

Rural Power

INSIDE

- 2 | Calendar
- 3 | Tara Mays joins KEC's Government Relations team
- 3 | Bruce Graham appointed to CBC
- 4 | Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp highlights

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

KEC to kick off the 2018 Summer Meeting on August 6

KEC will kick off the 2018 KEC Summer Meeting on Monday, August 6 at the Overland Park Marriott.

The featured luncheon speaker will be **DAN MEERS**, better known as the Kansas City Chief's Wolf. In 2013, Meers came within inches of losing his life while practicing a zip line stunt. From that experience, he wrote the book "Wolves Can't Fly" and now shares his incredible story and the important lessons learned about leadership and life.

Other speakers include **LYNNE HINRICHSSEN**, State Director, USDA Rural Development, who will share her vision for Kansas rural development; and **DIANE DEBACKER**, Executive Director, Kansas Dept. of Commerce, who will demonstrate the



value of technical training. **DAVID TUDOR**, CEO, Associated Electric Cooperatives in Missouri, recently worked in the utility industry in Texas and will outline the realities of retail wheeling. **BUD BRANHAM**, NRECA's Director of Safety and Loss Prevention, will review the Commitment to Zero Contacts toolkit; and **PETER MUHORO**, CFC, will discuss power supply issues.

There will be a panel discussion with **SEN. ROB OLSON & REP. JOE SEIWERT**, and cooperatives will have a chance to thank these legislators for their significant support.

Other meeting activities include the KEC Spouses Program and Auxiliary Silent Auction. NRECA Directors Courses will be offered on August 4 and 5.

Two Kansas electric cooperatives name new managers

Twin Valley's Board of Trustees has selected **REED METZGER** as CEO. Metzger started work on June 28.

For more than 19 years, Metzger has worked for a cooperative, beginning his career at a telephone co-op in Colorado before transitioning to the electric industry. Metzger has worked at every level within cooperatives and has spent the past 11 years of his career in the CEO role—eight years as a telephone cooperative CEO and the past three as the CEO of Big Horn County Electric Co-op, Inc. in Montana.

Metzger and his wife of 12 years, Brandy, have 6 children: Alyssa (18), Tucker (9), McKenna (7), Emmett (5), Quigley (3), and Sterling (4 months). The Metzgers enjoy the outdoors and spending time together as a family.

Through his work with employees and the Board of Trustees, Metzger plans to increase the core competency of the cooperative and ensure its success both now and in the future.



Reed Metzger

Prairie Land's Board of Trustees is pleased to announce the appointment of **CHUCK LOOK** as its next CEO.

Look, currently the Assistant CEO, will succeed Allan Miller, who is retiring on January 4, 2019, after 43 years of service with Prairie Land, and CEO for the past 28 years.

Ron Griffith, Board President stated, "Prairie Land has a tradition of promoting qualified people within the organization who have the leadership skills required to adapt to a changing industry, while maintaining core cooperative principles."

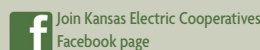
"Chuck Look has been a key part of the Prairie Land management team during the time the cooperative completed a merger with a neighboring cooperative and a major acquisition of an investor-owned utility," said Allan Miller. "He is familiar with Prairie Land's service territory and the overall philosophy of providing safe, reliable electricity, at an affordable price, to its members."



Chuck Look



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KEC to host open house of its newly renovated headquarters

KEC invites members to stop by the association headquarters on Friday, Aug. 3, as they travel to the KEC Summer Meeting. The open house is a come-and-go event. There will be refreshments and a prize drawing.

KEC's headquarters, which was built in 1990, needed mechanical and several other efficiency improvements. The remodel also updated the layout of the offices and provided functional meeting space. After working from temporary offices graciously provided by FreeState, staff returned to the KEC headquarters in late May. The project was designed by ArchitectOne and was completed by Mohan Construction.

KEC staff looks forward to giving members a tour of the updated facilities on Friday, or any time a member can drop by.

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

- ▶ Butler seeks Warehouse Associate, Broadband Customer Service Specialist, IT Technician, and Install / Service Technician
- ▶ DS&O seeks Accountant
- ▶ Flint Hills seeks Area Maintenance Lineman
- ▶ FreeState seeks Journeyman Lineman (East District) and Line Superintendent (West District)
- ▶ High Plains Power (WY) seeks Journeyman Lineman
- ▶ KEC seeks Communications Intern
- ▶ Southern Pioneer seeks Apprentice / Journeyman Lineman
- ▶ Sumner-Cowley seeks Warehouseman
- ▶ Victory seeks Meterman 3rd Class

co-opcalendar

AUGUST

- 1-3 **Material Managers Meeting**, Hotel Old Town, Wichita
- 3 **KEC Open House**, 7332 SW 21st St., Topeka
- 4-6 **KEC Summer Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Overland Park
- 15-16 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka
- 20 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays
- 23 **MDM Meeting**, Butler Headquarters, El Dorado
- 24 **KCRE Golf Tournament**, Sand Creek Station Golf Course, Newton

CFC Kansas Statewide Workshop earns high marks

Nearly 60 Kansas electric cooperative directors and staff attended CFC's Kansas Statewide Workshop in Wichita, July 10-11.

This workshop provided a variety of finance-focused topics, designed specifically for co-op directors. Sessions were led by CFC staff experts, including a presentation on capital markets by Sheldon Peterson. Other topics included strategic planning, electric rates,



Steve Kettler, CFC's Senior Vice President of Strategic Services, shares challenges other systems face in a strategic planning discussion.

understanding financial statements, and an industry update.

After the training, attendees were asked to complete an evaluation.

"The overall score for the workshop calculated to 93, the highest yet in Kansas," said John

Grant, CFC's Vice President of Events and Training. "A special thanks to the KEC team for all the work you did to make this such a success. A score like this doesn't happen in a vacuum."

KEC wants to help improve cellphone coverage in rural Kansas

KEC is joining forces with Kansas Farm Bureau to help identify areas in the state lacking cellphone broadband coverage.

KFB was recently granted a waiver from the Federal Communications Commission to challenge the legitimacy of coverage maps from various major cellular carriers in Kansas.

"Coverage maps of Kansas indicate there is virtually full coverage by at least one cellphone carrier in the state," says Rich Felts, KFB President. "But we know this isn't the case from our experience with dropped calls and slow downloading and uploading speeds in rural areas of our state."

The FCC is providing \$4.53 billion in support over 10 years to primarily rural areas that lack unsubsidized 4G Long Term Evolution (LTE) service, according to the FCC website.

Because the coverage maps of Kansas indicate there is service available from one carrier or another, KFB is seeking help from Kansans to show the lack of reliable cellphone coverage exists.

Speed tests throughout the state will be required to show the FCC data necessary to revise the map, and electric co-op members are asked to help.

"These speed tests are an integral part of being considered for the grant dollars provided by the FCC," Felts says. "To show our need for reliable cellphone coverage, we need to prove it's an issue."

Speed tests can be run by downloading the FCC Speed Test App, and results should be sent to the KFB. For detailed instructions, visit www.kfb.org/connectingkansas or see the full article in the August 2018 issue of *Kansas Country Living*.

Tara Mays joins KEC's Government Relations team

TARA MAYS has accepted the position as Manager of Government Relations at KEC.

Mays currently serves as the Executive Director for both Kansas Operation Lifesaver, a statewide network of volunteers working to improve railroad track safety awareness, and for Economic Lifelines, a highway transportation advocacy organization. Her previous experience



Tara Mays

includes Director of Government Affairs for the Kansas Turnpike Authority and Legislative Liaison for the Kansas Department of Transportation.

"Tara brings excellent contacts and experience at the Kansas Statehouse as well as association leadership skills," said Bruce Graham, KEC CEO. "She has also developed strong communication skills that will be helpful across KEC's member services."

Mays worked in communications and support roles for Governor Kathleen Sebelius and Dennis McKinney during his term as State Treasurer.

Mays will be introduced to the KEC membership at the upcoming Summer Meeting.

Bruce Graham appointed to Cooperative Business Council

KEC CEO Bruce Graham has been appointed to the Cooperative Business Council (CBC).

The CBC was created by NRECA's former CEO Glenn English, continued by his successor JoAnn Emerson, and was recently refreshed by current NRECA CEO Jim Matheson. Members are the CEOs of NRECA, ACES, Federated, the Cooperative Response Center,

NISC, NRTC, CFC, SEDC, and the Presidents of the Rural Electric Statewide Managers Association (RESMA), G&T Managers, and Touchstone Energy. Graham was elected President of RESMA in June.

The CBC meets quarterly to discuss industry needs, events, and how to effectively collaborate to serve cooperative members.

KEC's Doug Shepherd named to Kansas Broadband Task Force

House and Senate leadership recently announced the members of the Statewide Broadband Expansion Planning Task Force. This task force will study the state's needs for high-speed Internet service and how to meet those demands.

The task force includes both legislators and industry representatives. Legislators include Sen. Rob Olson and Rep. Joe Seiwert who will co-chair the Task Force, Sens. Mike Peterson and Tom Hawk, and Reps. Randy Garber and Annie Kuether. Other members include Christine Aames, Kansas Corporation Commission; Richard Felts, Kansas Farm Bureau; Colin Hansen, Kansas Municipal Utilities; Erik Sartorius, League of Kansas Municipalities; and Doug Shepherd, KEC; as well as representatives from other communication and government entities.

"We appreciate the recognition by the Kansas Legislature that the electric cooperatives will be a critical partner in the mission to enhance broadband service in rural Kansas. Doug Shepherd will bring an important combination of economic and policy expertise to the discussion," said Bruce Graham.

Mid-Kansas Electric Company energizes 138 kV line transmission project

Mid-Kansas Electric Company Inc. placed the Harper-to-Milan Transmission Project in service on May 25, 2018. The project, located in Kingman, Harper, and Sumner counties, enhances electric reliability. The Southwest Power Pool, the regional transmission organization to which Mid-Kansas belongs, identified a need for the project to support growing demands on the transmission grid, both locally and regionally.

The 138 kV line includes 58.9 miles of new line from Harper to Milan, 12.6 miles of new line from Harper to Rago, 5.8 miles of rebuilt line between Milan and the Viola tie, and the new connection to Westar's Viola Substation. The \$65 million project also includes the new Bluff Creek Substation and modifications to the Harper and Milan substations.

Public meetings to determine the route were held in 2015



Sunflower employees Michael Creamer, Line Technician Apprentice II, Derek Gilsdorf, Journey Line Technician, and Shane Wheeler, Journey Line Technician, string conductor for the transmission project.

with the final route determined in early 2016. POWER Engineers Inc. provided technical services, including routing, siting and permitting support and engineering for the transmission lines and substations. POWER also provided material procurement, construction contracting, and construction management of the project. As part of POWER's team, Land Services Inc. performed the right-of-way acquisition for the project.

"Mid-Kansas is proud to have partnered with POWER and Land Services on the Harper-to-Milan Project, one of our largest transmission projects to date," said Stuart Lowry, President and CEO of Mid-Kansas. "The new line provides a large conductor, looped transmission configuration to the region that provides greater capability and improved reliability to this part of the service territory."

CYLC students learn about connectedness, cooperation, and compassion

Fitting in and being part of the group can be challenging for anyone, especially high school students. The Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp (CYLC) in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, aims to bring high school students together in a collaborative setting to learn the cooperative

principles while cultivating the students' leadership and teamwork skills.

This year's CYLC hosted 37 Kansas high school students and other hand-picked scholars from Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming from July 13-19.

At CYLC, the youth gained a greater understanding of how their electric cooperative operates by creating a candy cooperative. The students learned leadership and teamwork skills while participating in daily membership meetings, establishing committees, and electing a general manager and board of directors. They also learned about power generation by touring both Trapper Mine, a surface coal mine, and neighboring Craig Station Power Plant.

"One of the biggest things that hit home with me were the dangers and hard work that goes into the industry," said **LANE FISCHER**, a student sponsored



Students representing Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Wyoming came together for the 2018 Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp.

by Western. "We toured a generating facility where I saw how much work goes into generating electricity. We met with a lineman who survived a tragic accident. It really put into perspective the time and effort that goes into the industry and makes me appreciative of everyone involved."

KARA EILERT, sponsored by Rolling Hills, said, "Learning about all the hard work and dedication our cooperatives give to serve our members and communities has given me a great appreciation for my co-op."

While at camp, students participated in group activities and educational sessions while learning the importance of inclusivity and collaboration. A featured speaker was Rodd Welker who taught the students through leadership activities about the "three Cs," connectedness, cooperation, and compassion.

ARIA KNEDLER, sponsored by Victory, said, "The leadership activities showed me that you can get to know a stranger and truly form a connection so quickly. Through meeting others, you can learn a lot about yourself."

Even the scheduled leisure activities offered learning opportunities as the students worked together maneuvering their river rafts down the Colorado River, competed in a volleyball tournament, and showcased their entertaining skills at the annual talent show. The students also toured downtown Steamboat Springs, enjoyed an evening dance, and relaxed by swimming.

"Meeting new friends has inspired me to be more social when I get back to school," said **BLAKE PHILLIPS**, sponsored by FreeState. "Reaching out to people I didn't know at camp has been great, and I hope to do the same at school."

At the end of the camp, the students dissolved their cooperative. They elected to donate their candy cooperative "capital credits" to support an international water filter initiative created by electric cooperatives in Colorado and Oklahoma. These five-gallon water filters will be delivered by the volunteer linemen to each Guatemalan household that will receive electricity.

As a final item of business, the campers selected students to return to the 2019 camp as junior ambassadors. Elected from Kansas cooperatives were **ADISON HAMPTON**, sponsored by Ninnescah, and **BRANDON NGUYEN**, sponsored by Flint Hills.

Lane-Scott Annual Meeting

A record-setting 550 members and guests attended Lane-Scott's 68th annual meeting at the Lane County Fairgrounds in Dighton on July 17.

Special guests at the meeting included KEC's Doug Shepherd, Sunflower's Stuart Lowry, 2017 Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp winner Madison Seery, and 2018 Youth Tour winners Burke Shapland and Melanie Whipple.

HAROLD HOSS, **DICK JENNISON**, and **CRAIG RAMSEY** were re-elected to the board. Prior to the meeting, attendees enjoyed carnival rides and a barbeque dinner.

New location for 22nd annual KCRE Golf Open

The Kansas Committee for Rural Electrification (KCRE) announced its 22nd annual Golf Open will be held on the greens of Sand Creek Station Golf Course on August 24. Sand Creek Station is located at 920 Meadowbrook Dr. in Newton.

Registration for the four-person teams begins at 7:30 a.m. at a cost of \$70 per participant. The tournament begins at 8:30 a.m.

Included in the registration fee are green fees, the use of a cart, mulligans, lunch, and a chance to win a golf bag.

A shotgun start will commence the event supporting KCRE, a political action committee that raises funds to help legislators, elected officials and candidates who show continuous support of electric cooperative issues. No KCRE dollars are used for meals, entertainment or gifts.

To donate prizes, sponsor a hole, or play in the tournament, contact Kirk Thompson at 620-873-2184.

Registrations received by Friday, August 17, are eligible for a \$25 cash drawing.