

# Rural Power

## INSIDE

- 2 | Calendar
- 3 | Radiant lineman competes in charity bus race
- 3 | Safety magician to visit Kansas schools as part of KEC's District Meetings
- 4 | Mid-Kansas Electric commissions Rubart Station

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## Kansas Energy Expo becomes a new Kansas State Fair tradition

Teaching electrical safety can have a hard time competing with the rides and games at the Kansas State Fair. But this year, attracting a crowd got a lot easier thanks to cooperation among state officials, fair organizers, and other utilities.

Electric cooperative linemen have been giving safety demonstrations at the fair since 2007. But they were always stuck in a hot old metal shed with dirt floors. A concrete floor installed last year helped, but once the Kansas Corporation Commission got involved, things really took off.

"The KCC worked with the fair and signed a contract to have an energy expo for five years," said Shana Read, director of communications at Kansas Electric Cooperatives.

"We were basically the only exhibitor in that building at the time, and so they approached us and said, 'Would you mind some company?' and we said, 'We'd love some company,'" said Read.

As the building was improved, the commission brought together others under its jurisdiction, including natural gas and transportation interests. Some 30 groups joined in the planning for this year's fair, which ran Sept. 5-14. The result was the Kansas Energy



Gov. Sam Brownback visited the electric co-op exhibit on Thursday, Sept. 11. Midwest Energy's Les Loker assists the Governor try on a pair of linemen gloves during the safety demonstration.

Expo. "It was a lot of fun to have neighbors at the state fair," said Read. A wind group let students design their own blades and attach them to a model wind turbine. The natural gas folks made hula hoops out of gas line tubing.

The Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives of

Kansas worked with the state's "Kansas' Largest Classroom" project to invite teachers and their classes to the fair in Hutchinson.

"There were a lot of different things people of all ages could do," said Read. And that meant crowds were much larger than in past years. "Our linemen were running a lot more demonstrations."

Cooperative linemen from DS&O, Heartland, Midwest Energy, and Wheatland volunteered to give the demonstrations.

Also working hard at the fair was Amber Sheley, who is interning at KEC while majoring in corporate communications at Washburn University. She got to dress for success, as it were—in the Touchstone Energy LED Lucy costume.

"I was kind of volunteered for it," Sheley said. "When I interviewed to be the intern this fall I was warned that they needed someone to wear the costume at the fair, and I think I was the only one willing to do it."

Although it's hot in that costume, Sheley said she loved it.

"The kids all wanted to hug me, give me a high five, and have their picture taken, and it was just a great experience."

This article was written by Michael W. Kahn and first published in the September 22, 2014, issue of *Electric Co-op Today*.



LED Lucy greets fair-goers to the Energy Expo at the Kansas State Fair.

## Last chance to register for KEC's New Director & Employee Orientation

There is still time to register for the New Director & Employee Orientation. The one-day training, set for Oct. 8 in Wichita, will bring together new employees and directors from across the state.

The agenda offers attendees the chance to meet experienced electric co-op staff in key leadership positions, learn the history of the electric co-ops and their grassroots beginnings, and understand the language and the structure of electric utilities and co-ops.

The presentations will include an update on KEC services, understanding generation and electric rates, and the importance of political engagement. Speakers are Bruce Graham, KEC; Cindy Hertel, Sunflower; Les Evans, KEPCo; and several KEC staff.

As part of the orientation, NRECA's Mary McLauray will present the new course "The Power of Cooperatives." This course is designed to teach a deep understanding of the cooperative difference.

Registration is \$100 per participant and includes lunch. To register for this program, or for more information, contact Shana Read, KEC, at [sread@kec.org](mailto:sread@kec.org) or 785-478-4554.

## Nominate your employees for the Power+Hope program

The Kansas Touchstone Energy Executive Council seeks nominations for the Power+Hope employee recognition program. This program honors co-op staff who have gone the extra mile to help others.

The deadline for nominations is Oct. 1. Nominations will be reviewed at the Kansas Touchstone Energy Annual Meeting on Oct. 7.

For a nomination form, contact KEC's Shana Read at [sread@kec.org](mailto:sread@kec.org) or 785-478-4554.



## SEPTEMBER

30 **Managers Meeting with the USDA/Attic Report Card**, 1 p.m., Marriott Hotel, Wichita

## OCTOBER

- 1 **KEC Board of Trustees standing committee meetings**, Marriott Hotel, Wichita  
**9:30 a.m.**, Apparatus Testing Committee Meeting  
**1:30 p.m.**, Loss Control, Safety and Compliance Committee Meeting  
**3:00 p.m.**, Communications Committee Meeting  
**4:00 p.m.**, Joint Legislative and ACRE/KCRE Committee Meeting
- 2 **KEC Executive committee breakfast meeting**, 7 a.m., Marriott Hotel, Wichita  
**KEC Board of Trustees Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Wichita
- 14 **NRECA Region 7-9 Director Education**, Hilton Hotel, Omaha, Nebraska
- 15-16 **NRECA Region 7-9 Meeting**, Hilton Hotel, Omaha, Nebraska
- 17 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays
- 22-23 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka
- 24 **MDM Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka

## NOVEMBER

- 3 **District 2 Meeting**, Kansas Association of School Boards, 1420 SW Arrowhead Road, Topeka
- 5 **District 1 Meeting**, Doubletree Hotel by Hilton, 2098 Airport Road, Wichita
- 6 **District 4 Meeting**, Victory Headquarters, 3230 N. 14th, Dodge City
- 7 **District 3 Meeting**, Fort Hays University Robbins Center, One Tiger Place, Hays

## Co-op accounting and finance staff attend CFC Budget Pro workshop

Fifteen co-op employees representing 10 Kansas co-ops attended the CFC Budget Pro workshop, Sept. 18-19 at the Ambassador Hotel in Wichita.

The purpose of the workshop was to learn how to prepare a 12-month operating budget for a distribution co-op using a CFC-created spreadsheet template. Facilitators were CFC's John Grant (shown at right), Johnny Vaughn and Rodney Sanford.



## jobmarket

### Victory seeks Chief Financial Officer

Victory Electric is seeking a full-time Chief Financial Officer. Must have a Bachelor's degree in accounting, finance, business administration or related field (Master's degree and / or CPA preferred), 7-10 years of utility accounting, 5+ years of supervisory/management experience; knowledge of RUS and utility borrowing/financing.

Responsible for planning, organizing and directing the activities of finance, accounting and customer service personnel. Duties include general accounting; internal audit; procurements and billing; analysis, implementation and operation of financial accounting system under RUS and GAAP standards; developing and completing operating budgets annually to

include completion of capital and operating budgets; preparing capital credit report; responsible for updating ten-year financial forecast yearly; and monthly board presentations.

This position is part of the management team and is jointly responsible for the implementation of corporate policies and procedures. Pre-employment drug screening and background check is required.

For more information, visit [www.victoryelectric.net/content/careers](http://www.victoryelectric.net/content/careers). Position open until filled.

Send cover letter & résumé to: Victory Electric Cooperative, Attn: Amy Grasser, PO Box 1335, Dodge City, KS 67801; Fax 620-227-8948; or email [amy@victoryelectric.net](mailto:amy@victoryelectric.net). EOE.

## Radiant lineman Ryan Huser competes in charity bus race

Radiant Lineman, Ryan Huser, had prepared for months to participate in the very first School Bus Races that were held at the Humboldt Speedway on Aug. 23.



Ryan Huser poses with the Fredonia Yellowjacket school bus that he raced for charity on Aug. 23.

"This racing event was new at the speedway this year and a fund-raiser for the Southeast Kansas Masons," said Huser. Twenty-two buses participated in the race.

Huser, a graduate from Fredonia High School, has also driven combines in derby events. He purchased a yellow school bus and painted it black for this event. Along the side of the bus in white was the "Fredonia Fight Song" and the accompanying musical notes.

His daughters, Magdalene and Anastasia, along with the children enrolled in the Fredonia Arts Council Summer Arts Program, were on hand to help him paint the bus.

"It certainly felt like a community project with the assistance from

## Safety magician to visit Kansas schools as part of KEC's District Meetings

Scott Davis, award-winning magician and safety educator, will present "Making Accidents Disappear" at several Kansas elementary schools during the week of Nov. 3 in conjunction with KEC's District Meetings.

The magic show, sponsored by KEC, is being hosted by co-ops around the state including Bluestem, Butler, Flint Hills, Kaw Valley, Midwest Energy, Sedgwick County, and Victory.

"Magic's ability to hold their attention, make them laugh, make them listen, and make them amazed all while teaching something important is pretty powerful," said Davis.

Davis, an Arkansas native, created the "Making Accidents Disappear" program. He travels to more than 300 schools, sharing his magic and message with thousands of grade-school children each year.

"Scott has developed an effective way to relate to a younger, more curious

the Arts Council students," said Huser.

As the bus made its way around the track during introductions, members of

the Fredonia High School Band played the school's fight song.

The event awarded a \$500 prize for first place and \$1,000 prize for the bus with the loudest cheering section.

Sad to say, Radiant's favorite driver did not come home with a win. The race went to Postrock who donated the money to the Southeast Kansas Masons.

However, Huser provided lots of suspense for the cheering audience. When rounding a curve on the track, his Yellowjacket bus tipped over, landing on its side with the door pinned to the ground. With smoke rolling from the bus, the crowd were on their feet yelling for Huser to get out. He escaped by making his way to the back of the bus and exiting through the emergency door to the cheers of the crowd.

audience who may not have heard an electric safety message before," said Bruce Graham, KEC's CEO. "We are excited to bring his unique presentation to Kansas with a goal to help parents, teachers, and kids make accidents disappear."

In addition to visiting Kansas classrooms, Davis will also present part of his show during the KEC District Meetings.



Scott Davis previews his safety magic show with Sedgwick County's Cindy Kill at the spring Kansas member services meeting in Wichita.

## Electric co-op employees judge 4-H projects at the Kansas State Fair

Cooperative employees from around the state volunteered to judge 4-H Energy Management projects on September 5 at the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson. Judges included Scott Ayres and Mark Hansen, Sedgwick County; Dennis Deines, Western; Randy Rogers, Wheatland; and retired Bluestem employee Ron Dickey.

There were approximately 75 entries in the Energy Management category, ranging from the fundamentals of making an extension cord to condensed versions of an entire electrical system within a house.

Projects were judged by several categories including overall workmanship, neatness, and creativity. But one of the most important things judges look for is the educational value of the project and what the participant learned from putting it together.

"On behalf of all the judges, it was a privilege to be involved and witness all the entries. It was a great pleasure to see how much interest the participants showed and how they'll take our comments and use them to improve for next year," said Deines.

To see results from the Energy Management category and all other 4-H projects, visit [www.kansas4-h.org](http://www.kansas4-h.org).

## CoBank named among the safest banks in the US

CoBank has been named the safest bank in the United States this month by *Global Finance* magazine, and earned a place on its "World's 50 Safest Banks" list for a fourth consecutive year.

*Global Finance*, which covers the financial services industry, publishes the "World's 50 Safest Banks" list annually, and released this month its rankings for 2014. Banks are ranked using a methodology that includes total assets and an evaluation of long-term ratings from major rating agencies. CoBank was first named to the list in 2011.

"We're very pleased to have earned this distinction," said Robert B. Engel, CoBank's chief executive officer. "Financial strength and stability is something all our customers look for when choosing a banking partner."

# Mid-Kansas Electric Company commissions Rubart Station

Rubart Station, Mid-Kansas Electric Company's electric generating station located near Ulysses, was commissioned on Sept. 25. Guests included officials of the construction companies, co-op board members, and state and local dignitaries—along with Perry Rubart, longtime Pioneer trustee after whom the facility is named.

The state-of-the-art facility includes 12 natural gas reciprocating engines designed by Caterpillar, Inc. The nominal 110 megawatt station is the first facility worldwide to install Cat's new G20CM34 gen-sets. These units, which can be deployed individually, were selected based on several factors, including high-efficiency, low emissions and exceptionally low water consumption.

"We're happy to have this facility online as it complements to our already diverse genera-



The Rubart Station, named for Pioneer's long-time trustee Perry Rubart, was commissioned with a celebration on Sept. 25.

tion portfolio, which includes wind, coal and natural gas," said Steve Epperson, Mid-Kansas' Board Chairman. "The exceptional flexibility of the G20CM34 gen-sets allows Mid-Kansas to quickly respond to market conditions while continuing to provide our members and the thousands of Kansans they serve with reliable energy at the lowest possible cost."

Mid-Kansas received the Prevention of Significant Deterioration air permit in January

2013, and site preparation began within one month. Construction of the facility began in March 2013, and many of the large structures were in place by summer's end. The gen-sets started arriving from Germany in October with the final units arriving in January 2014. Commissioning tests began during the first quarter of 2014 and were completed in September.

"Rubart Station is a testament to the commitment that the Mid-Kansas board of directors has to our members and those they serve in central and western Kansas," said Stuart Lowry, Mid-Kansas president and CEO. "Many factors affecting the electric industry are out of their control—like federal regulations and price of fuel—but the board continues to be visionary, seeking solutions that meet our members' demand for electricity in the best way possible."



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