

Rural Power

INSIDE

- 2 | Calendar
- 3 | Butler hosts open house
- 3 | Darrin Lynch accepts CFC position
- 4 | Kansas co-op communicators earn CCC designation

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

Industry, leadership featured at KEC Summer Meeting

Hundreds of electric co-op trustees, managers and key staff attended this year's KEC's Summer Meeting in Overland Park on Aug. 7.

The program featured **JOHN CASSADY**, Vice President of Legislative Affairs at NRECA, who opened the meeting by sharing an update on the political landscape for electric co-ops. Notably, he mentioned that the Farm Bill needed to be reauthorized as the current one expires in September 2018.

"We care about the Farm Bill because it contains policies and programs that are critical for rural development," Cassady said. "While the last Farm Bill introduced a lot of changes to the way ag programs work, we're told this bill will be more of a tweak than another wholesale rewrite."

Next were a slate of Kansas speakers who represented strong leadership programs proudly supported by the electric co-ops. Wheatland's **SHAWN POWELSON** and FreeState's **SARAH FARLEE**, both graduates of the Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership Program, detailed the importance of the program and encouraged co-ops to sponsor employees in future classes. **BETH GAINES**, Executive Director of the Kansas FFA Foundation, thanked KEC for its support of the State Degrees and the recent grant through the CoBank "Sharing Success" program. Next, **JAKE WORCESTER**, Kansas 4-H Foundation President and CEO, thanked KEC for its continued support and shared how 4-H transforms the world through young people.

BUD BRANHAM, Director of Safety for NRECA, reviewed the National Safety Program and explained what can be done to prevent



NRECA's John Cassady shares an update on the political landscape for electric cooperatives at the KEC Summer Meeting.

work accidents at electric co-ops. Retired DS&O manager **DON HELLWIG** reviewed lessons learned while serving as interim manager at Macon Electric Cooperative. **TOM HEMMER**, President and CEO of Solomon Corporation, discussed the alliance with KEC, as well as their successful alliance with the Texas statewide.

At the luncheon, **MARK MAYFIELD** shared how to combat stress with humor. "You can't be upset and laughing at the same time," Mayfield reasoned.

During the Power Supply Panel, Sunflower's **STUART LOWRY** gave an update on several projects and then discussed changes in the Southwest Power Pool's Integrated Market/Consolidated Balancing Area and the wind energy production tax credits. KEPCo's **MARCUS HARRIS** summarized the proposed Westar/Great Plains merger and then predicted how ongoing technology changes and efficiency improvements will affect power supply.

During the Kansas NRECA Membership Meeting, **KEITH ROSS** was re-elected as the Kansas representative to the NRECA Board. The KEC Board of Trustees also met following the adjournment of the Summer Meeting.

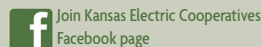
The KEC Auxiliary program featured an apron artwork challenge from the Culinary Center of Kansas City and a cookie decorating activity. The cookies were donated to local youth. **REBECCA HOWARD**, food columnist for *Kansas Country Living*, also spoke to the group. In addition, the Auxiliary hosted a silent auction raising \$1,851 for KEC's youth programs.



Members of the KEC Auxiliary showcase the aprons they decorated during their program.



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Sedgwick County Board selects Scott Ayres as General Manager

On Aug. 21, Sedgwick County's Board of Directors selected **SCOTT AYRES**, currently Sedgwick County's Staking Engineer, as its next General Manager.



Scott Ayres

"Scott has been with the cooperative for 27 years. During which time, he has held positions in the line department and as engineer," said Eugene Scheer, Sedgwick County's Board President. "We are confident Scott will excel and lead the cooperative with the knowledge he's gained from his years of experience."

Ayres will mentor under **DON HELLWIG**, retired DS&O General Manager, through the end of the year.

insympathy

Trevor Rempe

Trevor Rempe, a lineman for Rolling Hills, died on Aug. 20, 2017.

A rosary was held on Aug. 23 at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Smith Center. Funeral services were held Aug. 24 at the Smith Center Jr./Sr. High School.

Memorial contributions may be sent to the Trevor L. Rempe Memorial Fund, 116 W. First, Smith Center, KS 66967.

Condolences can be shared at www.simmons-rentschler.com.

Marc Miller

Marc Miller, son of Prairie Land's Allan Miller, died on Aug. 19, 2017.

A Mass of the Christian Burial was held Aug. 24 at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Norton.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Marc Miller Memorial Fund, c/o Enfield Funeral Home, 215 W. Main St., Norton, KS 67654. Condolences can be shared at www.enfieldfh.com.

co-opcalendar

SEPTEMBER

- 4 Labor Day Holiday**, KEC Office Closed
- 6-8 Kansas Member Services Directors Association Fall Meeting**, Hotel at Old Town, Wichita
- 7-8 REC Managers Association Meeting**, Fire Keeper Golf Course on the 7th, Meeting at Prairie Band Casino on the 8th, 12305 150th Rd., Mayetta
- 12-14 Hot Line School**, Pratt Vo-Tech, Pratt
- 14 MDM Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka
- 15 Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays
- 19-21 Hot Line School**, Manhattan Vo-Tech, Manhattan
- 20-21 KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka
- 27-29 Line Supervisors Association Meeting**, Holiday Inn Select, Wichita

OCTOBER

- 4-5 KEC Board of Trustees Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Wichita
- 9-13 NRECA Cooperative University**, Denver
- 10-11 National Electric Safety Code (NESC) Workshop**, DoubleTree, Wichita
- 11-12 KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka
- 12-13 Work Order Training**, Butler Electric Cooperative, El Dorado
- 13 Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays
- 17-18 Region 7 & 9 Meetings**, NRECA, CFC, and Federated, Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel, Denver
- 18 Rate and Cost of Service Seminar**, Courtyard Marriott, Salina
- 19-20 Accountants Club Meeting**, Courtyard Marriott, Salina
- 19 MDM Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka

upcomingtraining

Work Order training

KEC has scheduled a Work Order training on Oct. 12-13 at Butler Electric Cooperative in El Dorado.

TONY HAAS, UtiliBiz Solutions, will deliver instruction on work order procedures common to electric cooperatives.

Key topics of this training will include the purpose and objectives of work orders, phases involved in plant changes, types of construction activity, Construction Work Plan (CWP), RUS Form 740c coding and budget, and work order financing.

This training is designed for line crews, staking personnel, engineers, work order clerks, materials management personnel, accounting clerks, and any other cooperative employee who touches a work order.

Cost to attend this training is \$275 per person and will include course materials and snacks.

Hotel reservations can be made by calling Holiday Inn Express & Suites at 316-322-7275 for the group rate of \$95. Registration information will be sent soon. For more information, contact Shana Read at sread@kec.org.

Rate and Cost of Service seminar

Power System Engineering and KEC are hosting a Rate and Cost of Service seminar on Oct. 18 at the Courtyard Marriott in Salina. This training, which is being held the day before the Kansas REC Accountants Association Meeting, is designed for CEOs, CFOs, assistant managers, office managers, accountants, member services, billing and CSRs, key account managers, and engineers.

Attendees will gain a better understanding of the data requirements and process for a cost of service (COS) and rate study; they will learn how to use the COS results to evaluate, design, and communicate rates; and they will gain insights on ratemaking and policy solutions to current and future industry challenges and opportunities, including reduced sales growth, infrastructure investment, distributed generation penetration, and community solar.

Cost to attend this seminar is \$395 and will include course materials and lunch. For more information, contact Elena Larson at larsone@powersystem.org or call 785-224-3065.

Butler electric co-op hosts open house for new headquarters

After nearly a year of construction, Butler Electric Cooperative trustees and employees held a ribbon cutting ceremony to dedicate the co-op's new facility on Aug. 11. More than 200 members and guests toured the building during the open house.

The 9,500 square foot office space is equipped with LED lighting, an upgraded heating and cooling system, a tornado shelter, and an electric gate to harbor stored materials.



Butler Electric Cooperative hosts an open house and ribbon cutting ceremony for members, employees, guests and community leaders to celebrate the recent office renovation.

The building serves as the main headquarters for the co-op's 29 full-time employees, as well as for Regional Energy Group, Butler's propane subsidiary.

This facility is located at 216 S. Vine St. in downtown El Dorado, which is adjacent to the old office

space. Butler's previous facility suffered from heating and cooling issues, as well as a settling foundation. After evaluation, the board approved the new building in December 2015.

Darrin Lynch accepts CFC position

Darrin Lynch announced his resignation as General Manager from Western Cooperative Electric effective Sept. 8, 2017. Lynch, who served Western for more than four



Darrin Lynch

years, accepted a position with National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation, an affiliated cooperative that provides financial and business management services to fellow electric co-ops nationwide.

"The pleasure is mine to have served Western's member-owners and employees these past four years," Lynch said. "An opportunity has presented itself that I simply cannot pass up, so I resign with both hesitation and excitement."

The board is currently considering candidates to fill Lynch's position.

"On behalf of the member-owners and employees of Western, we appreciate Darrin's service to Western," Board of Trustees President Craig Crossland said. "We are confident that a suitable replacement will be found to continue to lead Western in safely providing its member-owners with reliable electric service at an affordable price."

Kansas electric cooperatives at the Kansas State Fair

From safety demonstrations to agriculture forums, Kansas' electric cooperatives are proud sponsors of the 2017 Kansas State Fair scheduled for Sept. 8 to 17 in Hutchinson.

Kansas State Ag Forum

KEC is sponsoring the Kansas State Ag Forum on Saturday, Sept. 9, from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. The forum will feature U.S. Senator and Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee **PAT ROBERTS** and U.S. Congressman and House Agriculture Committee member **DR. ROGER MARSHALL**.

The Kansas Agriculture Network and WIBW 580 are set to broadcast the forum. Anyone wishing to view the event live can visit kansasagnetwork.com or wibwnewsnow.com.

High-Voltage Safety Demonstration

From Sept. 11 to 15, Kansas electric co-ops and Touchstone Energy co-ops of Kansas celebrate 10 years of sponsoring the high-voltage safety

demonstration in the Ad Astra Pavilion.

ALEX BREEDING, BRIAN DREILING, LES LOKER, NATE STRYKER, GREG SWOB, and JAMES WRIGHT of Midwest Energy, along with **JEFF REED** and **ALLEN MILLER** of Radiant, **CHANDLER GECHTER** and **MARK HANSEN** of Sedgwick County and **JACOB LEDFORD** and **KYNDELL PENICK** of Victory will showcase the high-voltage safety display from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The live-wire demonstration includes a stick man made of wire and plastic piping to show the importance of staying safe around power lines.

This event is part of the State Fair's "Kansas Largest Classroom" program which invites Kansas teachers to bring their students to this event at the fair.

Admission Tickets

KEC has a limited number of gate admission tickets to the fair. If you would like to request free tickets, please email Shana Read at sread@kec.org.

State Fair tickets will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.



Nominate members for 2nd annual Touchstone Energy contest

Touchstone Energy is bringing back its #WhoPowersYou contest for a second year. This contest encourages cooperatives to recognize those who have gone above and beyond to make their communities a better place.

"This contest is designed to focus on people in our co-op communities who are making a difference," said Mary Ann Cristiano, Director of Marketing, Advertising and Digital at Touchstone Energy.

Members and employees of Touchstone Energy co-ops are eligible to nominate an individual through the #WhoPowersYou website. The contest opens Oct. 2 and will run through Nov. 4. Nominees don't have to be co-op members, but co-op employees and directors are not eligible for this contest.

Along with spotlighting people doing worthwhile things, this program also serves as good public relations.

"It really increases visibility and engagement with your members," said Ruben Musca, Touchstone Energy's Creative Director. "This is a great way of showing how you interact directly with your member-owners."

Musca said co-ops can generate earned media with the contest. "A great example is a local radio station picking

up the story after someone in your community has been nominated," he said, adding that last year's contest even generated some local TV news coverage.

Co-ops will be encouraged to promote #WhoPowersYou through a number of methods.

The 2017 #WhoPowersYou contest is a way for co-ops to honor the individuals who make a positive difference in your community.

"The best submissions we got [last year], the most compelling ones, were for the most part from co-op employees nominating people they knew," said Musca. "You're in your communities. You know people there. You know who's doing cool stuff, who's making a difference."

For example, a co-op's vice president of member services nominated a couple who began a foundation to build a new home for a family whose daughter is confined to a wheelchair. The couple was among the 2016 #WhoPowersYou winners.

Resources for cooperatives to promote the contest—from customizable ads, to emails, to social media posts—are available in a special section on cooperative.com. A panel of judges will announce the winners in December.

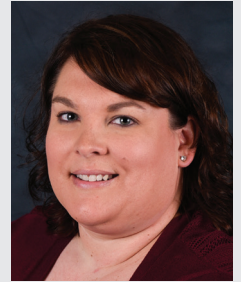
This year, the grand prize winner will receive \$5,000; second place \$2,000; third place \$1,500; and an honorable mention will receive \$500.

Kansas communicators earn CCC

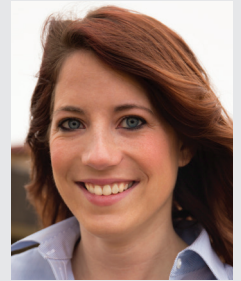
FreesState's **SARAH FARLEE** and Victory's **KENNEDY ST. GEORGE** have earned recognition as professional communicators in a national certification program offered by NRECA.

Farlee and St. George 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, They each submitted a portfolio of their work, which was reviewed by an independent communications professional. After passing the portfolio review, Farlee and St. George passed a rigorous four-hour examination.

They join other KEC-member employees who have earned their CCC designation: KEC's Bruce Graham, Carrie Kimberlin, and Shana Read; Midwest Energy's Patrick Parke and Mike Morley; Pioneer's Rae Gorman; Sunflower's Cindy Hertel; Tri-County's JuliAnn Graham; Victory's Jerri Imgarten; and Wheatland's Shawn Powelson.



Sarah Farlee



Kennedy St. George

Lane-Scott holds annual meeting

Lane-Scott's annual meeting was held on July 18, 2017, at the Lane County Fairgrounds. A crowd of nearly 450 guests enjoyed a delicious meal by Stan Hoss BBQ of Ness City.

Incumbent Trustees **RICHARD SOREM, ED GOUGH, and PAUL SEIB JR.**, were re-elected to the Board of Trustees.

STUART LOWRY, President and CEO of Sunflower, gave an update on the Holcomb Station project and the effects of the open market on electric rates. Other speakers included Youth Tour winners **CLAY BEUTLER** and **GENTRY SHAPLAND**.

Door prizes and free carnival rides were enjoyed by the attendees.

Victory encourages students to 'Plug Into Energy Careers'

Victory Electric will present co-op career opportunities to area high school students at this year's 3i SHOW High School Ag Career Day on Oct. 12.

The event offers students—as well as Ag teachers, students and parents, high school counselors, FFA representatives, 4-H representatives, and extension agents—an opportunity to learn about a future in agriculture.

Co-op representatives will discuss the many career options available at Victory Electric and other electric cooperatives and will assist students to determine an appropriate path related to their interests, experience, background, and skill set.

With more than 63,000 employees at 900 cooperatives nationwide, the elec-

tric cooperative network offers numerous career opportunities. Students will learn about options including line work, information technology, electrical engineering, accounting, communications and public relations, community and economic development, engineering and operations, meter and substation technicians, safety and loss prevention, tree trimming, human resources, payroll, purchasing and warehouse clerks, customer service, and administrative.

For more information, visit www.VictoryElectric.net/Content/Careers.

For updates regarding High School Ag Career Day session information, as well as other events at the 63rd Annual 3i SHOW on Oct. 12-14, visit www.3ishow.com or call 877-405-2883.