

**KAW VALLEY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

LightTalk



FROM THE MANAGER

Cooperative Alliance Update

This is an exciting time for Kaw Valley. In this edition of *Light Talk* you will find information on the replacement of our aging metering system, the hiring of two new employees and the results of our Youth Tour contest.

Perhaps most exciting, or at least the most meaningful to your household budget, is the current alliance and potential consolidation with Leavenworth-Jefferson Electric Cooperative (LJEC). This will play a major role in our future. In our communications, we have consistently pointed to a savings, through this consolidation, of over \$13.5 million over the next ten years. However, we are confident that the savings can be even larger.

We have had unexpected retirements and found additional efficiencies that we continue to capture to push those savings to even higher levels. There are projects to tie our phone systems together, connect our computer networks, enable our radios to communicate with each other and to maximize efficiencies through eliminating duplicate tasks at each cooperative.

With the cooperation of each staff member at both cooperatives, we are capturing the dollars we save in order to demonstrate the benefit of consolidation when the vote is held next year.

You may ask, "With all these savings, will my bills go down?" Unfortunately, the answer is no. However, they won't go up nearly as fast either. Viewing the financial forecasts of each cooperative we have already moved the expected dates of any rate increase down the road. As the savings grow, we will hold rates steady as long as it is financially responsible for us to do so.

The vote to consolidate will occur at our April 2016 annual meeting. Look for updates every month in this publication, online at www.kve.coop or on our Facebook page. Please call, email or stop by with questions or concerns. We are at your service.

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Jerry Manning

“As the savings keep growing, we will hold rates steady as long as it is financially responsible.”

Kaw Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Jerry Manning—General Manager

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Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Summer is right around the corner! Have you changed your home's air filter? Filters get loaded with more and more particles as they do their job. This actually has the effect of making them more efficient, but it also increases resistance and reduces airflow. Remember to check filters once a month.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

Kaw Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc. is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service (RUS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and the rules of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or handicap shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is Jerry Manning, Manager.

Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may file a written complaint with this organization; or the Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250; or the Administrator, Rural Utilities Service, Washington, D.C. 20250. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discriminatory action, or by such later date to which the Secretary of Agriculture or the Administrator of RUS extends the time for filing. Identity of complainants will be kept confidential except to the extent necessary to carry out the purposes of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Installation of New Metering System

The Kaw Valley Board of Trustees has approved the purchase of a new electronic metering system. These electronic meters will replace both the traditional mechanical, gear-driven meters, as well as several hundred digital meters which already exist on our lines.

Mechanical meters are normally what people associate with the electric company. Inside, they have gears and a spinning dial that registers your electric consumption. A meter reader comes around each month to get a reading from your meter.

In addition, nearly half our system is equipped with digital meters, which replaced older mechanical meters. However, these meters were installed in 1984. Let that sink in for a minute. We are still using technology from a day when Atari was the cool game system and Ronald Reagan was President. Technology has advanced and it is time for an update.

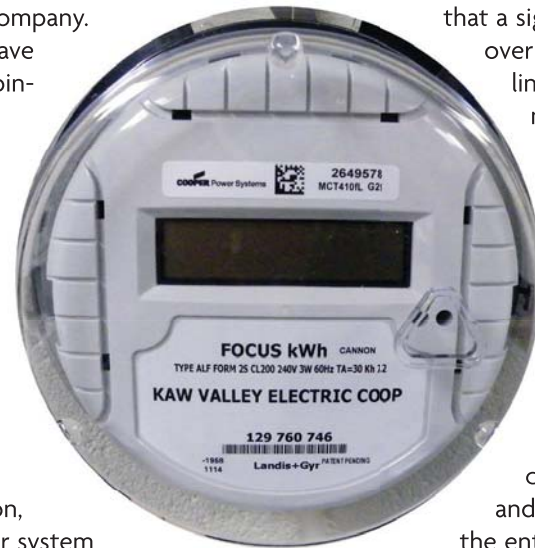
Benefits of this new system

include immediate outage notification to our office, faster outage restoration, tamper detection due to attempted power theft, reduced line losses and the elimination of meter readers. These are all things which either save you money or improve your service.

Our new system is a power line carrier system, which means that a signal will be sent over your power line from your meter back to our substation to show your electric consumption for the month. Meters and substation equipment will be installed over the coming months and we expect the entire project to be completed before the end of the year.

During the installation of this new system, it will be necessary for us to gain access to your meter. Employees and contractors will be clearly identified. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask them or to contact our office.

The installations are projected to be complete by the end of 2015.



Youth Tour Winners Selected

On Sunday, March 8, Kaw Valley held interviews to select two students to represent our cooperative on the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., in June.

The applicants watched a short video provided by Shana Read, Youth Tour Director with Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. Read gave a short presentation and was available to answer any questions from applicants or their parents.

Applicants were given a quiz on their knowledge of electric cooperative history and then each of them was interviewed by our judges.

This year, a panel of previous Youth Tour winners selected our 2015 winners including Christa Hodgson, a 2003 Youth Tour winner sponsored by Kaw Valley Electric; Amber Sheley, a 2009 Youth Tour winner sponsored by Prairie Land Electric; and Jessica Jacinto, a 2004 Youth Tour winner sponsored by KIUC in Hawaii.

Kaw Valley Electric received seven applicants for the 2015 Youth Tour.

- ▶ **CRAIG BAUERLE**
Washburn Rural High School
- ▶ **ASHLEY BROXTERMAN**
Rossville High School
- ▶ **SAMANTHA FARB**
Lawrence Free State High School
- ▶ **ZACH JENSEN**
Rossville High School
- ▶ **BLAKE MATZKE**
Silver Lake High School



The winners of the all-expense-paid trip to our Nation's Capitol are Ashley Broxterman (above) from Rossville High School and Gavin Mitchell from Topeka High School. Congratulations!



- ▶ **GAVIN MITCHELL**
Topeka High School
- ▶ **DONNA WHIPPLE**
Topeka High School

The winners of the all-expense-paid trip to our Nation's Capitol are **ASHLEY BROXTERMAN** and **GAVIN MITCHELL**. Judges selected **CRAIG BAUERLE** as our alternate in case either of our winners is unable to attend.

Winners were "called to the office" the following Monday at their respective schools and were given the news of their selection. Congratulations to our winners and thank you to everyone who applied!



Three New Apprentice Linemen Hired

Retirements at Kaw Valley have prompted the hiring of three new apprentice linemen.

BRAD HEIDEMAN began working at Kaw Valley in October 2014. **BRITTON ANDERSON** and **NOAH SCHRECK** were both hired in February.

All three are graduates of the Manhattan Area Technical College and while getting on the job training from our Journeymen, they have also begun the four year Merchant's Power-line training which is required of all Journeymen hired at Kaw Valley. Successful passage of this program ensures we are hiring and retaining highly qualified and educated linemen.

Their safety and that of their co-workers and the general public is vital in their profession.

Kaw Valley Electric welcomes these three men to the cooperative family.



Britton Anderson



Brad Heideman



Noah Schreck

WE KEEP THEM UP HERE FOR A REASON.

STAY CLEAR OF DOWNED POWER LINES.

Helping members use electricity safely, that's the power of your co-op membership.
Learn more from the experts themselves at TogetherWeSave.com.



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