

# RuralPower

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Please send your story ideas to [ruralpower@kec.org](mailto:ruralpower@kec.org).

## Consolidation vote passes at Lyon-Coffey and Radiant co-ops

The members of Lyon-Coffey Electric Cooperative and Radiant Electric Cooperative voted by a huge margin to consolidate the two co-ops.

Two special membership meetings were held concurrently on Nov. 5 for co-op members to cast their ballots. Lyon-Coffey members met at their co-op headquarters in Lebo, with 139 registered members voting in favor of the consolidation and 10 registered members voting against. Radiant members met at their co-op headquarters in Fredonia, with 146 registered members casting favorable ballots and nine registered members voting no.

The two cooperatives will come together as **4 RIVERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.** on Jan. 1, 2020. The new co-op will be named for the rivers that run through the service area.

"We are looking forward to joining this



Eugene Houston, Lyon-Coffey Board Secretary, addresses the membership about the proposed consolidation at a special meeting held Nov. 5 at the co-op headquarters in Lebo. When the votes were tallied, 93 percent of Lyon-Coffey members present and 94 percent of Radiant members present voted in favor of the consolidation.

partnership with Radiant Electric Cooperative. This is a great opportunity to stabilize rates for the future and continue to provide the safe affordable service our members expect and deserve," said Lyon-Coffey Board President **ROBERT CONVERSE**.

All existing jobs will be maintained for a combined workforce of 48, and the two boards will combine. The current business offices in Lebo, Emporia, and Fredonia will remain open to serve nearly 13,000 accounts in 14 neighboring counties. Cost savings are forecast to be approximately \$9 million over 10 years. These cost savings come from greater operating efficiencies than either co-op could achieve on its own by combining purchasing, accounting, billing, information technology and member service functions, as well as by sharing equipment, software and engineering services.

## KEC announces speaker line up for annual meeting

Representatives of rural electric co-ops from across the state will gather at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Topeka Jan. 26-29 for the 77th annual meeting of Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc.

The agenda features a variety of speakers. **STEPHEN BELL**, NRECA, will report on the Lexicon Project which has guided development of a common language for co-ops to use when discussing priority issues. **SID SPERRY**, SPIDI Weather Solutions, will demonstrate how to use the Sperry-Piltz Ice Accumulation (SPIA) Index. **BRIAN SLOBODA**, NRECA, will give an update on consumer-centric emerging technologies, including blockchain, batteries, and electric vehicles. **KELLY LENZ**,

WIBW Radio/Kansas Agriculture Network, will present an agricultural outlook.

The luncheon program features world-touring entertainer **MARK J. LINDQUIST**, who has appeared in ABC's *LOST*, CBS' *Hawaii Five-O* and the Universal Studios movie "Battleship."

The program also includes Federated's **PHIL IRWIN**, G&T updates by KEPCo's **SUZANNE LANE** and Sunflower's **STUART LOWRY**, and KEC District chairperson elections. **BRUCE GRAHAM**, KEC, will report on achievements and activities in the State of the Statewide presentation. Other KEC staff will lead presentations on the KEC app, safety awards, and legislative activity.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative  
PO Box 4267  
Topeka, KS 66604-0267  
[www.kec.coop](http://www.kec.coop)

Join Kansas Electric Cooperatives  
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## Cooperative Hall of Fame deadline near

Nominations are now being accepted for the Kansas Cooperative Hall of Fame.

The Hall of Fame, sponsored by the Kansas Cooperative Council, is important for honoring those who have gone “above and beyond the call” in advancing the cooperative philosophy. Established in 1999, 47 individuals representing all types of cooperatives have been inducted.

The showcase display at the Kansas State Fairgrounds in Hutchinson also plays a significant role in educating others about the uniqueness of the cooperative business model by highlighting the achievements of our state’s great co-op leaders and preserving our co-op history.

To download the nomination form, visit [www.kansasco-op.coop](http://www.kansasco-op.coop). The deadline for applications is Dec. 1.

## 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 about the following positions.

Send your open position listings to [ruralpower@kec.org](mailto:ruralpower@kec.org). Positions will be posted on the website for one month, unless otherwise directed by the co-op.

- ▶ KEC has openings for a Multimedia Communications Specialist and a Communications Intern.
- ▶ FreeState has openings for an Engineering Intern and a Member Services representative for the Topeka office.
- ▶ Sunflower has openings for a Communications Specialist, a Project Management Intern, Journey Line Technician, Line Technician Apprentice, Lab Tech Trainee, Environmental & Science Intern, Transmission Engineer, Transmission Engineer Intern, Senior Transmission Engineer, Transmission Geotechnician, Instructional Designer, and an Operator Technician.
- ▶ Custer PPD in Nebraska has openings for an Operations Manager and an Engineering Assistant.

## co-opcalendar

### NOVEMBER

22-23 **Thanksgiving Holiday – KEC Office Closed**

27-28 **Transformer Workshop**, FreeState Headquarters, 1100 SW Auburn Rd., Topeka

29 **MDM Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka

29 **KEC’s What the Election Results Mean for Electric Co-ops**, conference call, 1 p.m.

29-30 **Metering Workshop**, FreeState Headquarters, 1100 SW Auburn Rd., Topeka

### DECEMBER

5-6 **KEC Board of Trustees Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Wichita

## upcomingtraining

### KEC to host election recap conference call

Electric co-ops were actively engaged in the 2018 midterm election to represent the interests of the communities they serve. Now that most of the races have been called, KEC is hosting an interactive conference call on Nov. 29 at 1 p.m. that will answer “What the Election Results Mean for Electric Cooperatives.”

**KIRK JOHNSON**, NRECA’s Senior Vice President of Government Relations, will share the big picture for what the election results mean on the national level. Then KEC’s Govern-

ment Relations team of **LESLIE KAUFMAN** and **TARA MAYS** will give a statewide review.

Call-in information for this hour-long session will be emailed to the electric co-ops.

This conference call is the first of the planned quarterly “micro learning” opportunities offered through KEC. The next session will be a webinar with **KRISTINA DIETRICK** on March 5 at 10 a.m. The webinar’s topic will be “Transitioning in the Workplace: Succession Planning with Multiple Generations.”

### 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. 26, directors will have a choice between a CCD course and a Board Leadership course. **KEVIN SUMP** will facilitate *2630.1 Strategic Planning*. This course teaches how to participate effectively in strategic thinking and planning processes. **SCOTT**

**LUECAL** will facilitate *975.1 Capital Credits Issues and Decisions*. This course helps directors understand the co-op’s capital credits policy.

On Sunday, Jan. 27, Sump will facilitate the Board Leadership course *955.1 Your Board’s Culture: Its Impact on Effectiveness*. This course explains the concept of boardroom culture through an examination of case studies.

### KEC to host Supervisor and Manager Development Program courses

For the week of August 19, 2019, KEC will offer five of the new Supervisor and Manager Development Program (SMDP) courses. The courses will be led by NRECA’s **BRYAN SINGLETARY** and will run from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

SMDP is a flexible, co-op-specific education program focused on strengthening the leadership skills, knowledge and abilities needed to hire, develop and lead others, manage performance, communicate effectively and make decisions. The goal of this program is to equip co-op supervisors and managers with tools and resources to successfully lead and engage high-performing teams

in support of the four mission-critical areas of safety, member satisfaction, reliability and cost control.

This program is intended for co-op staff with leadership responsibilities ranging from key contributors considering a supervisory role, to new and experienced supervisors and mid-level managers.

Registration information will be sent to each cooperative. Participants will be able to select individual courses or can sign up for the entire week.

Contact Shana Read at 785-478-4554 or email [sread@kec.org](mailto:sread@kec.org) if you have any questions.

# KEC's Co-ops Vote event series begins

Electric cooperatives are hosting a series of Co-ops Vote events designed for legislators to learn more about the electric cooperative industry in Kansas.

The first of these events was held on Nov. 13 at Lyon-Coffey Electric Cooperative's headquarters in Lebo. Lyon-Coffey, Flint Hills, and Radiant electric cooperatives hosted Kansas Senator **BRUCE GIVENS** (R-El Dorado) and Kansas Senate Vice President **JEFF LONGBINE** (R-Emporia). Also joining by phone was Representative-elect **MARK SAMSEL** (R-Wellsville).

The program included briefings by KEC staff on cooperative issues likely to come before the 2019 Kansas Legislature and a discussion on what sets co-ops



KEC's Leslie Kaufman (center) introduces Kansas Senate Vice President Jeff Longbine to Radiant's Leah Tindle at the Nov. 13 Co-ops Vote event.

apart from other business models.

"This event was a terrific chance to connect co-op leadership and staff with key elected officials," said **TARA MAYS**, KEC's Manager of Government Relations. "It was a great opportunity to engage legislators while educating them about

electric cooperatives and the issues important to our members."

There are eight additional events scheduled through Dec. 14. The next Co-ops Vote event will be held Nov. 26 in Clay Center, and will be hosted by Bluestem, DS&O, Nemaha-Marshall, and Rolling Hills. For more information or for a complete schedule of events, please contact Mays at [tmays@kec.org](mailto:tmays@kec.org).

## KEPCo holds annual meeting

KEPCo held its annual meeting on Nov. 14 at the Courtyard by Marriott in Junction City. More than 140 trustees, guests, managers, staff, and spouses were in attendance.

The Annual Meeting program included dinner and a report from KEPCo's Executive Vice President and CEO **SUZANNE LANE**, followed by contests and games.

During the business session the next day, the following officers were elected: **DALE SHORT**, President; **DOUG JACKSON**, Vice President; **STEVE FOSS**, Secretary; and **DEAN ALLISON**, Treasurer.

The KEPCo Board annually names seven trustee representatives to serve as its Executive Committee. In addition to the officers, the Executive Committee members elected were **CHUCK GOECKEL**, **KEVIN COMPTON**, and **KIRK THOMPSON**.

## KEC announces agenda for January Spouses Program

Spouses of KEC Annual Meeting attendees are welcome to attend the Spouses Program on Monday, Jan. 28. All events take place in the Maner Conference Centre in Topeka.

The itinerary begins in the general session with a memorial program, a KEC App demonstration, and the Statehouse 2019 presentation. The spouses will then meet in the Pioneer Room.

**MARTIE RISON** with the Topeka History Geeks will explain how her group was formed and how they impact the Topeka community. She will also give tips on how social media can make history relevant to a younger generation.

**KIM TURLEY** with Topeka Rescue Mission Ministries will discuss their mission of bringing help and hope to homeless and impoverished neighbors. Everyone is encouraged to bring hygiene items to donate, including shampoo, conditioner, and shower gel (hotel size and larger), deodorant, and toothpaste (small and large).

Last on the agenda is **AL STRUTTMAN** of Moburts who will give a demonstration on spices and seasonings.

For more information, email Carol Dorr at [cdorr@kec.org](mailto:cdorr@kec.org).

## Kansas director serves as panelist at CFC's annual summit

Key cooperative staff from across the nation attended the 2018 CFC Independent Borrowers Executive Summit (IBES), held Nov. 5-7.

This annual conference provided CEOs, CFOs, and leaders of non-RUS borrower cooperatives with a unique opportunity to network, hear from prominent experts and gain insights on the latest industry, finance and management challenges and opportunities.

Sumner-Cowley Electric Director **GABE SCHLICKAU** served as a panelist for the presentation entitled *Understanding Next Generation Board Members*. The panel was moderated by **ADAM SCHWARTZ**, Founder and Principal of The Cooperative Way.

Schlickau was elected this



Gabe Schlickau, (pictured at left) Director from Sumner-Cowley Electric Cooperative, serves as a panelist for the *Understanding Next Generation Board Members* presentation at the recent CFC conference. Other panelists included Kim Goepferich, Director from Platte-Clay Electric Cooperative, MO; and Stephen Goodman, Director from Southern Rivers Energy, GA.

year to the Sumner-Cowley Board and is a Vice-President at Meritrust Credit Union, headquartered in Wichita. He previously worked in economic development and external affairs for Black Hills Corporation.

Panelists discussed how they balance family demands, the importance of a

positive Board culture for new Directors, their reasons for deciding to serve, and other issues during the two-hour program.

"As baby boomers retire, we are seeing both a need and the reality that we are moving to a new generation of board members," explained Schwartz. "Cooperatives need to prepare for the future by training younger board members to assume responsibility and to be leaders for their communities."



## Members invited to visit KEC's updated website

Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. recently launched its newly designed website at <https://www.kec.coop/>.

The updates feature a streamlined and simplified design, improved functionality and enriched content areas to help members navigate the different programs offered through the statewide organization.

The site update was prompted by the launch of Touchstone Energy's Co-op Web Builder 3.0. The new platform is hosted with Google Cloud technology that includes security updates and performance enhancements.

Visitors to the KEC website will notice the addition of the **LEGISLATIVE CENTER** where they can find information on Co-ops Vote and KCRE, and an expanded **ABOUT US** section that highlights the importance of the cooperative difference and a listing of the KEC trustees.

Under the **NEWS** tab, *Rural Power* content is easier to navigate, and the *Kansas Country Living* page includes calls to action for advertisers, potential writers, and those who want to submit events. A soon-to-be-added **MEDIA**

**RESOURCES SECTION** under the News tab will provide media with infographics and content to download and publish.

The **CAREERS** section has been enhanced to promote co-op careers and includes job openings at member co-ops. To include your co-op's job listings, email Shana Read, KEC's Director of Education, at [sread@kec.org](mailto:sread@kec.org).

The **MEMBERS-ONLY** site is easily accessible from the new home page by clicking the green Members-Only button at the top of the page.

"We believe the updated website provides an improved user experience," said Vicki Estes, KEC's Director of Communications. "The expanded navigation, reorganization of the content, and updated design makes it easier for users to find the information they need."

KEC Communications staff will continue to develop the website and add content relevant to members, legislators, the media, and the public.

"We're excited to have the new site up and running but more excited to have access to the built-in tools this site offers that provide a better user experience," Estes said.

## Glenn English Foundation scholarships open Dec. 1

The Glenn English National Cooperative Leadership Foundation encourages educational advancement by awarding higher education scholarships. Applications for these scholarships open on Dec. 1.

The Foundation awards one \$10,000 scholarship and four additional \$1,000 scholarships to Youth Tour alumni each year through the **YOUTH TOUR ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP**.

The foundation also awards at least two \$2,000 scholarships to college students seeking a career in the rural electric engineering fields through the **ENGINEERS FOR THE FUTURE SCHOLARSHIP**. These scholarships support future engineers who will help define and solve the electric utility challenges of the future. Applicants do not need to be former Youth Tour participants.

For more information about these scholarship opportunities, visit <http://bit.ly/NRECAscholarship>.

## Utilities partner to educate customers about scams

Local utilities including Black Hills Energy, Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., Kansas Gas Service, Kansas Municipal Utilities, Westar Energy, and Kansas City Power and Light Company, joined forces to educate consumers about scams targeting utility customers and ways they can protect themselves.

November 14 was **NATIONAL UTILITY SCAM AWARENESS DAY**, which raised the awareness of scammers posing as utility employees in an attempt to steal customers' private information.

Scammers use telephone, mail, email, or door-to-door tactics to target customers. They pose as electric, water, or natural gas company employees, and threaten customers by saying their service will be disconnected if they fail to make an immediate payment – typically using a prepaid card or other non-traceable form of payment.

Tips to help customers avoid being the victim of a utility scam can be found at [www.UtilitiesUnited.org](http://www.UtilitiesUnited.org).

## Kansas ElectroRally to host seminars for high school teams

Kansas ElectroRally will conduct two fall seminars for high school teams to learn more about the ElectroRally program as they prepare to compete in the championship racing season in the spring.

These fall seminars will allow both current and prospective teams to learn more about the sport from experienced instructors covering topics including building an electric race car, safety, driving and performance.

The first seminar will be held on Nov. 28 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the MINDDRIVE facilities located at 2615 Holmes Rd., Kansas City, MO.



High school teams race their hand-crafted electric vehicles through the Kansas ElectroRally program at the Scott City Airport.

Photo by Marcia Matthies

The second seminar will be held on Dec. 12 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Center for Applied Technology on the Campus of Fort Hays State University.

To register to attend either seminar, schools should email **CHRIS DINKEL**, President of Kansas ElectroRally, at [cdinkel@usd489.com](mailto:cdinkel@usd489.com).