

# Rural Power

## Butler breaks ground for new headquarters building



Members of Butler's Board of Trustees and staff took part in the ground breaking ceremony on Sept. 6.

Butler Rural Electric Cooperative celebrated a ground breaking ceremony on Sept. 6 at the site of its new office building, which is south of their current location in El Dorado. Working with Gravity Works Architecture and Conco Construction, Butler plans to build a 9,700 square-foot single-story office building.

The new facility will serve as the main headquarters for Butler's 29 full-time employees as well as for Regional Energy Group, Butler's propane subsidiary.

The existing office building, which was constructed in the 1950s, will be converted to warehouse space.

"We are very excited about the new building. We have been fighting a settling foundation as well as heating and cooling issues for years and the repair costs estimated by our architectural consultant proved to be uneconomical," said CEO Dale Short. "Our co-op continues to see growth, and the new office building will allow us more room for that growth in the coming years."

## Kansas electric cooperatives earn 5-Star Co-op honors

Twenty-four electric cooperatives in Kansas, including KEC, have been named a "5-Star Co-op" by NRECA. This recognition honors participation in the Co-ops Vote initiative, a national get-out-the-vote campaign.

NRECA is expected to recognize the 5-Star cooperatives at the respective Regional Meetings. Kansas will have a majority of the co-ops recognized at the Region 7 & 9 meeting in Reno, NV.

"Co-ops Vote is an important initiative to strengthen voter turnout and engagement in rural areas of the country," said Bruce Graham, KEC's CEO. "The participation in Kansas has been exemplary and

the 5-Star recognition is a direct result of the engagement of our cooperatives and the KEC staff to organize Candidate Meet and Greet events across the state. Those events were the launch of what we hope is continued interest and activity in grassroots politics by our electric cooperatives."

For more information on Kansas' 5-Star Co-ops, read "Tackling the Decline in Rural Voting" in the October issue of *Kansas Country Living*. Visit [www.vote.coop](http://www.vote.coop) to find voter resources, including information on the candidates, registering to vote, voting locations, and brief descriptions of key co-op issues.

PROUD 5-STAR ELECTRIC CO-OP



### INSIDE

- 2 | Calendar
- 3 | Co-ops deliver safety message at Kansas State Fair
- 4 | KEC hires Jeff Rankin
- 4 | DS&O installs solar kit at co-op headquarters

Please send any story ideas to

[ruralpower@kec.org](mailto:ruralpower@kec.org)



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



Join Kansas Electric Cooperatives Facebook page

## Kansas Touchstone Energy to hold Annual Meeting

The Touchstone Energy Annual Membership Meeting will be held at the Wichita Marriott on Oct. 26 from 9:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

**EDDIE MCKNIGHT** will report on the national program activities. The Touchstone Energy Executive Council

will discuss state-wide activities, set the

2017 dues assessment, discuss the Power+Hope program, and hold elections.

The committee members whose terms expire this year include **PERRY RUBART**, **DAVE CHILDERS**, and **RON GRABER**. The committee will also elect a new trustee to fill a vacancy. If interested in serving on the Council, please contact Bruce Mueller.

Please RSVP your attendance to Shana Read at [sread@kec.org](mailto:sread@kec.org) before Oct. 19.



Touchstone Energy®

## insympathy

### Gordon Lowry

Gordon Lowry, father of Sunflower's Stuart Lowry, died on Sept. 5.

Gordon served as KEC's Corporate Attorney from 1957 to 1987. He also represented several distribution electric cooperatives during that time.

A memorial service was held on Sept. 9 at Valley Falls United Methodist Church.

Memorials may be made to Valley Falls United Methodist Church, Jefferson County Friends of Hospice, or Washburn University School of Law Foundation. Memorials may be sent in care of Mercer Funeral Home, P.O. Box 6, Valley Falls, KS 66088.

### Tommy Friedli

Tommy Friedli, brother of KEC's Kim Friedli, died Sept. 7.

Funeral services were held on Sept. 12 at Wanamaker Woods Church of the Nazarene in Topeka.

Memorial contributions may be made to Wanamaker Woods Church of the Nazarene, sent in care of Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home, 2801 SW Urish Road, Topeka KS 66614.

## co-opcalendar

### SEPTEMBER

- 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.
- 23 **FEMA Policies and Procedures Update**, DoubleTree Wichita Airport, Wichita
- 28-30 **Line Supervisors Meeting**, Holiday Inn, 549 S. Rock Rd., Wichita
- 29 **MDM Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka

### 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 Center, One Tiger Place, Hays, meeting 10 a.m.
- 19-20 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka
- 21 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays
- 26 **Kansas Touchstone Energy Annual Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Wichita
- 26-28 **Kansas Accountants Club Meeting**, Clarion Inn, 1911 E. Kansas Ave., Garden City
- 27 **MDM Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka

### NOVEMBER

- 1 **District 4 Meeting**, United Wireless Arena, Dodge City
- 2 **District 3 Meeting**, Fort Hays University, Robbins Center, Hays
- 3 **District 2 Meeting**, Prairie Band Casino & Resort, Mayetta
- 4 **District 1 Meeting**, Flint Oak Lodge, Fall River
- 10 **MDM Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka
- 14-15 **CFC COMPASS & KRTA Training**, Hilton Kansas City Airport, 8801 NW 112 Street, Kansas City

## upcomingtraining

### CFC to offer COMPASS and KRTA training

CFC is offering the COMPASS 4.0 and KRTA 1 & 2 training on Nov. 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](http://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.

Surrounding states have 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

### LJEC seeks engineer

This is a position working in the Cooperative Alliance of Kaw Valley and LJEC toward the future consolidation to FreeState Electric Cooperative, Inc. This position will work equally in the Topeka and McLouth locations.

The engineer is responsible for the design, coordination, overcurrent protection, voltage regulation, load balancing, and troubleshooting of the co-op's electric power distribution and transmission system. This position is responsible for the Aclara AMI system and the support communication infrastructure.

A degree in electrical engineering is required, and an additional 1-2 years of engineering experience related to electric utility planning and operations is preferred. Applicant must have experience with the Microsoft Application Toolset, and a thorough understanding of electricity and power distribution.

To view the complete position description or to download an application, visit [www.ljec.coop](http://www.ljec.coop) under "About Us," "Employment Opportunities." Send resume and application by Sept. 23 to Desiree Outersky, Director of HR, at [desiree.outersky@freestate.coop](mailto:desiree.outersky@freestate.coop).



## Co-ops golf to raise funds in KCRE tournament



Nemaha-Marshall's golf team wins the KCRE tournament. From left: Dan O'Brien, Kathy O'Brien, Dane Brinker, and Justin Burdick.

Despite a rain delay, 30 teams took to the golf course and raised approximately \$5,000 during the 20th annual Kansas Committee for Rural Electrification (KCRE) golf tournament. The event was held Aug. 26 at the Salina Municipal Golf Course.

The golf tournament provides KCRE with necessary funds to help candidates who support electric cooperative issues.

A total of 120 golfers participated in the tournament. Flight winners included the teams from Bluestem, Butler, DS&O, Kaw Valley, KEPCo, and Nemaha-Marshall. Early bird and top prize drawings were won by Rita Petty and Gary Frieling respectively, and 19 hole prizes were also awarded.

The tournament planners—Kirk Thompson, CMS; Scott Whittington, Lyon-Coffey; Bob Reece, Flint Hills; Ken Maginley, Bluestem; and Dale Short, Butler—gave special thanks to the sponsors who supported this event. The 21st Annual KCRE golf tournament is scheduled for Aug. 25, 2017.

## 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](mailto:cdorr@kec.org).

## Co-op linemen deliver safety message at Kansas State Fair

Corn dogs, concerts, and cooperatives—the Kansas State Fair brings entertainment and education for all ages. As part of the fair's activities, Kansas electric cooperatives and Touchstone Energy cooperatives of Kansas once again co-sponsored a high-voltage line safety demonstration, Sept. 12-16.

Located in the Ad Astra Pavilion, Kansas electric cooperative linemen presented the interactive demonstration using real electric equipment and their "volunteer" stick man to show the importance of education and public safety around power lines. The presentation helped viewers learn safety precautions, what protective gear linemen use, and what happens if a person comes in contact with an energized line.

Midwest Energy provided the demonstration materials, a narrator, and a trainer for each day of the safety presentation, while Lane-Scott, Sedgwick County, and Wheatland volunteered linemen to operate the demonstration.

Midwest Energy volunteers were **BRIAN DREILING, ALEX BREED-ING, LES LOKER, NATE STRYKER, GREG SWOB, and JAMES WRIGHT**; Lane-Scott volunteers were **CHAD RUPP and KEVIN BRAD-STREEN**;

Sedgwick County volunteers were **ANDY RIGGS and TOMMY HILL**; Wheatland volunteers were **JORDAN HARTWELL, TYLER GEHRING, ROBERT OSTERBERG, BLAKE REED, TYSON RIFF, and DAX WALK**.

The Kansas electric cooperatives and Touchstone Energy cooperatives of Kansas have been sponsoring the high-voltage safety demonstration since 2007.

KEC also sponsored the WIBW broadcast of the Agriculture Forum from the Kansas State Fair on Sept. 10. This year's forum featured Senate Agriculture Committee chairman and Kansas Sen. Pat Roberts, House Agriculture Committee Chairman and Texas Congressman Mike Conaway, and Dr. Allen Featherstone, head of the KSU Department of Agricultural Economics.



Above: Nate Stryker, Midwest Energy, shows the result when something touches a power line at the high-voltage line safety demonstration at the Kansas State Fair.



Left: Young fairgoers react to the electric safety presentation.

## Electric cooperative employees learn supervisory skills

Thirty-four co-op employees representing 17 electric cooperative systems from three states attended KEC's supervisory training Aug. 22-26 in Topeka.

This "fast track" program delivered instruction on core competencies required of supervisors in the areas of leadership, communication, and basic administrative skills. NRECA developed the curriculum based on a set of supervisory competencies.

NRECA's Bryan Singletary facilitated nine interactive, co-op-specific modules including: time management, communication, resolving conflict, motivating employees, human resources, and occupational health and safety for supervisors.

The next supervisory fast track is being planned for August 14-18, 2017, in Wichita. Singletary is scheduled to facilitate this training.

## KEC Apparatus Testing hires Jeff Rankin

**JEFF RANKIN** is KEC's newest addition to the Apparatus Testing Department as a Recloser Repair Assistant. Rankin, who began working at KEC in August, will be responsible for rebuilding and maintaining oil circuit reclosers as well as other maintenance duties.

After a career in construction as a superintendent, Rankin decided he



Jeff Rankin

wanted a change. Rankin said that the position caught his attention as it was something new. He also complimented the on-the-job training for the position.

"The one thing I've noticed so far about working in a cooperative environment is that everyone is team-oriented and are there to help one another," Rankin said.

## DS&O installs solar kit at cooperative headquarters

DS&O has purchased the first solar kit in the state of Kansas through Today's Power, a 100% owned subsidiary of Arkansas Electric Cooperatives. On Sept. 14, DS&O installed the 4kW Ten K Solar unit at their office in Salina for display.

DS&O purchased the ready-to-assemble solar kit to educate both their members and the cooperative staff.

"We want to be the go-to source when our members have questions about solar," said **DERRICK RUTHERFORD**, DS&O's Communications Manager. "We figured this is a great way

to show, hands-on, what a system can produce in this area.

The solar kit has been designed to be compact.

"The unit has been condensed down to where you can actually haul it in the back of a pickup truck," Rutherford said.

"We are excited to see how the panels perform," said **TIMOTHY J. POWER**, DS&O's CEO. "We want our members to see firsthand how much energy the solar panels produce at different times of the year and under different weather conditions."

## Kansas cooperative interns get the 411 in Co-ops 101

More than 40 cooperative interns met in Topeka for a two-day Co-ops 101 seminar July 6-7. The seminar was organized by the Kansas Cooperative Council and hosted interns from cooperatives all across the state of Kansas.

Brian Briggeman, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Director of the Arthur Capper Cooperative Center at Kansas State University, was the key note speaker at the seminar. With Briggeman's presentation, the interns obtained a basic understanding of what it means to be a cooperative member.

"Dr. Briggeman's presentation really hit home with me," said **WHITNEY TUREK**, KEC Summer Communications Intern. "It was eye-opening to see how beneficial being a member of a cooperative is and how many different types of co-ops there are."

Interns were taught the seven cooperative principles. The cooperative principle "concern for community" was featured by guest speaker Jake Worces-

ter, CEO of the Kansas 4-H Foundation. Worcester explained how the opportunity for internships, youth programs, sponsorships and scholarship are all based on that principle. He described how critical community involvement from younger generations is to the future of cooperatives.

"When we get more young people involved, we have a chance at a better outcome for our future," Worcester said. "Being a part of an organization that values community means the work you do matters to the people that live there."

The interns toured the Kansas State Capitol where they met with Gov. Sam Brownback and Rep. Blaine Finch (R-Ottawa). The students also heard a presenta-

### Statewide Editors Association awards *Kansas Country Living*

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Statewide Editors Association recognized *Kansas Country Living* with an award of merit.

Named in honor of the iconic symbol of rural electrification, Willie Wiredhand, the Willie Awards recognized the top work done by statewide magazines from June 2015 through May 2016. The contest featured entries in 13 categories.

*Kansas Country Living* was honored with an award for Best Column for the "To Shir-an Egg-with Love" by freelancer Rebecca Howard in the February 2016 issue.

The judges stated that this column was easy for the readers to identify. "Good flow throughout, weaving the story of family and food together," a judge commented. "The story was interesting and memorable. I'm sure readers went back to their childhood meals after reading your egg story."

*Kansas Country Living* continues to respond to reader feedback which has resulted in the addition of new writers and editorial content they want and find valuable.



Gov. Sam Brownback meets with co-op interns from across the state as part of the Kansas Cooperative Council's Co-ops 101 class.