

Rural Power

A newsletter for and about Kansas Electric Cooperatives

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USDA Announces Funds for Renewable Energy and Broadband

The USDA has announced the availability of \$22.8 million to support investments in renewable energy systems and energy efficiency improvements by agricultural producers and rural small businesses.

"Renewable energy is an exciting growth frontier for American agriculture," said Mike Johanns, agriculture secretary.

Section 9006 of the 2002 Farm Bill established the Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements loan and grant program to encourage agricultural producers and small rural businesses to create renewable and energy efficient systems. These funds will be available to support a wide range of technologies, as well as energy efficiency improvements.

The \$22.8 million will be made available in two stages. The first half is available immediately for competitive grants. The remaining \$11.4 million will be set aside through August 31, 2005, for renewable energy and energy efficiency guaranteed loans.

The USDA also announced \$8.9 million in broadband grant funds are available for connecting essential community facilities to high-speed telecommunications in rural towns and communities where no broadband service exists.

More than \$30 million in three years have been invested by USDA Rural Development to open the door to broadband infrastructure through the Community Connect Broadband Grant Program. To date, 90 communities have participated in the program to connect essential services of police and fire protection, local government, hospitals, libraries and schools to broadband service. For their part of the project, the communities will make at least 10 computers available to the public with set hours and instruction available for use on the internet. With this program, the USDA says it will reach some of the most remote and challenged communities in rural America.

For more information, visit USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

Congress Eyes Daylight-Saving Time To Conserve Oil

If Congress passes an energy bill, Americans may see more daylight-saving time.

Lawmakers developing energy legislation approved an amendment last week to extend daylight-saving time by two months, having it start on the first Sunday in March and end on the last Sunday in November. Daylight-saving time now runs from the first Sunday in April to the last Sunday in October.

"Extending daylight-saving time makes sense, especially with skyrocketing energy costs," said Rep. Fred Upton, R-Mich., who along with Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., co-sponsored the measure.

The House Energy and Commerce Committee approved the amendment. This committee is putting together major parts of energy legislation likely to come up for a vote in the full House in the coming weeks.

"The more daylight we have, the less electricity we use," said Markey, who cited Transportation Department estimates that showed the extension would save the equivalent of 10,000 barrels of oil a day. The country uses 20 million barrels a day.

Free USDA REDL&G Web Conference

A free, interactive web conference is being offered on Tuesday, April 26, 2005, from noon to 1 p.m.

Find out why Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDL&G) zero-interest rate loans and grants are the gateway to helping your communities.

Register by visiting www.cooperative.com/events/webconferences.htm. Deadline to register is April 22, 2005.

For more information, contact Jane Marden, NRECA, at (703) 907-5813 or jane.marden@nreca.coop.

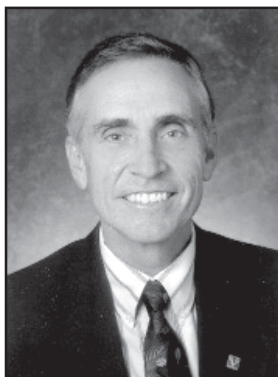
Cooperative Calendar

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|-------|-------|---|
| April | 19 | Prairie Land Annual Meeting. Dinner at 6:00 p.m., Meeting at 7:00 p.m., co-op headquarters, Norton. |
| | 20 | KEPCo Committee Meetings, KEPCo Hdqtrs, Topeka. |
| | 21 | KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting, KEPCo Hdqtrs, Topeka 8:30 a.m. |
| | 22 | Twin Valley Annual Meeting at 7:00 p.m., Labette County High School. |
| | 25-27 | NRTC's InfoComm, Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino, Las Vegas. |
| | 27-29 | Kansas Member Services Directors Association (KMSDA) meeting, Ulysses. |
| | 28 | MDM Meeting, KEC Headquarters, Topeka, 10 a.m. |
| | 30 | CCD Course, Wichita Hilton Airport, 8:30 a.m. |
| May | 1-4 | NRECA Legislative Conference, Washington, D.C. |
| | 3 | Caney Valley Annual Meeting. Dinner at 5:30 p.m., Meeting at 7:00 p.m., Chautauqua County Fairgrounds, Sedan. |
| | 4-6 | KEC Supervisors Workshop, Best Western Airport Red Coach Inn, Wichita. |
| | 11 | KEC Committee Meetings, Holiday Inn, Hays. |
| | 11 | Western Annual Meeting. Dinner at 6:00 p.m., Meeting at 7:00 p.m., co-op headquarters, WaKeeney. |
| | 12 | KEC Board Meeting, Holiday Inn, Hays, 8:30 a.m. |
| | 18 | KEPCo Committee Meetings, Hyatt Regency, Wichita. |
| | 19 | KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting, Hyatt Regency, Wichita, 8:30 a.m. |

Gerdes Elected as Vice Chairman of Federated's Board

Rod Gerdes, Brown-Atchison's General Manager, was elected to serve as Vice Chairman at the Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange's Board of Directors meeting held March 1, 2005. Gerdes was elected to represent Region VII on Federated's Board in 2003.

Other officers include Chairman - Don McCracken, Director at Consolidated Electric Cooperative, Inc. in Ohio; Secretary - Diana Holmes, Director at Mississippi County Electric Cooperative, Inc. in Arkansas; and Treasurer - Steve Reed, CEO/Manager at West Central Electric Co-op, Inc. in South Dakota.



KEC Offers Training for Trustees

KEC is offering the CCD course – 2630.1 Strategic Planning – on Saturday, April 30, at the Hilton Wichita Airport.

This course teaches trustees how to participate effectively in a strategic planning process, and will be taught by NRECA's Bryan Singletary.

This course will count for one of the five Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) curriculum courses. **Deadline to register for this course is April 15th.**

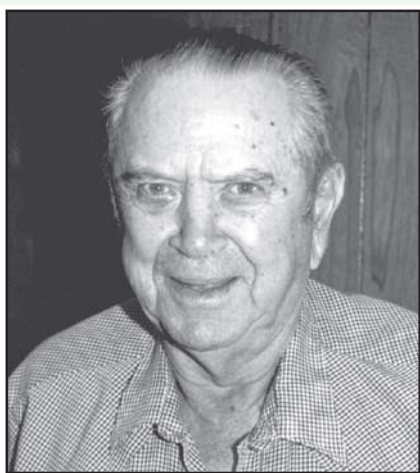
KEC has confirmed the Board Leadership Courses for the KEC Summer Board Meeting.

On July 30, KEC will offer the brand-new Board Leadership Course **968.1 Advanced Rate Decisions for Experienced Directors**. This course will enable directors to understand the complex issues that must be balanced when considering equity management and alternative rate strategies.

On July 31, Trustees can attend Board Leadership **915.1 Advocating the Cooperative Difference**, that highlights grassroots advocacy as the cornerstone of the electric cooperative movement.

For more information, contact Shana Holsteen, KEC, at (785) 478-4554 or sholsteen@kec.org.

In Sympathy



Former Heartland Trustee, Marvin Lewis, passed away on April 6th. Marvin served on the Heartland Board of Directors from 1965 until 2003. The funeral was held on April 8th at the Presbyterian Church, 3rd & Crawford, Ft. Scott, KS 66701.

Upcoming Conferences

NRECA's 2005 Financial Planning & Strategies Workshop

NRECA's 2005 Financial Planning & Strategies Workshop is scheduled for May 16-20 at the University of Wisconsin. The workshop is an interactive five-day program, limited to 25-30 participants.

Learn to understand financial alternatives; develop financial plans using operating, capital, and cash budgets; apply cash management principles to cash flow statement; analyze cost-of-service studies and rate design to address revenue requirements and long-term capital management goals.

For more information or to register, log on to Cooperative.com.

NRECA Legislative Conference

Sunday, May 1 - NRECA is offering Board Leadership Course: *917.05 Creating a Political Action Plan: The Board's Role* and *930.1 Ethics and Governance: Implementing the New Accountability*.

There will be an evening musical performance of political satire.

Monday, May 2 - Rep. Jerry Moran has confirmed a U.S. Capitol Tour for the Kansas delegation at 2:30 p.m.

NRECA is offering legislative workshops and NRECA lobbyists will give an in-depth legislative briefing.

Tuesday, May 3 - Appointments with the Kansas legislators.

For more information, contact Judy Holliday, KEC, at (785) 478-4554 or email jholliday@kec.org.

KEC Members' Annual Meeting Updates

Bluestem

Approximately 225 members, staff, vendors and guests attended Bluestem's annual meeting on March 29 at the Clay Center Community High School. Before the meeting, several vendors and organizations from BEC's 11 county service area hosted booths with information and prizes for the attendees.

In his report, General Manager Ken Maginley updated the membership on the cooperative's activities over the past year; introduced Bluestem's 10 scholarship winners, and acknowledged several employees' for their years of service. Steve Parr, KEPCo, spoke to the attendees about power supply issues.

In a mail ballot that was sent to the membership in December 2004, the membership re-elected Alice Kimble, Dan Pollock, Don Sutter, and Dale Keesecker.

Heartland

Heartland held its Annual Meeting on March 29th at the Girard High School. Heartland linemen served a brisket dinner to more than 350 people, with more than 150 members present for the meeting.

Re-elected to the board were Dennis Peckman and G.C. Smith. Elected to the board was Patrick A. Johnson and Richard Poor. Glenn Roberts who retired from the board was recognized for his years of service.

Employees who were celebrating an anniversary were recognized, with special recognition of Member Services and Records employee, Richard Jagels, who has been with Heartland for 45 years.

Alfalfa

574 members attended the Alfalfa Annual Meeting on April 1 at the Cherokee High School. Re-elected to the board were Joe Hise and Joe Waggoner.

Approximately 1,150 people were served dinner and visited several booths that promoted Alfalfa's services. Bob Schanbacher won the grand prize of \$500.

Ark Valley

Ark Valley held its 66th Annual Meeting on April 5 at the Hutchinson Memorial Hall. 176 members registered for the meeting, and over 400 people were served a smoked pork and beef dinner. Re-elected to the board were Dwight Engelland, Steve Goering, and Marilyn Hurst.

DS&O

DS&O's Annual Meeting was held April 5 at the BiCentennial Center in Salina. Nearly 250 members were present, and over 450 people were served dinner. The membership approved a substitute set of bylaws. Re-elected to the board were Robert Aylward, Harlow Haney, Bruce Spare, and Lawrence Spohn.

Ninnescah

Over 350 people were served dinner at the Ninnescah Annual Meeting on April 5 at the Pratt Municipal Building. Two Trustees were recognized at the meeting: Don Fisher has retired with 42 years of service, and Phil Rush has retired with 30 years of service. Re-elected to the board was Eddie Lenkner. New Trustees elected to the board were Curt Durall and Jonathan Folkerts.

Kaw Valley

Kaw Valley hosted a dinner for more than 1,200 people at the Kaw Valley office in Topeka on April 6. Employees distributed capital credit checks to the members. Re-elected were Dallas Caster, Lloyd Wulfkuhle, and Gene Allen.

Wheatland

Wheatland held its Annual Meeting on April 6 at the Leoti Community Building. Heather Shelley, homegrown talent destined for Nashville, entertained approximately 90 members. Manager Neil Norman and the Trustees answered questions. Re-elected to the board were Jerome Berning, John Graber, Donald Hedges, and Patrick Riley.

Lyon-Coffey

Nearly 150 members attended Lyon-Coffey's Annual Meeting on April 7 at the Burlington High School. This meeting was Manager Larry Scott's last annual meeting before his planned retirement in December.

The membership approved a bylaw change to remove the at-large board seat, leaving eight Trustee positions. Re-elected to the board were Richard Prather and Wayne Van Gundy. Newly elected to the board was Richard Schmidt.

Rolling Hills

Rolling Hills had its 3rd Annual Meeting on April 8 at the NCK Vocational Technical School in Beloit. Approximately 550 members were served dinner and were entertained by Thad Beach, a musician who is described as a "one man band."

This was the first annual meeting after the downsizing of the Rolling Hills Board. The 16 Trustees that went off the board were recognized at the meeting. Also recognized was employee Marie Logan who retired after 34 years.

Harold Ehler was presented a plaque honoring him for 12 years of service on the KEC board. Harold retired from the Board in December of 2004.

Sedgwick County

Sedgwick County had approximately 285 members attend its Annual Meeting on April 12 at the Cotillion Ballroom in Wichita. Almost 600 dinners were served. Re-elected to the board were Rex Smith, LeRoy Boerger, and Cindy Foster.

Victory

More than 500 people were treated to a steak dinner at the Victory Annual Meeting on April 12 at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Dodge City. 256 members were at the meeting. Re-elected to the board were Jim Imel and Kenny Wehkamp. Merle Hitz retired from the board, and Chuck Nicholson was elected to fill the open seat.

Son of Victory Trustee Participates in Presidential Inauguration

Air Force Tech. Sgt. Jess A. Lightner, the son of Victory Trustee Richard Lightner, participated in the 55th Presidential Inauguration in Washington, D.C., as a member of the Joint Task Force-Armed Forces Inaugural Committee.

The competitively selected members from the five branches of U.S. military services are responsible for a range of planning, operational, communications, logistics, personnel, and public affairs support related to inaugural ceremonies and activities.

Military participation traditionally includes musical units, marching bands, color guards, cordon members, firing details and salute batteries, and provide a limited amount of approved logistical support. When fully manned, more than 700 people participate within JTF-AFIC to provide military support during the 10-day inaugural period.

The sergeant served as a premier band craftsman in the Presidential Inaugural Parade. He has two years of military service.

Lightner graduated in 1997 from Garden City High School, and received a bachelor's degree in 2001 from the University of Kansas. He earned a master's degree in 2003 from the University of Cincinnati, OH.

Brown-Atchison Honors Dedicated Employees



Brown-Atchison Electric Cooperative, Inc. recognized their dedicated employees who have 20 or more years of service. Pictured (from left): Jim Currie, 26 years; Jim Bottom, 33 years, Allen Baker, 22 years; Dave Hartley, 20 years; Michele McClaskey, 27 years; Jack Lott, 29 years; and Steve Hochstetler, 25 years.

Pioneer Linemen Judge College Lineman's Rodeo

Pioneer linemen Ross Riley and Cedar Taylor served as judges for the College Lineman's Rodeo on April 2 at the Pratt Community College.

A total of 12 teams from six different schools from Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Wisconsin competed in four-person teams and as individuals in multiple events including C-1 structure framing, crossarm changeout, speed climb, and a written test. Nearly 100 trophies were awarded in each event to individuals and the top six teams based on the teams' overall average scores.



Pioneer linemen Ross Riley (left) and Cedar Taylor judged the Lineman's Rodeo in Pratt.

RuralPower

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