

# Rural Power

## INSIDE

- 2 | Calendar
- 3 | KEC Apparatus Department provides services
- 4 | Sunflower's Al Tamini earns doctorate

## Governor proclaims 2012 the Year of Cooperatives

Governor Sam Brownback proclaimed 2012 as the "Year of Cooperatives" in Kansas.

Cooperative representatives met with the Governor for a ceremonial proclamation signing on Jan. 25 in conjunction with the Kansas Cooperative Council's (KCC) Legislative Action Day.

The proclamation was requested by the KCC as part of the International Year of Cooperatives (IYC) 2012 activities.



Governor Brownback is joined by representatives of Kansas cooperatives in proclaiming 2012 as the "Year of Cooperatives". Pictured (from left): Mark Fenner (CHS), Dave Holthaus (KEC), Leslie Kaufman (KCC), Deb Miller (Farmers Union Mercantile & Shipping Assn.), Dennis Blick (CoBank), Amy Chambers (KFSA), Dave Studebaker (Delphos Cooperative), Dan Cashier (Anthony Farmers Cooperative Elevator Co.) and Marla Marsh (KCUA).

The theme for IYC 2012, "Cooperative Enterprises Build a Better World" stresses the value of cooperatives.

The Kansas proclamation recognizes that cooperatives "provide jobs, contribute to the local and global economy, and enhance the quality of life for those in our individual communities, our state,

throughout the country and around the world..."

The KCC is coordinating efforts to promote cooperatives during 2012. All events will be posted on their website: [www.kansasco-op.coop](http://www.kansasco-op.coop).

## Legislation and tourism topics at KEC 70th annual meeting

More than 210 electric cooperative trustees, managers and key staff attended the Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., 70th Annual Meeting on Jan. 23-24, at the Maner Conference Centre in Topeka.

Guest speakers for the meeting included Sen. John Vratil, vice president of the Kansas Senate, who talked about the major issues facing the senate during this legisla-

tive session including redistricting, proposed changes to the immigration laws and passing the budget.

"Redistricting is one of the most political things we do, and it's always a difficult chore," Vratil stated.

Rep. Arlen Siegfried, Majority Leaders of the House, discussed the cost of the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System (KPERS) defined benefit plan,

the need to support businesses, and passing the state budget.

"One thing we have to do is to support businesses," Siegfried

remarked. "Government doesn't pay for business, business pays for government. We need to have cash on hand if something bad with the economy happens again."

David Kensinger, chief of staff for the Governor, discussed the sluggish economy and unemployment in the state.

"We in the U.S. are heading for the most predictable financial train wreck in history, but at least in Kansas, we are slowing that train down," Kensinger said.

Robin Jennison, secretary of the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism,

*continued on p. 2*



Sen. John Vratil



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## FirstEnergy, citing impact of environmental regulations, will retire six coal-fired power plants

FirstEnergy Corp. announced that its generation subsidiaries will retire six older coal-fired power plants located in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Maryland by Sept. 1, 2012. The decision to close the plants is based on the EPA Mercury and Air Toxics Standards, which were recently finalized, and other environmental regulations.

FIRSTENERGY CORP – 1/9/12

## Rural electrification named one of the top 12 notable Kansas events

As part of the state's commemoration of the Kansas sesquicentennial, Gov. Sam Brownback announced the top 12 Notable Kansas Events. Rural Electrification was named as one of those top 12. On April 1, 1938, rural electrification reached Kansas. Electricity allowed farmers and families to take advantage of modern conveniences and increase productivity. Rural farmers were able to compete with their urban counterparts and rural schools also benefited.

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE – 1/24/12

## Consumers like smart grid for more than just saving money

Many non-financial benefits of smart grid upgrades are as compelling as those that can save consumers money. Each of the following benefits was found to be important to 80% or more of respondents: Ease of connecting renewable energy sources to the electric grid, reduced outages, new cost-saving rate plans, fewer new power plant investments, increased quality of power delivery, availability of near real-time energy use information and more accurate billing.

SGCC – 1/23/12

## FEBRUARY

- 15-16 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka.
- 17 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays.
- 21 **Flint Hills Annual Meeting**, Centre High School, Lost Springs.
- 23 **Brown-Atchison Annual Meeting**, Cooperatiave headquarters, Horton.

## MARCH

- 5-7 **NRECA Annual Meeting**, San Diego, CA.
- 13-14 **KEC Board of Trustees Meeting**, Marriott Courtyard, Salina.
- 16 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays.

## KEC annual meeting highlights, cont.

reported about how the state is developing tourism in Kansas.

"We didn't have a lot of confidence with who we were, and we didn't really want to share who we were," Jennison explained. "Our biggest problem is our perception of ourselves."

Other speakers included Jeff Lanza, a retired FBI agent, who spoke on how to protect against identity theft; and Larry Bryant who gave a Touchstone Energy presentation. Reports were heard from Keith Ross, NRECA; Kirk Thompson, CFC; Ed Wiltse, ACRE/KCRE; Patty Lawrence, KEC Auxiliary; and Dave Holthaus, who gave a legislative update.

The KEC Loss Control, Safety and Compliance Department recognized cooperatives that earned "No Lost Time" awards and the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program for 2011.

Leslie Kaufman, Kansas Cooperative Council, honored Pioneer's Perry Rubart for his induction to the Cooperative Hall of Fame, and Sunflower's Stuart Lowry for his service on the KCC board.

Presentations from the meeting are posted on KEC's website at [www.kec.org](http://www.kec.org).

On Jan. 23, Federated and all Kansas electric cooperatives hosted a



The 2012-2013 KEC officers were elected during the business meeting. From left: Ed Wiltse, Ninnescah, treasurer; Kathy Brinker, Nemaha-Marshall, secretary; Ralph Phillips, LJEC, vice president; and John Blackwell, Midwest Energy, president.

legislative reception for Kansas elected officials. Nearly 400 people attended, including approximately 60 legislators.

During the reception, the KCRE silent auction raised \$3,815.

The KEC Auxiliary raffle and silent auction raised \$1,171 for KEC's youth programs. Connie Burton, Flint Hills, won the raffle for the bench donated by John Roniger, Flint Hills. Harriet Riley, Wheatland, had the winning bid for the quilt donated by Carolyn McNickle, Twin Valley.

In addition to the meeting, KEC hosted an Expo that featured 48 vendors. Available this year in the Expo were two, 20-minute breakout sessions.

The winner of the \$500 grand prize, sponsored by KEPCo and Sunflower, was Chuck Look, Prairie Land.

Prior to the annual meeting, Scott Luecal facilitated 2630.1 Strategic Planning, and Colette Trohan facilitated 901.1 Rules and Procedures for Effective Board Meetings.

# KEC's Apparatus Testing Department provides important service

KEC's Apparatus Testing Department has only 10 employees, but the small staff provides a vital service to many rural electric cooperatives in the area.

The department performs testing and maintenance of oil circuit reclosers across Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa and Kansas. They also perform repairs on reclosers, as well as regulators and oil circuit breakers in their shop in Burlingame.

"It's important to perform regular maintenance," said Danny Seele, head of the department, "If you don't, it could compromise reliability and safety."

The OCR (Oil Circuit Recloser) division of the department has two mobile shops that travel around to help maintain the equipment, and a third stationed at their office. OCR employees will drive to a location where the cooperatives' linemen take down a recloser.

The recloser is then taken to an OCR trailer where it is dismantled, inspected and reassembled with new gaskets. The tank is cleaned and painted. The recloser is then re-tanked using either filtered or new insulating oil. The recloser is tested for proper timing with high current and for proper insulation with high voltage, if it passes it is rolled out of the mobile trailer for installation by the cooperatives' linemen.

At the Burlingame facility, the technical division repairs and tests three-phase reclosers and step voltage regula-



Danny Seele, KEC's director of Apparatus Testing, puts in a bushing in a three-phase recloser.

tors. They do so many that a full-time employee is required to pick up and deliver equipment.

"We carry a large inventory of extinct or obsolete equipment you can't purchase or buy parts for," said Seele. Seele gave a recent example of an old Westinghouse transformer that belonged to a local cooperative. The cooperative tried several places to find the parts they needed, and then came to the apparatus testing department. The department had the two, low-voltage bushings that allowed them to salvage the equipment.

The technical division does much more than repairs, however. Commissioning tests of transformers, power circuit breakers, circuit switchers and substation ground grids are a large portion of the division's field testing.

"We're troubleshooters, also," said

Seele. "Our ability to respond to our members in emergencies in a very short time is what we pride ourselves on."

Without the department, area cooperatives would have to rely on larger companies like Westinghouse and Siemens for repairs and emergency services. KEC offers a more personal service. Seele himself is available to members 24/7 via his cell phone.

Seele has been with the department for 21 of its 22 years of existence. The advent of cell phones is one event he has noticed that has impacted the quality of service the depart-

*continued on p. 4*

## Personal protective grounding equipment tested

As part of the KEC Loss Control, Safety and Compliance visits to the member cooperatives, the KEC staff performs an annual test of personal protective ground equipment.

Personal protective grounding provides protection for linemen working on de-energized equipment.

"We are committed to providing a safe working environment for all co-op linemen," said Todd Bailey, LCS&C instructor. "This equipment is especially important because equipment can become energized while the linemen are working on high voltage lines."

Once a year, each personal protec-



KEC's LCS&C Instructor Todd Bailey (center) and Victory linemen, Paul Schmidt and Miguel Barriga, test grounding equipment.

tive ground unit is tested. Bailey travels to each cooperative within his service area to help with the testing.

"This equipment gets a lot of use and abuse, so they really need to be checked over," Bailey explained. "There is a certain range they need to be in, or the grounds will need to be cleaned, adjusted or replaced."

## insympathy

### Hazel Ott

Hazel Ott, mother of Alfalfa's Max Ott, died on Jan. 26. Funeral services were held Jan. 31 in Enid, OK.

Memorials may be made to Puritan Congregational United Church, and mailed to Ladusau-Evans Funeral Home, 2800 N. Van Buren, Enid, OK 73703-1728.

Condolences may be emailed to the family at [ladusaeuevans@suddenlinkmail](mailto:ladusaeuevans@suddenlinkmail).

### KEC is on Facebook

If you are a member of 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 state-wide. Find our fan pages at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) by searching for Kansas Electric Cooperatives.

facebook

## Apparatus Testing, cont.

ment provides. Three to four times a month, Seele gets a phone call in the middle of the night. "Ninety percent of the time" he can solve the problem without leaving his home. Cell phones allow callers to speak with Seele while looking directly at the problem.

"Now that they're standing in front of it, they're an extension of your arm," Seele said.

While offering a wide variety of services, the department has a de facto mission

statement, "if we can't do it better or for less money, we don't do it."

For example, they used to test meters, but when another entity offered the service cheaper, they dropped the service. Their focus is, first and foremost, on the members they serve.



Andy Harris, KEC's apparatus testing assistant, works on an OCR.

## Sunflower's transmission engineer Al Tamini earns doctorate

Al Tamimi, planning engineer supervisor at Sunflower, successfully completed his doctorate in electrical engineering at Kansas State University on Oct. 28, 2011.

"Individuals with Ph.D.s in electrical engineering are rare," said Tamimi. "Because engineers are in such high demand, many feel they do not need to pursue a Ph.D. to further their career. You really have to want it; almost two thirds of all Ph.D. students do not complete their programs," said Tamimi, whose motivation to pursue a Ph.D. began with his father, who with the rest of Tamimi's family, lives in his homeland of Israel.

As with most Ph.D. programs, a thesis is necessary to graduate. The title of Tamimi's thesis is "Voltage Stability



Al Tamini holds his son, Adam, after the commencement ceremony.

Limits for Weak Power Systems with High Wind Penetration," a topic that focuses on both Sunflower and Kansas. Essentially, his dissertation explains that renewable energy must be moved toward the end user and away from transmission dependence. This means our state would benefit from smaller-scale wind farms closer to the end user,

rather than large-scale wind farms that require extensive transmission networks to carry the voltage.

Tamimi has presented his dissertation twice to the IEEE Power & Energy Society, a worldwide, non-profit association of more than 28,000 individuals engaged in the electric power energy industry. Tamimi will present his dissertation a third time in San Diego in July.

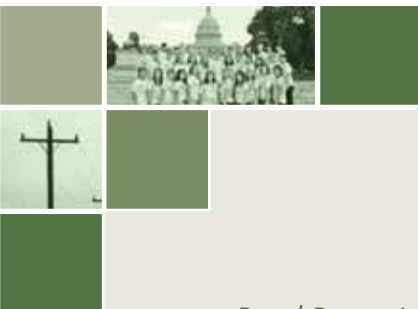
## jobmarket

### Wisconsin G&T seeks vice president of generation

Dairyland Power Cooperative, a G&T in La Crosse, WI, seeks a vice president of generation. Dairyland serves 25 distribution cooperatives and 16 munis. Responsibilities include the daily operation, development and implementation of long-term strategic initiatives for Dairyland's assets including fossil, hydro and renewables.

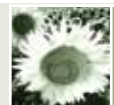
Applicants must have a degree in an engineering or related field. Minimum of ten years of progressively responsible utility experience.

For a complete position description or to apply, visit [www.dairynet.com/careers](http://www.dairynet.com/careers), or call Dairyland: 608-787-1293. Applications will be accepted until staffing needs are met. EOE/M/F/D



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