

# Rural Power

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## Kansas Country Living honored with prestigious Haggard Award

*Kansas Country Living* and Editor, Larry Freeze, has been selected to receive the prestigious George W. Haggard Memorial Journalism Award for 2014 from National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

The award recognizes and publicly commends the editor and electric co-op publication that demonstrate the most lucid, forthright, and effective presentation of ideas advancing the objectives of electric cooperatives and issues that affect them and their consumer-owners.

The award was presented to Freeze and Bruce Graham, KEC's CEO, at the 2014 NRECA Annual Meeting on March 5 in Nashville.

The staff of *Kansas Country Living* strives in each issue to update its readers on state and national issues related to energy, efficient use of electricity, and electrical safety. Combined with pieces on human interest, food, travel, and statewide events, the publication is a well-rounded source of news, information, and entertainment to the members of 23 electric cooperatives across Kansas.

Freeze, who has served as the magazine's editor since 1979 and has presided over a circulation increase from 75,000 to 122,000 monthly, said his primary goal with the magazine is to help revitalize rural Kansas.

"I see as one of our magazine's purposes to serve as a tool for economic development through our stories. Spotlighting rural businesses in the magazine is one way to do this," Freeze said.

This is the first time that *Kansas Country Living* has earned the prestigious award since the program launched in 1958.

The Haggard Award judges praised the magazine for its recent transformation in both editorial content and graphic design as *Kansas Country*



NRECA Board President Curtis Nolan (center) presents the coveted George W. Haggard Memorial Journalism Award to KEC's Bruce Graham and Larry Freeze at the NRECA Annual Meeting in Nashville.

*Living* increased its focus on energy and cooperative issues. The judges commended its fuller coverage of important electric industry news, along with its excellence in Kansas-focused features.

"*Kansas Country Living* excels at communicating pertinent subject matter tailored to their readers. Important topics are consistently presented

in a manner that compels the reader to feel their interests are being cared for by the cooperative family," commented one of the judges.

In addition to judging magazine entries for forthrightness, clarity, and balance, the Haggard Award competition encourages co-ops to raise the standards and professional excellence of statewide publications, to recognize the publications' contribution to the electric cooperative network nationwide, and to strengthen cooperative education and member relations programs.

The judges praised the winner for its overall design and production quality. One judge even said, "The magazine leaves no doubt with readers that this is the voice of the state's electric cooperative. The editor's column sets the tone by telling what readers will find in the issue and why it is important to them. The columns are to the point and focus on issues members need to know."

The award memorializes George W. Haggard, a former statewide editor, statewide manager, and REA official who championed the creation of electric cooperative statewide publications, which consistently rank among the most widely read consumer publications in the United States. They reach more than 10 million households, or 25 million readers, every month in 37 of the 47 states in which electric cooperatives provide service. Twenty-one publications were entered in the 2013 competition.



A Division of Rural Electric Cooperative Association

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## Shepard joins Pioneer

Lindsay Shepard recently joined Pioneer as Executive Vice President-General Counsel.

Previously, she worked as the Associate General Counsel and compliance officer for Sunflower. She came to Pioneer after



Lindsay Shepard

the co-op's previous attorney, Moran Tomson, announced his retirement.

Shepard grew up in Scott City and attended Kansas University and then KU law school where she received her J.D. and met her husband, Chris. They moved to Great Bend after graduation, where they both began their careers at the law firm of Watkins Calcara. In 2011, they moved to Hays after Shepard joined Sunflower.

"I like working for cooperatives because, at the end of the day, I like knowing I'm having a direct impact on the community I serve," Shepard said.

## co-opcalendar

### MARCH

- 12 **Apparatus Testing Committee Meeting.** Marriott Courtyard, Salina – 1 p.m.
- Legislative Committee Meeting.** Marriott Courtyard, Salina – 4 p.m.
- 13 **KEC Board of Trustees Meeting.** Marriott Courtyard, Salina
- 19 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting.** Wichita Marriott
- 21 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting.** Sunflower Headquarters, Hays
- 26-28 **KMSDA Spring Meeting.** Hotel at Old Town, Wichita
- 27 **MDM Meeting.** KEC Headquarters, Topeka

## annualmeetings

### MARCH

- 4 **Nemaha-Marshall – lunch at 11:30 a.m.,** meeting at 1 p.m., Axtell American Legion, 205 5th Street, Axtell
- 10 **Bluestem – meeting at 7 p.m.,** United Methodist Church, Family Life Center, 5th & Clarke, Clay Center
- 13 **Butler – dinner at 5:30 p.m.,** meeting at 7 p.m., Circle High School, 905 Main St., Towanda
- 13 **Heartland – meeting at 7 p.m.,** Ft. Scott Community College, Ellis Arts Center, 2108 S. Horton, Fort Scott
- 15 **Pioneer – lunch at 11:30 a.m. meeting at 1 p.m.,** Grant County Civic Center, 1000 W. Patterson, Ulysses
- 25 **Ninnescah – dinner at 6 p.m.,** meeting after dinner, Pratt Municipal Bldg., 117 W. 3rd, Pratt
- 25 **Prairie Land.** lunch at 12 p.m., meeting at 12:45 p.m., Cooperative Headquarters, 14935 U.S. Highway 36, Norton
- 27 **Doniphan – dinner at 6 p.m.,** meeting at 7 p.m., Midway School, Hwy 20 West, Denton
- 27 **Flint Hills – dinner at 5 p.m.,** meeting at 7 p.m., Centre High School, 2382 310th St., Lost Springs
- 31 **Lyon-Coffey – dinner at 6 p.m.,** meeting at 7 p.m., Emporia Civic Auditorium, 111 E. 6th Avenue, Emporia

## upcomingtraining

### NRECA Directors Conference to be held in St. Louis

The 2014 NRECA Directors Conference will be held March 22-25 at the Hyatt Regency St. Louis in St. Louis.

Directors can register for CCD or Board Leadership courses on March 22-23, and the conference program begins on March 24.

Through this conference, directors are given an opportunity to meet with leading governance experts and collaborate with their peers. Speakers include NRECA's Jo Ann Emerson, author Jim Carroll, Oregon statewide's Ted Case, Navy Seal Eric Grietens, and CFC's Sheldon Peterson.

Registration for the conference is \$895 per person (there is additional fees for the pre-conference education programs). For more information, visit [www.cooperative.com](http://www.cooperative.com).

### KEC's CLE program

KEC's Continuing Legal Education (CLE) program will be held on Monday, April 14 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. at KEC's office in Topeka.

Topics include ethics tips from Angel Zimmerman, a legislative update by Sen. Terry Bruce, discussion on legal and bylaw issues by NRECA's Ty Thompson, and pending cases and how they affect co-ops by Leslie Kaufman of the Kansas Cooperative Council.

Registration and cancellation deadline is April 9. Application is pending at the Kansas CLE Commission for 5.0 credit hours, including 1.0 hours of ethics.

Breakfast and lunch are included in the \$25 registration fee. Please make checks payable to: KEC, PO Box 4267, Topeka, KS 66604. For more information, contact Carol Dorr at (785) 478-4554, or email [cdorr@kec.org](mailto:cdorr@kec.org).

### KEC's HR Summit

KEC has scheduled the 2014 HR Summit at the Wichita Marriott on Monday, April 28.

Topics include a review of health care reform by Wichita attorney Steven Smith, compliance issues by Kristina Dietrick of Creative Business Solutions, and a discussion of pension plan issues

and the Region 7 audits by NRECA's Steve Newton.

Registration information will be emailed a few weeks before the date of the training.

### Supervisory Fast Track

KEC is offering the NRECA Supervisory Training courses on August 18-22 at the Courtyard Marriott in Wichita.

This program covers core competencies required of supervisors in the areas of leadership, communication, and basic administrative skills. NRECA developed the curriculum based on a set of supervisory competencies identified by new cooperative supervisors, experienced supervisors, and CEOs.

This "fast track" offers all nine interactive, half-day courses in one week. Participants can register for some or all of the modules they need to fulfill their Supervisory Training certificate.

Bryan Singletary, NRECA, will facilitate these courses.

Registration information will be emailed a few weeks before the date of the training.

## Victory Electric hosts Senator Roberts as part of listening tour

Senator Pat Roberts made a stop in Dodge City on Feb. 17 to take a tour of Victory Electric and chat with electric co-op employees and other cooperative representatives.

During the meeting, Sen. Roberts echoed industry concerns that the Environmental

Protection Agency is moving toward policies that will limit the efficient use of coal. Sen. Roberts stated that he is worried customers will see their energy bills double or triple in the next few years if the EPA starts playing favorites and restricts certain energy options. The Senator also noted concerns about the economic impact of other pending regulations such as the Endangered Species Act and the Lesser Prairie Chicken.

Shane Laws, Victory's CEO, said, "We appreciated Senator Roberts taking time to stop by and visit with Victory Electric employees. It also gave us an opportunity to share our concerns about the rate impact pending EPA regulations and the US Fish and Wildlife departments' efforts to list the Lesser Prairie Chicken will have on our members."



From left: KEC's Bruce Graham, Senator Roberts, and Victory's Shane Laws visit with co-op employees and community leaders about legislative issues.

Sen. Roberts asked the group to express their individual thoughts on issues.

"This provided us with an opportunity to tell Senator Roberts thank you for his work to lead recent approval by the U.S. Senate of the Small Employer Pension Flex-

ibility Act," said Bruce Graham, KEC's CEO.

The bill is designed to provide multi-employer pension plans like NRECA's with some certainty regarding future funding regulations. The bill is now awaiting consideration by the U.S. House of Representatives.



As part of Sen. Roberts' tour of the co-op, Victory linemen gave a high-voltage safety demonstration.

## KEPCo announces the Stephen E. Parr Engineering Internship

Chuck Terrill, KEPCo's CEO, knows firsthand the importance of an internship and said that an internship introduced him to the electric power industry. The KEPCo Board of Trustees established the Stephen E. Parr Engineering Internship.



Parr served as KEPCo's CEO from 1996 until his death in Feb. 2013. In honor of his dedication and contributions to KEPCo and its members, the internship was named after him.

The engineering internship is open to anyone from Kansas universities who has accumulated at least 48 credit hours and have an interest in electric power.

"If it were not for an internship, I would not have been able to complete my education," said Terrill.

KEPCo's engineering internship will run from mid-May through mid-August. The applicant who receives this internship will have exposure to several facets in electric generation and distribution.

Applications for the Stephen E. Parr Engineering Internship are due March 14, 2014, to KEPCo's office. The board will select the winning candidate before the first of April.

## Brown-Atchison annual meeting



Despite snowy weather, Brown-Atchison held its 76th annual meeting on February 20 at the cooperative headquarters in Horton.

More than 100 members registered for the meeting and enjoyed a catered lunch.

Last year's youth tour winner, Jack Nolte, gave a speech about his experience in Washington, D.C.

Jim Buttron, Kevin Compton, and Gary Schlegel were all reelected to the board.

## LJEC seeks Energy Solutions Specialist

Leavenworth-Jefferson Electric Cooperative (LJEC) is seeking an Energy Solutions Specialist.

Duties include developing and providing energy solutions for the cooperative members by conducting surveys and development of value added member programs. Will perform energy analysis of members' homes and businesses. Will assist Engineering with peak load shave generator operations and trouble-shoot load management installations. Manage member reactions to member programs and rates.

Applicant must be able to communicate clearly, both orally and in writing. Must have good interpersonal and customer relationship skills. Must have

the ability to work independently, to organize and prioritize work and meet deadlines. Must be a dedicated team player. Certified Energy Auditor preferred or must be obtained within one year of employment.

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

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

Interested applicants should send resume by March 14 to HR Department, PO Box 70, McLouth, KS 66054.

## Retired KEPCo employee volunteers time to build covered wagon for Kansas History Museum

One KEPCo retiree has been spending his time building a replica of a covered wagon for the Kansas Museum of History.

"I readily said yes," said Mike Peters about helping with the project.

Peters, a retired attorney and general administrative officer from KEPCo, was asked by David Wiksten to help build a covered wagon for the museum.

"David and I are in wood working clubs together. I didn't know how we were going to create this," said Peters.

The objective of the project was to make a replica of the covered wagon that was already on exhibit at the museum. The request was to make a smaller replica so that children could

play and learn on the exhibit.

Wiksten and Peters started the project in April 2013. "We tried to work on the wagon about four hours a night at least four days a week," said Peters.

While Wiksten and Peters did most of the wood working, they realized they needed iron pieces. "We had

another friend, Norm Davis, that was in wood working club with us that was also a black smith, so we asked him to help," said Peters.

"The three of us are retired, so it gave us something enjoyable to do. The whole process was enjoyable. I haven't had so much fun wood working in a very long time," said Peters.

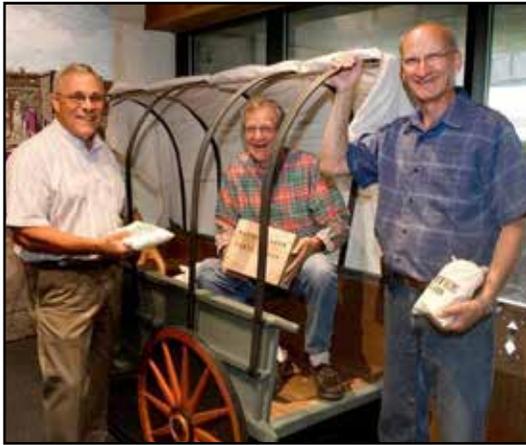
The covered wagon is an exact replica of a wagon that would have been used on the Oregon Trail. The wagon has no moving parts to ensure the safety of children playing on it.

Peters said that the most difficult part of the project was the fact that the men had no blueprints to make the wagon. "We looked at the wagon that was already at the museum, took the measurements, drew the measurements to scale, and hoped they worked out," said Peters.

After about 740 hours of volunteered time, the three gentlemen delivered the covered wagon to the Kansas Museum of History in Topeka.

"It's educational. There are kid size boxes labeled sugar, salt, and other packages that the kids put into the wagon and then act like they are really going places," said Peters.

"The covered wagon was much appreciated, and we're already being asked to do more projects for the museum. I'm glad to have experienced it, I can't wait to do more projects," said Peters.



Mike Peters (right) poses with the child-sized covered wagon that he, David Wiksten and Norm Davis created for the Kansas History Museum.

Photo by Thad Alton, Capitol Journal



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