

Rural Power

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Kansas trustees and cooperatives honored at NRECA regional meeting

Five trustees from electric cooperatives in Kansas were recognized at the NRECA region meeting for their commitment to education before an audience of more than 750 electric cooperative officials.

Earning the Certified Cooperative Director designation was Ed Gough, Lane-Scott. Earning the Board Leadership Certificate were Carl Johnson, Jr., Caney Valley; Larry Meadows, LJEC; Frank Joy, Western; and Ronald Davis, Wheatland.

Also during the meeting, Loren Ochs accepted a certificate on behalf of Sunflower Electric for the support and monetary contributions to the NRECA International Foundation. The foundation's mission is "electrifying the world... one village at a time."

The Region 7 meeting was held in conjunc-



Lane-Scott's Ed Gough (left) receives his CCD certificate from NRECA's Glenn English at the Region 7 meeting in Denver, Oct. 11-13.

tion with the Region 9 meeting in Denver, CO, on October 11-13. Officials representing electric co-ops from Alaska, Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas, Washington, Oregon, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Montana and Utah gathered to share their experiences and

discuss the physical, financial and political challenges facing the electric utility industry.

This regional meeting was the third in a series of five 2011 Regional Meetings convened by NRECA. General session presentations and session recaps are now available on Cooperative.com under "2011 Regional Meetings".

These meetings continue the association's grassroots policymaking process, which begins at the local co-op level and culminates at NRECA's Annual Meeting, to be held in San Diego, CA, March 5-7.

Victory's Jerri Imgarten earns Certified Cooperative Communicator designation

Jerri Imgarten, communications specialist at Victory Electric, has earned recognition as a professional communicator through the Certified Cooperative Communicator (CCC) – a voluntary, national certification program.

In order to achieve certification, Imgarten had to meet the program requirements and submit a portfolio of work samples in the field of marketing and communication for evaluation. Her portfolio was judged by peers, communicators in the electric co-op industry who have already earned the CCC designation. Having passed that evalu-



Jerri Imgarten

ation, Imgarten then took a four-hour written examination.

"The CCC program was a way for me to advance my education without going back to traditional schooling," Imgarten said. "The skills I acquired during studying and the certification process help me everyday."

Since 1985, when the program began, more than 300 electric cooperative communicators – including nine in Kansas – have attained CCC status. The CCC Program is entirely voluntary.

The CCC program board of directors governs the program. It is composed of 10 CCCs, including KEC's Bob Jennings, who are responsible for setting policy and program guidelines.



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Wheatland manager search in final stages

On Oct. 25, Wheatland's board selected candidates for final interviews for the position of general manager. Interviews are scheduled the week of Nov. 14. The new manager will take over for Neil Norman, who is retiring, on Jan. 3, 2012.

There will be a public reception at the Bryan Education Center in Scott City on Dec. 20 from 3-5 p.m. to bid farewell to Norman and to provide an opportunity to meet the new manager.

Kansas named as one of top 10 states in need of improvement

A sour U.S. economy, tight state budgets and a failure by Congress to adopt a comprehensive energy strategy have not slowed the growing momentum among U.S. states toward increased energy efficiency, according to the fifth edition of the annual ACEEE State Energy Efficiency Scorecard released by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy.

However, the 10 states most in need of improvement (starting with dead last) are: ND, WY, MS, KS, OK, SC, WV, MO, AL and SD.

ACEEE - 10/20/11

KC Board of Public Utilities adds to Smart Grid team

Siemens has teamed up with the Kansas City Board of Public Utilities (KCBPU), a publicly owned provider of electricity and water services to residences and businesses across Kansas City, Kan., to deliver eMeter Smart Grid Appliances. Each appliance includes a preloaded, rapidly deployable instance of eMeter® EnergyIP® meter data management system (MDMS) with IBM Tivoli and WebSphere software running on IBM Power Systems.

SIEMENS - 10/20/11

NOVEMBER

- 15-17 **National Electrical Code Workshop**, Courtyard Marriott, Salina.
- 16 **KEPCo Annual Meeting**, dinner at 6 p.m., meeting following dinner, Prairie Band Casino and Resort, 12305 150, Mayetta.
- 16-17 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, Prairie Band Casino & Resort, Mayetta.
- 18 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays.
- 21 **Midwest Energy Annual Meeting**, meeting at 1:30 p.m., Fort Hays State University, Robins Center, One Tiger Place, Hays.
- 24-25 **Thanksgiving Holiday**, KEC Office Closed.

DECEMBER

- 7-8 **KEC Board of Trustees Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Wichita.
- 14-16 **Supervisory Training**, Hotel at Old Town, Wichita.
- 14-15 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka.
- 16 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays.

Kansas Cooperative Hall of Fame nomination sought

Nominations for 2012 are now being accepted for the Kansas Cooperative Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame, sponsored by the Kansas Cooperative Council, is valued for recognizing the contributions of co-op pioneers and honoring those who have gone "above and beyond the call" in advancing the cooperative philosophy.

Since it was established in 1999, 27 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 nomination deadline is Dec. 1, 2011.

Co-op employees participate in Touchstone Energy Brand Camp

Approximately 20 electric cooperative employees attended a free, hands-on Touchstone Energy workshop on Oct. 26 in Wichita.

Dubbed the "brand camp", this training was facilitated by NRECA's Ann Maggard, who helped the employees better understand Touchstone Energy's varied resources.

Maggard demonstrated each resource and showed ways the programs could be used to help cooperative members.

Guest speakers included Don Hellwig, DS&O's general manager, and Ben Keiter, the Wichita Wingnuts' assistant general manager.

Hellwig talked about the Touchstone Energy brand through the manager's perspective. He gave a history of his cooperative's involvement with the

brand, as well as the programs that best fit his membership's needs.

Keiter visited with the group about the journey of renaming (and therefore, rebranding) a minor league baseball team, and how they developed their logo and brand into what it is today.

A large part of the day's discussion included the new Touchstone energy web builder program, as well as the "Together We Save" resources.

"Whether competing for the World Series or member loyalty, the approach is similar," Maggard said. "This camp is about better understanding your members' needs."



From left: Ann Maggard, NRECA; Don Hellwig, DS&O; and Ben Keiter, Wichita Wingnuts; presented the importance of branding at the Touchstone Energy Brand Camp.

Severe weather awareness, financial planning topics of KMSDA meeting

Severe weather awareness and retirement and investment planning were the key topics of the Kansas Member Services Directors Association (KMSDA) meeting held on Oct. 27-28 in Wichita.

Speakers included Chance Hays, meteorologist at the National Weather Service and Steve Newton, NRECA's regional director. Other speakers included Rich Clover, NISC; Sherry Sharp, CFC; Phil Wages, KEPCO; Cindy Hertel, Sunflower; and

Shana Read, KEC.

The member services employees also held a round table discussion on topics including using social media and implementing the Touchstone Energy Cooperative Connections Card program. The group also participated in a ghost tour of Wichita.

The spring KMSDA meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 25-27 at the Homewood Suites in Wichita.



Steve Thrash, Service Concepts, demonstrates the latest CFL products to the Kansas Member Services Directors Association in Wichita last month.

Kansas cooperatives attend KEC district meetings

Hundreds of Kansas electric cooperative trustees, staff and managers attended the KEC district meetings last week.

KEC staff met with cooperative officials from across the state at meetings in Fall River, Hays, Dodge City and Topeka.

Following the departmental and budget presentations, CFC's John Grant presented a workshop on equity management.

Elected to represent their districts on the KEC Executive Committee in 2012 were: Carl Johnson, Jr., District 1;



CFC's John Grant, presented a training session on equity management at all four district meetings.

George Zentner, District 2; Gary Frieling, District 3; and Perry Rubart, District 4.

Luncheon speakers included Representatives John Grange, Bob Brookens, William Wolf, Dan Collins, Brian Weber, Larry Powell, Carl Holmes and Senator Garrett Love.

The trustees also completed surveys regarding next year's district meetings. Prior to this year's district meetings was a web conference to review the KEC budget in detail. A brief overview of the budget was presented at the district meetings.



District 4's trustees, managers and key staff heard from four of their local legislators during the luncheon at Victory's headquarters in Dodge City.

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Luella Brinker

Luella Brinker, the mother-in-law of Kathy Brinker, Nemaha-Marshall's manager, passed away on Nov. 1 at Nemaha Valley Community Hospital.

Memorials for Luella may be sent to Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church, 411 Pioneer, Seneca, KS 66538.

Kenneth Erickson

Kenneth Erickson, retired PR&W manager, died on Sept. 21 in Washington state. He started his co-op career in Norton in 1946, serving as assistant manager. In 1952, he and his family moved to Wamego where he became the manager of PR&W, which is now Bluestem. Erickson served as president of the Kansas statewide from 1980-1983. He retired from the cooperatives in 1983.

Memorials may be sent to Tri-State Memorial Hospital Foundation, PO Box 189, Clarkston, WA 99403.

Phyllis Jackson

The mother of Rolling Hills' Manager, Doug Jackson, passed away on Oct. 6 at Bryan LGH Medical Center East, Lincoln, NE.

Memorials for Phyllis Jackson may be sent to First Christian Church of Clyde or Community Care Inc., of Clifton, c/o Neill-Schwensen-Rook Funeral Home, 918 7th Street, Clay Center, KS 67432.

Elections held for Touchstone Energy Executive Council

The Kansas Touchstone Energy executive council met for its annual meeting on Nov. 7 in Wichita.

The guest speaker was NRECA's Erin Keogh who reviewed the national Touchstone Energy program.

Keogh reported that the national investment structure will not increase for the next couple of years. She complimented DS&O and LJEC for promoting Touchstone Energy programs on their websites.

Keogh reviewed the "Together We Save" program, and promoted the BizConnections.coop website that features local discounts for businesses. She also distributed the Brand Manager Reference Guide and demonstrated the Touchstone Energy smart phone app.

Shana Read and Nikki Pfannenstiel gave a report on the 2011 programs and activities, including the State Fair, the ElectroRally and the youth tour programs.

Re-elected to the council were Ronald McNickle, Twin Valley, and Dennis Deines, Western. Bob Reece, Flint Hills, stepped off the council, and Scott Whittington, Lyon-Coffey was elected to fill the vacated seat. The officers remained the same: Don Hellwig, chair; Leon Eck, vice chair; and Dennis Deines, secretary/treasurer.

Kansas cooperatives sponsor ElectroRally

While most of their peers are simply learning to drive, Kansas high school students who take part in the Plains ElectroRally are building their own cars—single-person electric racecars, that is.

On Sept. 29, high school teams brought their final creations to compete in Hays. Each

of the 10 teams had designed their own electric vehicles to be lightweight, efficient and aerodynamic—all built them from scratch.

The competition was no traditional race. Instead of a time trial, the teams competed to get the most laps in one hour around the quarter-mile track at West Frontier Park.

The cars were categorized into two divisions: standard and experimental. Both cars had to follow national design guidelines, but experimental cars could also incorporate solar panels to recharge the battery. A Scott City team won the standard division by completing 70 laps in one hour and a Ulysses team took home first place in the experimental division with 61 laps.

The race was held by the technology studies departments at Fort Hays State

University and sponsored by Midwest Energy, Inc., Sunflower Electric Power Corporation and Western Cooperative Electric Association. Dennis Deines of

Western and Nikki Pfannenstiel of Sunflower, co-op employees, also serve on the ElectroRally Board.

"It's important for co-ops to support this program because, ultimately,

we have an opportunity to get students interested in the electric world early on in their educational journey," said Pfannenstiel.

The Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Kansas sponsor similar events, including the Touchstone Energy ElectroRally each spring and the KanAm Electric Challenge at the Kansas Speedway every other year. For more information, visit www.kansaselectrorally.org.



A Kansas youth tests his team's electric vehicle in the standard class race at West Frontier Park in Hays.



Co-op employees from Midwest Energy and Sunflower serve lunch to the teams.

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