

# Rural Power

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## Co-ops strengthen connections during Legislative Conference

Twenty-three Kansas electric cooperative representatives met with the state's Congressional delegation and their staff in Washington, D.C., as part of the NRECA Legislative Conference, April 28-30.

The Kansas attendees were part of the nearly 2,000 co-op leaders at this year's fly-in. The agenda included presentations from key Senate and House members and each noted significant impacts electric cooperatives have had on communities in their home state and across the nation.

NRECA included updates on effective communication with legislators, advocacy, and issue briefings. Co-op attendees also had opportunities to hear from representatives of federal agencies such as Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, RUS, and FEMA.

Teams from Kansas visited the offices of Senators Pat Roberts and Jerry Moran, and U.S. Representatives Roger Marshall, Steve Watkins, Sharice Davids, and Ron Estes. During the visits, Kansas co-op leaders discussed ways cooperatives can participate in infrastructure development and expressed concern with administration proposals to sell power marketing associations' (PMA) assets. They also stressed the need to reform Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBG) premium calculations for co-op pension funds and return to pro-

visions in previous tax codes removing grant funds from non-member income computations.

"Getting Kansas cooperative leaders to the Hill is extremely important," noted **BRUCE GRAHAM**, KEC CEO. "With the turnover in Congress, we have many new policy leaders to introduce to cooperatives and electric co-op issues. The visits also provide co-op members an opportunity to thank longer-serving lawmakers who have a firm understanding of cooperative and rural issues."

Representing Kansas were: Mike Morton, **BLUESTEM**; Jim Christopher, **DS&O**; Steve Foss, **FREESTATE**; Mark Scheibe, **HEARTLAND**; Bruce Graham, Leslie Kaufman, Tara Mays, and Doug Shepherd, **KEC**; Susan Cunningham, **KEPCO**; Pat Parke, **MIDWEST ENERGY**; Kathleen O'Brien, **NEMAHA-MARSHALL**; Steve Epperson, **PIONEER**; William Peterson and Keith Ross, **PRAIRIE LAND**; Keith Leddy and John Schon, **SUMNER-COWLEY**; Clare Gustin, **SUNFLOWER**; Shane Laws, Patrick Morse, and Randy Quint, **VICTORY**; and Wes Campbell, James McVay, and Bruce Mueller, **WHEATLAND**.

KEC members will make a second trip to Capitol Hill on September 10-11. The 2020 NRECA Legislative Conference is scheduled for April 26-29.



Clockwise: KEC and member cooperative representatives met with Sen. Jerry Moran, Representative Sharice Davids, Sen. Pat Roberts, and Congressman Steve Watkins during their visit to Washington, D.C. (Not pictured are the visits with Congressmen Roger Marshall and Ron Estes.)



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## Lyon-Coffey names Dennis Svanes as General Manager

The Board of Directors of Lyon-Coffey Electric Cooperative (LCEC) has announced selection of **DENNIS SVANES** as the new General Manager. He will start on May 20.

Svanes comes to LCEC from La Plata Electric Association, Inc. in southwest Colorado. He currently serves as Chief Financial Officer overseeing accounting, billing, and enterprise risk management.

Prior to La Plata Electric, Svanes was the CEO of KEM Electric Cooperative, Inc., in North Dakota having started with the cooperative as the staff accountant. He also worked for Knife River Corporation in Bismarck, ND, and Brady, Martz & Associates, PC in Grand Forks, ND, a regional public accounting firm.

LCEC and Radiant Electric Cooperative have announced the consolidation of the two co-ops which will be renamed 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative effective January 1, 2020.

"I appreciate the confidence from the Lyon-Coffey and Radiant Electric Boards of Directors in selecting me as the new General Manager," said Svanes. "My wife, Michelle, and I are excited for this opportunity and look forward to serving the members of the cooperatives."

## jobmarket

KEC helps to promote co-op careers by listing openings on the careers section of the KEC website.

Visit <https://www.kec.coop/careers> to learn more about the following positions.

Send your open position listings to [ruralpower@kec.org](mailto:ruralpower@kec.org). Positions will be posted on the website for one month, unless otherwise directed by the co-op.

- ▶ FreeState has an opening for an Accounts Payable Specialist.
- ▶ Sunflower has openings for an External Affairs Intern, Journey Line Technician, Line Technician Apprentice I-IV, Manager of Corporate Safety, Mechanic, Relay Supervisor (Substation Automation and Protection Supervisor), Senior Manager of Application Integration Management, and Transmission Engineer I and II.

## co-opcalendar

### MAY

- 17 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Pioneer Headquarters, Ulysses
- 17 **Sunflower Annual Meeting**, Pioneer Headquarters, 1850 W. Oklahoma, Ulysses. Meeting starts at 8 a.m. Meal starts at noon.
- 23 **MDM Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka
- 27 **Memorial Day**, KEC Office Closed
- 29-31 **Kansas REC Managers Association Spring Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Wichita

### JUNE

- 10-13 **Supervisors Conference**, Hilton President Hotel, 1329 Baltimore Avenue, Kansas City, MO
- 13-20 **Electric Cooperative Youth Tour**, Washington, D.C.
- 21 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays
- 27 **MDM Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka

## KEC hosted HR Summit and 717.1 SMDP Course

Twenty co-op human resources professionals, benefits administrators, and supervisors attended the HR Summit on April 24 at the Wichita Marriott.

Topics ranged from dealing with workplace violence, workplace etiquette, communication styles, and managing priorities.

This year's HR Summit was fol-

lowed by the Supervisor and Manager Development Program course 717.1 Know the Rules: Legal Responsibilities and Liabilities for Supervisors.

This training was facilitated by **LYNN INGMIRE** who taught the group of 17 attendees how to avoid common employment law pitfalls while encouraging a productive work environment.

## Cyber-security, ethical hacking featured at IT Summit

The KEC IT Summit was held May 2-3 at the Courtyard by Marriott at Old Town in Wichita.

**JJ CUMMINGS**, a security professional with TALOS Group, showed co-ops how to defend themselves against advanced threat actors. **JAY FERRON**, a multi-certified Information Security Subject-Matter-Expert, discussed ethical hacking. **PETE MCKENNA**, Fortinet, demonstrated Security Inci-

dent Event Message based situational awareness with regard to information security. **LAUREN NELSON**, Verizon, promoted private network solutions. **JUSTIN DEMPSEY**, Nex-Tech, shared best practices to migrate to Microsoft 365. **MATT MCELRAVY**, ConvergeOne, focused on how to reassess a co-op's IT system in order to improve efficiencies. Lastly, **MATT OTTMAN**, KEPCo, reported on cybersecurity assessments.

## upcomingtraining

### KEC to host Supervisor and Manager Development Program courses

For the week of Aug. 19, 2019, KEC will offer five of the new Supervisor and Manager Development Program (SMDP) courses.

The following courses will be led by NRECA's **BRYAN SINGLETARY** and will run from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day:

- ▶ 710.1 Stepping into Your Supervisory Role: Learning to Lead,
- ▶ 711.1 Everyone Communicates; Few Connect: Tools for Bridging the Gap,
- ▶ 712.1 You Can't Do It Alone: Building a Strong

Team,

- ▶ 713.1 Engaging and Developing High-Performing Employees: Bringing Out Their Best, and
- ▶ 714.1 Change is Hard: Guiding Your Team through Complex Times.

This program is designed for employees considering a supervisory role, new and experienced supervisors, and mid-level managers.

Registration information will be emailed in June. Email Shana Read at [sread@kec.org](mailto:sread@kec.org) if you have any questions.

**Q** I am a new manager at a Kansas co-op, and would like to know if any particular notification must be filed with the Secretary of State (SOS) or KCC when there is a manager change?

**A** If the outgoing manager is the official registered agent for the co-op, then a change in agent should be submitted to the Kansas Secretary of State immediately upon transition. Otherwise, updates can be included with your... [READ MORE.](#)

Each issue of *Rural Power* will feature an answer to a question or a solution to a problem provided by KEC to a member cooperative.

## Asked & Answered

### Coral Ann Magnus

Coral Ann Magnus, Caney Valley Trustee, died on May 13. She was elected to the board in May 2008, and served as Secretary/Treasurer since May 2011. She had earned the Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership certificates, and the Director Gold credential.

Services will be held at the First Baptist Church of Cedar Vale on Sat., May 18 at 2 p.m.

## annual meetings

### Lyon-Coffey

Lyon-Coffey held its annual meeting on April 8 in Burlington. Approximately 343 members and guests enjoyed a meal and attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the members of the KidWind Challenge team, the Electric Four, were introduced. The team is sponsored by Lyon-Coffey and will participate at the National KidWind Challenge in May. The guest speaker was **BRUCE GRAHAM**, KEC CEO.

**ROBERT CONVERSE**, **RANDY BUNNEL**, and **ROBERT HARKRADER** were re-elected to serve on the board.

### Victory

Victory held its 74th Annual Meeting on April 9 in Dodge City. Approximately 926 members attended the meeting.

The National Anthem was sung by **DIAMOND CARBAJAL**, the daughter of Victory's Rubi Carbajal. The 2018 and 2019 youth winners were recognized, as were the 10 Lightner Community Spirit Scholarship winners. Victory's linemen presented power line safety demonstrations.

Retiring board member **RICHARD LIGHTNER** was honored with a video tribute for his 36 years of service. **GARY GILLESPIE**, **JIM OCHS**, and **PAT MORSE** were re-elected to the board.

### Twin Valley

Twin Valley hosted its annual meeting in Altamont on April, 11. Approximately 175 members and guests enjoyed the meal provided and attended the meeting.

Guest speakers included the 2018 youth winners **DEREK ROSS**, Youth Tour, and **RILEY SORRELL**, Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp, who shared about their trips. **SUSAN CUNNINGHAM**, KEPCo, and **LESLIE KAUFMAN**, KEC, also spoke to members.

**BRYAN HUCKE** and **LARRY "DAVID" HUBBELL** were both re-elected to the board. **JARED NASH** was newly elected and will replace **DAN PETERSON** who retired from the board after serving for 30 years.

### Ark Valley

Ark Valley held its annual meeting on April 16 at the Sunflower Building in Hutchinson. There were 525 members and guests who attended the meeting.

**BUDD FOUNTAIN** was re-elected to the board, and **TIM BERGKAMP** was newly elected.

### FreeState

FreeState held its annual meeting at Perry-Lecompton High School on April 23. Nearly 400 members and guests attended the meeting.

Two board members announced their retirement. **DALLAS CASTER** who served 32 years and **MARK GRATNY** who has served multiple terms totaling 14 years were both honored at the meeting. Their seats will not be filled, downsizing the FreeState Board to nine members.

**MARK WULFKHUL** and **HARLAN HUNT** were re-elected to the board.

### Wheatland

Wheatland held its 71st annual

meeting on April 24. Nearly 280 members and guests attended the annual meeting. For those not able to attend in person, Wheatland simulcasted the meeting to offices in Scott City, Leoti, Tribune, Syracuse, Garden City, and Harper.

At the meeting, 14 high school students were each awarded \$1,000 scholarships. These graduating seniors represented the 13 schools within the co-op's service territory and one at-large position. Youth Tour winners were also presented with a certificate.

Special guests included **JAMES LANE** from Senator Pat Roberts' office and **STUART LOWRY** from Sunflower.

Re-elected to the board were **WILLIAM "WOODY" BARNES**, **WES CAMPBELL**, and **ROBERT HISS**.

### Western

Approximately 150 members, guests and employees attended Western's annual meeting on May 8 at its WaKeeney headquarters. A catered lunch was served prior to the meeting.

Following lunch, **DAVID SCHNEIDER**, former General Manager and Vietnam veteran, recognized the veterans in attendance and led the group with the pledge of allegiance. **STUART LOWRY**, Sunflower, discussed transmission topics such as power supply and costs. **TOM RUTH**, General Manager, gave an overview of 2018 performance and initiatives for 2019, including a rate study already in progress.

Re-elected to the board via mail ballot were **SUSAN ROHLEDER**, **FRANK JOY**, and **CHARLES LUETTERS**.

# ElectroRally program offers unique learning environment for students

On May 4, eight high school teams competed in the Touchstone Energy ElectroRally in Olathe. This race was the third and final of the three state races in Kansas. The other events were held April 18 in Hoisington and April 25 in Scott City, bringing together a total of 13 teams and 200 students from across the state.

“High school students have an opportunity to compete in quite a unique alternative sport during the Kansas ElectroRally spring championship racing season,” said **STEVE HAUSLER**, Secretary of the Kansas ElectroRally Board and Communications Specialist II at Sunflower. “We are excited that the level of interest is growing once again as the technology advances in electric cars are capturing the interests of young adults.”

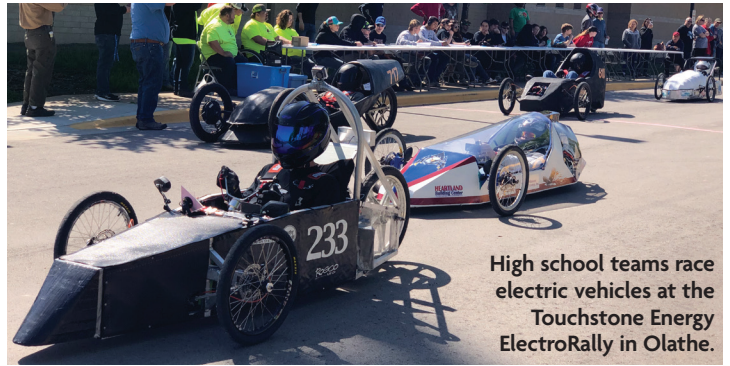
The student teams build vehicles from scratch using lightweight components such as aluminum frames and bicycle wheels. Motors and controls are typically smaller versions of the same technology used in full-size EVs. While there are specific rules, the student

teams are allowed much flexibility in the design and composition of their vehicles.

“This program gives students an incredible opportunity to dabble in engineering, fabrication, and industries directly and indirectly related to the sport. It is an incredible learning environment that helps prepare young talented kids for their future,” said **CHRIS DINKEL**, President of Kansas ElectroRally and instructor for the Hays High School team.

The ElectroRally program involves physics, mathematics, electronics, auto technology and graphic design. As the teams are creating and racing their vehicles, students have the opportunity to participate in different aspects of the race, including design development, securing sponsorships, writing a paper, or being a driver or part of the pit crew.

The competition is based on time



High school teams race electric vehicles at the Touchstone Energy ElectroRally in Olathe.

and distance, and the race is won by the team that completes the most laps in one hour.

Students build vehicles to race in either the Standard Class, that uses only batteries, or the Solar Class, that uses both batteries and solar panels.

This year, the top teams in the Standard Class were Clearwater High School and Hays High School. The top teams in the Solar Class were Scott City High School and Great Bend High School.

Co-ops are encouraged to be involved by sponsoring local teams or volunteering at race events. For more information, visit [kansaselectrorally.org](http://kansaselectrorally.org).

## KEC staff volunteers for Topeka Day of Service event

Three Kansas Electric Cooperatives representatives participated in a community service event on April 26. This year marked the second Forge Day of Service event,



KEC's Tara Mays, Shaylee Arpin, and Emma DeMaranville join other volunteers at the Day of Service event.

where young professionals throughout the community partnered with organizations to volunteer for an afternoon.

**TARA MAYS**, Director of Government Relations, coordinated the service activity for **SHAYLEE ARPIN**, Multimedia Communications Specialist, and **EMMA DEMARANVILLE**, Communications Intern. More than a dozen Topeka companies provided more than 100 volunteers to help work on a number of community projects.

“For our project, we had the opportunity to help put the finishing touches on a Habitat for Humanity home,” said Arpin. “We painted

the master bedroom and living room.”

KEC supported the employees' participation in the event.

“As one of the seven coopera-

tive principles, concern for community is an important way that co-ops work for the sustainable development of their communities,” said Mays. “I have participated in the Forge Days of Service since they began two years ago. It's inspiring to see the way that companies are beginning to recognize the value in allowing employees to volunteer and understanding the return on investment that it creates for more engaged and thoughtful employees and more creative and innovative partnerships.”

“This was a great way to have a hands-on service experience that gave us the opportunity to give back,” DeMaranville said.

## KEC plans Co-ops Vote events

KEC staff is planning the 2019 Co-ops Vote events across Kansas. The series of 21 events will kick off on June 5 and run through Nov. 25.

“This year, we are working with member co-ops to broaden our outreach to include local elected officials such as county commissioners, city council members, and other important boards,” explained **TARA MAYS**, Director of Government Relations. “This will provide an opportunity to reach out to many leaders, alongside legislators, to educate policymakers on electric cooperatives and issues important to us.”

Due to their community focus, more of the events will be hosted by single cooperatives to increase their engagement with local policymakers.

“These events have been extremely positive opportunities to connect with legislators, and they are a key component to our continued legislative success,” said **LESLIE KAUFMAN**, Vice President of Government Relations and Legal Counsel.