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## NRECA Launches Grassroots Campaign

At the 2008 Annual Meeting last month, NRECA introduced a public campaign to give cooperatives and their consumer-members a voice in the debate over energy legislation occurring now in state legislatures and Congress.

At its core, the campaign aims to motivate cooperative employees, board members, and consumer-members to ask elected officials hard questions about the cost and impact of climate change legislation.

During the unveiling of the new campaign, NRECA CEO Glenn English invoked the successful public-private partnerships of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the legacy of the "New Deal."

"In the 1930s, when Roosevelt initiated the 'New Deal' the president didn't say: You people go out and provide electric power all across the country while the rest of us sit on the fence and determine what penalties will be assigned if you don't meet these goals. President Roosevelt said we need a partnership between government and the people."

English observed that whoever is elected



(From left) The Kansas Youth Leadership Council representative, Abbey Bannister of Sumner-Cowley, visits with Sedgwick County's Margie Conyac, Stan Theis, and Don Metzen at the NRECA Congressional Action Center between the annual meeting's sessions.

President this fall will face a tremendous challenge. But like Roosevelt whose "New Deal" morphed from ill-defined campaign rhetoric into a coherent set of policy initiatives – not overnight but over a decade – the new president will have time to implement the new plan.

English encouraged the 9,000 co-op leaders in attendance, including 90 trustees, managers and key staff representing 24 Kansas cooperatives, to energize their members and begin a dialogue between elected officials and electricity consumers.

"The cooperative principles require that we educate and inform the membership," said English. "We have a responsibility also to provide elected officials the information they need to make good decisions and effective policy."

That's the idea behind "Our Energy, Our Future". The campaign encourages a "conversation" between members and their elected representatives about balancing affordable, reliable power with new laws and regulations on climate change.

For more information about the "Our Energy, Our Future" campaign, visit [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop).



Ark Valley's Dwight and Pat Engelland and Joseph and Linda Seiwert pose with Touchstone Energy's "CFL Charlie" at the NRECA Annual Meeting.

## In Brief

### California Cows Pass Gas to the Grid

Imagine a vat of liquid cow manure covering the area of five football fields and 33 feet deep. Meet California's most alternative new energy. Utility PG&E Corp began producing natural gas derived from manure, in what it hopes will be a new way to power homes with renewable, if not entirely clean, energy.

The Vintage Dairy Biogas Project, the brainchild of life-long dairyman David Albers, aims to provide the natural gas needed to power 1,200 homes a day.

*Reuters - 3/4/08*

### The Day the Wind Died in Texas

Texas, a model of wind power's potential, now is a model of wind power's pitfalls too. Minders of the Lone Star State's electricity grid had to cut power to some offices and factories when the wind dropped and with it, electricity produced from the states many wind farms. The green juice slowed from 1,700 MW to the trickle of 300 MW.

Now that wind is big enough to be a real part of Texas' electricity mix, the state is coming to grips with one of wind powers biggest problems: the power flows only when the wind blows.

*Dow Jones Newswires - 1/28/08*

### Rural Utilities Explains Funding Pullout

Federal officials said concerns over rising construction costs, legal challenges and other potential delays led them to pull the plug on financing for the proposed generating station east of Great Falls, MT.

Between 2001 and 2007, RUS was the primary means for electric cooperatives to finance new construction of transmission and generation. RUS provided \$1.3 billion in funding for new coal-fired plants.

But RUS said last month it had been directed by the Office of Management and Budget not to use any of its 2008 funding for loans to build base load generation.

With power demand growing or dead-lines approaching to replace expiring contracts, cooperatives in Montana and other states are now seeking financing elsewhere.

*Great Falls Tribune - 3/4/08*

## Cooperative Calendar

March	19-20	KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka.
	21	Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays.
	26	Touchstone Energy ElectroRally, Brit Spaugh Park & Zoo, Great Bend.
	27	MDM Meeting, KEC Headquarters, Topeka - 10 a.m.
April	9	Western Kansas ElectroRally, Municipal Airport, Scott City.
	16-17	KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka.
	18	Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays.
	23	166.1 Understanding the New World of Power Supply for Employees, Hays.
	24	MDM Meeting, KEC Headquarters, Topeka - 10 a.m.
	24-25	Kansas Member Services Director's Association (KMSDA) meeting, Hays.
	25	Kansas Line Superintendents Meeting, Salina.
May	30-5/1	KEC Board of Trustees Meeting, Dodge City.
	4-7	NRECA Legislative Conference, Washington, D.C.
	6-8	Supervisor's Conference, Topeka.
	14-15	KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting, Eisenhower Museum, Abilene.
	16	Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays.
29	MDM Meeting, KEC Headquarters, Topeka - 10 a.m.	

## KEC Members' Annual Meetings

March	15	Pioneer - Lunch at noon, Health Fair 7 a.m. - 11 a.m., Meeting at 1 p.m., Grant County Civic Center, Ulysses.
	25	Flint Hills - Dinner at 6 p.m., Meeting at 7 p.m., Centre High School, Lost Springs.
	25	Prairie Land - Lunch at noon, Meeting at 1 p.m., co-op headquarters, Norton.
	25	Heartland - Dinner at 6 p.m., Meeting at 7 p.m., co-op headquarters, Girard.
	25	Ninnescah - Dinner at 6 p.m., Meeting - after dinner, Pratt Municipal Building.
	27	Doniphan - Dinner at 6:30 p.m., Meeting at 7:30 p.m., Midway School, Denton.
	27	Radiant - Meeting at 7 p.m., Fredonia High School.
	31	Lyon-Coffey - Dinner at 6 p.m., Meeting at 7 p.m., Civic Auditorium, Emporia.

## Kansans Support Energy Legislation, Balanced Approach for Resources

Results of a new statewide survey commissioned by the Kansas Chamber point to economic development and a balanced approach to energy as top priorities among Kansans. The telephone poll, taken Feb. 21 - 24, gathered responses from 500 registered voters.

"Our goal was to learn what Kansans view as priorities for their state," said Amy Blankenbiller, president and CEO of the Kansas Chamber. "We are sharing the findings so Kansans' voices can be heard and policymakers can know what is on the minds of voters."

Key findings from the poll include:

When given a choice of four issues that most concern voters in selecting candidates for public office, nearly four in 10 Kansans cited an economic grouping that included taxes, jobs and the budget as most important.

Respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the KDHE Secretary Roderick Bremby's denial of

Sunflower's Holcomb Station expansion project. Only 28 percent of voters agreed with the denial of the application, while 47 percent disagreed.

When asked if their legislator should vote to overturn a possible veto by Governor Sebelius of a recently passed bill allowing expansion of the Holcomb power plant, of those expressing an opinion, nearly 60 percent said their legislator should vote to overturn the veto.

Respondents were asked if Kansas should meet its energy needs with a balanced approach that includes coal, or if they were willing to pay more for alternative energy sources. More than 60 percent want a balanced approach.

Another question on the survey asked respondents what they would be willing to do to reduce carbon-based emissions. Results showed that just one in five Kansans are willing to pay higher electric rates in exchange for reduced carbon emissions.

## KEC Urges Members to Action

Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. is utilizing communication resources to encourage cooperative member-owners to support sound energy policies in Kansas.

In the March issue of *Kansas Country Living*, Stuart Lowry, KEC's executive vice president, outlined in his column the current legislative issues being faced by Kansas legislators this session.

In his column, he encouraged the member-owners to visit the KEC web site and to contact their legislators to support pending energy legislation.

From this site, member-owners can track the progress of the energy bills, and can see whether their legislators supported the bills with their votes.

For those member-owners who do not know their legislators, there is a link



to help them identify their legislators.

There are also links to the Alliance for Sound Energy Policy and to the Holcomb Station Expansion Project. For more information, visit [www.kec.org](http://www.kec.org).

## Job Opportunities

### South Dakota Co-op Seeks Engineer

East River Electric Power Cooperative Inc., Madison, is accepting applications for a newly created engineering position. The primary responsibilities of this position are to provide engineering design and project management for substation and transmission line construction projects and supervision of the engineering support function including drafting, GIS, environmental reporting, and construction contracting.

A Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering from an accredited college or university is required.

To apply or for a complete position description, call 605-256-4536, email [hr@eastriver.coop](mailto:hr@eastriver.coop), or visit [www.eastriver.coop](http://www.eastriver.coop).

## Annual Meeting Highlights

### Brown-Atchison

Brown-Atchison held its 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting on Feb. 21 in Horton. 134 members attended the meeting, and approximately 325 people were served a roast beef lunch.

Re-elected to three-year terms on the board were James Buttron, Kevin Compton and Gary Schlaegel.

The cooperative's 2007 youth tour winner, Natalie Pederson, spoke on her trip to Washington, D.C. The Soundmasters from Effingham entertained the membership before the meeting, and KEPCo's Steve Parr spoke to the group about current power supply issues.



Dave Holthaus (right) spoke to the membership at Bluestem's annual meeting in Clay Center.

### Bluestem

Bluestem held its annual meeting on March 3 at the United Methodist Church in Clay Center. Approximately 275 members, trustees and employees attended the meeting and the vendor-products fair held prior to the meeting.

Trustee elections were conducted by mail ballot last December. Re-elected to

the board were Dale Keesecker, Don Sutter, Dan Pollock and Alice Kimble.

### Nemaha-Marshall

Nemaha-Marshall's annual meeting took place on March 4 at the Axtell American Legion.

360 members and guests enjoyed a lunch, and 146 members registered for the meeting.

Re-elected to three-year terms on the Board were Bob Rottinghaus, Galen Bauman, and Bob Voet.

### Students Learn about Cooperative Careers at K-State Career Fair

KEC hosted a booth at the K-State Internship/Career Fair on March 5. Carrie Kimberlin, KEC's communications specialist, spoke to nearly 100 college students about cooperative careers. Students were able to watch the two new career videos from NRECA, pick up a copy of the latest issue of *Kansas Country Living*, and register to win a door prize. Several students also dropped off resumes for the KEC communications intern position.



## New Power Supply Course Offered for Co-op Employees

KEC is offering the NRECA course 166.1 *Understanding the New World of Power Supply for Employees* on Wednesday, April 23, 2008, from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. at the Hampton Inn in Hays. Cost to attend the course will be \$200 per attendee. Lunch will be provided. Space is limited.

The course, specifically designed for employees, focuses on the "new world" that electric cooperatives face in which power supply decisions are more complex, involve greater risks and have greater cost consequences for consumers.

Key topics include concepts associated with power generation and transmission; how the nation's power generation and transmission systems are changing in response to technological, legislative, regulatory, and market forces; why some new cost drivers are having significant impact on electric rates; and why cooperative concepts and principles are significant in dealing with these new market forces.

If you are interested in attending, please email Shana Holsteen at [sholsteen@kec.org](mailto:sholsteen@kec.org) or call (785) 478-4554.

## Kansas State Ag Scholarships Awarded to Five Cooperative Youths

Five Kansas State University students with ties to Kansas electric cooperatives were awarded scholarships at Kansas State University last month.

To be eligible for these scholarships, these students were required to be either a junior or senior in high academic standing in K-State's College of Agriculture. In addition, these students or their parents must belong to a farmer-owned cooperative, including electric cooperatives.

Both Anikka Martin of Herndon, Prairie Land Electric Cooperative; and Kristina Martin of Hartford, Lyon-Coffey Electric Cooperative, were selected to be recipients of the 2007-2008 William S. May Scholarship for Ag. Finance. This endowment enhances the educational pursuits of future agricultural leaders with an interest in a career in finance or banking.

Justin Patterson of Benton, Butler Rural Electric Cooperative, was selected to be the 2007-2008 recipient of the Otis and Mary Lee Molz Cooperative Scholarship. Otis and Mary Lee Molz established this scholarship in 2005 to encourage the next generation to plan a future with cooperatives.

Nick Mizner of Esbon, Rolling Hills Electric Cooperative, was selected to be the 2007-2008 recipient of the Matthew

Kent Stamper Memorial Scholarship.

This scholarship honors the memory of Matt Stamper who died in an automobile accident on May 23, 1999, just shy of his 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday. The scholarship encourages an interest in the operation, management, and economics of agricultural cooperatives, beef production and grain production enterprises.

Marinda Johnson of Mound City, Heartland Rural Electric Cooperative, was selected to be the 2007-2008 recipient of the Linn County Cooperative Scholarship. The scholarship was established to honor the memory of the Linn County Farmers Cooperative Association by providing financial assistance to Linn County high school graduates majoring in agriculture.

These scholarships are coordinated through the Arthur Capper Cooperative Center (ACCC), directed by Professor David Barton. The ACCC provides research-based information, education and assistance to people with and interested in cooperative businesses, including cooperative members, directors, managers and employees.

Further information can be obtained about these scholarships or about establishing additional scholarships by emailing David Barton at [dbarton@ksu.edu](mailto:dbarton@ksu.edu).

## Receive Rural Power Newsletter via Email

To sign up to receive your copy of Rural Power via email, send your name, cooperative or organization, and email to:

Shana Holsteen, KEC, at [sholsteen@kec.org](mailto:sholsteen@kec.org).

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