

# Rural Power

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

## KEC prepares for Summer Meeting, Open House

KEC will celebrate the 75th Anniversary of its charter at the 2016 Summer Meeting in Overland Park.

At this year's meeting, **JIM SPIERS**, NRECA, will share how cooperative innovation is shaping the future of utilities; **ANTONIO**

**SOAVE**, Kansas Department of Commerce, will discuss Kansas commerce initiatives and rural development efforts; **KIRK JOHNSON**, NRECA, will give his predictions on the election and utility politics; and **LESLIE KAUFMAN**, Kansas Cooperative Council, will share the KCC's purpose and accomplishments, including the Kansas Cooperative Hall of Fame.

Six-year-old **MACEY HENSLEY**, the Presidential Expert from Kansas, will be the luncheon speaker. Motivational speaker **MATTHEW RUSH** will close the meeting.

Two breakout sessions will be offered, including a trustee roundtable discussion.

Also on Monday, the KEC Auxiliary Program will feature artist **VIRGIL PENNER**, who was commissioned to create a painting to commemorate KEC's 75th Anniversary. **JILL LEIKER** will offer hands-on self-defense training. There will also be a wine and cheese educational tasting by **KARINE HELLWIG**, Aubrey Vineyards. The KEC Auxiliary will host the 4th Annual Silent Auction. Co-ops and individuals are encouraged to consider donating items for the auction.

Prior to the meeting, two trustee courses will be offered. On Sat., July 30, a Board Leadership course and a Certified Co-op Director course will be offered from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. **BOB PATTON** will facilitate **929.1 Current Issues in Policy**



Artist Virgil Penner, Newton, poses with his painting commissioned by KEC in celebration of its 75th Anniversary. Limited edition prints of the original painting, in a size suitable for framing, will be signed by the artist and will be this year's Summer Meeting registration gift.

**Development.** **ROD CRILE** will facilitate the day-and-a-half CCD course **2640 Financial Decision Making.**

On Sun., July 31, the CCD Course will continue from 1-4 p.m. Concurrently, **MARY MCLAURY**, NRECA, will facilitate

**Touchstone Energy: What Every Co-op Leader Should Know;** and **AMANDA WOLFE**, NRECA will review **Co-ops Vote and Other Successful Grassroots Tools.** There will also be an **iPad/ Tablet help desk** available from 1-4 p.m.

## You're invited to the KEC Open House

KEC staff invite you an open house of the KEC Headquarters, located at 7332 SW 21st St., Topeka. The KEC office will be open for tours from 8 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. on Fri., July 29. Feel free to stop by on your way to Overland Park.

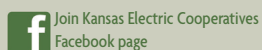
As you may know, the KEC Headquarters Committee has been working to evaluate the maintenance needs of the 26-year-old facility, as well as opportunities for updates and efficiency improvements. The open house is a great opportunity to tour the facility as the committee develops a plan going forward.

Please note, the street in front of KEC's office is undergoing reconstruction. There is an asphalt access road on the north side of 21st Street that can be used to get to KEC's headquarters. The temporary road can be accessed only coming from the east – just west of the roundabout at 21st and Urish Road. The construction zone speed limit is 15 mph.

We hope to see you Fri., July 29.



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## NRECA Board names new CEO

The NRECA Board of Directors has selected former Congressman **JIM MATHESON** as the sixth Chief Executive Officer of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Matheson succeeds Jo Ann Emerson who was stricken by a severe illness in August of last year. Matheson assumes his duties as CEO in July and will be officially introduced to the membership at the NRECA Regional Meetings.

He had served as Principal, Public Policy Practice for Squire Patton Boggs, a large well-respected international law firm based in Washington, D.C. Matheson is a former Member of Congress from the state of Utah, serving from 2001-2015. During his tenure, he served as a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. In addition to his background in Congress and public policy, Matheson worked in the energy industry for several years.

"The respect that Jim has from both sides of the aisle, and his ability to bridge political and policy divides to find common ground, will serve NRECA and all member cooperatives very well," said NRECA President Mel Coleman. "His broad knowledge base of the issues facing rural America make Jim eminently qualified to lead NRECA and represent the interests of our members."

## jobmarket

### KEC seeks Recloser Repair Assistant

The professional in this position will maintain and repair utility equipment including oil circuit reclosers, oil circuit breakers and power circuit breakers. Knowledge of various types of electrical distribution equipment and familiarity with NESC and OSHA regulations is desired.

The position requires extensive travel and paid overtime during the week in Kansas and nearby states. Applicants must be able to frequently lift and carry weight, be a good communicator, and have strong collaboration skills.

Applicants must have a high school diploma, and a CDL license will be required. A complete job description can be found at [www.kec.org](http://www.kec.org). Please send a resume and cover letter to [rkibbee@cec.org](mailto:rkibbee@cec.org) by July 15.

## co-opcalendar

### JULY

- 4 **Independence Day Holiday**, KEC Office Closed
- 15 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays
- 20-21 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka
- 16-22 **Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp**, Steamboat Springs, CO
- 19 **Lane-Scott Annual Meeting**, Lane County Fairgrounds, Dighton; meal 6:30 p.m., meeting 7:30 p.m.
- 30-31 **KEC Summer Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Overland Park

### AUGUST

- 1 **KEC Summer Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Overland Park
- 3 **OSHA Round-Table Discussion**, DS&O Headquarters, Solomon; 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- 17-18 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka
- 19 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays
- 22-26 **Supervisory Fast Track**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka

### SEPTEMBER

- 5 **Labor Day Holiday**, KEC Office Closed
- 13-15 **KEC Hot Line School**, Pratt Vo-Tech
- 14-15 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka
- 16 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays
- 20-22 **KEC Hot Line School**, Manhattan Vo-Tech
- 22 **Tri-County Annual Meeting**, Texas County Activity Center, 5th & Sunset, Guyman, OK; meal 5 p.m.; meeting 6 p.m.

## upcomingtraining

### Supervisory Fast Track

NRECA's Supervisory Fast Track will be offered the week of Aug. 22 at KEPCo in Topeka.

**BRYAN SINGLETARY** will facilitate this program and deliver instruction on core competencies required of supervisors in areas of leadership, communication, and basic administrative skills. NRECA developed the curriculum based on a set of supervisory competen-

cies identified by supervisors and CEOs.

Hotel reservations can be made at the Topeka Fairfield Inn, 1530 SW Westport Dr., by calling 785-273-6800. Ask for the Kansas Electric Cooperative rate of \$109 per night before July 22.

Registration information and a detailed itinerary will be emailed to all cooperatives this month. For more information, contact Shana Read at [sread@cec.org](mailto:sread@cec.org).

## insympathy

### Brad Wayne House

Brad Wayne House II, brother of KEC's Recloser Services Technician John House, died on June 10. Their father, Brad Wayne House, died in February this year.

Services were held on June 17 at the Kaw Prairie Community Church, 9421 Meadow View Dr., Lenexa.

Memorials can be made to the KU Endowment Association 4125 Rainbow Blvd. #300, Kansas City, KS 66103. Please designate either the Garden of Infinite Possibilities or Clinical Nutrition Education.

### Bonnie Campbell

Bonnie Campbell, Caney Valley's office manager, died June 15. Bonnie started working at the co-op in April 1951. Her dedicated service covered 65 years. She was a pillar within the communities served by Caney Valley.

Services were held on June 20 at the First Baptist Church in Cedar Vale.

Memorials can be made to the Cedar Vale Labor Day Association or the Cedar Vale Alumni Scholarship Association and may be sent in care of the Dickens Family Funeral Home, 209 N. Douglas, Sedan, KS 67361.

## Graham named as RESMA officer

KEC's CEO **BRUCE GRAHAM** has been elected by his colleagues as an officer in the Rural Electric Statewide Managers Association (RESMA). Graham was named Secretary/Treasurer for a one-



Bruce Graham

year term at the most recent meeting of the organization. The other officers elected were: President, Shawn Taylor, WY; and Vice President, Randy Pierce, LA.

"RESMA provides a critical communication network for the 38 statewides in association development and in managing critical issues. It is also an important two-way conduit with NRECA to advance a legislative agenda and other services," Graham said. "I appreciate the confidence of my peers. In particular, I think the officer role over the next few years could be helpful to Kansas as we welcome new NRECA leadership."

## KEC participates in the 88th Kansas FFA State Convention

Each year, Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., sponsors the Kansas FFA State Degrees. On June 3, Jackie Moore, Communications Specialist at KEC, distributed State Degrees to approximately 220 Kansas FFA members at the 88th Kansas FFA State Convention in Manhattan.

In addition to the State Degree sponsorship, KEC also participated in the Kansas State FFA Career Fair held during the convention. Moore, joined by Whitney Turek, KEC's Summer Communications Intern, represented KEC and spoke to FFA members from all across Kansas about their local electric cooperatives, youth tour and scholarships, and co-op careers.

"Participating in the career fair allows us to educate Kansas youth about their local co-ops," Moore said. "It also provides a great opportunity for students to begin thinking about their future career choices. These students may very well be the future of our cooperatives."

Educating students on the benefits of co-op programs and how they help youth become leaders was another benefit of participating in the career fair.

"It was rewarding to see how the students responded to their co-ops sponsoring two amazing programs that not only educate them on cooperatives, government and leadership, but give them access to future opportunities later in their careers," Turek said.

Turek, a 2012 Youth Tour alumna, shared how she went from being a Youth Tour student to a communications intern for KEC. "That connection helped the students understand the importance of initiative and networking while you are young."

There are currently about 9,000 FFA members in Kansas. Nearly 1,500 of those members were present for the convention.



KEC Intern Whitney Turek (right) visits with students about co-op careers at the FFA Career Fair.

## KEC staff travels across Kansas to encourage co-op members to make their voices heard

The beginning of June kicked off a statewide legislative meet-and-greet tour. These events give co-op staff and members an opportunity to visit with their local legislative candidates.

As part of the national "Co-ops Vote" campaign, KEC teamed up with Kansas cooperatives to coordinate the meet-and-greets to encourage member-owners to vote in the upcoming elections.

To date, KEC's government relations team has traveled 2,100 miles and connected approximately 400 co-op employees and members with more than 100 candidates running for office.

In the 2014 November election, only 50 percent of Kansas residents participated, and less than 21 percent of eligible voters voted in the 2014 August primary. In the 2016 election cycle, cooperatives want to encourage members to become part of the election process and vote. For co-ops to have a voice, engaged co-op voters are vital.

"When we as co-op members do not vote, we lose the opportunity to communicate our concerns to legislators about the issues that matter to cooperatives," said **KIM CHRISTIANSEN**, KEC's Director of Government Relations and Legal Counsel. "Having co-op members go to the polls to support candidates who they believe in and respond to cooperative issues will instantly improve our cooperative political esteem."

KEC staff has traveled to 13 Kansas co-ops thus far and plans to host seven more meet-and-greet events this month. In order to give members the opportunity to visit, ask questions and get to know those who may soon represent them, every candidate running for state or federal office is invited to attend these events.

KEC spends considerable hours tracking the activities of the Kansas Legislature and Congress to keep cooperatives and their members best informed on current issues such as drone use,

federal clean power plan rules, and sales tax on utility bills.

"KEC is dedicated to our members and our commitment to community," said **ALEX OREL**, KEC's Manager of Government Relations. "These events were created to inspire co-op members to be the voice our representatives need to hear in order to further improve our cooperatives."

"Elected officials are more likely to listen to the concerns of co-op members if they can see that co-ops are engaged and do, indeed, vote," said Christiansen. "Electric cooperatives have 42 million members nationwide. 42 million voices make a strong national impact. 42 million voices is a number our elected officials cannot ignore."

Remaining meet and greet dates include Ninnescah, July 5; Victory, July 6; Sunflower, July 6; Sumner-Cowley, July 7; Wheatland (Great Bend), July 11; Wheatland (Harper), July 12; and DS&O, July 18.



# Electric Cooperative Youth Tour inspires Kansas students

"If you are not a patriot now, you will be by the time you leave," said **ALEX OREL**, KEC's Manager of Government Relations, as his first piece of chaperone advice on the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., June 9 through 16.

This year's delegation included 36 Kansas youth and four Hawaii youth. The trip started with a banquet in Topeka that featured youth tour alumni **MIKE O'NEAL**, Former Speaker of the Kansas House of Representatives; **BRANT LAUE**, Chief Counsel for Gov. Sam Brownback; and Reps. **STEVEN JOHNSON** and **KYLE HOFFMAN**, who encouraged the youth to embrace their rural backgrounds to reach their goals.

Cooperatives created this program in the late 1950s to inspire youth. This year, co-ops nationwide sponsored more than 1,700 youth to visit our nation's capital and learn about history and the role their electric cooperatives take in developing strong rural communities.

"Learning about cooperatives throughout this trip helped me see group cooperation in a different manner," said Western's delegate **TAYLOR KELLER**. "When you look at the history of our electric cooperatives, you see what a determined group of people can really accomplish."

From meeting with Congresswoman **LYNN JENKINS**, Congressman **TIM HUELSKAMP**, and Kansas Sens. **JERRY MORAN** and **PAT ROBERTS**; touring Capitol Hill; experiencing the Holocaust Memorial Museum and several memorials, these events create a spark of self-confidence and a love for learning in each delegate.

"I was most inspired by hearing young leaders, not much older than myself, speak about everything they were accomplishing," said Rolling Hills' delegate **REBECCA MCDOWELL**. "Rural youth often have the misconception that they cannot change the country we live in, but this trip has shown me that we can and should strive to make a change because we are the future of America."

One future leader is Lyon-Cofey's **CAITLIN SCHNEIDER**. While on this trip, Schneider was elected by her peers to represent Kansas on the NRECA Youth Leadership Council.



Sen. Pat Roberts (left) and Sen. Jerry Moran (right) post with the Youth Tour delegates in front of the U.S. Capitol.

She, along with representatives from 42 other states, will return to Washington, D.C., July 16 through 20 for leadership training at NRECA.

"I found the entire trip around Capitol Hill to be fascinating. We saw the Dali Lama and were able to meet with those who help run our country," Schneider said. "Seeing the Senators in action and meeting with our Kansas Members of Congress really affected me."

Western's General Manager, **DARRIN LYNCH**, and his wife Tricia, also served as chaperones for this year's trip. They were impressed with the effect this trip had on the students.

"The youth are our future in every way. The continued support of the youth tour program is vitally important to not only rural America, but to this country's long-term success and viability. After chaperoning this event and spending a

week with these youth, I have a renewed optimism for our future," Darrin said. "At the end of the day, we want to instill cooperative principles into these youth, equipping them with tools they will use to be engaged, active participants in their communities and homes for the rest of their lives, no matter where their bright future may lead them!"

Many students called this trip an unforgettable and life-changing experience that left them with a renewed sense of pride for our country. Alfalfa's delegate, **SABRINA HUGH-BANKS**, said she "learned more about our country's values, history and expectations" on this trip and pointed out that it was a great way to witness America's history first-hand.

Midwest Energy's delegate, **JEANIE BALZER**, said Arlington National Cemetery was the most impactful experience on the trip as it reminded her of America being the "Land of the free, because of the brave."

"It gave me a greater appreciation for our country and makes me even more grateful to those who serve our country," Balzer said.

KEC and participating electric cooperatives are proud to be a small part in developing America's future generations.

"This program is a great way to empower youth and instill a sense of pride to be from rural Kansas," said **SHANA READ**, KEC's Director of Communications and Kansas Youth Tour Director. "Regardless of where you're from, all it takes is a positive attitude and a determination for change. We are proud that the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour continues to inspire our future leaders."



Caitlin Schneider was elected to the Youth Leadership Council.