

Rural Power

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

Governor Brownback declares Aug. 18 as Co-op Day

In the late 1930's, cooperatives were being organized across the Sunflower State to bring electricity to farms, homes and businesses and dramatically improve the quality of life in rural Kansas. There were many organizational and operational challenges common across the fledgling industry. In order to efficiently and effectively meet those needs, seven electric cooperative leaders chartered a membership association called Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (KEC) on August 18, 1941.

Seventy-five years later, the KEC membership celebrated the foresight of those founders during its August 1 Summer Meeting with several special events including receipt of a Gubernatorial Proclamation.

"I commend the membership of Kansas Electric Cooperatives for their dedication to rural values, commitment to community, and dedication to serving Kansans with safe and reliable electric service for homes and businesses," said **GOVERNOR SAM BROWNBACK**. "It is my pleasure to recognize August 18, 2016, as Kansas Electric Cooperatives Day."

Brownback helped commemorate KEC's Diamond Anniversary by reading the full proclamation to the membership and presenting a copy to Kathleen O'Brien, KEC board president, and Bruce Graham, KEC CEO

"The electric cooperative purpose is as strong today as it was 75 years ago when our founders began to electrify homes and farms.



Governor Sam Brownback signed the proclamation on July 29 with members of the KEC Executive Committee in attendance. From left: Keith McNickle, KEC Board vice president; Bruce Graham, KEC CEO; Leah Tindle; Gary Frieling; Gov. Brownback; Terry Hobbs, KEC board treasurer; Kathleen O'Brien, KEC board president; Craig Kostman; and Pat Morse.

While our challenges may be different, we share the same passion to improve the quality of life and the economy of rural Kansas," said Graham. "The electric cooperatives are proud of our accomplishments and are grateful for the recognition by Governor Brownback and the State

of Kansas."

Brownback also hosted electric cooperative leaders in his office on July 29, where he made the Proclamation official in a signing ceremony.

Attending the ceremony at the Capitol in Topeka were: **BRUCE GRAHAM**, KEC chief executive officer; **KATHLEEN O'BRIEN**, KEC board president; **KEITH MCNICKLE**, KEC board vice president; **TERRY HOBBS**, KEC board treasurer; **DAVE CHILDERS**, Sedgwick County; **GARY FRIELING**, Rolling Hills; **CRAIG KOSTMAN**, Doniphan; **PAT MORSE**, Victory; **BRUCE MUELLER**, Wheatland; **LEAH TINDLE**, Radiant; and several KEC staff members.

To view more photos



To view more photos of the proclamation signing or the KEC Summer Meeting, visit: <http://bit.ly/kecsm2016>.



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Midwest Energy's Mike Morley earns CCC designation

Midwest Energy announced that **MIKE MORLEY** has earned recognition as a professional communicator in a national certification program offered by NRECA.

Morley has met the requirements to become a Certified Cooperative Communicator (CCC), which signifies standards of professionalism in communications and competency of the electric co-op industry. In order to become certified, Morley submitted a portfolio of his work, which was reviewed by an independent communications professional. After passing the portfolio review, Morley passed a rigorous four-hour examination.

During Morley's 23-year service in the Navy as a Public Affairs Officer, he was able to earn several degrees—an associate's degree from the University of Maryland, a bachelor's degree from Regents College, and a Master of Liberal Studies in Public Administration from Fort Hays University. Morley is now working as the Corporate Communications Manager, where he serves as editor, writer, marketer, photographer, graphic artist and more.

"Communications and public relations are constantly evolving. The CCC program is a way to broaden my knowledge of electric and natural gas utilities while keeping current on communications trends," Morley said. "The ability to network and learn from other CCC recipients is invaluable."

Morley joins other Kansas communicators who have earned their CCC designation: KEC's Bruce Graham, Carrie Kimberlin, and Shana Read; Midwest Energy's Patrick Parke; Pioneer's Rae Gorman; Sunflower's Cindy Hertel; Tri-County's JuliAnn Graham; Victory's Jerri Imgarten; and Wheatland's Shawn Powelson. Since 1985, more than 300 electric cooperative communicators have attained CCC status nationwide.



Mike Morley

co-opcalendar

AUGUST

- 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 **KEC Budget and Operations Committee Meeting**, KEC Office, Topeka, 10 a.m.
- 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.

OCTOBER

- 4-6 **Region 7-9 Meeting**, Peppermill Resort, Reno, NV
- 12-13 **KEC Board of Trustees Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Wichita
- 17 **Midwest Energy Annual Meeting**, FHSU Campus Robbins Ctr., One Tiger Place, Hays, meeting 10 a.m.
- 19-20 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka

upcomingtraining

CFC to offer COMPASS and KRTA training

CFC is offering the Compass 4.0 and KRTA 1 & 2 training on November 14 and 15 at the Hilton Kansas City Airport Hotel.

This training is designed for CFO and accountants. To register for these courses, visit the CFC member page (www.nrucfc.coop) and log in. Click on the events tab, then the training tab

and register. There is a block of rooms reserved at the hotel.

Other states have also been invited to this training, so register early to ensure a seat. Also, Mike Lewis, CFC's Regional Vice President, is available to visit with co-op staff on site to assist with the completion of the financial forecast.

jobmarket

Alfalfa Electric Cooperative seeks CEO and General Manager

Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, headquartered in Cherokee, OK, seeks qualified candidates for the position of CEO and General Manager.

The successful candidate will be a person of integrity and have proven leadership skills. The individual must be a strategic thinker, possess strong business acumen, and preferably have at least five years' experience at the senior management level at an electric co-op. A demonstrated understanding of the cooperative principles and business model is essential. The individual will have established strong interpersonal, team building, member relations, and negotiation skills. Knowledge in the areas of legislation affecting electric

utilities, financial management, electric distribution operations, strategic planning, safety, and public relations is required. The successful candidate will have excellent oral and written communications skills and an appreciation for rural living. A bachelor's degree is preferred.

The co-op provides a comprehensive benefits package and a salary structure representative of the market. Send cover letter, two-to-three page resume, and at least three professional references or letters of recommendation to: Doug McMurtrey, AEC Board President, PO Box 39, Cherokee, OK 73728, lwerner@aec.coop. Applications must be received by August 22. EOE.

Young presidential expert featured at KEC's 75th celebration

Hundreds of electric co-op trustees, managers and key staff joined in the celebration of KEC's 75th Anniversary at the Summer Meeting in Overland Park on Aug. 1.

The meeting program featured **GOVERNOR SAM BROWNBACK** who recognized KEC's 75th Anniversary by delivering a proclamation.

"I hereby proclaim August 18, 2016, as Kansas Electric Cooperatives Day," Gov. Brownback stated.

He commended the KEC membership for their commitment to serving the people of Kansas with safe, reliable and affordable electric service.

"Thank you for your everyday contribution and commitment to improving the lives of our citizens throughout this great state," Gov. Brownback concluded.

BRUCE GRAHAM, KEC's CEO, introduced a video that covered highlights of KEC's 75 years of service to its members. He also unveiled the KEC Foundation designed to collect and distribute charitable donations and encouraged attendees to join him as a Founding Partner.

MACEY HENSLEY, six-year-old "presidential expert," and her mother Nichole, shared some of the "best day ever" experiences Macey's vast knowledge of American Presidents has provided.

"She doesn't seem to care that people see her on TV," Nichole stated. "She's still a little Kansas farm girl at heart."

JIM SPIERS, NRECA, shared the innovative work of NRECA's Business and Technologies Strategies Division to



Six-year-old presidential expert, Macey Hensley, served as the luncheon speaker for the KEC Summer Meeting. She was greeted by the audience waving presidential campaign flags for her presumed run in 2048, the first year she'll be eligible.

shape the future of utilities.

"We're not in an era where it's all about kilowatt hours," Spiers said. "It's about quality of life and economic prosperity—all those things electric co-ops have always been about."

ANTONIO SOAVE, Secretary, Kansas Department of Commerce, gave an overview of the state's economy and incentive programs available to encourage rural development. **KIRK JOHNSON**, NRECA, detailed the current political environment and how the upcoming elections could affect the cooperative industry. **LESLIE KAUFMAN**, Kansas Cooperative Council, discussed the association's mission and recognized the family of **AMBROSE DEMPSEY**, a former LJEC Trustee and political leader, who was recently elected to the Kansas Co-op Hall of Fame.

KIM CHRISTIANSEN and **ALEX OREL**, KEC, gave a recap of the Co-ops Vote activities. **SHANA READ**, KEC, shared highlights from KEC's summer youth programs. There were also roundtable discussions for managers and trustees.

MATT RUSH wrapped up the meeting with a humorous and inspirational presentation.

The KEC Auxiliary program featured Kansas artist **VIRGIL PENNER** who was commissioned to create a commemorative 75th Anniversary painting for KEC; defense training by **JILL LEIKER**, Alexandra Kemp Foundation; and wine and cheese tasting and education by the staff of Aubrey Vineyards. In addition, the Auxiliary hosted a silent auction that raised \$2,206 for KEC's youth programs.

Prior to convening the summer meeting, **BOB PATTON** facilitated the Board Leadership course 929.1 - *Current Issues in Policy Development*, and **ROD CRILE** facilitated the CCD course 2640 - *Financial Decision Making*. Several workshops were offered: **MARY MCLAURY**, Touchstone Energy, led a discussion on *What Every Co-op Leader Should Know about Touchstone Energy*; **AMANDA WOLFE**, NRECA, discussed *Co-ops Vote and Other Successful Grassroots Tools*; and **CARRIE KIMBERLIN**, KEC, offered an iPad/tablet help desk.

Kansas Electric Cooperatives creates charitable foundation, invites founders

To celebrate the vision and determination of the association's founders who chartered the organization on August 18, 1941, KEC has established a new charitable foundation.

The Foundation was introduced at the KEC Summer Meeting and Bruce Graham, KEC CEO, invited others to join him as a Founding Partner. A Founding Partner pledges to contribute at least \$750 and Graham said his hope is to raise \$75,000 over the next year.

"Any contribution amounts will be appreciated and the Foundation can accept property and legacy pledges as well. Throughout the past 75 years, many have invested their profes-

sional careers with electric co-ops or have been part of the co-op leadership through Boards or other associations. My sincere hope is that we can build this resource to support the vitality of rural Kansas for generations to come," Graham said.

KEC will create a Foundation Board to determine guidelines and recipients of grant projects made possible by the support of the electric cooperatives, employees, directors, and other generous partners.

To share your appreciation of the electric co-ops through the KEC Foundation, contact Bruce Graham, KEC, at bgraham@kec.org.

Thank you to our first five founders

- ▶ **MARCUS & ALLISON HARRIS**, KEPCo
- ▶ **DALE & BERNADETTE COOMES**, Heartland
- ▶ **ALEX OREL**, KEC
- ▶ **BRUCE & KATHY GRAHAM**, KEC
- ▶ **JOHN BLACKWELL**, Midwest Energy

In addition, **KEN HEDBERG**, DS&O Director, won one of the \$250 cash grand prizes at the KEC Summer Meeting (sponsored by T&D Solutions) and donated it to the Foundation.

Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp makes a lasting impression

Kansas high school students joined youth from Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming at the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp on July 16-22. KEC first began sending Kansas youth to the camp in 1977 and continues to coordinate the program as part of its efforts to provide educational and leadership opportunities for youth.

One of the campers, **MONICA JIRAK** sponsored by Rolling Hills, is a second-generation recipient of this trip. Her father, **JAMES**, attended the camp when he was 17 years old. James—the CEO of the Valley Co-op in Winfield and current chairman of the Kansas Cooperative Council—remembers his camp experience fondly.

“The electric cooperatives offer outstanding workshops that inspire campers to take leadership roles in their own community,” James said.

“Throughout college and my professional career, I have seen many of my cooperative youth leadership peers,” he continued. “It is amazing how many successful and involved leaders came out of that program. I hope that my daughter had as great of an experience as I did.”

Monica agreed that her camp experience was one of her summer highlights.

“The personal growth I have experienced has been the greatest outcome from the trip,” she said. “Camp helped remind me that it is important to be yourself and not let those around you hold you back from being you.”

As part of the week-long adventure, the students estab-



Nearly 100 students representing Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming attended the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp near Steamboat Springs, CO, July 16-22.

lished a candy cooperative business, in which they selected a general manager and board of directors, and participated in daily membership meetings. When not tending to their candy cooperative, the students learned about electric co-ops, witnessed a high-voltage safety demonstration and built a transmission line from craft supplies.

The youth toured Fish Creek Falls, Trapper Mine, Craig Power Plant, visited Steamboat Springs, went rafting, and enjoyed fun activities such as volleyball, swimming, dancing, and competing in the student talent show. At the end of the week, the students voted to donate their \$200 in capital credits from the candy cooperative to HawkQuest.

Every year, campers elect students to return to the following year's camp to help with coordination and facilitation of leadership activities. These ambassadors serve as role models for the new campers. **MITCHELL PORTER**, Kaw Valley, and **BRIAN MARTINEZ**, Southern Pioneer, were elected by their peers to serve as the Kansas ambassadors for 2017.

“Being surrounded by other teen leaders inspired me to go home and be a better leader in my own community,” Porter stated. “Seeing the co-ops focus on serving their members as a number one priority and giving back to their communities had a great impact on me and I was impressed by their efforts to educate youth.”

“The counselors shared their perspectives of their co-op roles and encouraged me to open up and start taking interest in discovering new things,” Martinez added.

20th annual KCRE golf tournament planned

On Aug. 26, co-op trustees, managers and suppliers will tee up for the 20th annual Kansas Committee for Rural Electrification (KCRE) golf tournament at the Salina Municipal Golf Course.

The fundraiser will begin with a shotgun start at 8:30 a.m. following registration at 7:30 a.m. The registration fee this year is \$70 per player and an additional \$10 to purchase a “John Daly Drive” for the team.

The tournament usually attracts about 130 participants to support KCRE, a political action committee that raises funds to help legislators, elected officials and candidates

who show continuous support of electric cooperative issues.

The annual golf tournament is run by co-op managers volunteering their time. Other funding comes from membership contributions and the annual silent auction.

KCRE donations are important to candidates who are running for Kansas offices to assist them in getting their campaign message out to voters. No KCRE dollars are used for meals, entertainment or gifts.

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

Commemorative print available



KEC is making the print of Virgil Penner's painting, “Celebrating Our History & Bright Future,” available for a \$25 donation to the KEC Foundation. Prints can be picked up at KEC or can be delivered at a future KEC meeting. Contact Carol Dorr at cdorr@kec.org.