

Rural Power

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

KEC District Meetings featured legislators and leadership workshops

There was a healthy turnout for KEC's District Meetings held Nov. 1 through 4. More than 200 managers, directors and key staff attended the series of meetings.

The agenda included a statewide year-in-review, a Co-ops in Politics recognition, and a budget presentation by KEC staff. There was also an update on transmission issues presented by KEPCo's **MARCUS HARRIS** (Districts 1 & 2) and Sunflower's **STUART LOWRY** (Districts 3 & 4). The District 3 meeting also included a solar presentation by DS&O's **TIM POWER** and Midwest Energy's **MIKE MORLEY**.

The District Meeting agenda also featured a leadership workshop by **GORDON HIBBARD**, President/CEO, Dale Carnegie Training-Kansas Heartland. This workshop, titled "Foundation



Congresswoman Lynn Jenkins visits with managers Jim Currie, Brown-Atchison, Steve Foss, Kaw Valley and LJEK Alliance, and Bob Reece, Flint Hills, during the District 2 meeting in Mayetta.

for Success," showed how career and volunteer leaders can become more effective both in their professional and personal lives.

In addition, several legislative candidates stopped by the meetings to address the attendees: Representatives **LARRY HIBBARD**, **ADAM LUSKER** and **KENT THOMPSON** (District 1); Congresswoman **LYNN JENKINS** (District 2); and newly-elected Congressman **DR.**

ROGER MARSHALL (Districts 3 & 4).

During the meetings, each District elected a representative to the KEC Executive Committee. Representing their respective districts are: **DAN PETERSON**, Twin Valley, District 1; **DUANE KAISER**, Flint Hills, District 2; **JOHN BLACKWELL**, Midwest Energy, District 3; and **PAT MORSE**, Victory, District 4.

Thompson moderates at CFC Independent Borrowers Executive Summit

The CFC Independent Borrowers Executive Summit (IBES) was held in Charleston, SC, Nov. 6 through 9.

This annual conference provided eligible cooperatives with a unique opportunity to network, hear from prominent experts and gain insights on the latest industry, finance and management challenges and opportunities.

CFC Director **KIRK THOMPSON** moderated the first general session and, as part of that session, visited with speaker Lisa Bodell, CEO and Founder of futurethink.

During her presentation titled **KILL THE COMPANY: END THE STATUS QUO, START AN INNOVATION REVOLUTION**, Bodell urged companies to question assumptions and challenge rules that have outlived their time. She issued a call to arms: to start a revolution in how companies think and how they work.



CFC Director Kirk Thompson visits with featured speaker Lisa Bodell, CEO and Founder of futurethink, during the CFC IBES general session.



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Doniphan Electric names Jim Currie as manager

The Doniphan Electric Cooperative board has announced that Brown-Atchison manager, **JIM CURRIE**, will also serve as manager of Doniphan. There are no plans to merge the two cooperatives at this time.

Currie started at Brown-Atchison in 1978 as an apprentice lineman. He became a lineman, and then crew foreman, before being named operations manager in 2006, and then general manager in 2013. He assumed the manager role at Doniphan on Nov. 2, following the death of the previous manager, Arlan Mitchell.

Director training offered at KEC Annual Meeting

At the KEC Annual Meeting, directors will have their choice of three NRECA courses.

On Saturday, Jan. 21, Wallace Barron will facilitate the CCD course **2630 STRATEGIC PLANNING**.

On Saturday, Jan. 21, Bryan Singletary will facilitate the Board Leadership Course **924.1 WHEN DISASTER STRIKES – CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNING FOR DIRECTORS**. This course has been updated and now includes a section on cybersecurity.

On Sunday, Jan. 22, Bryan Singletary will facilitate the new Board Leadership Course **961.1 THE EVOLUTION OF ELECTRIC CO-OP POWER SUPPLY**.

insympathy

Arlan Mitchell

Arlan Mitchell, manager of Doniphan, died on Nov. 2.

Mitchell first served as a member of the Doniphan Board for 11 years before being selected as general manager on May 4, 1998. He retired on Oct. 24, 2016.

Services were held on Nov. 5 at the Christ Lutheran Church in Wathena.

Memorials may be made to Wathena EMS or the Troy Ambulance Fund and sent in care of Harman-Rohde Funeral Home, 310 Fremont St., Wathena, KS 66090.

co-opcalendar

NOVEMBER

17-18 KEC Metering Workshop, Kaw Valley, Topeka

18 Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays

24-25 Thanksgiving Holiday, KEC Office Closed

DECEMBER

7-8 KEC Board of Directors Meeting, Marriott Hotel, Wichita

14-15 KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka

16 Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays

23-26 Christmas Holiday, KEC Office Closed

JANUARY

20 Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays

21-24 KEC Annual Meeting, Capitol Plaza Hotel/Maner Conference Center, Topeka

upcoming training

Key accounts training

KEC is offering a two-day NRECA key accounts course on Feb. 16 and 17 at the Courtyard Wichita at Old Town.

The course, **487.2 MANAGING YOUR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S KEY ACCOUNTS**, provides a practical exploration of key accounts fundamentals, including best practices for building and managing a program that targets the strategic and operational concerns of key accounts.

BRYAN SINGLETARY will facilitate this course that also counts toward the NRECA Key Accounts Certification.

Make your reservations at the

Courtyard Wichita at Old Town for the KEC group rate of \$139/night (which includes breakfast and parking) by calling 866-522-8909. The room block expires on Jan. 25.

2017 IT Summit

KEC has planned the next IT Summit for May 4 and 5 in Courtyard Wichita at Old Town.

To make a hotel reservation, call 866-522-8909, and ask for the KEC group rate of \$144 (which includes breakfast and parking). The room block expires on April 13.

KEC Foundation membership grows

To celebrate the vision and determination of the association's founders who chartered the organization on Aug. 18, 1941, KEC has established a new charitable foundation.

The KEC Foundation was introduced at the KEC Summer Meeting.

"I am proud to announce that we now have 15 Founders who have pledged or contributed at least \$750," said Bruce Graham, KEC CEO. "Any donation amount will certainly be appreciated and we are hoping that current and former cooperative trustees, managers and staff will get excited about this legacy opportunity."

A founding partner pledges to contribute at least \$750, and Graham said his hope is to raise \$75,000 over the next year.

To share your appreciation of the electric

co-ops through the KEC Foundation, contact Bruce Graham at bgraham@kec.org.

Thank you to our founders (as of Nov. 14, 2016)

- ▶ **JOHN and NANCY BLACKWELL**
- ▶ **DALE and BERNADETTE COOMES**
- ▶ **BRUCE and KATHY GRAHAM**
- ▶ **MARCUS and ALLISON HARRIS**
- ▶ **TERRY HOBBS**
- ▶ **DOUG and DAWN JACKSON**
- ▶ **GREG LEE**
- ▶ **BRUCE MEYER**
- ▶ **PAT and SHANNON MORSE**
- ▶ **ALEX OREL**
- ▶ **BILL PANNBACHER**
- ▶ **TERRI PEMBERTON**
- ▶ **CAFER PEMBERTON, LLC**
- ▶ **PERRY and DOROTHY RUBART**
- ▶ **ERVIN GNADT**

Electric co-ops prepared for new political landscape

The election of **DONALD J. TRUMP** as President has prompted a week of celebration, consternation, speculation, and expectation. Trump will enter the Oval Office with a Republican majority in the House and Senate—the first time since 1928 that a Republican president will serve with a Republican-controlled Congress. President Obama had a Democrat-controlled Congress during his first two years in office.

The Kansas Congressional Delegation welcomes **ROGER MARSHALL**, M.D., as the new 1st District Representative. The rest of the Sunflower State members of the House of Representatives were re-elected. Senator **JERRY MORAN** was also re-elected to his second six-year term, joining Senator **PAT ROBERTS** who ran last in 2014.

For our industry, environmental issues such as the EPA's Clean Power Plan (CPP) are included in a list of initial priorities by the incoming administration. While the CPP is currently in the hands of the courts, there seems to be little doubt the new president will have an influence on the fate of the plan. Possible actions include an executive order, Congressional repeal or a block using budget authority, appointment of a conservative Supreme Court justice who could carry through with earlier actions that challenged the legality of the CPP, or just implementation leniency.

"The future of the Clean Power Plan is certainly going to be different now. However, any action by the administration will have checks and balances, and it's unlikely to go anywhere

without a fight," said Bruce Graham, KEC CEO.

In the Kansas Legislature, a number of retirements announced earlier this year signaled there would be a large change in the Statehouse—and the August primary shifted things further with the defeat of several incumbents. The count after the Nov. 8 election has 60 new legislators in the 2017 session—46 new members will take seats in the Kansas House and 14 new Senators. The political tone will change as well with many conservative Republican legislators replaced by moderates. Democrats added 13 House seats and added one Senator. The House will be split 85-30, instead of the 97-28 split in 2016.

This large "freshman" class and the incumbents will be focused on the state budget. The latest state estimates predict a record \$346 million shortfall in revenues for the remaining eight months of this fiscal year. School finance will also command attention with a decision pending by the Kansas Supreme Court regarding the adequacy of funding. That decision, expected in the spring, could call for hundreds of millions of dollars, which the state in its current financial crisis doesn't have.

"We also expect several utility bills to be introduced including legislation that would implement customer choice," said Kim Christiansen, KEC Director of Government Relations and Legal Counsel. "No matter what the issues are this session, if they affect electric co-ops, we have a head-start on important relationships because of our summer candidate meet-and-greets and our fall events with legislators."

Bluestem purchases land for possible future growth

Bluestem announced the purchase of 12 acres of land in the Wamego Industrial Park. The land purchase was precipitated by a nearly two-year study and review in which the Board assessed the future facility needs of the cooperative.

Currently, Bluestem has office and warehouse facilities in both Wamego and Clay Center. The Wamego office serves as the co-op's headquarters. Bluestem's current warehouse facility was built in the 1960s with the office complex being constructed in the mid 1970s. After almost 50 years, the current warehouse facility requires many repairs that challenge the economic feasibility to maintain its usefulness and functionality.

The age and deterioration of the warehouse, coupled with confined space for future growth needs identified in the study, were determining factors in pursuing a larger parcel of land.

Definitive future plans for the site have yet to be determined by the Bluestem Board, but acquiring the site was an important first step in planning and preparing to meet the future needs of the co-op members.

"Our current warehouse facility has served our co-op for almost 50 years," said President Dan Pollock. "We have grown, and projections are that we will continue to grow. The land acquisition will allow us the ability to grow if the board decides to update and modernize Bluestem's facilities."

Midwest Energy annual meeting

Midwest Energy held its annual meeting Oct. 17 at the Robbins Center at Fort Hays State University.

More than 130 people attended the meeting. Members were entered into a drawing for an iPad Mini.

The five winners of the 2016 Youth Tour—**JEANIE BALZER, JOEL GREEN, BRYNN NIBLOCK, MICAELA POLSON,** and **HUDSON STRAMEL**—spoke about their trip to Washington, D.C., this past summer.

Re-elected to the board were **KEITH MILLER, JOHN BLACKWELL,** and **LON FRAHM.**

Kansas Touchstone Energy Council holds Annual Meeting

The Touchstone Energy Annual Membership Meeting was held at the Wichita Marriott on Oct. 26.

EDDIE MCKNIGHT, Touchstone Energy, highlighted the purpose of the brand and reviewed statistics and service attributes from the national co-op survey. He announced that the Energy Solutions Kick Start course is now available in person or online, and he reported that Touchstone Energy is in the process of reimagining the brand and re-evaluating all of the programs.

KEC's **SHANA READ** and Sunflower's **NIKKI PFANNENSTIEL** presented a review of the state activities in 2016, including

the Kansas State Fair, the Touchstone Energy training at the KEC Summer Meeting, and the growth of the ElectroRally program.

The Touchstone Energy Executive Council approved the 2017 budget and set the 2017 dues assessment. Re-elected to the council were **PERRY RUBART**, Pioneer; **DAVE CHILDERS**, Sedgwick County; and **RON GRABER**, Heartland. **LINDA TOMLINSON**, CMS, was appointed to fill an unexpired term.

Officer positions re-elected were **BRUCE MUELLER**, Chairman, **SCOTT WHITTINGTON**, Vice Chairman; and **DENNIS DEINES**, Secretary/Treasurer.

Kansas Co-op Hall of Fame nominations sought

Nominations are now being accepted for the Kansas Cooperative Hall of Fame.

The Hall of Fame, sponsored by the Kansas Cooperative Council, is important for recognizing the contributions of co-op pioneers and honoring those who have gone “above and beyond the call” in advancing the cooperative philosophy.

The showcase display at the Kansas State Fairgrounds in Hutchinson also plays a significant role in educating others about the uniqueness of the cooperative business model by highlighting the achievements of our state’s great co-op leaders and preserving our co-op history.

Since it was established in 1999, individuals from all types of cooperatives have been inducted into the Kansas Cooperative Hall of Fame. Each December, the Council asks for nominations for additional inductees.

To download the nomination form, visit www.kansasco-op.coop. The deadline is Dec. 2.

jobmarket

DS&O seeks IT specialist

DS&O Electric, headquartered in Solomon with an office in Lindsborg, has an immediate full-time opening for an information technology specialist who will work with the IT manager to install, configure, secure, operate, support and maintain the co-op’s information, data and communications systems.

Qualified candidates will possess post-secondary education or technical training in computer science, information technology or related field, with at least two years of relevant experience. Bachelor’s degree preferred. Relevant background includes real-world experience with storage and networking systems, virtualization technologies, programming and Microsoft operating systems and applications. Microsoft MCSA/MCSE, VMWare VCA/VCP and/or various CompTIA certifications are desirable but not required.

For a complete position description or to apply, email Derrick Rutherford at drutherford@dsoelectric.com, or call 785-655-2011 ext. 224. Deadline is Nov. 30.

Midwest Energy linemen place in International Lineman’s Rodeo

Midwest Energy linemen showed strong in the 2016 International Lineman’s Rodeo, held Oct. 15 in Bonner Springs.

The 33rd annual rodeo hosted events including a hurt man rescue simulated on a hot 40-foot pole, and a 40-foot pole climb in which the lineman has to carry an egg to the top and return to the ground with the egg intact.

The Hays Journeyman team of **DANIEL HODGES, BRIAN LEGLEITER**, and **BUTCH HAMEL** was the high-scoring Midwest Energy team this year, placing in the top third overall of more than 200 teams. **BRETT APPELHANS**, Apprentice Lineman at Hays, placed in the top third of the Apprentice Lineman-REA Division.

“This year’s competition was especially tough as participants noted that

times in many events were faster, and judges were liberal in issuing deductions,” said Mike Morley, Midwest Energy’s Corporate Communications Manager. “In any case, all Midwest Energy linemen enjoyed the friendly competition and meeting peers from other utilities around the world.”

Other Midwest Energy linemen who participated in the rodeo included the Great Bend Journeyman Team of **CHRIS TRAYLOR, NATE STRYKER**, and **TRAVIS SUCHY**; the Senior Journeyman Team of **MIKE STREMEL, BILL NOWLIN**, and **DON SHERMAN**; and Apprentice Lineman **BENN KIRMER** of Great Bend.



The Senior Lineman’s division team—Don Sherman of Great Bend, Bill Nowlin of WaKeeney, and Mike Stremel of Hays—surveys the competition before beginning the transformer swap event.



Chris Traylor, Journeyman Lineman, Great Bend, carries an egg up a pole during the speed climb. Carrying it down in his mouth he then had to show the unbroken egg to a judge.



The Hays Journeyman team of Brian Legleiter and Butch Hamel detaches a transformer, as Groundman Daniel Hodges lowers it. The Hays team placed in the top third overall.



Benn Kirmer, Apprentice Lineman, Great Bend, ties off on a dummy during the Apprentice Hurt Man Rescue event.