

Rural Power

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

Kansas co-op representatives discuss tax policy implications during Legislative Fly-In

Seventeen Kansas electric cooperative representatives met with the state's Congressional delegation and their staff in Washington, D.C., as part of KEC's Fall Legislative Fly-in, Sept. 10-11.

Co-op officials hosted a delegation reception on Sept. 10 at the NRECA townhouse, located near the Capitol. This event was organized to provide a casual after-hours connection with the Kansas delegation and their staff specializing in energy policy and rural issues of interest to cooperatives.

Sept. 11 included a full day of Capitol Hill visits that provided attendees an opportunity to share the co-op message with the Kansas Congressional delegation. Teams visited the offices of Senators **PAT ROBERTS** and **JERRY MORAN**, and U.S. Representatives **ROGER MARSHALL**, **STEVE WATKINS**, **SHARICE DAVIDS**, and **RON ESTES**.

During the visits, the co-op leaders emphasized the need to pass the Reinvigorating Underdeveloped Rural Areas and Lands (RURAL) Act. This important tax proposal, introduced in both the House and Senate (H.R. 2147/S. 1032), will address unintended consequences of the 2017 federal tax changes that treat government grants as non-member income.

Such treatment threatens a co-op's ability to take in federal funds for emergency response, broadband deployment and more. Attendees also discussed broadband deployment needs, the administration's efforts to modernize the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and an initiative co-sponsored by Sen. Moran to incent battery storage research projects, the Expanding Access to Sustainable Energy (EASE) Act.



Co-op representatives meet with Senator Jerry Moran during the Kansas electric cooperative fly-in event to Washington, D.C., Sept. 10-11.

"KEC was excited about the chance to host a second DC fly-in just as Congress returns from their August recess and turns their attention to outstanding budget and tax issues. September was a strategic time to discuss the issues that are important to Kansas electric cooperatives," said Leslie Kaufman, KEC Vice President of Government Relations and Legal Counsel.

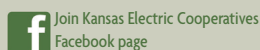
"We want to thank those who took the time to attend the September fly-in. Your work during the September events were crucial to garnering additional support for the policy items that are critical for our electric co-ops," said Tara Mays, KEC Director of Government Relations.

Representing Kansas cooperatives were **LESLIE KAUFMAN**, **TARA MAYS**, and **DOUG SHEPHERD**, KEC; **SUZANNE LANE** and **PHIL WAGES**, KEPCo; **DENNIS SVANES**, Lyon-Coffey; **SANDY BENOIT**, **PEGGI AXELSON** (daughter of Benoit and a 2007 Youth Tour delegate), **JERRY GALLAGHER**, **OTTO LEVIN**, and **MIKE ROGERS**, Prairie Land; **DOUG JACKSON**, Rolling Hills; **SCOTT AYRES**, Sedgwick County; **STUART LOWRY**, Sunflower; and **CEDRIC DREWS**, **TERRI LARSON**, and **SHANE LAWS**, Victory.

KEC plans to continue Hill visits in conjunction with the 2020 NRECA Legislative Conference, April 26-29, and again in the fall of 2020.



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Kansas Touchstone Energy to hold Annual Meeting

The Touchstone Energy Annual Membership Meeting will be held at Butler Electric Cooperative on Wednesday, Oct. 30, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

ANNE HARVEY, Touchstone Energy's Director of Member Relations and Communications, will report via Webex on the national program activities including new campaigns, the new National Survey on the Cooperative Difference data, the Co-op Community Contest and other programs featured in the Best in Class Model, and the national dues realignment.

The Kansas Touchstone Energy Executive Council will discuss statewide activities, set the 2020 dues assessment, and hold officer elections. There are vacancies for a trustee position and a member services position.

Please RSVP your attendance to Shana Read at sread@kec.org by Oct. 23.

Co-op staff improve leadership skills through SMDP courses

During the week of Aug. 19, 22 electric cooperative employees representing 10 Kansas co-ops attended the new Supervisor and Manager Development Program (SMDP) courses.

The courses were facilitated by NRECA instructor **BRYAN SINGLETARY** and were held at the Drury Inn in Wichita.

Each of these one-day courses counted as one credit toward the SMDP certification.

KEC plans to host another series of the SMDP Courses the week of Aug. 24, 2020, at KEPCo in Topeka.

jobmarket

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

- ▶ KEC has an opening for the CEO position.
- ▶ FreeState has multiple openings.
- ▶ Sunflower has multiple openings.
- ▶ Tri-County has an opening for a VP of Finance and Accounting.

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

co-opcalendar

SEPTEMBER

- 30 **Co-ops Vote**, Pioneer Electric Cooperative, 1850 W. Oklahoma, Ulysses – 11:30 a.m.
- 30 **Co-ops Vote**, CMS Electric Cooperative, 509 E. Carthage, Meade – 5 p.m.

OCTOBER

- 2-3 **KEC Board of Trustees Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Wichita
- 4 **Co-ops Vote**, FreeState Electric Cooperative, 7332 S.W. 21st St., Topeka – 11:30 a.m.
- 9 **Co-ops Vote**, Doniphan Electric Cooperative, 530 W. Jones, Troy – 5 p.m.
- 9 **Co-ops Vote**, Brown-Atchison Electric Cooperative, 1712 Central, Horton – 11:30 a.m.
- 14 **Co-ops Vote**, Ark Valley Electric Cooperative, 10 E. 10th Ave., S. Hutchinson – 11:30 a.m.
- 15 **Co-ops Vote**, Sumner-Cowley Electric Cooperative, 2223 N. A St., Wellington – 5 p.m.
- 16-17 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka
- 18 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays
- 21 **KEC Budget and Operations Committee Meeting**, Butler Headquarters, El Dorado – 10:30 a.m.
- 21 **Midwest Energy Annual Meeting**, The Venue, 2704 Vine, Hays – 10 a.m.
- 23 **KEC Sales Tax Workshop**, The Venue, 2704 Vine, Hays, 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- 24-25 **Kansas Accountants Club Meeting**, The Venue, 2704 Vine, Hays
- 24 **Co-ops Vote**, Twin Valley Electric Cooperative, 1511 1400 Rd., Altamont – 11:30 a.m.

upcomingtraining

KEC to host Sales Tax Workshop prior to accountants meeting

KEC has developed a Sales Tax Workshop to be held Wednesday, Oct. 23, at The Venue in Hays. This event will precede the Accountants Club meeting that is set for Oct. 24-25 at the same location.

The workshop will run from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Lunch and snacks will be provided.

Featured speakers include **CARL YORK**, a tax specialist with the Kansas Department of Revenue, and **DOUG SHEPHERD**, KEC's Vice President of Management Consulting Services.

Topics will cover sales tax basics, as well as issues specific to electric coop-

eratives including the original construction exception, mutual aid, holiday refunds vs. bill credits, exempt uses of electricity such as consumed in production or agriculture use, pole attachments, and exemption certificates and record keeping.

Attendees will also be able to share experiences regarding recent audits.

To register for this workshop or the Accountants Association meeting, please contact Ashley Garrett, President of the Kansas REC Accountants' Association at AshleyG@westerncoop.com. For questions about the workshop, please contact Doug Shepherd at dshepherd@kec.org.

Directors CCD and Board Leadership courses set for January

Prior to the KEC Annual Meeting, three directors courses will be offered at the Capitol Plaza, Topeka, in January.

On Saturday, Jan. 25, directors will have a choice between a Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) course and a Board Leadership course. **MIKE GUIDRY** will facilitate *2600.1 Director Duties and Liabilities*. This course explains the duties of loyalty, obedience, and due care. **KEVIN SUMP** will facilitate *921.1 Risk Oversight: The Board's Role in Risk Management*. This course is designed to provide directors with the principles and tools to improve their

processes for overseeing the cooperative's risk management activities. Using co-op examples and real world case studies, this course discusses the unique role of board and management to identify, manage and mitigate risk.

On Sunday, Jan. 26, **MARY MCCLAURY** will facilitate the Board Leadership Course *913.1 Cooperative Foundations: Co-op Legacy, Principles, and Impact on Communities*. Course participants will explore the cooperative principles and define how they provide a competitive advantage for today's co-op organizations.

Kansas co-op officials serve in leadership roles at the NRECA Region 7 Meeting

More than 750 co-op directors, managers, and staff attended the NRECA Region 7 & 9 Meetings in Spokane, WA, Sept. 24-26. The co-op officials gathered to discuss challenges facing the electric utility industry and determine the policies and priorities to be implemented by NRECA in the coming year.

BRUCE GRAHAM, KEC, and **KIRK THOMPSON**, CMS, served on the Resolutions Committee, and Graham served as vice-chair. **DOUG JACKSON**, Rolling Hills, represented Kansas on the Nominating Committee.

LESLIE KAUFMAN, KEC, served as a panelist for the "Making Co-ops Vote count in a Presidential year" breakout session.

BRIAN LANG, DS&O, and **WOODY BARNES**, Wheatland, served as participants in the "Director Compensation Under Scrutiny" game-style presentation that was held during a general session.

Approximately 50 Kansas cooperative rep-



KEC CEO Bruce Graham, Region 7 Resolutions Vice Chair and Resolutions Committee member, (pictured fourth from left) and Kirk Thompson, Manager at CMS, (pictured left) listen to comments on policy proposals during the Region 7 & 9 Meeting in Spokane, WA.

resentatives attended the meeting that covered topics including how to deliver exceptional member experiences, best practices to connect with young adult members, and a celebration of Federated



KEC's Leslie Kaufman presents a breakout session with Kent Lopez of the Washington Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Rural Electric Insurance's 60 years of providing safety, service, and stability. The NRECA Board of Directors Committee on Education, Communications and Marketing hosted a session to allow members to provide feedback on the Touchstone Energy brand and programs. There were a series of breakout ses-

sions, committee meetings, and directors courses. In addition to the NRECA program, ACRE hosted a breakfast meeting. **STUART LOWRY**, Sunflower, anchored the ACRE breakfast presentation on PAC participation. CFC and Federated held their district meetings.

Trustees who had completed the requirements for the Credentialed Cooperative Director, the Board Leadership Certificate, and the Director Gold credentials were recognized.

The Spokane meeting was one of five NRECA regional meetings. These meetings continue the co-ops' grassroots policy making process, which culminates at NRECA's 78th Annual Meeting in New Orleans, Feb. 27-March 4, 2020.

Thirty-five teams raise funds for KCRE at annual Golf Open

Kansas electric cooperatives raised approximately \$6,250 as 139 golfers competed in the 23rd annual Kansas Committee for Rural Electrification (KCRE) Golf Open. The event took place on the greens of Sand Creek Station Golf Course on Aug. 23.

The tournament champion was the **FREESTATE** team which consisted of Steve Foss, Chris Parr, Randy Richards, and Nolan Lewis. This group posted the lowest score of 58 among the 35 teams.

The lowest scores from each of the event's five other flights were:

- 1st Flight – **BLUESTEM**: Kyle Hooten, Ben Matthews III, Shelton Allen, and Tim Wolf with a score of 64.
- 2nd Flight – **SOLOMON**: Tom Hemmer, Tim Power, Reed Hammond, and Shelly Power with a score of 66.
- 3rd Flight – **ROLLING HILLS**: Craig Clark, Justin York, Kyle McGreevy, and Tyler Roesti with a score of 67.



The FreeState team was named the KCRE Golf Open Champions. Pictured from left: Jennifer Ping, Chris Parr, Michelle Meyer, Randy Richards, Nolan Lewis, and Steve Foss.

- 4th Flight – **CANEY VALLEY**: Craig Lampson, Bob Kennedy, Tom Everett, and Alan Hull with a score of 71.
- 5th Flight – **DS&O**: Herb Burgett, Bill Griggs, Brett Campbell, and Mike Sellers with a score of 73.

In addition, 19 hole prizes were awarded.

Next year's tournament date is Aug. 28, 2020, and will be held at the Sand Creek Station in Newton.

congrats

Epperson elected to CoBank board

STEVE EPPERSON, CEO of Pioneer Electric Cooperative, was elected to the CoBank Board of Directors. Epperson will represent the Mid Plains region.

CoBank is governed by a 32-person board whose members come from locations throughout the U.S. and represent diverse industries and professions.

Frahm named to Governor's Council on Tax Reform

LON FRAHM, a trustee for Midwest Energy, was named to the Governor's Council on Tax Reform. He fills one of four positions representing agriculture communities.

This council, which met for the first time this week, will conduct an 18-month, in-depth study, and make specific statutory recommendations to state lawmakers.

Co-op linemen deliver safety message at Kansas State Fair

From safety demonstrations to agriculture forums, Kansas' electric co-ops are proud sponsors of the 2019 Kansas State Fair.

SAFETY DEMONSTRATION

Celebrating its 12th year, the safety demonstration ran Sept. 9-13 in the Ad Astra Pavilion. Kansas electric cooperative linemen presented the interactive demonstration that includes a stick man made of wire and plastic piping to show the importance of staying safe around power lines.

This event is part of the State Fair's "Kansas Largest Classroom" program, which invites Kansas teachers to bring their students to this event at the fair.

Midwest Energy provided the demonstration materials, a narrator, and a trainer for each day of the safety presentation, while Midwest Energy, Pioneer, Southern Pioneer, Victory, and Wheatland linemen rotated each day to operate the demonstration. Helping with the event included **ALEX BREEDING**, **BRIAN DREILING**, **LES LOKER**, **NATE STRYKER**, **GREG SWOB**, and **JAMES WRIGHT** of Midwest Energy, along with **MIKE SALSABURY**, Pioneer; **NICK SCHWINDT**, **BERAKAH CARTER**, and **TAVIS MACDONALD**, Southern Pioneer; **PAUL SCHMIDT** and **MIKEY GODDARD**, Victory; and **TYSON RYFF** and **BRANDON RITCHIE**, Wheatland.



Above (from left): Alex Breeding, James Wright, and Nate Stryker, Midwest Energy, show the importance of protective equipment at the high-voltage line safety demonstration at the Kansas State Fair. Right: Young fairgoers react to the safety demonstration.



KEC was a sponsor of the Ag Forum that featured (from left) Greg Doud, Congressman Roger Marshall, and Mike Beam.

AG FORUM

In addition to the high voltage safety demonstration, KEC also sponsored the WIBW broadcast of the Agriculture Forum from the Kansas State Fair on Sept. 7. This year's forum featured U.S. Congressman and House Agriculture Committee member

DR. ROGER MARSHALL, Kansas Agriculture Secretary **MIKE BEAM**, and Chief

Agricultural Negotiator in the Office of the United States Trade Representative **GREGG DOUD**. The Kansas Agriculture Network and WIBW 580 broadcast the forum.

SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION

To encourage cooperative members to attend the fair, KEC hosted a Facebook giveaway for free State Fair admission tickets. Followers were asked to comment on the KEC Facebook page with their favorite fair foods. Five winners were randomly drawn from among the 262 entries.

FreeState employees raise funds for medical center



FreeState Electric Cooperative's 80 employees and nine trustees rallied to raise \$7,500 that was matched by CoBank to donate a total of \$15,000 for the F.W. Huston Medical Center in Winchester. The facility was selected by the board through an application process. The gift will be used for equipment upgrades, computers, kitchen items, thermometers, bladder scanner, wheelchairs, and bedside tables.

KMSDA shows commitment to community

Members of the Kansas Member Services Directors Association (KMSDA) showed their commitment to community at the September meeting by helping feed the hungry. Several co-op employees volunteered in the kitchens at The Lord's Diner, which serves a meal 365 days a year.

In addition to the community service event, the group met to discuss topics including crisis communications, the KidWind Challenge, electric vehicle infrastructure, drone technology, Form 990, LinkedIn Learning, social messaging, and a variety of roundtable discussions.



Volunteers from Bluestem, Butler, FreeState, Heartland, KEC, Lane-Scott, Midwest Energy, Prairie Land, Sunflower, and Victory help feed the hungry on Sept. 18.