

Rural Power

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KEC Member Connections to debut first of August 2021

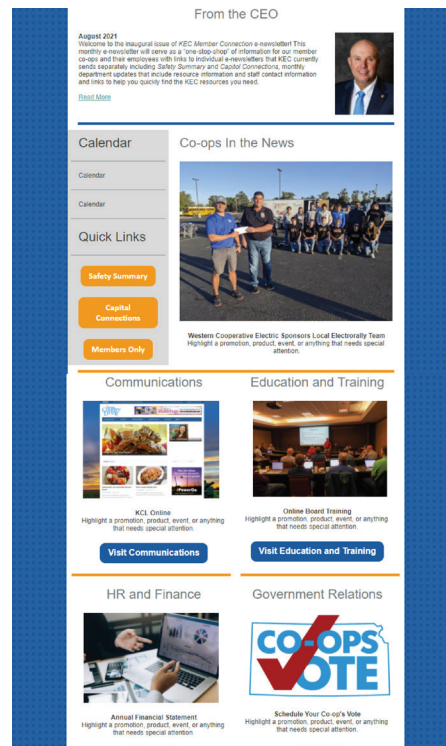
Anyone with an email address (or several) spends a staggering amount of time reading and answering emails — more than 11 hours per work-week, according to McKinsey Research. Despite our demanding inboxes, email is still the preferred method of communication for 86% of professionals.

Not surprisingly, the majority who responded to the KEC communications member survey earlier in the year said their preferred method to communicate with KEC is through email. In addition, 91% of respondents to that survey either strongly agreed, agreed or were neutral on consolidating KEC monthly communications.

As a result of the information and comments gleaned from the membership survey, one of the top actionable items for the KEC Communications Department is to consolidate communications sent to member co-ops into a timely, easy-to-read format that also serves as a

“one-stop-shop” of information for our member co-ops and their employees. Thus, *KEC Member Connections* will debut the first week of August and offer much of the same content *Rural Power* has over the years with the addition of:

- Links to individual e-newsletters that KEC currently sends separately including *Safety Summary* and *Capitol Connections* (during legislative session *Capitol Connections* will still be disseminated weekly)
- Monthly department updates that include resource information and staff contact information to assist member co-ops and their staff in quickly finding the KEC resources they need
- Kansas electric co-op news about employees, community initiatives, and other industry updates
- KEC and Kansas electric co-ops calendar of events



KEC's new email communications, *KEC Member Connections*, will debut in August 2021.

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Wheatland's Bruce Mueller elected to NCSC board

Wheatland's CEO and General Manager **BRUCE MUELLER** was elected to the board of directors at the National Cooperative Services Corporation's 40th annual meeting on June 14. The meeting was held during the CFC Summer Summit.

"I am looking forward to working with the NCSC board on their continuance of the NCSC mission: to bridge the financial needs of the rural electric network with expectations of the global capital



Bruce Mueller

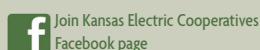
market, one cooperative at a time," Mueller said.

NCSC provides specialized financial services to electric cooperatives across the nation. It has helped cooperatives, including Wheatland, expand their services to meet community needs and save more than a billion dollars in financing costs through tax-advantaged financings.

Mueller will represent District 4 on the organization's 10-member board of directors during his three-year term. District 4 is an expansive region encompassing the states of Kansas, Nebraska, Alaska, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. For more information, visit www.ncsc.coop.



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Find out more about the KEC Summer Meeting on the App

The Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (KEC) app keeps you informed and connected with the electric cooperatives of Kansas.

The app, which features a directory of co-op employees and trustees, has been updated with a section for the KEC Summer Meeting. This section includes the meeting agenda, detailed information about



the speakers and sponsors, and a list of restaurants and activities available for meeting attendees. Attendees may also use the app to complete an evaluation on the different aspects of the Summer Meeting.

To download the app, search for "Kansas Electric Cooperatives" using either the App Store or Google Play. Members will need to log in using the email they use for KEC. Members are asked to click "always allow" for the app to access your location and "allow" for the app to send notifications. These features will be important to send updates during KEC events.

For more information, please contact Angela Howard at ahoward@kec.org.

jobmarket

KEC helps to promote co-op careers by listing openings on the careers section of the KEC website. Visit <https://www.kec.coop/careers> to learn more.

- ▶ FreeState has multiple openings.
- ▶ Sunflower has multiple openings.
- ▶ Victory seeks vice president of communications.
- ▶ Wheatland has multiple openings.

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

Positions will be posted on the website for one month, unless otherwise directed by the co-op.

co-opcalendar

JULY

- 17 **Sumner-Cowley Annual Meeting**, Wellington High School. Meal at 11:30 a.m. Meeting at 1:15 p.m.
- 20 **Lane-Scott Annual Meeting**, Lane County Fairgrounds, Dighton. Meal at 6:30 p.m. Meeting at 7:30 p.m.
- 21 **Sunflower Board Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, 8:30 a.m.
- 22 **MDM Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, 10 a.m.
- 31 **KEC Summer Meeting Directors Training**, Marriott Hotel, Overland Park.

AUGUST

- 1 **KEC Summer Meeting Directors Training**, Marriott Hotel, Overland Park.
- 2 **KEC Summer Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Overland Park.
- 5 **Caney Valley Annual Meeting**, Cedar Vale High School, Cedar Vale. Meal at 5:30 p.m. Meeting at 6 p.m.
- 12 **Safety Summit**, DSO Electric Cooperative, Solomon, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- 12 **Doniphan Annual Meeting**, Troy Community Center, 6 p.m.
- 13 **KEPCo Board Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, 8 a.m.
- 23 **Sunflower Board Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, 8:30 a.m.
- 25 **HR Summit Roundtable**, virtual, 10 a.m.

SEPTEMBER

- 9 **Pioneer Annual Meeting**, Grant County Civic Center, Ulysses. Time TBD.

Linemen volunteers needed for Kansas State Fair exhibit

Kansas electric cooperatives and the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Kansas are co-sponsoring a high-voltage line safety demo at this year's Kansas State Fair, Sept. 13-17.

This sponsorship will incorporate the full-size, electric safety demonstration—on loan from Midwest Energy—with the fair's "Kansas' Largest Classroom." The safety demonstration will be repeated from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Ad Astra Pavilion building.

Midwest Energy will supply a narrator and trainer for each day. However, we need two linemen per day to run the demonstration. Currently, Tuesday,

Wednesday, and Thursday are available.

- ▶ Monday, Sept. 13 - **MIDWEST ENERGY**
- ▶ Tuesday, Sept. 14 - **AVAILABLE**
- ▶ Wednesday, Sept. 15 - **AVAILABLE**
- ▶ Thursday, Sept. 16 - **AVAILABLE**
- ▶ Friday, Sept. 17 - **VICTORY**

Volunteers will receive general admission passes to the fair, and an FR shirt to wear while they are volunteering at the demonstration.

Available days will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. If you have linemen who could volunteer to help, please contact Alexa Scheer at 785-478-4554 or email ascheer@kec.org.

upcomingtraining

HR Summit virtual roundtable

HR professionals are encouraged to attend the quarterly virtual roundtable meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 25, 10-11 a.m.

This session will cover the following topics: how co-ops are preparing for upcoming retirements, what specific activities co-ops engage in to retain current employees, and how co-ops promote the positive side of co-op culture to employees or potential employees.

Meeting information and registration has been emailed to the participating cooperatives. There is no cost to attend this event.

2021 IT Summit, Sept. 20-22

The IT Summit Planning Committee asks members to save the dates of Sept. 20-22 for the fall meeting. The 2021 KEC IT Summit will be held from 1 to 5 p.m. on Sept. 20, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sept. 21, and from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Sept. 22. The Courtyard by Marriott at Old Town in Wichita is the host site.

To make a hotel reservation, call 866-522-8909 by Aug. 30. Ask for the "KEC IT Summit Block." The \$145 rate includes breakfast and parking. Detailed program information will be emailed closer to the meeting dates.

KCRE to host 25th annual Golf Open on Aug. 27

The Kansas Committee for Rural Electrification (KCRE) will host its 25th annual Golf Open on Aug. 27 at Salina Municipal Golf Course located at 2500 Crawford St. in Salina.

Registration for the four-person scramble begins at 7:30 a.m. at \$80 per participant. Included in the registration fee are green fees, the use of a cart, mulligans, lunch, and a chance to win a prize.

To celebrate 25 years of advocating for Kansas electric co-ops and the rural way of life, this year's tournament offers a few extras for everyone, including commemorative golf ball markers for each registered player.

The tournament begins at 8:30 a.m. A shotgun start will commence the

fundraising event for KCRE, a political action committee that supports state legislators, elected officials, and candidates who support issues of concern to electric cooperatives and rural Kansans.

To donate prizes, sponsor a hole, or play in the tournament, visit www.kec.coop/golf. If you have any questions, contact **KIRK THOMPSON**, CMS Electric, at 620-873-2184.

Golfer or not, you can celebrate Kansas electric cooperatives with the purchase of a premiere-quality shirt with your choice of logo. Wear your shirt at upcoming KEC events and be entered into cash prize drawings. To order a shirt, visit www.kec.coop/form/shirt-order-form.



Sunflower and Kansas Dept. of Commerce create new business recruitment partnership

Gov. Laura Kelly recently announced a new partnership between the Kansas Department of Commerce's Certified Sites program and Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, which will increase the number of shovel-ready development sites Kansas can showcase nationwide.

Commerce's Certified Sites Program informs developers about potential sites the state has deemed ideal and primed for development. As the result of this new partnership, when a site is certified through Sunflower's Certified Sites Program, Commerce will automatically certify the site, as well. Successful recipients of the Kansas Certified Site designation receive many benefits, including marketing and investment attraction support.

"We are excited to enhance job growth and economic activity in Kansas," said Sunflower President and CEO **STUART LOWRY**. "The dual certification with the Department of Commerce will enhance marketing opportunities for this site."

KEC Member Connections, cont.

- Upcoming education and training information for co-op staff and trustees
- KEC updates from CEO Lee Tafanelli

KEC is timing *KEC Member Connections*' monthly publication to coincide with many of the co-op's board meetings so the most recent KEC news will be available for co-op managers or KEC trustees to report to their boards.

If you are a Kansas electric co-op employee, trustee, or retiree, look for *KEC Member Connections* the first week of August. Add kec@kec.org to your

address book to ensure you don't miss the first issue.

If you are a friend of KEC (industry partner, employee of another statewide association, or other non-Kansas co-op reader) and are interested in continuing to receive information about KEC and the electric co-ops of Kansas, let us know by sending an email to kec@kec.org.

If you have any questions, contact Vicki Estes, director of communications and editor of *Kansas Country Living*, at vestes@kec.org or 785-228-4630.

insympathy

Clifford Friesen

Clifford Friesen, died on June 30 at the Lone Tree Retirement Center in Meade. He served on the CMS Board of Trustees from 1991 to 2018. He served as an Alternate Trustee to the KEPCo Board from 1993 to 2018.

Memorials may be sent to the Lone Tree Retirement Center in care of Fidler-Orme-Bachman Mortuary, PO Box 70, Meade, KS 67864.

KEC staff members participate in annual Forge Day of Service event

KEC's Multimedia Communications Specialist **SHAYLEE ARPIN** and KEC Intern **ALEXA SCHEER** participated in the Forge Annual Day of Service on June 25 at the Capper Foundation.

Local professionals gathered at the Capper facility in Topeka to assist in an exterior maintenance project. Volunteers scraped and painted picnic tables and benches.

"I am grateful to be given the opportunity by Forge and KEC to support

my community," said Scheer. "Service opportunities like these make it possible to connect with other local young professionals and collaborate on projects that promote the wellbeing of our shared community."

Forge, a Greater Topeka Partnership program, offers opportunities for young professionals aged 18 to 40 to participate in educational, philanthropic, networking, and social programs.



KEC's Alexa Scheer (left) and Shaylee Arpin paint picnic benches as part of the Forge Annual Day of Service on June 25.

Students discover the KEY to leadership

KEC's strong tradition of promoting youth leadership continued this year in a new format, with 29 local student leaders coming together virtually to take part in the Kansas Electric Youth (KEY) Leadership Conference. These students were selected for this exclusive opportunity by twelve Kansas and Oklahoma electric co-ops who sponsored the delegates for the June 21-25 event.

The conference focused on different aspects of leadership and included sessions about the cooperative business model and the cooperative principles, a session on advocacy that included a review of the Co-ops Vote initiative and how students can make their voices heard, a reputation management workshop, and tips to prepare for the transition between high school and higher education.

The speaker lineup featured a discussion with **SEN. JERRY MORAN**, who visited openly with the students and answered their questions on topics ranging from foreign grain exports, death tax on inherited land, the pandemic, climate change, and support for military families.

Other speaker highlights included an inspiring message from the reality television program *Survivor*'s **HOLLY HOFFMAN**, and a presentation titled *Wolves Can't Fly* from the Kansas City Chiefs mascot **DAN MEERS**.

Students were able to network with their peers through small groups, each lead by an electric cooperative employee who has shown excellent commitment to the cooperative youth program. These small group mentors were **ANGIE CLEVENGER**, Butler; **SARAH FARLEE**, FreeState; **TRAVIS GRIFFIN**, Flint Hills; **SHELLEY PAIK**, KIUC; **LESLIE KRAICH**, TCEC; and **ALLI CONINE**, Wheatland.

At the conclusion of the conference, students submitted a short video focused on what leadership means to them.

NATALIE SCHWEIZER, sponsored by Ark Valley, was among the participants.



"I learned so much that I didn't know. Having been through this conference, I feel better equipped to take on the future and whatever it may hold."

Each of the student leaders was asked to create a video detailing what leadership means to them. The videos will be shared with the sponsoring cooperatives and a highlight reel will be presented at the KEC Summer Meeting.

In addition to the conference, the students had the opportunity to apply for the Kansas Youth Spokesperson position. **MAGGIE BRULL**, sponsored by Western, was named the 2021 Kansas Youth Spokesperson.

"I thought it would be a great opportunity to represent the students who were selected for the KEY Leadership Conference," Brull said. "This conference has taught me that people come from a lot of different places in life, and co-ops serve everyone no matter what your place in life is. It is nice to know that you have this giant community of people who are there for you."

Brull will give a speech at the KEC Summer Meeting on Aug. 2.

All students who completed the virtual conference are eligible to apply for both the KEC Auxiliary Scholarship and the NRECA Glenn English Scholarship. Both scholarship programs are designed for youth tour alumni.

For more information about the virtual KEY Leadership Conference or other KEC youth programs, contact Shana Read at sread@kec.org. KEC hopes to return to the in-person Electric Cooperative Youth Tour and the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in 2022.

The recordings of the virtual conference may be viewed on KEC's members-only section of the website at <https://www.kec.coop/KEY>.



Maggie Brull

Unlocking the KEY Leadership Conference

by Evan Shupe,
sponsored by
FreeState

The KEY Leadership Conference provided me with some great insight, and a lot of ideas that I feel will be helpful to me in the future. There were three takeaways that I believe will always stick with me. They include:

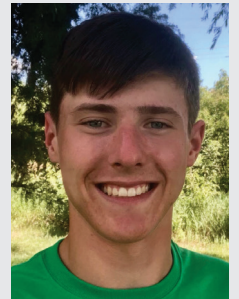
- ▶ don't be afraid to accept a challenge,
- ▶ don't spend your life - invest your life, and
- ▶ always be aware of your online reputation.

I learned that challenges are opportunities, and opportunities usually lead to growth. Sometimes challenges can be frustrating and scary, but if you put forth your best effort many times, they will lead to some of your greatest accomplishments.

While listening to Dan Meers, the Kansas City Chiefs Wolf mascot, he said something that really stuck with me. He said, "invest your life, don't spend your life." When you invest in your life by serving your community you can lead and encourage others. The legacy you leave will be the result of the investments and service you commit to your community.

Having a positive online presence is becoming more important each day. Presenter Molly McPherson said that having a bad online reputation can affect your entire future. More employers are looking at social media before hiring employees, and her presentation made me realize how important it is to be thoughtful about what you post online.

I am extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in the KEY Leadership Conference. I met many new people, and I learned many important things that I can use for a lifetime.



Evan Shupe