

# Rural Power

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*Please send your story ideas to*  
[ruralpower@kec.org](mailto:ruralpower@kec.org).

## Lyon-Coffey and Radiant electric co-ops propose consolidation

Two electric co-ops serving in east central and southeast Kansas announced on May 29 the first step in a proposed consolidation plan.

The Board of Directors for both Radiant Electric Cooperative (REC) and Lyon-Coffey Electric Cooperative (LCEC) have approved a consolidation plan for a vote by the co-ops' members this fall.

The proposed consolidation plan was reviewed last month during special meetings with REC and LCEC employees and their membership.

"We constantly work to find every means possible to manage costs without affecting safe, reliable electric services for our customer/members," says Dennis Duft, Operations Manager for REC. "This proposed consolidation offers the best path forward to limit future rate increases in the next one to three years."

"The proposal is the outcome of a thorough, careful evaluation by our cooperatives that included a comprehensive range of options to manage costs," said Scott Whittington, General Manager for LCEC. "This plan will benefit everyone across the board and put our cooperatives in a stronger financial position for the long term."

Under the proposed consolidation plan, the co-ops would create a new legal entity called **4RIVERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**, named for

the rivers that run through the service area. All existing jobs would be maintained for a combined workforce of 48, and the two boards would combine. The current business offices in Lebo, Emporia, and Fredonia will remain open to serve a combined 12,793 accounts in 14 neighboring counties.

Cost savings are forecast at \$9 million over 10 years. These cost savings come from greater operating efficiencies than either co-op could achieve on its own by combining purchasing, accounting, billing, information technology and member service functions, as well as by sharing equipment, software and engineering services.

The proposed consolidation requires approval of two-thirds of the membership present at the meetings. The REC and LCEC votes will be held on the same day in November, with the date yet to be announced. If approved, the consolidation would be completed by 2020.

"This consolidation is an excellent fit for our cooperatives," said Leah Tindle, Administrative Manager for REC. "We are almost identical in how we provide services. Our operating processes are similar, and we use much of the same technology, software and equipment, which will allow us to efficiently and effectively blend functions to maximize cost savings without affecting our high quality, reliable electric services."

## KEC's Summer Meeting to offer a diverse lineup of speakers

Final preparations are being made for the 2018 KEC Summer Meeting, which will be held Monday, Aug. 6 at the Overland Park Marriott.

Speakers for this year's meeting include **LYNNE HINRICHSEN**, State Director, USDA Rural Development, who will share her vision for Kansas rural development; and **DIANE DEBACKER**, Executive Director, Kansas Dept. of Commerce, who will demonstrate the value of technical training. **DAVID TUDOR**, CEO, Associated Electric Cooperatives in Missouri, recently worked in the utility industry in Texas and will outline the realities of retail wheeling. **BUD BRANHAM**, NRECA's Director of Safety and Loss Prevention, will review the

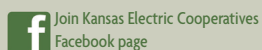
Commitment to Zero Contacts toolkit; and **PETER MUHORO**, CFC, will discuss power supply issues.

There will be a panel discussion with **SEN. ROB OLSON & REP. JOE SEIWERT**, and the cooperatives will have a chance to thank these legislators for their significant support.

The featured luncheon speaker will be **DAN MEERS**, better known as the Kansas City Chief's Wolf. In 2013, Meers came within inches of losing his life while practicing a zip line stunt. From that experience, he wrote the book "Wolves Can't Fly" and now shares his incredible story and the important lessons that he has learned about leadership and about life.



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## Graham elected RESMA president

KEC CEO Bruce Graham has been elected President of the Rural Electric Statewide Managers Association (RESMA). The election occurred at the group's meeting which concluded June 20, and he will serve a one-year term. RESMA is a cooperative peer group with members from the 39 associations in the country. RESMA serves as resource for the exchange of information and ideas that will improve advocacy and member service. RESMA is also a liaison for NRECA on legislative and communication issues that impact member cooperatives.

## Managers Association elects officers at spring meeting

At the Kansas Rural Electric Managers Association meeting on June 1 in Wichita, the following officers were elected: **ED WILTSE**, Lane-Scott, President; **STEVE EPPERSON**, Pioneer, Vice President; and **BRUCE MUELLER**, Wheatland, Secretary/Treasurer.

The group met to discuss several items including a proposed statewide outage map, the Mutual Aid agreement, and current trends in ratemaking. They also heard updates from CFC, CoBank, NISC, NRTC, RUS, and Federated.

## Jackie Kamphaus earns CCC

KEC Communications Specialist Jackie Kamphaus has earned professional credentials through the Certified Cooperative Communicator (CCC) Program—a voluntary, national certification standard. She was one of 14 new CCCs who took the exam in May at CONNECT.

In order to achieve this certification, she submitted a work portfolio which was judged by communicators in the electric co-op industry who have already earned the CCC designation. Once her portfolio was approved, she took a four-hour written examination that covered industry and communications issues.

There are currently 233 active CCCs throughout the cooperative network, including nine in Kansas: Sarah Farlee, FreeState; Bruce Graham, Carrie Kimberlin, and Shana Read, KEC; Michael Morley, Midwest Energy; Rae Gorman, Pioneer; Cinthia Hertel, Sunflower; and Jerri Imgarten and Kennedy St. George, Victory.

## co-opcalendar

### JUNE

28 **MDM Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka

### JULY

4 **Independence Day Holiday**, KEC Office Closed

13-19 **Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp**, Steamboat Springs, Colorado

17 **Lane-Scott Annual Meeting**, Lane County Fairgrounds, 745 N. 7th, Dighton. Meal starts at 6 p.m. Meeting starts at 7 p.m.

18-19 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka

20 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays

26 **MDM Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka

## upcomingtraining

### CFC Statewide Workshop

More than 45 Kansas electric cooperative directors have already registered to attend CFC's 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. Sessions are led by CFC staff experts and address topics including capital markets, strategic planning, electric rates, under-

standing financial statements, and an industry update.

A complete agenda, online registration directions, and hotel information, has been emailed to all co-ops.

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

### Directors training courses offered at KEC Summer Meeting

During the KEC Summer Meeting, co-op trustees will have several training options. All courses will run from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

On Saturday, Aug. 4, there is a choice of the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) course **2620.1 BOARD OPERATIONS AND PROCESS** facilitated by Bob Patton or the Board Leadership course **977.1 EQUITY MANAGEMENT AND BOARDROOM DECISION MAKING-**

facilitated by Rod Crile.

On Sunday, Aug. 5, there are two Board Leadership courses. Bob Patton will facilitate **930.1 ETHICS AND GOVERNANCE: IMPLEMENTING THE NEW ACCOUNTABILITY**. The pilot course **905.1 ASSESSING GOVERNANCE: TAKING A CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT APPROACH TO GOVERNING YOUR CO-OP** has limited seating and is already full.

### KEC offers the Dale Carnegie High Impact Presentations course

In an effort to meet membership calls for diversified training opportunities, KEC is offering the Dale Carnegie course titled High Impact Presentations. This two-day training is scheduled for August 28 and 29 at KEC's headquarters in Topeka.

High Impact Presentations focuses on structuring effective presentations that build credibility, enhance a client relationship and clearly convey concepts. Attendees will explore the optimum use of voice and gesture to create a lasting impression as well as a variety of presentation styles, ranging from a formal speech to a casual meeting or contentious conversation.

As this seminar focuses on more advanced presentation skills, it is recommended that participants have some prior experience in public speaking. It is ideal for leaders and future leaders needing to motivate others, address the media, or simply manage a meeting.

Registration is typically \$2,000 for this course, but KEC is able to offer a registration fee of \$1,100 per attendee. Registration information has been sent to the co-ops.

The course recommended maximum is 18 attendees. KEC is partnering with the Kansas Farm Bureau who have spoken for five spots. Deadline is Friday, July 27.

## KEC Seeks Manager of Government Relations

The successful candidate should have strong written and verbal communication skills, extensive knowledge of the legislative process and/or association services, and a desire to advance the interests of electric co-ops on both the state and federal levels.

This position plays a key role in KEC's advocacy efforts, identifying issues affecting electric co-ops and voicing the concerns of the membership. The manager is an integral member of the grassroots development team, helping individual co-ops increase their legislative outreach.

A complete job description is posted at <https://kec.coop/careers>. Send cover letter and resume to [careers@kec.org](mailto:careers@kec.org). The position is open until filled.

## Butler seeks Fleet Maintenance/ Supplemental Laborer

The position is responsible for supervising and coordinating vehicle maintenance and repair, and to provide reliable service in a safe and timely manner. For a complete position description or to apply, visit <http://www.butler.coop/employment-opportunities>, or email Angie Clevenger, HR Manager, at [angie@butler.coop](mailto:angie@butler.coop). Applications accepted through June 29.

## Flint Hills seeks Area Maintenance Lineman

Qualifications include high school diploma or equivalent, completion of lineman apprenticeship training program, three or more years journeyman lineman experience, and a valid Kansas Class A CDL and current Medical Examiner's card. Duties include installation and replacement of transformers, meters, regulators, inspection and records maintenance of substations, handling of consumer complaints, assisting construction crew, operating cooperative vehicles, and general system repairs.

Send resume to Flint Hills, Attn: Damien Hebert, PO Box B, Council Grove, KS 66846 or email to [dhebert@flinthillsrec.com](mailto:dhebert@flinthillsrec.com). Applications accepted until position is filled.

## FreeState hosts Kansas Listening Tour stop for Sen. Jerry Moran

U.S. Senator Jerry Moran hosted a town hall meeting on June 11 at FreeState's McLouth headquarters. This event is another in his series of listening tours.

The hour-long meeting allowed members to ask questions and share feedback on the critical issues facing Kansas and the nation.

During his time at FreeState, Sen. Moran shared that the VA MISSION Act recently became law, making it easier and more efficient for all veterans, especially in rural Kansas, to receive deserved care. He also discussed the Farm Bill, how our country must responsibly negotiate global trade deals, talks with North Korea, and the importance of rural broadband to small communities.



Senator Jerry Moran visits with Jefferson County constituents at FreeState Electric Cooperative on Monday, June 11, 2018. Moran stopped at FreeState as part of his Kansas Listening Tour.

## FreeState

Nearly 150 members and guests attended FreeState's inaugural annual meeting at the Perry-Lecompton High School in Perry on April 24.

Prior to the meeting, FreeState staff demonstrated information on several energy efficiency topics.

Special guests at the meeting included KEPCo's **MARK DOLJAC**, Co-Bank's **SETH HART**, KEC's **DOUG SHEPHERD**, as well as Kansas State Representative **RON ELLIS**.

**WILLIAM CONLEY** and **ROBERT SAGE** were re-elected to the board, and **MATTHEW TURECEK** was newly elected.

## Wheatland

More than 150 members and guests attended Wheatland's 70th annual meeting on April 25 at the William Carpenter Building in Scott City.

Attendees watched a video that featured the financial report and co-op activities. Scholarship and youth tour winners were announced, and employees were honored for their years of service.

Re-elected were **MIKE THON**, **DAN BONINE**, and **MARK ARNOLD**.

## annualmeetings

### Western

Western's annual meeting was held May 9 at the co-op headquarters in WaKeeney. Nearly 150 members and guests enjoyed a lunch by Bigge's Country Kitchen of Stockton.

Guest speakers included Sunflower's Stuart Lowry who gave an industry update and two youth contest winners who shared trip memories.

Retiring board members, **LARRY EVANS** and **MELVIN KELLER**, were honored for their service.

Re-elected to the board was **CRAIG CROSSLAND**. Newly-elected were **MARVIN KELLER** and **LONDON HEIER**.

### KAMO

KAMO held its annual meeting on May 10 at the Chateau on the Lake in Branson. Nearly 280 members and guests enjoyed a meal.

After the business update, a video showing milestones that were met clearing the horizons for KAMO's future.

Elected as Board officers were **DAVID TROGDON**, President; **JOHN HIBDON**, Vice President; and **KEET SHORT**, Secretary/Treasurer.

# White House, government officials, and murals highlight 58th Youth Tour

“Coming from a place where the tallest building is a grain elevator to seeing skyscrapers everywhere was very overwhelming,” said **TREY FISHER**, a youth delegate sponsored by Ninnescah, about his experiences on the 58th annual Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., held June 7 through 14.

Fisher, along with 35 other high school students from Kansas and four from Hawaii, first met in Topeka where State representatives **KYLE HOFFMAN** and **STEVEN JOHNSON**, along with Gov. Jeff Colyer’s chief counsel **BRANT LAUE**, and former Speaker of the House **MIKE O’NEAL** spoke at the opening banquet, before Hoffman, Johnson, and Laue led a private tour of the State Capitol. The speakers are all alumni of the program.

While still in Kansas, the group was treated to bucket truck rides, a safety demonstration, and a co-op career fair by the employees at FreeState. They were also invited to help paint the community mural outside of the Brown v. Board historical site.

The group, many of whom were first-time flyers, then traveled to Washington, D.C., where they toured sites including the White House, the Holocaust Memorial Museum, the National Cathedral, Fort McHenry, and many of the memorials.

“I got to witness, with my own eyes, the memorials here in D.C.,” said **CADEN PFEIFER**, sponsored by Midwest Energy. “It is one thing to see them in a book, but it is another thing to feel their magnitude in person.”

**CODY FRINK**, sponsored by Victory, agreed. “Seeing these places in textbooks does them no justice. The amount of detail in every structure is honestly breathtaking.”

The students also toured Arlington National Cemetery that included a stop at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

“Witnessing the Changing of the



Thirty-five Kansas delegates meet with Senators Pat Roberts and Jerry Moran at the U.S. Capitol as part of the 58th annual Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, held June 7 through 14.

Guard showed me just how seriously our military takes its job,” said **SARAH UNRUH**, sponsored by Lyon-Coffey. “The amount of pride displayed by this entire city definitely stood out.”

**HADLEY HAUSER**, sponsored by Prairie Land, said her visit to Arlington helped her recognize the many sacrifices made for our country. “I realized that it is because of these sacrifices that I have the freedoms I have today.”

The Youth Tour delegates also attended a Washington Nationals game, a play at the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, a dinner/dance cruise on the Potomac, a trip to the Smithsonian museums, a walking tour of historical U Street, and a visit to see the pandas at the National Zoo.

Perhaps most memorable for the group was the candid conversations with government officials. Students met with Congressman **ROGER MARSHALL** and Senators **JERRY MORAN** and **PAT ROBERTS**.

**GAGE WINGER**, sponsored by Midwest Energy, stated that he was impressed with the Kansas officials. “I was encouraged that people in our government care about small towns in America,” he said.

“Getting to talk to the Kansas Congressman and Senators was an important experience,” said **TYLER KUESER**, sponsored by Heartland. “Talking to them opened my eyes to see that they are real people just like us who are trying to make our country a better, safer place.”

While on Youth Tour, **PAUL BRULL**, sponsored by Western, was elected to serve as the 2018-19 Kansas representa-

tive to the NRECA Youth Leadership Council. Brull said that he was inspired by his trip to D.C. and hopes to work on Capitol Hill.

Brull said, “When we went to the Capitol building and were able to discuss current issues with our senators, I knew

I wanted to come back and be on the other side of that conversation.”

While in D.C., the Hawaii-Kansas delegation joined 43 other states with a record 1,888 high school students. During the Youth Day program, NRECA CEO **JIM MATHESON** told the students they can help make a difference by joining others in their communities engaged on civic issues and speaking up about what is important to them. Keynote speaker **MIKE SCHLAPPI**, a four-time Paralympic Medalist and two-time world wheelchair basketball champion, shared his inspiring message, “Just because you can’t stand up doesn’t mean you can’t stand out!”

“This trip is a huge inspiration for me to do more for my community, my state, and my nation,” expressed **DEREK ROSS**, sponsored by Twin Valley.

After some reflection, **JOSIAH BOLTON**, sponsored by Western, stated, “I found that every day we make our own chapter in the history books of our nation. How will others read about us in 50 years? This trip has inspired me to try and write my chapter, and to bring back ideas to my community.”

“I will never forget standing on the steps of the Lincoln memorial realizing how rich and amazing our nation’s history is,” said **JOSH DIAZDELEON**, sponsored by Southern Pioneer. “Even though our country has faced hardship in the past, it does not alter our capabilities to overcome any challenge in the future. My time in D.C. was one I wish every American could experience.”

Chaperones included **RAE** and **JAY GORMAN** of Pioneer Electric and **SHANA READ**, KEC.