

Rural Power

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

Rural Revitalization Featured at KEC Summer Meeting

Nearly 300 electric co-op trustees, managers, key staff, and guests attended this year's KEC Summer Meeting in Overland Park on Aug. 5.

The program led off with remarks from Kansas Congressman



Congressman Roger Marshall addresses the KEC Summer Meeting attendees on Aug. 5.

ROGER MARSHALL. He spoke about the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the need to open up agricultural markets. Other topics included immigration issues, health care costs, and the importance of trade schools and community colleges for Kansas high school graduates.

ADAM SCHWARTZ of The Cooperative Way discussed how co-ops can anticipate and react to the changing market and member expectations. The program also featured author and lecturer **ROBERT BRYCE** who shared his thoughts on utility issues such as electricity poverty, the future grid, and why electric co-ops still matter.

DAVID TOLAND, Kansas Secretary of Commerce, and **ZACHARY MANNHEIMER**, McClure Engineering, focused on rural revitalization and creative placemaking in rural communities.

"It's about people and providing a place for people with common interests and a place to gather," Toland explained. "State government is not the answer to rural development. It all comes down to local leadership."

Mannheimer added, "Rural America is the

next place to pioneer. There's a myth that there are no good paying jobs in rural America. But the reality is that we need more people to fill those jobs."

DAVID CARTER, Kansas State University's Energy Specialist, reviewed K-State's Energy Program and the KidWind Challenge. **SUSAN OLANDER**, Federated, discussed several fiduciary hot topics, including cybersecurity, the Form 990, and transparency.

Luncheon speaker **SCOTT DAVIS** entertained the group with his comedy and magic.

During the ACRE/KCRE update, co-ops reaching the gold, century, and president's level through KCRE and ACRE contributions were honored, and staff announced the "Grow Your Giving" campaign.

There were also presentations by the Platinum-level sponsors including CFC, Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange, NextEra Energy Marketing, and UAV Recon.

During the Kansas NRECA Membership Meeting, **PAT MORSE**, Victory, was 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 Spouses Program included a commitment to community project to benefit veterans, a chocolate presentation by Russell Stover Chocolates, and music bingo.

Prior to convening the summer board

meeting, **BOB PATTON**, **ROD CRILE**, and **MOLLY MCPHERSON** facilitated directors courses.

In addition to the credited courses, **ADAM SCHWARTZ** presented a workshop titled Preparing the Next Generation of Leaders, which

continued on p. 3



David Toland (left) and Zachary Mannheimer share their ideas for rural revitalization.



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KEC plans legislative fly-In

KEC staff is finalizing logistics for its first-ever fall D.C. fly-in. This advocacy event to Washington, D.C., is set for Sept. 10-11.

Electric cooperative officials from across the state will host a delegation reception on Sept. 10. A full day of Hill visits on Sept. 11 will provide attendees an opportunity to share the co-op message with our Congressional delegation.

For more information about this event, contact Leslie Kaufman at lkaufman@kec.org, Tara Mays at tmays@kec.org, or Carol Dorr at cdorr@kec.org.

KCRE to host 23rd annual Golf Open on Aug. 23

The Kansas Committee for Rural Electrification (KCRE) will host its 23rd annual Golf Open on Aug. 23 at Sand Creek Station Golf Course, located at 920 Meadowbrook Dr. in Newton.

Registration for the four-person scramble begins at 7:30 a.m. at \$70 per participant. Included in the registration fee are green fees, the use of a cart and the driving range, muligans, lunch, and a chance to win a prize.

The tournament begins at 8:30 a.m. A shotgun start will commence the fundraising event for KCRE, a political action committee that supports state legislators, elected officials, and candidates who support issues of concern to electric cooperatives and rural Kansans.

To donate prizes, sponsor a hole, or play in the tournament, contact Kirk Thompson, CMS Electric, at 620-873-2184.

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.

- ▶ Sunflower has multiple openings.
- ▶ KEC has an opening for a fall communications intern.

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

co-opcalendar

AUGUST

- 19-23 **Supervisor and Manager Development Program courses**, Drury Inn, Wichita
- 22 **MDM Meeting**, Butler Electric Cooperative
- 23 **KCRE Golf Tournament**, Sand Creek Station Golf Course, Newton

SEPTEMBER

- 2 **Labor Day**, KEC Office Closed
- 4 **Co-ops Vote**, Ninnescan Rural Electric Cooperative, 275 NE 20th St., Pratt – 11:30 a.m.
- 9-13 **Kansas State Fair**, Hutchinson
- 10-11 **KEC Legislative Fly-in**, Washington, D.C.
- 10-12 **Hot Line School**, Pratt Vo-Tech
- 17-19 **Hot Line School**, Manhattan Vo-Tech
- 18 **KEC Budget and Operations Committee Meeting**, Meridian Center, Newton – 9:30 a.m.
- 18-20 **KMSDA Fall Meeting**, Wichita

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. Courses will be held at the Drury Plaza Hotel in Wichita.

The following courses will be led by NRECA's **BRYAN SINGLETARY** and will run from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. Each of these new courses counts as one credit toward the SMDP certification:

- ▶ Aug. 19 - 710.1 Stepping into Your Supervisory Role: Learning to Lead
- ▶ Aug. 20 - 711.1 Everyone Communicates; Few Connect: Tools for Bridging the Gap

- ▶ Aug. 21 - 712.1 You Can't Do It Alone: Building a Strong Team
- ▶ Aug. 22 - 713.1 Engaging and Developing High-Performing Employees
- ▶ Aug. 23 - 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.

Cost for KEC members is \$550 per course, or \$2,500 for all five courses. For more information, contact Shana Read at sread@kec.org or 785-478-4554.

KMSDA plans crisis communications roundtable for meeting

The Kansas Member Services Directors Association (KMSDA) 2019 Fall meeting will be held Sept. 18-20 at the Courtyard by Marriott Wichita at Old Town.

On Sept. 18, a crisis communications roundtable will be moderated by **SARAH FARLEE** of FreeState and **STEVE HAUSLER** of Sunflower, a community service event, and a welcome mixer.

On Sept. 19-20, topics will start with **MIKE TWEEDY**, Lyon-Coffey, and his experience with the KidWind Challenge; **TAMI ALEXANDER**, Metropolitan Energy Center, will discuss the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure; and **DAVE NORTON**, Pioneer Electric, will share how his co-op uses drone technology. The afternoon program includes the hot topic of the Form 990 with OAE's **SID SPERRY**. Touchstone Energy

staff will be talking about their newest resource, LinkedIn Learning. There will be updates from KEC, Sunflower, and KEPCo, as well as the fall business meeting.

On Friday, the group will learn about the Rise of Social Messaging through a video provided by **MEGAN MCKOY-NOE**, and will conclude the meeting with roundtable discussions on topics of interest including member engagement and member meetings.

For hotel reservations, call 866-522-8909 before Aug. 28. Ask for the "KMSDA block" for the group rate starting at \$126, which does not include breakfast or parking.

Online registrations are requested for this meeting. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Shana Read at sread@kec.org.

Co-op Officials Discuss Collaboration with Leadership Graduates

KEC staff joined representatives from Evergy, FreeState, and KEPCo to host Leadership Greater Topeka ReFresh program on Aug. 7.

The program, which is part of an ongoing training series, is designed to allow Leadership Greater Topeka graduates and community leaders to learn about new topics.

The event focused on collaboration between utility industry organizations, and allowed the attendees to get a behind-the-scenes look at local efforts. Presenters included **STEVE FOSS**, FreeState; **BRUCE GRAHAM**, KEC; **SUZANNE LANE**, KEPCo; and **JEFF MARTIN**, Evergy.

"The format was a moderated panel and we started by explaining our roles in the industry, the differences in organizational structure as well as our industry similarities," said Graham.

"Those in attendance understand how Evergy is organized, but many appreciated an explanation of the role all three cooperative entities in Topeka play," he explained. "If you live in Topeka very long, you see our separate cooperative organizations and so I get that question a lot."

KEC Summer Meeting, continued from p. 1

included two panel discussions. The first was made up of three Youth Leadership Council students: **BRAYDEN SCHMIDT**, 2019 YLC, sponsored by Alfalfa; **KRIS WAGNER**, 2017 YLC, sponsored by Pioneer; and **EMMA DEMARANVILLE**, 2015 YLC, sponsored by Leavenworth-Jefferson Electric Cooperative (now FreeState). The second consisted of young board members: **CHRIS KELLY**, Caney Valley; **GABE SCHLICKAU**, Sumner-Cowley; and **MATT TURECEK**, FreeState.

Cooperative representatives and



Leadership Greater Topeka graduates learn about utility collaboration from electric co-op and IOU officials. Pictured from left: Steve Foss, FreeState; Suzanne Lane, KEPCo, and Bruce Graham, KEC.

The panelists explained how they collaborate on issues in the legislative arena, joint ownership of generation, and other areas. It was noted though that from time-to-time there

is difference of opinion, particularly in rate cases.

"That was an opportunity to point out the importance of being able to work through differences and still work together. This would be a good lesson for those in politics," Graham said.

Other topics included the biggest challenges facing the industry, rates and energy conservation.

"There were about 50 Topeka leaders in attendance and it was interesting to meet many electric co-op members. Topeka has a large employment draw from around the region, so being engaged in the Chamber of Commerce connects more than just folks that live in the capital city," Graham added.

The ReFresh presentation opportunity was created by KEC's **TARA MAYS** and Evergy's **LAURA LUTZ**. Attendees also toured the Kanza Education and Science Park and the Westar Training Center.



Adam Schwartz (right) moderates a panel of young Kansas board members at the "Preparing the Next Generation of Leaders" workshop held Aug. 4.

their families enjoyed a performance of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" at the New Theatre Restaurant on Aug. 4.

KEC continues series of remote learning opportunities

KEC will continue its series of interactive webinars on Sept. 10 at 10 a.m.

NRECA's Senior Director of Editorial and Digital Strategy **JESSICA O'NEAL** will facilitate a session to showcase the resources offered through Cooperative.com.

The webinar will cover:

- ▶ Navigating the different menus (what's where),
- ▶ Personalizing the site,
- ▶ Signing up for and using the professional communities,
- ▶ Using Cooperative.com on a mobile device, and
- ▶ Learning about resources you may not have known about (employee discounts).

Instructions to join the webinar will be emailed to the cooperatives closer to the event.

This webinar is the fourth remote learning opportunity offered through KEC. The first of these sessions was held on Nov. 29, 2018, and focused on how the election results, both federal and state, would affect the electric cooperatives. The second, held March 5, 2019, featured "Transitioning in the Workplace: Succession Planning with Multiple Generations." The third was held April 11, 2019, and focused on Touchstone Energy resources including LinkedIn Learning.

Recordings of previous webinars can be found on KEC's Members Only portion of the website.



J.M. Schafer

John Melvin "J.M." Schafer, former WAPA Administrator and Tri-State G&T General Manager, died on Aug. 6, 2019.

From 1975 to 2008, Schafer worked various jobs in the electric utility industry in Colorado and Oklahoma. He retired in 2008 from his position as Executive Vice President and General Manager at Tri-State Generation Transmission Association. In 2012, Tri-State dedicated and renamed their Fort Lupton location the "J.M. Schafer Generation Station."

Memorials can be made to alz.org.

KEC Represented at Emergency Preparedness Meeting

When the worst happens, what is next? The answers to that question were the focus of the Emergency Preparedness meeting, held in Biloxi, MS, Aug. 6-7.

LARRY DETWILER, KEC's Director of Loss Control, Safety, and Compliance, joined staff from 27 other statewide associations to address a variety of topics and issues that are important to improving electric co-op emergency preparedness programs.

"The networking is invaluable, putting a face to a name, especially with new statewide employees filling these positions," said Detwiler. "It's important to understand that we all have the same concerns, struggles with coordinating not only in-state disasters but how we can better coordinate regional and national disasters more effectively and efficiently."



KEC's Larry Detwiler joins representatives from 27 electric cooperative statewide associations for the Emergency Preparedness meeting, held Aug. 6-7 in Biloxi, Mississippi.

Q At the Summer Meeting, KEC staff talked about a new "Grow Your Giving" campaign. What exactly is that campaign and at what level should co-op leadership donate to KCRE?

A The Kansas Committee for Rural Electrification (KCRE) launched its "Grow Your Giving" campaign designed to communicate the need for co-op leaders to adopt a new standard of support. Last year, we had important contributions from 378 cooperative representatives and we appreciate all levels of giving from those cooperative employees, trustees and a few attorneys. KCRE supports the campaigns of candidates for Kansas-only political offices. KCRE is governed by a committee, elected by the participants, and contributions are considered for elected officials who serve on key legislative committees and others who support the electric cooperatives. Campaigns are expensive and because we have been proponents of several important issues in the past couple sessions, we have been increasing our contributions.

To continue our success at the statehouse, we need cooperative leaders to grow their giving and annually meet the century level (\$100/individual) or higher. You can pledge to grow your giving on the KEC App by clicking on the KCRE tile, or complete the [pledge form on the Members Only site](#) and return it to Leslie Kaufman, KEC, lkaufman@kec.org.

Asked & Answered

Co-ops Vote Events include Youth



Raleigh Heeke, a 2019 Youth Tour delegate sponsored by Victory, attends the Co-ops Vote event along with Shane Laws, Victory's CEO.

As KEC's series of 21 Co-ops Vote events continues across Kansas, they are attracting more than legislators and co-op officials. High school students who attended this summer's Youth Tour or the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp also attend these events.

"The co-ops invested in these students on the trips, and now the students are showing their appreciation by supporting the co-ops," said **TARA MAYS**, Director of Government Relations. "These youth leaders are eager to share their experiences and engage on issues important to electric cooperatives."

2019 Youth Tour delegate **RILEIGH HEEKE** attended Victory's Co-ops Vote event on July 30 to share her experience.

"I was initially somewhat nervous to speak, but I got over that quickly," Heeke said. "I met with the Victory CEO Shane Laws and got to personally thank him and my co-op for their support. I am so grateful for the kind responses that I got at the meeting and the opportunity to share the importance of Youth Tour."

The Co-ops Vote events kicked off on June 5 and run through Nov. 25.

Co-ops to sponsor ag forum and safety demo at the State Fair

KEC is a sponsor of the Kansas State Ag Forum on Saturday, Sept. 7, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The forum will feature U.S. Senator and Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee **PAT ROBERTS**, U.S. Congressman and House Agriculture Committee member **DR. ROGER MARSHALL**, and **GREGG DOUD**, Chief Agriculture Negotiator in the Office of the United States Trade Representative. Listen to the forum at kansasagnetwork.com or wibwnow.com.

From Sept. 9 to 13, co-op linemen will present the high-voltage safety demonstration in the Ad Astra Pavilion. Volunteers from **MIDWEST ENERGY**, **PIONEER**, **SOUTHERN PIONEER**, **VICTORY**, and **WHEATLAND** will present the demonstration from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.