

# Rural Power

## 2011 marks KEC's 70th anniversary

For 70 years, Kansas Electric Cooperatives (KEC) has served as the statewide service organization for Kansas' electric distribution cooperatives and generation and transmission cooperatives. Formed on August 18, 1941, KEC represents the interests and provides needed services and programs to the electric co-ops that serve in Kansas.



Unquestionably the most widely published photograph in rural electrification history, the "Four Horsemen of the Lines" will be used as inspiration for a painting by artist Pamela Renfroe.

including the statewide consumer magazine *Kansas Country Living*, news releases, advertising, and publishing services.

The January issue of *Kansas Country Living* highlights the accomplishments and activities of KEC and its members over the past 70 years. To help commemorate KEC's anniversary, artist Pamela Renfroe

When local electric cooperatives began forming in the late 1930s, they were small businesses with limited political and legislative influence. Over the years, KEC has developed a wide range of support services for its members. These services include legislative research and legislative action programs at the state and national levels; regulatory support; youth programs; education; public relations; safety/loss control; legal; and a large selection of communication services

is using the "Four Horsemen of the Lines" photograph as her inspiration for her annual rural electric painting. This photo captures the momentum as the last miles of line are pulled the day before energization for Brown-Atchison Electric Cooperative on March 31, 1938. Renfroe will have her painting in progress on display at the NRECA Annual Meeting in Orlando in March, and hopes to have the painting completed this summer.

## Steve Epperson named CEO of Pioneer Electric Cooperative

Steve Epperson has been named CEO of Pioneer Electric Cooperative. He assumed his new position on January 3.

For the past five years, Epperson was president and CEO of McDonough Power

Cooperative in Macomb, IL.

He began his cooperative career in 1998 at Indian Electric Cooperative



Steve Epperson

in Cleveland, OK, as the director of business development. He furthered his career at Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative as a consultant, supervisor and senior vice president, prior to accepting the president and CEO position at McDonough.

Raised in Nebraska, Epperson graduated in 1991 from Ozark Christian College with a Bachelors Degree

in Psychology.

Epperson received his MBA from Bradley University. He has also successfully completed NRECA's Management Internship Program.

He enjoys golfing, lifting weights, hunting, fishing and spending time with his family: wife, Leanne; son, Jake (14); and daughter, Payton (10).

"My wife and I were very impressed with the Pioneer family and culture," Epperson stated.

### INSIDE

- 2 | Calendar
- 2 | Training offered
- 3 | KEC hosts its 69th Annual Meeting
- 4 | 2011 brings new legislative landscape



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**Supreme Court to hear utilities appeal of global warming lawsuit**

The U.S. Supreme Court said that it would hear an appeal by four big coal-burning utilities of a ruling that a group of states and New York City can proceed with a global-warming lawsuit seeking to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions of the power companies. The justices agreed to review a ruling by a U.S. appeals court that reinstated a 2004 lawsuit by eight states claiming the utilities have created a public nuisance by contributing to global warming.

REUTERS - 12/8/10

**CoBank to seek merger with US AgBank**

CoBank said it plans to merge with Wichita-based U.S. AgBank in late 2011.

The merger would create an \$85 billion bank serving some 70,000 farmers, ranchers and producers in 23 states.

The combined bank would be called CoBank and be based in the Denver area, but would also maintain U.S. AgBank's Wichita and Sacramento offices. Staff reductions are not planned, the banks said.

WICHITA BUSINESS JOURNAL - 12/16/10

**Kansas to keep 4 house seats**

Kansas kept its four U.S. House seats after the release of population figures from this year's census, but the state's incoming governor said it faces a potential loss of clout in another decade if it doesn't improve its economy and boost its population more quickly. Gov.-elect Sam Brownback, who takes office Jan. 10, said he expects legislators to rewrite congressional district boundaries so that the already sprawling 1st District of western and central Kansas grows significantly.

CJ ONLINE - 12/21/10

**JANUARY**

- 19-20 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka.
- 21 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays.
- 22 **NRECA Board Leadership Course**, 974.1: Rate Strategies for 21st Century Challenges, Capitol Plaza Hotel, 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Topeka.
- 23 **NRECA Board Leadership Course**, 903.1 The Role of the Board Chair in Conducting Effective Meetings, Capitol Plaza Hotel, 11:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., Topeka.
- 24-25 **KEC Annual Meeting**, Maner Conference Centre, Topeka.
- 25 **KEC Board of Trustees Meeting**, immediately following the KEC Annual Meeting, Maner Conference Centre, Topeka.
- 16-17 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka.
- 18 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays.

upcomingtraining

**Trustee training offered at 2011 KEC Annual Meeting**

The KEC Annual meeting will be held at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Topeka on January 24 - 25.

Scheduled for Sat., Jan. 22 is the Board Leadership Course **974.1: Rate Strategies for 21st Century Challenges**, facilitated by Scott Luecal. In this course, trustees will discuss the complex issues that they must balance when they consider business plans, financial policies, alternative rate philosophies and strategies.

The course on Sun., Jan. 23 is **903.1: The Role of the Board Chair in Conducting Effective Meetings**, facilitated

by Colette Trohan. The board chair has the responsibility for organizing the meeting, creating a productive atmosphere allowing for the free exchange of opinion, presenting the issues to be resolved, bringing the decisions to resolution, and moving the cooperative forward.

Both of these courses will count as one credit for the Board Leadership certificate. Trustees must have completed the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) certificate and 10 Board Leadership credits to earn the Board Leadership certificate.

**2011 KEC Board of Trustees meetings**

- ▶ January 22-25 - Capitol Plaza Hotel, Topeka (Annual Meeting)
- ▶ March 23-24 - Marriott Courtyard, Salina
- ▶ May 11-12 - Wichita Marriott
- ▶ July 30-August 1 - Marriott Hotel, Overland Park, Kansas (Summer Board Meeting)
- ▶ September 28-29 - Wichita Marriott
- ▶ December 7-8 - Wichita Marriott

insympathy

**Ray Bickel**

Ray Bickel, husband of former Ninescah manager Carla Bickel, died on Dec. 30.

He and Carla married in 1972 in Hutchinson. They have two adult children and three grandchildren.

Cremation has taken place at Elliott Mortuary in Hutchinson. Memorials may be made to Cause for Paws in care of the mortuary.

**Wilfred "Willie" Himmertzhaim**

Wilfred "Willie" Himmertzhaim, a former trustee of Sedgwick County, died on Dec. 31.

He served on the board from 1975-1985, and was president of the board from 1981-1985.

Memorials may be sent to the Harry Hynes Memorial Hospice or the Seminary Fund - Wichita Catholic Diocese.

# KEC to host its 69<sup>th</sup> annual meeting

KEC's Annual Meeting will be held Jan. 24-25, 2011, at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Topeka. Two NRECA Board Leadership courses will be offered prior to the meeting on Jan. 22-23.

The KEC Annual Meeting will begin Jan. 24 at 8 a.m. Speakers will include Chris Courtwright, Kansas Research Department; Ken Keylor, Buckeye Power; and Melinda Becker, Youth Leadership Council. Also invited are Governor Sam Brownback, Senator Jay Emler, and Attorney General Derek Schmidt.

Attendees will hear KCRE, Federated and NRECA reports. KEC's LCS&C Department will present safety awards, and Leslie Kaufman, Kansas Cooperative Council, will make a Co-op Hall of Fame presentation.

Also available to the meeting attendees on Jan. 24 is the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual KEC Expo. Breaks and door prizes will be given in the Exhibition Hall.

A photo area will be available from

3 - 5 p.m. for any trustee or manager who would like a new photo in the annual KEC Directory.

The Kansas Committee for Rural Electrification (KCRE) will host its annual silent auction on Jan. 24. For more information or to donate items, please contact Scott Whittington, Lyon-Coffey; or Dave Holthaus or Carol Dorr, KEC.

The KEC Auxiliary will meet on Jan. 24. Speakers include Bekah Pankow, Massage Therapist, and B.J. Myers, Southeastern Indiana REMC. The Auxiliary will also tour the Kansas State Capitol and the Curtis House.

A special KEC Auxiliary silent auction item is a hand-made quilt donated by Carolyn McNickle, wife of Twin Valley director Ronald McNickle. This year's KEC Auxiliary raffle prize is a love seat with storage, hand-crafted by John Roniger, member of Flint Hills. Raffle tickets are on sale now and will be available at the meeting.

## Kansas served by new CFC rep

Because of the recent retirements of employees, CFC has taken advantage of this opportunity to adjust the territory of its Regional Vice Presidents (RVP) and Associate Vice Presidents. Steve Beck, who has served Kansas, will have a new territory in the states of Montana and Wyoming where CFC recently had an RVP retire. The new Kansas RVP will be Sherry Sharp.

## congrats

### Sunflower receives permit

In December, Sunflower received notification that the final Prevention of Significant Deterioration air quality construction permit for its 895-megawatt Holcomb expansion project was approved by Acting Secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment John Mitchell. The decision adopts the recommendation by the KDHE's technical staff, and allows Sunflower to proceed with construction of a state-of-the-art, coal-based unit.

### Crotts and Barrett retire from Lyon-Coffey

Lyon-Coffey's Gayla Crotts, meter reader, and Alan Barrett, engineering technician, have worked for the cooperative for a combined 50 years. Lyon-Coffey hosted a retirement reception to honor their years of service on Jan. 6 in Burlington.

### USDA's Gary Smith announces retirement

After working in federal service for more than 38 years, USDA's Gary Smith retired Jan. 1.

In a letter sent to KEC, Smith wrote, "it has been a pleasure to work with you in addressing the needs of rural Kansans for so many years. We can be proud of many successes."

"I have enjoyed working with you and the cooperatives to help advance the quality of life in many of our rural communities," he continued. "I think the connection to the electric cooperatives was a great enhancement for many of our programs."

Smith worked with the electric cooperatives through programs including the USDA Rural Development program.

## jobmarket

### LJEC seeks member services position

Leavenworth-Jefferson Electric Cooperative (LJEC) is seeking an individual interested in a position as a member services representative.

Duties could include assisting member/owners with rate, rebate and usage inquiries. Also could be responsible for promoting value added services and programs to member/owners.

Applicant must have the ability to communicate clearly, both orally and in writing. Must have good interpersonal and customer relation skills. Must have the ability to work independently to

organize and prioritize work and meet deadlines. Must be a team player.

A basic knowledge of residential electrical wiring is desirable. Applicant must be at least 18 years of age, must have a valid KS driver's license and must be able to successfully pass physical and drug tests.

LJEC offers a competitive starting salary and an outstanding benefit package.

Interested applicants should send resume by January 20 to HR Department, PO Box 70, McLouth, KS 66054.

college who is majoring in communications, journalism, marketing, public relations, or a related field, have them contact Shana Holsteen, [sholsteen@kec.org](mailto:sholsteen@kec.org), for a complete position description. Deadline is January 20.

Interviews will be held in Topeka in late January or early February. Start and end dates will be based on the successful applicant's academic schedule.

### KEC offers communications internship for spring semester

The KEC communications intern will work on a variety of hands-on, portfolio building projects that support the Kansas electric cooperatives. Responsibilities include assisting with the publication of a monthly magazine, designing print materials, providing event support for youth programs, and more.

If you know of a junior or senior in

# Place Your Ad HERE!

We are excited to announce a new advertising opportunity in the *Rural Power* newsletter.

Advertisers will reach 900 cooperative decision-makers in Kansas each month in this very space.

Advertising in *Rural Power* will be sold on a first-come, first-serve basis. Space in each issue for advertising is limited.

If you know a business that would like to advertise in this space, e-mail [ckimberlin@kec.org](mailto:ckimberlin@kec.org).

## RuralPower

## 2011 brings new Governor and more Republican lawmakers to the Kansas House of Representatives

By Dave Holthaus, KEC's manager of government relations

The Brownback gubernatorial Gala events will take place this weekend culminating with the Swearing In Ceremony at the capitol on Monday, Jan. 10 at 11 a.m., followed by an open house.



Dave Holthaus

There is much anticipation for this year's influx of new legislators. They will face a half-billion dollar budget shortfall again this year. At this point, there will be six new senators. Remember, the Senate wasn't up for election in 2010. Many were necessitated by the appointments to Cabinet positions. The Senate will now consist of 32 Republicans and 8 Democrats.

The Kansas House was up for election in 2010, and 32 new legislators will join the Kansas House of Representatives. Republicans picked up 16 seats in the House in the November election, and now control the House by a 92-33 margin. It hasn't been since 1954 that the House had such a wide disparity between the two parties.

The truth is that they will have their work cut out for themselves. The state has a half-billion dollar budget hole to fill. Coming off a 1% tax increase last session, they will be reluctant to add

more taxes. That means cuts and belt-tightening could be ahead.

The House Energy and Utilities Committee has been named: C. Holmes, chair; F. Knox, vice chair; S. Alford; R. Bruchman; M. Burgess; P. Hermanson; D. Hineman; R. Mesa; R. Proehl; D. Schroeder; J. Seiwert; T. Sloan; V. Swanson; A. Kuether (ranking D); N. Dillmore; M. Slattery; S. Frownfelter; and G. Finney. The Senate Energy and Utilities Committee has been named: P. Apple, chair; M. Petersen, vice chair; J. Emler; R. Merrick; T. Bruce; M. Tad-diken; T. Masterson; D. Pyle; and D- M. Francisco.

During the legislative session, KEC will produce the *Capitol Connection* newsletter to inform our member systems on matters of legislative interest to electric cooperatives, including committee hearings, status of legislative bills, and action taken by the Legislature. To join the email list, please contact [cdorr@kec.org](mailto:cdorr@kec.org).

### KEC is on Facebook

If you are a member of the fastest growing social networking site – Facebook, join us in becoming a fan of Kansas Electric Cooperatives. The fan page will keep you up-to-date on happenings at the Kansas statewide. Find our fan pages at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) by searching for Kansas Electric Cooperatives.



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