ▶ Visits with more than 75 state legislators, 1

statewide office holder and a representative from another statewide office, 40 local officials and 7 U.S. House and Senate staffers

- ▶ Staff traveled nearly 5,000 miles (80 hours of travel time)
- ▶ Attended by 9 youth program alumni
- ▶ 149 Facebook and Twitter posts (including 86 live-tweets) that had 43,810 impressions and 996 engagements

"These events have been extremely positive opportunities to connect with legislators. They are a key component of our three-fold advocacy program and our continued legislative success," said **LESLIE KAUFMAN**, Vice President of Government Relations and Legal Counsel.

Co-ops Vote is a non-partisan campaign focused on boosting voter turnout and cooperative engagement on policy issues. Work on the 2020 Co-ops Vote events has already begun, and KEC looks forward to continuing these opportunities next year.



1. Ark Valley board members and staff host Chairman Joe Seiwert and Sen. Ed Berger at the co-op's newly remodeled facilities.
2. Lyon-Coffey and Radiant co-host an event with State Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt and VP of the Senate Jeff Longbine.
3. Pioneer Manager Steve Epperson poses with youth tour alumni Sophia Dawson and Mia Rock.
4. Doniphan board members and Manager James Lednicki join KEC staff and Rep. John Eplee during a tour of the co-op headquarters.
5. KEC's Bruce Graham visits with Rep. Fred Patton and Rep. Jim Gartner at FreeState.

