

Rural Power

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

Co-ops rally at NRECA's Legislative Conference

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 8 to 11.

While at the conference, nearly 2,000 co-op leaders heard how key lawmakers on Capitol Hill respect the pivotal role of co-ops in rural economies across the nation. KEC's CEO Bruce Graham introduced U.S. Senate

Agriculture Committee Chairman Pat Roberts at one of the general sessions.

Sen. Roberts updated conference attendees on the progress toward the next Farm Bill. He expects the bill to include essential provisions for the success of rural America, including funding for the Rural Utilities Service and the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program. On REDLG, Sen. Roberts noted the "important role this program plays in financing" for rural projects in the current environment of tight budgets.

Sen. Roberts did not indicate a timeline for releasing the Senate's draft of the Farm Bill but indicated that he is pursuing a bipartisan approach to ensure the legislation can get more than 60 votes to clear the Senate. He also emphasized the need to achieve "a common sense approach to regulation."

After the conference, Kansas co-op leaders visited with all six of the state's delegation members, discussing ways cooperatives can participate in infrastructure development for the benefit of co-op members. They expressed concern with administration proposals to sell power marketing associations (PMA) assets and encouraged delegation members to continue efforts to reform pension fund premium fees. Concerns over the poten-



Above: KEC CEO Bruce Graham introduces Sen. Pat Roberts before a crowd of roughly 2,000 rural electric leaders at the 2018 NRECA Legislative Conference. Upper right: Kansas electric cooperative officials pose with Sen. Jerry Moran. Lower right: Congressman Roger Marshall takes time to visit with the Kansas delegation.



tial listing of the Lesser Prairie Chicken were discussed, and the group expressed appreciation for supporting rural electric provisions in the recently passed omnibus budget bill.

"The Kansas delegation is keenly aware of the contributions cooperatives make to their members across the state," said Bruce Graham, KEC's CEO. "We appreciate the efforts of Senators Pat Roberts and Jerry Moran, and U.S. Representatives Lynn Jenkins, Roger Marshall, Kevin Yoder, and Ron Estes to advance and protect electric cooperative interests."

Representing Kansas were: **MIKE MORTON**, Bluestem; **JIM CHRISTOPHER**, DS&O; **STEVE FOSS**, FreeState; **BRUCE GRAHAM**, **LESLIE KAUFMAN**, **ALEX OREL**, and **DOUG SHEPHERD**, KEC; **SUZANNE LANE** and **PHIL WAGES**, KEPCo; **MIKE MORLEY**, Midwest Energy; **KATHLEEN O'BRIEN**, Nemaha-Marshall; **JIM BELL**, **MICHAEL BREWER**, and **MICHELLE BRUNGARDT**, Pioneer; **RON GRIFFITH**, **ALLAN MILLER**, **MICHAEL ROGERS**, and **KEITH ROSS**, Prairie Land; **CLARE GUSTIN** and **STUART LOWRY**, Sunflower; **SHANE LAWS** and **PATRICK MORSE**, Victory; **RON HOLSTEEN**, Twin Valley; and **WES CAMPBELL**, **JIM MCVAY**, and **BRUCE MUELLER**, Wheatland.



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invitations

Lyon-Coffey Open House and Dedication

Lyon-Coffey Electric Cooperative is hosting a dedication to celebrate its new headquarters at 2731 Milo Terrace in Lebo on April 23 at 4 p.m.

An open house will be held prior to the dedication from noon to 3:30 p.m.

Retirement Reception for Ron Holsteen

The Twin Valley Board of Trustees is hosting a retirement reception for **RON HOLSTEEN**. The event will be held from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. on June 4 at the Twin Valley Headquarters in Altamont.

Holsteen has served as Twin Valley's manager since 2004. Prior to that, he served as the manager at the South Dakota Rural Electric Association, Seward County PPD, and in Member Services at the Nebraska Rural Electric Association. In all, Holsteen has served the co-op industry for 49 years.

co-opcalendar

APRIL

- 20 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays
- 25 **KEC's HR Summit**, Corporate Ballroom, Wichita Marriott, Wichita
- 26 **MDM Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka
- 27 **Line Supervisors Roundtable**, DS&O Headquarters, Solomon

MAY

- 3-4 **KEC's IT Summit**, Courtyard Marriott, Wichita
- 4 **Safety Coordinators Roundtable**, DS&O Headquarters, Solomon
- 8-10 **NRECA's CONNECT Conference**, Salt Lake City, UT
- 9-10 **KEC Board of Trustees Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Wichita
- 16-17 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, Kansas Star Casino, Wichita
- 18 **Sunflower Annual Meeting**, Wheatland Headquarters, Garden City, 8 a.m.
- 24 **MDM Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka

annualmeetings

APRIL

- 24 **FreeState**, Perry-Lecompton High School Theatre, 404 Lecompton Rd., Perry. Meeting starts at 7 p.m.
- 25 **Wheatland**, William Carpenter Building, 608 Fairground Rd., Scott City. Meal starts at 11:30 a.m. Meeting starts at 12:30 p.m.

MAY

- 9 **Western**, Co-op Headquarters, 635 S. 13th Street, WaKeeney. Meal starts at noon. Meeting starts at 1 p.m.
- 10 **KAMO**, Chateau on the Lake, 415 N. State Hwy 265, Branson, MO. Meal starts at 6 p.m. Meeting starts at 7 p.m.
- 18 **Sunflower**, Wheatland Electric Co-op Office, 2005 W. Fulton St., Garden City. Meeting starts at 8 a.m.

upcomingtraining

2018 HR Summit

The 2018 HR Summit will be April 25 at the Wichita Marriott.

This training is designed for co-op human resources professionals, benefits administrators and supervisors.

Speakers for this one-day training will include **SUSAN M. LANG**, U.S. Department of Labor, who will discuss minimum wage and overtime issues; **DR. LEANN BROWN**, FHSU's Management Development Center, will address performance management issues; **PATTI KLEIN**, USDA Rural Utility Service, will share RUS retention requirements; **BRIAN ALLEN**, Institutional Sales Consultant, will give an update on NRECA's Homestead Funds; and **MALACHI STURLIN**, Field Representative, will give the NRECA benefit plan update.

The HR Summit is \$195 per participant and includes lunch and materials.

For more information about this training, contact Shana Read at sread@kec.org.

2018 IT Summit

The 2018 IT Summit is designed for cooperative employees who manage their co-op's information technology needs. The event will be held in Wichita, at the Courtyard by Marriott in Old Town, on May 3-4, 2018.

Speakers include **ALVIN RAZON** and **DR. CYNTHIA HSU**, NRECA; **DR. COMFORT MANYAME**, Mid-South Synergy; **SCOTT KAYLOR**, NISC; **BRETT VANNOCKER**, Kansas Security; **SHANNON ROTHCHILD**, Nex-Tech; and **TODD WEDGE**, Siemens. The slate of speakers will cover topics ranging from cybersecurity, communication networks, GIS drones, endpoint protection and incident detection, physical security, network segmentation, and NRECA's Rural Cooperative Cybersecurity Capabilities Program (RC3). There will also be a roundtable discussion.

For more information, contact Shana Read at sread@kec.org or Angela Howard at ahoward@kec.org.

CFC Statewide Workshop

Kansas electric cooperative directors are invited to join CFC in Wichita for the Kansas Statewide Workshop at the Wichita Marriott, July 10-11.

This workshop provides a variety of finance-focused topics, designed specifically for directors of electric co-ops. CFC will also host a reception & dinner for attendees and guests on July 10.

Workshop sessions are led by CFC staff experts and address topics including capital markets, strategic planning, industry update, electric rates, understanding financial statements, and an industry update.

A complete agenda, online registration, and hotel information, has been emailed to all cooperatives. A CFC web account is required to register.

For questions about this workshop, contact John Grant at 800-424-2954, ext. 1731, or john.grant@nrucfc.coop or Rodney Sanford at 800-424-2954, ext. 2734, or rodney.sanford@nrucfc.coop.

Butler

Butler held its annual meeting on March 15 at the Circle Middle School in Benton. More than 300 members attended the event.

Youth Tour winner **BENJAMIN BLACK** and camp winner **MICHAEL GIEBLER** provided reports of their summer experiences. Manager Dale Short gave an operational report and year in review, and then recognized three retiring employees. Staff also gave updates on Operation Round UP and the headquarter remodel.

Short unveiled Butler's new broadband internet offering and was assisted by Ben "Johnny Cash" Whiteside singing "Ring of Fiber."

The members re-elected **GARY HILL**, **JERRY STAAB**, and **BOYD RAY** to Butler's Board of Trustees.

Pioneer

Pioneer Electric's 74th annual meeting was held March 17 at the Grant County Civic Center. There were 162 members present.

Guest speakers included **KRIS WAGNER**, YLC, who shared his experiences in both Washington, D.C., and Nashville; and **COREY LINVILLE**, Sunflower, who discussed the Johnson Corner Solar Plant. Youth tour and camp winners were introduced and scholarship winners were announced.

Re-elected were **PERRY RUBART**, **ALFRED ALEXANDER**, and **JOHN JURY**.

Earlier that day, Pioneer Electric held a community health fair, followed by a lunch.

Lyon-Coffey

Lyon-Coffey held its annual meeting on March 19 at the Anderson Building on the Lyon County Fairgrounds. More than 700 members and guests enjoyed a fried chicken dinner.

Guest speakers included **STEVE SMITH** from Wolf Creek, KEPCo's **MARCUS HARRIS**, and Kansas Youth Tour representatives **BRANDEN ALFORD** and **TAYLR BAHR**.

Trustee elections were conducted by mail ballot last December. **DAVID KUNKEL** and **STACY HEINS** were re-elected to the board.

Ninnescah

Ninnescah held its annual meeting on March 20 at the Pratt Municipal Building. A meal was served to approximately 275 members and guests.

Guest speakers included KEPCo's **SHAWN GEIL** and KEC's **LARRY DETWILER**. KEPCo's **JILL TAGGART** was also in attendance.

Re-elected to the Board of Trustees were **MICHAEL CHRISTIE**, **BRYAN FRANCIS**, and **RONALD SCHULTZ**.

Flint Hills

Flint Hills' annual meeting was March 20 at the Herington Community Building. More than 155 members were in attendance.

During the meeting, the linemen presented a safety demonstration, and camp winner and 2018 ambassador **RAELYN SCOTT** shared her experiences. The retirement of **SHIRLEY HENTON**, Executive Secretary/Accountant, was also announced.

Re-elected were **DALE ANDRES**, **KORBY EFFLAND**, and **TERRY OLSEN**. Newly-elected to the board was **JAMES WITT** who replaces Duane Kaiser following his retirement.

Caney Valley

The Caney Valley Annual Meeting was held March 22 at the Cedar Vale School gymnasium.

Approximately 525 members and guests enjoyed a hamburger supper, musical entertainment, and a high-voltage safety demonstration prior to the meeting.

Re-elected to the board was **DALE STEWARD**. Newly-elected were **CHRIS KELLY** and **CHARLES MCMILLAN**.

Doniphan

Approximately 140 members and guests enjoyed a meal and attended Doniphan's annual meeting on March 22 at the Troy Community Building.

The co-op recognized the contribution of the late **PAM PICKERELL** who had served as billing clerk for 42 years.

The membership approved bylaw amendments and re-elected **CRAIG KOSTMAN**, **BRETT NEIBLING**, and **WILLIAM BECKER** to the board.

Heartland

Heartland held its annual meeting on March 27 at Fort Scott Community College. More than 60 members were in attendance.

Following the meeting, members and guests enjoyed an ice cream social.

Re-elected to the Board of Trustees were **ERNIE TROTH**, **BERNARD O'BRIEN**, and **STEVE MCFARLAND**.

Prairie Land

Prairie Land's annual meeting was held April 3 at the cooperative headquarters in Norton. More than 300 members and guests enjoyed a luncheon prior to the meeting.

During the manager's report, **ALLAN MILLER** announced his retirement effective after the first of the year.

Re-elected to the board were **DONALD SOLKO**, **ROBERT PAXSON**, **OTTO LEVIN**, and **WILLIAM PETERSON**. Newly-elected was **ERIC WITMER**.

DS&O

On April 3, DS&O held its annual meeting at the Webster Conference Center in Salina. Approximately 380 members and guests enjoyed a meal prior to the meeting.

Guest speakers included KEC's **BRUCE GRAHAM** and KEPCo's **PHIL WAGES**.

The membership approved bylaws and re-elected **DANE CLARK**, **DAVID BUTLER**, **KEN HEDBERG**, and **DEAN ALLISON** to the board.

Sedgwick County

Sedgwick County held its 80th annual meeting on April 3 at the Cotillion Ballroom in Wichita. More than 800 members and guests enjoyed supper prior to the meeting.

Guest speakers included **CONGRESSMAN RON ESTES**, KEC's **ALEX OREL**, KEPCo's **SUZANNE LANE** and the 2017 youth winners **BRYAN SEILER** and **CHAYAN FOX**. The 2018 youth winners were announced and employees and trustees were recognized for their years of service.

The membership re-elected **CLINT DEVORE**, **DON METZEN**, and **GENE SCHEER** to the Board of Directors.

KEC attends Congressman Marshall's roundtable



From left: Leslie Kaufman, U.S. Representative Roger Marshall, M.D., Bruce Graham and KEC President Keith McNickle.

On April 11, **U.S. REPRESENTATIVE ROGER MARSHALL, M.D.** addressed the House floor following his infrastructure roundtable in Hutchinson. In his speech, he stressed the importance of improving rural areas with competitive and reliable infrastructure.

"While back in Kansas, I had the opportunity to sit down with a number of industry and community leaders from across the state to discuss how these investments will benefit our schools, businesses, and farmers," Rep. Marshall said on the House floor.

Rep. Marshall hosted the roundtable on March 26 to discuss the current infrastructure needs. KEC President **KEITH MCNICKLE** joined KEC's **BRUCE GRAHAM** and **LESLIE KAUFMAN** in the discussion.

McNickle and Graham spoke of the roles electric co-ops can play in delivering broadband services across Kansas. Graham also noted that a potential listing of the Lesser Prairie Chicken as a threatened or endangered species could severely hamper infrastructure improvements.

Kaufman discussed the impact additional funding for RUS will have on cooperatives' ability to update and expand equipment and services.

"We truly appreciate Congressman Marshall's focus on economic vitality and quality of life in Kansas," said Graham.

The 2018 funding package delivered \$21 billion to rebuild the nation's infrastructure and specifically designated dollars for rural America.

Western Board announces Tom Ruth as General Manager

Western Board President Craig Crossland announced on April 3 that **TOM RUTH** has been selected to serve as the next General Manager.

Ruth begins his duties April 30, 2018. He comes to Western from South Central Indiana Rural Electric Member Cooperative most recently as the Vice President Distribution Services where he was responsible for field operations, engineering, field communications, metering, relay testing and maintenance, system operations center, operations technology and vegetation management. Prior to joining South Central, Ruth has extensive experience ranging from journeyman lineman duties to operation and engineering responsibilities.

"The Western Cooperative board selected Tom from over 30 well qualified candidates following a national search utilizing the National Rural Elec-



Tom Ruth

tric Association search team," Crossland said. "The board and the NRECA search team spent a great amount of time analyzing excellent resumes of all who applied, but several factors made Tom the right person to lead Western. In addition to having extensive experience in operations, engineering, and safety, he has a genuine interest in rural culture from growing up in rural Missouri. Along with a rural connection, Tom has invaluable experience of working in many facets of the electric utility world."

"I am honored to have the opportunity to serve Western and evolve the strengths of Western while embracing cooperative principles," said Ruth. "Since growing up in rural Missouri, I enjoy the culture of the mid-west, including the people, and look forward to be a consensus builder and mentor for the Western family."

Stacey Malsam and Dennis Deines have been serving as co-interim managers since Darrin Lynch, former manager, accepted a position with National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation in September of 2017.

Federated approves allocation of 2017 net margins

The Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange Board recently reviewed the financial results for the fourth quarter and year ended December 31, 2017. Based on current financial results, Federated's Board approved management's recommendation to return 100 percent of its 2017 margins with allocations totaling over \$33 million. Cash payments totaling \$9.2 million were made in the month of March.

"Your commitment to a Culture of Safety has demonstrated positive financial returns," stated Phil Irwin, President and CEO. "Your focus on safety is paying off as dollars and cents that are returned to you in the form of margin allocations including cash payments; while simultaneously protecting your most valuable assets, the men and women who serve the cooperative members."

The board stated in a release, "Your insurance company continues to maintain a strong balance sheet with both assets and surplus reaching new milestones."

jobmarket

Sedgwick County seeks Journeyman, Staking Engineer

Sedgwick County Electric Co-op is seeking qualified candidates for a Journeyman Linemen and for an Assistant Staking Engineer/Warehouseman. For a complete job description and duties, visit www.sedgwickcountyelectric.coop or call 316-542-3131. Email resumes to jboyd@sedgwickcountyelectric.coop.

FreeState seeks applicants

FreeState Electric Cooperative is currently accepting applications for the following:

- Enterprise Applications Administrator
- System Engineer
- Line Superintendent

To view a full job description or to apply, please visit www.freestate.coop under "Contact Us", "Employment Opportunities." For more information, contact Chelsea Renyer, HR Generalist, at chelsea.renyer@freestate.coop. Applications accepted until the positions are filled.