

Rural Power

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Kansas co-op leaders deliver key messages to Congressional staff

Last week, 20 electric cooperative employees and directors, representing 15 cooperatives, met with the staff of Kansas' members of Congress while in Washington, D.C., for NRECA's 2012 Grassroots Summit and Legislative Conference.

"As political issues increase in number and complexity, our grassroots must also strengthen and increase to effectively impact state and federal legislative and regulatory issues," said Bruce Graham, KEC's executive vice president.

How best to employ people power was the focus of the two-day summit, which brought 1,500 co-op managers and directors to the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill for the tools and training they need to mobilize 42 million co-op members nationwide.

In addition to attending presentations on strengthening the electric co-op grassroots, the Kansas group held its traditional and popular Monday lunch for staff in our Kansas Congressional offices. Following that meeting, they visited with key energy staff about the following major issues:

- Power Marketing Administrations: They urged Congress to stop the PMA restructuring plan as proposed earlier this year by Energy Secretary Steven Chu.

- Coal Ash Regulation: They asked the Senate to support coal ash legislation in the House 90-day highway bill extension during the upcoming conference negotiations.

- RUS Electric Loans: They pointed out the importance of a viable and cooperative partnership with the RUS.

- Utility Greenhouse Gas Regulation: They provided a fact sheet to help answer questions about the proposed New Source Performance Standards for power plant greenhouse gas emissions.

"Having our electric cooperative leaders take the time to travel to Washington, D.C. to discuss issues significant to our cooperatives helps to illustrate to members of Congress just how important these issues are," added Graham. "I commend their dedication in looking out for the best interests of their cooperative's members."

Two Kansas cooperatives become CFC 100-percent borrowers

Two Kansas electric distribution cooperatives have become CFC 100-percent borrowers through recent transactions. CMS and Ninnescah closed the transactions on April 25 and March 30, respectively.

Each made the decision to become 100-percent CFC borrowers based on CFC's high level of customer service and the low interest rates and long-term savings that CFC was able to provide by refinancing their existing debt.

"We'll realize some \$7 million in savings over the life of the notes," CMS general manager Kirk Thompson said. Thompson represents District 7 on CFC's Board of Directors.

"The most remarkable thing about this transaction was the

speed and efficiency with which CFC staff made it happen," he said. "We looked at the numbers in February, and by March we secured a rate lock."

CMS originally worked with CFC to explore refinancing options in 2010. Rates at that time, however, were not low enough to provide significant savings.

"When our board of directors looked at the latest numbers, they instantly recognized it as a great deal," Thompson said. "There's a comfort level in working with CFC. Our board knew that CFC was the right choice to meet all of our financial needs."

Ninnescah began considering becoming a 100-percent CFC bor-

rower within the past year.

"The numbers made sense for us in the long term; the refinancing was just a very sound business decision," Ninnescah general manager Ed Wiltse said. "We also have a good working relationship with CFC. We know them."

CFC had provided Ninnescah with emergency lines of credit following storms in 2005 and 2007. Over that short span of time, two ice storms and two tornadoes wiped out half of the cooperative's system, including a substation and transmission lines.

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inbrief

Baldwin high school team earns 2nd national championship in Real World Design Challenge

For the second time in three years, Baldwin High School has won the national championship in the Real World Design Challenge. Teams from across the country competed at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum April 20-23. This year's challenge was to design an efficient, low-carbon-emission personal light sport aircraft that could accommodate two people and fly 200 miles in less than two hours at a cruise altitude of 1,000 feet.

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE – 5/4/12

TXU Energy launches free nighttime energy charges

TXU Energy has launched Free Nights 24SM, a new electricity plan that offers customers free nighttime Energy Charges between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. every night for two years. The new plan offers customers a chance to save by shifting activities like running the dishwasher, dryer or heavy PC use or interactive gaming to after 10 p.m. By shifting just 10 percent of their electricity use to nighttime, customers can save over \$200 a year.

TXU ENERGY – 5/4/12

New commitments to give 15 million households tools to shrink energy bills

Responding to President Obama's call to help consumers reduce their energy costs, nine major utilities will commit to providing more than 15 million households access to data about their own energy use with a simple click of an online "Green Button." By providing consumers with secure, easy-to-understand information about how they are using energy in their households, Green Button can help them reduce waste and shrink bills.

WHITE HOUSE – 3/22/12

co-opcalendar

MAY

- 16-17 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka.
- 17 **KAMO's Annual Meeting**, meeting at 6:30 p.m., Renaissance Hotel, 6808 S 107th East Ave., Tulsa, OK.
- 18 **Sunflower's Annual Meeting**, meeting at 8 a.m., meal at noon, Board of Directors meeting to follow, Holcomb Station, Holcomb.
- 22-23 **NRECA Supervisory Training**, Hotel Old Town, Wichita.
- 31 **MDM Meeting**, KEC Headquarters, Topeka, 10 a.m.

JUNE

- 14-21 **Government in Action Youth Tour**, Washington, D.C.
- 14-15 **REC Manager's Spring Meeting**, Hyatt Regency, 400 W. Waterman, Wichita.
- 15 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays.
- 28 **MDM Meeting**, KEC Headquarters, Topeka, 10 a.m.

upcomingtraining

Directors training courses offered at KEC's summer board meeting

KEC's Summer Board Meeting will be held at the Overland Park Marriott. Bryan Singletary will facilitate the CCD Course 2610 Understanding the Electric Business on July 28. Terry Halter and Gabe Snow will facilitate the Board Leadership Course 916 Directors Role

in Shaping Policy on July 29.

For the 2013 KEC Annual Meeting held in Topeka, Scott Luecal will facilitate the CCD Course 2620 Board Roles and Relationships on Jan. 26 and the CCD Course 2640 Financial Decision Making on Jan. 27.

annualmeetings

Victory

Victory held its annual meeting on April 10 at the Civic Center in Dodge City. Approximately 850 meals were served prior to the meeting. The menu featured steak, baked potatoes, green beans, rolls and dessert. The meeting was attended by 532 registered members.

Incumbents Cedric Drewes and Daryl Tieben were re-elected to the board. Both Terri Larson and Ken Schulte were newly elected to their respective districts.

Sedgwick County

On April 10, 2012, Sedgwick County held its 74th Annual Meeting at the Cotillion Ballroom in Wichita. More than 289 members attended the meeting. A meal was served to 662 members and guests prior to the meeting.

Guest speakers included KEC's Bruce Graham, and KEPCo's Steve Parr. Winners of the 2011 youth tours, Phillip Strunk and Mallory Troyer, also shared their experiences.

Re-elected to the board were John

Hillman, Donald P. Metzen, and Eugene J. Scheer.

CMS

The 66th Annual Meeting of CMS Electric Cooperative, Inc., was held on April 12th in Protection. The members and guests attending the meeting were treated to a delicious BBQ meal prepared by Kim's Ribs of Guymon, OK, with approximately 215 being served.

The meeting was opened by Girl Scout Troop 50014 leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

Special guests included Kansas State Senator Garrett Love, Kansas State Representatives Kyle Hoffman and Ronald Ryckman, KEPCo's Steve Parr and Les Evans, and KEC's Bruce Graham.

Thompson introduced the scholarship winners, and Mr. Parr updated the membership on generation issues.

Re-elected to the board were Jeff Headrick, Clifford Friesen, and Don Nighswonger.

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Cooperatives hold National Electric Safety Code workshop

KEC and Victory recently hosted workshops for the 2012 National Electric Safety Code. The workshops were held on April 10-12 and 17-19, respectively. The workshops were open to both members and non-members of LCS&C.

NESC establishes safety standards for the upkeep and operation of electric facilities located in the United States.

The seminar offered by the cooperatives covered the history of the NESC, as well as code updates and rules dealing with the construction and operation of electric utilities.

“One of the valuable features of this



Engineer Bob Witter (standing) facilitates the National Electric Safety Code workshop at KEC's headquarters on April 10-12.

workshop is that students leave with a complete knowledge of how the existing NESC clearance requirements were developed and the ability, when facing a situation not specifically addressed

by the NESC, to develop a clearance that is consistent with the NESC,” said Larry Detwiler, KEC director of loss control, safety & compliance.

The seminar was conducted by Bob Witter, a registered professional engineer who serves as the principle engineer and managing member of Witter Engineering, LLC. He is a frequent teacher of the NESC for the NRECA and other organizations.

LJEC's Adopt-a-Highway program shows commitment to community

As part of LJEC's three-year commitment to the Adopt-A-Highway program, LJEC employees picked up trash along a section of Highway 16 just west of McLouth.

“I'm glad our employees stepped up again this year to help,” said Steve Foss, LJEC's general manager. “These types of projects are an easy way for LJEC to give back to the community.”

Some of the strange things found by the employees during these pickups include a paddle, someone's paycheck, and a box of movies.



LJEC employees participate in a clean up through the Adopt-A-Highway program.

annual meetings

Twin Valley

Twin Valley held its 65th annual meeting on April 19 in Altamont. More than 200 people enjoyed a dinner from Chicken Annies.

Guest speakers included KEC's Doug Shepherd, and KEPCo's Shawn Geil. Youth tour winner Michael Banowetz shared his experiences, and Brittnee Albertson's comments were read in absentia.

Re-elected to the board of trustees were Bryan Coover, Ronald McNickle and Robert Webster, Jr.

Rolling Hills

Rolling Hills held its 11th annual meeting on April 20 at the North Central Kansas Technical College. Preceding the meeting, a delicious meal was catered by Buffalo Roam.

Audrey Boeken, the 2011 youth tour participant and the Kansas representative to the NRECA Youth Leadership Council, shared her adventures and experiences. KEPCo's Mark Barbee discussed generation issues, and KEC's

Bruce Graham highlighted the benefits Rolling Hills receives through its membership in KEC.

LJEC

The 68th annual meeting of Leavenworth Jefferson Electric Cooperative was held April 24 at the McLouth High School. This year's meeting focused specifically on the cooperative; its businesses from 2011 and the newest programs and services offered to members.

Re-elected to the board were Bill Pohl, Larry Meadows and Marty Shaw.

Members also approved the proposed bylaw changes that cleaned up language regarding joint memberships as well as outdated language associated with board elections.

Wheatland

Wheatland's annual meeting was held April 25 at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Great Bend. Guest speakers included Sunflower's Stuart Lowry and KEC's Bruce Graham.

Wheatland's manger, Bruce Mueller, pre-

sented employee service awards to his staff who have worked at the cooperative 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 and 40 years.

Caney Valley

327 members attended Caney Valley's annual meeting on May 1 at the Cedar Vale School gymnasium. More than 500 people were served hamburgers, and entertainment was provided by the Sedan High School Choir.

Re-elected to the board were Dwane Kesinger and Jack Newcomb. Newly elected was Dale Steward, who replaced Fred McAdam who did not seek re-election.

A proposed by-law amendment was approved to remove wording that excludes members from serving on the board if they also serve in an elected position that pays a salary.

Scholarship and youth tour winners were announced. 2011 camp winner Luke Bellar spoke about his experiences. Bellar will return to camp this summer as an ambassador.

Keith Miller testifies at Congressional Ag Field hearing



Keith Miller (left) visits with Congressman Tim Huelskamp at the ag field hearing. Photo by John Schlageck, Kansas Farm Bureau.

“Protection and enhancement of crop insurance programs ranks as the number one priority for a long list of farm organizations in the 2012 farm bill process,” testified Keith Miller at the U.S. House Agriculture Committee field hearings on April 20th in Dodge City.

Miller serves on both the Midwest Energy and the Kansas Farm Bureau board of directors.

The event was the last in a series hosted by Congressman Tim Huelskamp. Presiding at the hearing was Agriculture Committee Chairman Frank Lucas (R-OK), and General Farm Commodities and Risk Management Subcommittee Chairman K. Michael Conaway (R-TX). Also in attendance were representatives of the KEC staff and hundreds of Kansans.

Kansas electric cooperatives suffered from April tornadoes

A major storm cell swept across the Midwest on April 14, churning out at least 20 tornadoes that downed power lines and caused thousands of outages in Kansas.

13 cooperatives had damage directly related to the storm: Alfalfa, Ark Valley, Brown-Atchison, DS&O, Flint Hills, Midwest Energy, Ninnescah, Rolling Hills, Sumner-Cowley, Sunflower, Twin Valley, Western, and the eastern division of Wheatland.

These systems collectively lost approximately 800 utility poles. The system hardest hit was Midwest Energy that had damage to approximately 345 poles. At the peak of the storm, the cooperative had 6,700 members without power. All residential services were restored the next day.

Sumner-Cowley lost 50 poles and had major damage to distribution lines.

“At least four homes were totally

destroyed and dozens of others damaged,” said Clete Raines, Sumner-Cowley’s manager. “Thankfully no one was killed or seriously injured.”

Brown-Atchison reported few outages, however, the storm did cause severe damage to the distribution lines.

“We had a barn go through our lines,” said Jim Currie, Brown-Atchison’s line superintendent. “It caused power to be off for about an hour. It leaned a bunch of poles, but it didn’t break any.”

Currie added that this particular barn was unlucky.

“A barn in the same location was destroyed in a tornado about 20 years ago,” Currie explained. “It was rebuilt and then this tornado struck in the same place.”

In addition to the local line crews, cooperative linemen from Butler, Radiant, Sedgwick County, and Victory assisted in the repair efforts.

Kansas Member Services Directors Association elects officers

The Kansas Member Services Directors Association (KMSDA) elected officers at their meeting last month in Wichita.

The membership elected Josh Schmidt, Victory, as president; Ron Graber, Heartland, as vice president; and Abby McGreevy, Sunflower, as secretary. The mem-



The new KMSDA officers (from left): Ron Graber, Heartland, vice president; Abby McGreevy, Sunflower, secretary; and Josh Schmidt, Victory, president.

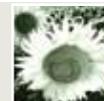
bership also elected to separate the treasurer’s position, and appointed Graber as treasurer.

The meeting’s speakers included NRECA’s Megan McKoy-Noe who facilitated workshops on social media and Straight Talk; a design workshop, and industry updates from KEC’s Bruce Graham, KEPCo and Sunflower.



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