

Rural Power

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Wheatland hires Bruce Mueller as new general manager

Bruce Mueller, currently the business group manager and CFO for San Bernard Electric Co-op, Inc. (SBEC) in Bellville, TX, was recently selected to be Wheatland's fifth general manager. Mueller will start his position at Wheatland on February 1.



Bruce Mueller

Mueller has more than 28 years of experience working in the electric utility industry. At SBEC, he is responsible for the overall management of finance, accounting, billing, consumer services, purchasing, warehousing, meter reading, collections, marketing, member services, key accounts, branch office

management and the governmental relations departments. He has been with SBEC for 10 years.

Previous to working at SBEC, Mueller worked 18 years at Central Power and Light Company and its parent company Central and Southwest Inc., now American Electric

Power, in the areas of operations, marketing, area office management, sales, metering, data collection, key account management and customer service.

Mueller holds a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in finance from Texas State University and a Master of Business Administration degree in management from the Uni-

versity of Houston-Victoria.

Mueller and his wife, Sharon, have two children, Trenton and Shelby. In addition to raising their children, Sharon has worked in the medical field for many years. She is currently employed in the administration department at First Surgical of The Woodlands, a physician-partnered ambulatory surgical center. Trenton is a sophomore at Texas State University at San Marcos, TX. He is in the McCoy School of Business majoring in management. Shelby is a high school senior.

Mueller will take the place of Neil Norman who has managed Wheatland since 1990. Lewis Mitchell, Bill Dobson and Frank Arthur each held the manager's position before Norman. Wheatland was formed in 1948.

Kansas Electric Cooperatives hosts legislative fundraiser

On Oct. 14, KEC hosted a meet-and-greet fundraiser for six freshmen Kansas legislators. Special guests included Sen. Jerry Moran, Attorney General Derek Schmidt, Treasurer Ron Estes and Secretary of State Kris Kobach.



From left: Phil Wages, KEPCo; Dave Holthaus, KEC; and Sen. Jerry Moran visit at the fundraiser at KEC.

The fundraiser served a complimentary pizza lunch, and was "very well attended," said Dave Holthaus, KEC's interim executive vice president.

The event helped to finance the 2012 re-election campaign for Sen. Garrett Love, and Reps. Ron Ryckman, Kyle Hoffman, Brian Weber, Reynaldo Mesa and Steve Alford. A similar event was held for these six individuals when they first ran for office. The previous event allowed lob-

bysts a chance to get to know the individuals all at once, instead of traveling to meet with each individually in rural parts of the state.

KEC has been lobbying for many decades, and while the event was for the rookie legislators, KEC and its members benefited, as well. Holthaus said that all

of the legislators who took part in the fundraiser have been great supporters of co-ops.

"All legislatures and statewide office holders who show up know KEC is actively trying to help legislators who are good for the Kansas rural economy," he said. "We're trying to ensure the best representatives for rural Kansas, and we want to be involved with that process."



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Minnesota utility to shut down new coal-fired plant

Great River Energy, Minnesota's second-largest electric company, is shutting down its recently completed coal-burning power plant. Although it was built with the encouragement of the state's political leaders, uses lignite mined in the state, has best-available pollution controls and draws city wastewater instead of fresh water, a combination of factors made the plant a financial drag. Some of the factors included slower growth in electricity demand, lower prices on power sales to the grid and the loss of a key industrial customer for some of the plant's steam.

STAR TRIBUNE - 11/29/11

NRECA's Smart Grid demo project finalizes contracts

Effective Nov. 15, NRECA closed on contracts worth \$26.7 million for smart grid components to be deployed at 23 cooperatives participating in the cooperatives' regional Smart Grid Demonstration Project (SGDP). Supported by a matching grant from the U.S. Department of Energy, over the course of the project, participating co-ops are deploying more than 75 technologies and equipment in 12 states.

NRECA - 11/18/11

KCP&L begins electric vehicle charging pilot

Coulomb Technologies announced that KCP&L, an investor-owned utility headquartered in Kansas City, is using Coulomb's ChargePoint® Network to access essential electric vehicle (EV) charging station data collected for a three-year pilot program in and around the Kansas City region. The program consists of eight EV charging sites including a college, hospital, manufacturing plant, corporate office, municipal and retail locations.

COULOMB TECH. - 11/16/11

DECEMBER

- 7-8 **KEC Board of Trustees Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Wichita.
- 14-16 **Supervisory Training**, Hotel at Old Town, Wichita.
- 14-15 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka.
- 16 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays.
- 23, 26 **KEC Office Closed**, Christmas Holiday.

JANUARY

- 2 **KEC Office Closed**, New Year's Holiday.
- 21-24 **KEC Annual Meeting**, Capitol Plaza Hotel, Topeka.
- 21 **Certified Cooperative Director Course (CCD)**, 2630.1 - Strategic Planning.
- 22 **Board Leadership Course (BL)**, 901.1 - Rules and Procedures for Effective Board Meeting.

2012 designated as International Year of the Co-op

Electric cooperatives and other members of the co-op family take center stage globally in 2012, designated the International Year of Cooperatives.

Electric cooperatives across the United States are pleased to join in celebrating the 2012 International Year of Cooperatives as designated by the United Nations General Assembly. The celebration aims to increase public awareness about cooperatives and their contributions to socio-economic development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and to promote the formation and growth of cooperatives worldwide.

Not only does 2012 mark a global

celebration of the cooperative business model, it also marks the 50th anniversary of NRECA International Programs, a division of NRECA. NRECA's International Programs is a partnership among America's electric co-ops dedicated to bringing power and economic development to rural villages all over the world. Since its creation in 1962, NRECA International Programs has assisted with electrification efforts that have improved the quality of life for more than 100 million people in more than 40 nations. The 2012 theme, "Cooperative Enterprises Build a Better World," shines in the work NRECA International Programs does every day.

Kansas electric cooperatives promote co-ops at career fair

On Nov. 8, KEC employees attended the Kansas State University Public Service Career Fair. At the fair, the staff educated interested students about cooperatives. A deck of cards featuring different career opportunities was a popular handout.

The event gave students an opportunity to network and learn about opportunities from a variety of employers.

"Attending career fairs is a great opportunity to connect with students about internship and

employment opportunities at cooperatives," said Carrie Kimberlin, KEC communications specialist.

The wide variety of majors present at the fair meant that not everyone who stopped by the KEC table was interested in positions

currently available. However, the NRECA video of "The Electric Cooperative Story" and friendly staff meant that those who stopped by walked away knowing a little bit more about what cooperatives are all about.



KEC's intern Becky Haddican (left) joined Carrie Kimberlin at the Kansas State Career Fair on Nov. 8.

KEPCo hires Robertson as engineering technician

Heath

Robertson has been hired as an engineering technician at KEPCo.

Robertson will specialize in utilizing AutoCAD and ESRI for the drawing of maps, schematics, and various other drawings.

Robertson is from Holton and attended Washburn Tech, graduating with a degree in Technical Drafting. His interests include music and baseball.



Heath Robertson

Wheatland broadband employees volunteer for a shave

Wanted: hairy faces... and brave souls! That was the call for help that went out from the Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) class at the Scott Community High School.

As a part of the class, students are required to put their knowledge to the test and "practice shaving" on volunteers.

Employees of Wheatland Broadband bravely agreed to arrive at work unshaven and be the class test subjects. Under the close observation of instructor Lani Kasselmann, the students completed their assignment while



Wheatland's Shawn Powelson (center) gets a shave, while Craig Cramer waits his turn.

accomplishing their goal of not harming any of their volunteers!

The CNA class, offered through the high school, teaches the students the skills needed to become certified CNAs. Upon completion of the class, stu-

dents have the opportunity to complete an examination process and become licensed CNAs.

One cooperative volunteer, Craig "Cosmo" Cramer, recently accepted a position at Western Cooperative Electric in Wakeeney. He will serve as the manager of information systems for Western.

Cooperative members earn CoBank Cooperative Ag Scholarships

Kyle Kennedy, a 2007 "Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp" winner from Western, has won yet another honor.

Kennedy, along with Alan Lange and Mollie Roths, has been selected to receive a 2011-2012 CoBank Cooperative Scholarship.

These scholarships are designed to contribute to the education of future agricultural leaders with an interest in a career in finance or banking.

Kennedy, Hoxie, is a senior at Kansas State majoring in agricultural economics with a specialty in finance. He works as a student assistant in the department of Agricultural Economics and in the Ag Academics Programs office. He also works for Kennedy Farms and completed an internship with CoBank this past summer. After graduation, he hopes to work as a loan officer or on the family farm.

Lange, Conway Springs, is a member of Wheatland and a junior at

Kansas State majoring in agribusiness. He is a student worker in K-State veterinary medicine. After graduation, Lange hopes to work at a local cooperative or with a credit lender.

Roths, Winfield, is a senior at Kansas State majoring in agribusiness. She is a student worker in the KSU Admissions Office. Upon graduation, she plans to pursue a career in banking.

To be eligible for a scholarship, students must be either a junior or senior in high academic standing in K-State's Department of Agricultural Economics and must have completed accounting or finance classes. The student must demonstrate an interest in pursuing a career in banking or finance. In addition, the student or their parents must belong to or be employed by a farmer-owned cooperative.

For more information about this scholarship, email Brian Briggeman at bbrigg@ksu.edu.



From left: Kyle Kennedy, Mollie Roths, Dennis Blick – CoBank Region Manager, and Allen Lange at the K-State Agricultural Economics Awards Banquet, October 7, 2011.

Midwest Energy holds annual meeting

Midwest Energy's annual meeting was held at the Robbins Center at Fort Hays State University, Hays, on Nov. 21.

Over 90 members and employees attended.

The group heard the reports from the officers, a "Government In Action" Youth Tour report from the five students who represented the cooperative in Washington, D.C. this summer, and a report by Earnie Lehman, general manager. KEC's Dave Holthaus also promoted the Kansas grassroots advocacy program.

Those in attendance enjoyed refreshments and won door prizes.

In the board's reorganization meeting following the annual meeting, John Blackwell was elected as Chairman, Juanita Stecklein as Vice Chairman, Chuck Moore as Secretary and Louise Berning as Treasurer.

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Cooperatives provide preventative care for members

Thanks to their local electric cooperatives, thousands of Kansas residents are getting the preventative care and medical screening they need.

Pioneer Electric, Victory Electric and LJEC all recently sponsored health fairs for their communities, which, in total, served more than 3,000 individuals.

The fairs offered free medical services such as eye screenings, hearing tests, pap smears, blood sugar checks, fluoride treatments and prostate exams. Full blood screenings and flu shots were also available at a discount. In addition to this medical testing, the fairs included information booths and other services to help keep their community members safe and healthy. Massage therapy, weight counseling and child seat inspections took place on site.

“We recognized the need in the community, and this was a way for us to give back,” said Jerri Imgarten, Victory communications specialist.

The health fairs are annual events. Often held in conjunction with Membership Appreciation Day, membership is not required



Dodge City Community College nursing students helped draw blood at Victory's health fair.

to participate in the health fair.

“One of the Seven Cooperative Principles that we as a Cooperative live by is: Concern for Community -- While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities. This principle is one of the main reasons why we open the health fair to any and all who would like to attend,” said

Rae Gorman, Pioneer communications specialist.

This year, LJEC also ran a food drive and distributed the donations

between Good Shepherd Thrift in Tonganoxie and the Jefferson County Service Organization in Oskaloosa.

“The food drive turned out great. We collected over 313 pounds,” said Jennifer Fisher, LJEC PR/marketing specialist.

It's hard to give an exact value on such a service to the community, but LJEC gave 65 flu and 5 pneumonia shots and Victory Electric alone diagnosed 10 skin cancers, found 20-30 pre-skin cancers and identified 15 cases in oral screenings that needed to be biopsied.

“In many cases, the health fair gave individuals a ‘wake-up call;’ many didn't know they had health problems until they got their test results,” Gorman said.

As the old adage says, ‘an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.’



Members of Pioneer Electric flocked to the health fair to have their blood drawn, and to take advantage of many other medical services being offered.



The McLouth Medical Clinic offered free cholesterol and blood sugar testing as part of the LJEC health fair.



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