

# Rural Power

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## Stuart Lowry to take helm at Sunflower Electric

KEC's Stuart Lowry has been named as Sunflower Electric Power Corporation's next president and chief executive officer.

Lowry will begin his tenure on Aug. 15 to succeed L. Earl Watkins Jr., Sunflower's current president and CEO, upon his retirement. Lowry is the fifth person to lead Sunflower since it was formed in 1957.

Since 2004, Lowry has served as executive vice president and general counsel of KEC. He has guided the statewide organization through a wide range of legal, legislative and regulatory activities at the state and national levels.

Lowry also served on the Kansas Energy Council, the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation Integrity Fund Committee, and the Kansas Energy and Environmental Policy Advisory Group.

Loren Ochs, Sunflower's board chairman, said that the Sunflower board unanimously selected Lowry following a national search conducted by Carol Langley of Denver-based Langley & Associates Inc.

"Stuart's cooperative background and industry experience, along with his personal traits that reflect Sunflower's culture, make him an outstanding choice for this position," Ochs said. "Stuart is a trusted and well-respected leader, and we know that under his direction we will continue our mission of serving our members with reliable energy at the lowest possible cost."

Lowry said, "I am honored to be selected for this position and excited to face the challenging times ahead. To be given the opportunity to build upon the successes achieved by Sunflower and its member-owners during Earl Watkins' tenure as CEO is truly humbling."

Lowry was raised in Valley Falls and is a graduate of the University of Kansas and Washburn University School of Law.

Prior to his tenure at KEC, he was a partner in the law firm of Lowry and Johnson in Valley Falls, where he served as counsel to KEC



Stuart Lowry

member systems on many legal issues facing electric cooperatives in Kansas, including Kansas Corporation Commission proceedings, bylaw revisions, and development of service rules and regulations for deregulated cooperatives.

He is a second generation electric cooperative attorney; his father, Gordon Lowry, started representing electric cooperatives more than 50 years ago.

"I have been so fortunate to work with the KEC members and a terrific staff," Lowry said. "I look forward to building on our collective strength in my new position."

Lowry and his wife, Lauren, have three children.

The KEC Board of Trustees has called a special meeting for July 22 to determine the selection process for Lowry's successor at KEC.

Watkins said that upon his retirement he plans to enjoy his family.

"I will be doing what the boss at home wants, instead of what the bosses at work want," Watkins added.



Earl Watkins (left) received a plaque from Lane-Scott's board member, Paul Seib, at Lane-Scott's annual meeting held on July 12. The board thanked him for his service to central and western Kansas and wished him well in his retirement. Watkins said that he is looking forward to spending more time with his family.



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# inbrief

## DOE and Ad Council launch consumer education campaign

U.S. Department of Energy and the Ad Council launched a national consumer education campaign to help consumers save money on utility bills. Created pro bono by Texas-based advertising agency GSD&M, the public service advertisements aim to help consumers save money on their energy bills by doing things such as sealing leaks in their homes and using energy efficient products. To view the ads, visit: [www.multivu.com/mnr/50779-ad-council-energy-efficiency](http://www.multivu.com/mnr/50779-ad-council-energy-efficiency).

AD COUNCIL - 7/19/11

## Energy companies launch "Troops to Energy Jobs"

U.S. Secretary of Energy Steven Chu announced an important new initiative to link returning military veterans to civilian jobs in the energy sector. The initiative, called Troops to Energy Jobs, will seek to create an accelerated transition for veterans into civilian energy sector jobs – jobs that are expected to become more plentiful in the next decade as nearly 40 percent of the workforce for the nation's electric and natural gas companies and nuclear power industry reach retirement age or depart their jobs through attrition.

CEWD - 7/12/11

## CFC to move headquarters on Labor Day

CFC announced that its headquarters will be moving to a new location. On Sept. 6, CFC will be open for business at its new address: National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation, 20701 Cooperative Way, Dulles, Virginia 20166. CFC's phone numbers will be changing as well as a result of the move. On Sept. 6, 2011, CFC's new main telephone number will be 703-467-1800.

CFC - 7/15/11

## JULY

- 22 **Special KEC Board of Trustees Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Wichita.
- 28 **MDM Meeting**, KEC Headquarters, Topeka.
- 30 **Board Leadership Course 945.1**, Marriott Hotel, Overland Park, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- Certified Cooperative Director Course (CCD) 2620.1**, Marriott Hotel, Overland Park, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- 31 **Board Leadership Course 902.1**, Marriott Hotel, Overland Park, 11:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

## AUGUST

- 1 **KEC Summer Board Meeting and KEC Auxiliary Spouses Program**, Marriott Hotel, Overland Park.
- 4-5 **Material Managers Meeting**, Hyatt Regency, Wichita.
- 17-18 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, Hyatt Regency, Wichita.

## KEC celebrates 70th anniversary at summer board meeting

As part of KEC's 70th anniversary, two Board Leadership courses and one Certified Cooperative Director course are being offered at its summer board meeting in Overland Park, July 30-31.

On Saturday, July 30, from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., trustees will have their choice between the CCD course or a Board Leadership course.

NRECA's Bob Patton will facilitate the CCD course **2620.1 Board Roles and Relationships**. This course explains how the director and the full board each play a key role in developing plans and in implementing actions to maintain and manage these relationships.

Also on July 30, NRECA's Greg Boudreaux will facilitate the Board Leadership course **945.1 Under Scrutiny: The Board's Role in the Age of the Internet, Consumer Activism and Transparency**. This course will help trustees discuss and analyze how to best position their system at a time of public demands for accountability, ethics and transparency.

On Sunday, July 31, from 11:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Boudreaux will facili-

tate the Board Leadership course **902.1 Understanding the Role of the Board Chair**. Board chairs have a critical role in leading the board. They must work closely with the CEO to ensure that meetings are well organized and focused on strategic issues.

The Summer Board Meeting will begin at 8 a.m. on Monday, Aug. 1. There will be a panel discussion on rate design, a power supply report from KEPCo and Sunflower, and a Kansas NRECA Membership Meeting to hold elections for the NRECA director.

Matthew Sunseri, president & CEO of the Wolf Creek Nuclear Power Plant, will discuss nuclear safety. Federated's Stan Bray will discuss safety issues, and NRECA's Dena Stoner will report on national legislative issues. The luncheon speaker will be Drew Switzer, WIBW Channel 13 meteorologist.

The KEC Auxiliary program will begin on Monday, Aug. 1 at 8:30 a.m. Chef Ali Winters will make some of her favorite summer dishes. Also, the musical quartet "3 Men and a Melody" will perform after lunch.

## jobmarket

### Brown-Atchison seeks general manager

Candidates must have 5 - 10 years electric utility experience, preferably within the rural electric program, and 3 - 5 years management experience. A Bachelor's degree is preferred. Must have electric utility management experience including such areas as finance, planning, member communications, operations and board relations.

Brown-Atchison, headquartered in Horton,

KS, has eighteen full-time employees serving approximately 3,400 meters over roughly 1,100 miles of line. It offers an excellent NRECA retirement plan, competitive benefit programs and salary commensurate with qualifications. Please send a resume, a minimum of three professional references and salary expectations by Aug. 30 to Kevin Hill, Corporate Counsel, 407 Hatfield, Hiawatha, KS, 66434-2306.

# Pioneer Electric reorganizes to strengthen energy services for its members

On May 1, Pioneer Electric began a restructuring process at its administrative level. Unlike most electric cooperatives, Pioneer owns and operates a separate utility called Southern Pioneer. The organizational restructuring will help to better serve both companies.

Pioneer created three new senior vice-president positions to oversee both companies. These positions have been filled by existing department heads, which allowed Pioneer to promote new managers to fill the old positions.

Senior vice-presidents Chantry Scott, George Bushnell, and Anita Rock will oversee Finance and Accounting, Engineering and Operations, and Energy Services, respectively. The Finance and Accounting division as well as the Engineering and Operations division were both previously established, but Energy Services is still a forming division. It grew out of the old Member Services division. Pioneer changed the name to Energy Services, because it serves both members and customers. In the past, the name created confusion.

“We thought that ‘Energy Services’ better defined the consumers for Southern Pioneer, because they’re not members,” said Rock.

This new structure is similar to the one that general manager Steve Epperson implemented in his previous position at a cooperative in Illinois.

## Lane-Scott holds annual meeting, honors Sunflower’s Earl Watkins

Lane-Scott held its annual meeting on July 12 at the Lane County Fairgrounds. Over 500 people attended the meal and meeting. Ed Gough, Paul Seib, and Dick Sorem were re-elected to the Board of Trustees.

Morgan Lawrence, Kate Hagans, and Hannah Speer reported on their attendance at the Wash-

ington, DC, and Steamboat Springs Youth Tours.

The guest speaker was Sunflower’s CEO, Earl Watkins, who was recognized by the Lane-Scott Board and membership for his service to central and western Kansas.

A young member dreams of becoming a lineman at the Lane-Scott annual meeting.



The strengthening of Energy Services is meant to better inform members and customers about legislation and regulation that may affect them. It also allows both companies to strengthen their relationships with those they serve.

“Energy services is really that arm of the organization that we try to be a little more aggressive than traditional member services in terms of developing relationships and actively pursuing energy efficiency and conservation methods, but also keeping our members and customers informed as to what is going on and letting them know what they can do to help us advocate on their behalf,” said Epperson.

**Energy services is really that arm of the organization that we try to be a little more aggressive than traditional member services.**

STEVE EPPERSON

Energy Services’ increased communication with the customers of Southern Pioneer could lead to increased staffing. Pioneer has also committed to more community involvement in Southern Pioneer’s service area. Pioneer, like other cooperatives, believes that public service is a central value of the cooperative system and that Southern Pioneer should be able to experience this public service as a customer company.

Pioneer acquired Southern Pioneer when Aquila, Inc.’s electric network in Kansas broke up in 2007 and sold to a group of six cooperatives in western Kansas, called Mid-Kansas Electric Cooperatives (MKEC), of which Pioneer was a part. Unlike the other five

cooperatives, Pioneer did not bring its new customers into its member system. It treated its new acquisition as a customer company.

Unlike the members of Pioneer, the customers of Southern Pioneer do not receive capital credits, don’t have any cooperative member benefits, have their own rate structure, and are still regulated by the KCC. Pioneer and Southern Pioneer will remain as two separate businesses.

Rock said, “Though it is unusual for an electric cooperative to have a subsidiary electric company, Southern Pioneer is guided by the same principles as an electric cooperative. Both Pioneer and Southern Pioneer strive to be good stewards in the communities we serve and provide reliable power at a reasonable cost.”

According to Rock, the changes have already helped with communication between Pioneer’s three district offices held in Liberal, Ulysses, and Medicine Lodge. They will continue to benefit both companies by creating more economies of scale. Sharing the senior management staff will also give Pioneer and Southern Pioneer more consistency. Overall, the new structure will permit both companies to better serve both its customers and members.

“If you summed up almost every cooperative mission statement across the country, they all are different, but they all basically say the same thing,” said Epperson. “We want to provide the best possible service at the lowest possible price and manage long-term risk. We’re in this for the long haul.”

## Perry Rubart’s 80th birthday celebration

Perry Rubart’s family extends an invitation to help Perry celebrate his 80th birthday.

The celebration will be held on Sat., Aug. 13 from 1 - 3 p.m. at the Methodist Church, 321 W Grant, in Ulysses, KS.

For more information, please contact Teresa Grounds, PO Box 1002, Hooker, OK 73945 or email [teresa.namaw@gmail.com](mailto:teresa.namaw@gmail.com).

The family has requested no gifts.

## Cooperative youth attend Colorado leadership camp

Thirty-four high school students representing Kansas electric cooperatives joined youth from Colorado, Okla-



The Kansas and Oklahoma students rode a bus to the Colorado camp.

homa and Wyoming at the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp, July 9-15 in Steamboat Springs, CO.

During their week-long stay, the students created a candy cooperative, established a board of trustees and "hired" a general manager. At the end of the week, the group decided how to handle any profit margins.

The campers took part in legislative presentations, a light and high voltage display and a competition to build a transmission line from craft supplies. They also toured the Craig Power Plant and Trapper Mine.

The student delegates were selected through a competition by their local electric cooperatives. Two Kansas students were elected by their peers to return to camp next summer as ambassadors. They are Carrie Carlson, Flint Hills; and Luke Bellar, Caney Valley. The two Oklahoma students elected to return as ambassadors are both from Alfalfa: Victoria Loeser and Cole

Steffens, Alfalfa; Alyssa Scott, Butler; Luke Bellar, Victoria Wittmeier, and Matt Womacks, Caney Valley; Madison Davis and Jacquelyn Wagner (Ambassador), DS&O; Carrie Carlson and James Mulderrig, Flint Hills; Loretta Harmison and Chad Meyers, Lane-Scott; Aaron McIntyre and Cheyenne Patton, LJEC; Rebecca Newth, Nemaha-Marshall; Levi Hirsh, Ninnescah; Kori Hall and Dannah White, Pioneer; Tyler Montgomery, Michaela Sasse, and Samantha Tien, Prairie Land; Kelsey Gengler and Sierra Ulrich, Rolling Hills; Levi Robert (Ambassador) and Mallory Troyer, Sedgwick County; Macy Axline and Connie Smalldridge, Southern Pioneer; Seth Tracy, Sumner-Cowley; Michael Banowetz, Twin Valley; Norma Jean Avalos and Claire Leis, Victory; and Kaycee Niermeier and Hayden Philieger, Western. Chaperones included Shana and Randy Read, and Carrie Kimberlin, KEC; Travis Griffen, Butler; and Jennifer Fisher, LJEC.

Steffens.

The delegates included the following: Victoria Loeser, Rachel Smith (Ambassador), and Cole Steffens,

## Ninnescah linemen participate in "Kids Day on the Farm"

Robert Lamatsch, a lineman for Ninnescah, presented an electrical safety program for dozens of fourth graders. The students came from Pratt, Skyline, Sacred Heart, and Cunningham schools, as well as home-schooled students.

Topics covered were kite flying, looking up to see if there are overhead electric lines and the dangers of climbing trees with energized lines running through them.

Lamatsch used an energized table top demonstration unit so the students could see the consequences of what happens when farm equipment or other items come into contact with power lines.

The annual event was hosted by David and Paula Blasi on their farm north of Pratt.



Robert Lamatsch demonstrates the elements of using electricity safely.



## First Class Mail

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