




A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative   
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 785-478-3444  
 www.kve.coop

**KAW VALLEY  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**



# LightTalk

**Kaw Valley Electric  
Cooperative, Inc.**

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**Efficiency Tip of the Month**

Don't let vampires suck the life out of your energy efficiency efforts! Unplugging unused electronics – otherwise known as “energy vampires” – can save you as much as 10 percent on your electric bill.

*Remove Energy Vampires & Save*  
**10%**

**FROM THE MANAGER**

## October is Cooperative Month

We are celebrating Co-op Month here at Kaw Valley, and I'm not one to shout a job well done from the roof tops, but, sometimes, you need to pat yourself on the back. I'll ask you to indulge me for a moment while I tell you about the phenomenal people who work to serve our members at Kaw Valley. These are the people who make the cooperative difference, and we want each of our members to see the value of our people.

I've always thought we did a fantastic job for our members, and now we've verified it.

Earlier this year, we participated in a customer satisfaction survey. We performed well. Actually, we performed extremely well. In fact, we outperformed most large corporations on the American Consumer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). We scored a 93.

This fantastic score puts Kaw Valley Electric in an elite category. We not only outscored several of America's favorite brands, but we outscored utilities and cooperatives across the nation.

A high score is not the work of individuals. It's the hard work, commitment, and dedication of every single staff

member at Kaw Valley Electric. We have great people, and we hire great people. I'm very proud that our hard work has been recognized by the results of the survey because in business a balance sheet never really reflects the greatest asset, our people.



**Jerry Manning**

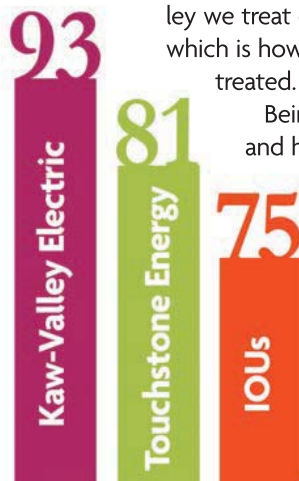
A while back, I was on the phone with a new member. He asked me, “are you a family-owned business?”

Well, we aren't technically family-owned, but that question sure made me feel good.

I guess in a way we are family-owned, because each of our cooperative members is part of the Kaw Valley family and they have a stake in their electric service, and here at Kaw Valley we treat our members like family, which is how we all wanted to be treated.

Being a part of this family, and helping to make the cooperative difference is something I'm proud of.

As always, if you have questions about the cooperative, we encourage you to contact us by calling the office at 785-478-3444 or emailing info@kve.coop.



BOARD PERSPECTIVE

**Board of Trustees Gives Membership a Voice**

BY ROBERT SAGE, TRUSTEE



Robert Sage

I have spent the last 11 years on the Kaw Valley Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees, and it has been an honor

to be elected to this position to represent the membership in District 3.

As a Board member, I feel it is important to have an open line of communication with members. Trustees, like myself, should be readily available by phone or in person to discuss concerns or questions members have. That's why we were elected to these positions.

Having a common sense approach of providing exceptional service at a cost-effective rate is our number one goal. We are here to be an active voice for those we represent when it comes to the daily operations and responsibilities associated with providing electricity to the rural areas where we live.

I am very proud to be a lifelong Kaw Valley Electric Cooperative member, and proud to serve as a trustee on the Kaw Valley board representing District 3. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in a forward-thinking, well managed rural electric cooperative with top-notch employees that provide first-class service to their members.

**The Cooperative Difference**

BY KEVIN GREGG, ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

Few people remember days without electricity. Those who do likely aren't concerned with the boundary lines that were drawn decades ago setting the edge of territory that would be served by large utility companies.

Over 75 years ago, if you lived outside of those lines, you didn't get electricity because it wasn't profitable to bring power to you. However, a few forward thinking individuals saw how much easier electricity could make their lives. With the help of the federal government and by pitching the idea to their neighbors, the idea of a cooperative electric service was established. The ideas that formed these companies' decades ago still guide electric cooperatives today.

The history of electric cooperatives is well documented. At Kaw Valley we are fortunate enough to serve the area around the city of Topeka. Given our location, suburban neighborhoods, once miles removed from the city proper, are now across the street from territory served by our local Investor-Owned Utility (IOU), Westar Energy.

At times, this proximity generates conversation between neighbors about outages, bills or service.

If your power is on, but your neighbor is out across the street, the likely cause is that you are served from two different service points. If they are a Westar customer and you are a Kaw Valley member, or vice versa, your homes are typically served by separate wires, poles and transformers. While Kaw Valley and Westar work closely

together on many projects, service to your home is dictated by whose territory your home is in.



Kevin Gregg

Questions about your bill are the ones we receive the most. It's no secret that cooperative power is more expensive than power from an IOU. Cost to set miles of poles and string miles of wire for single homes in rural areas is an expensive venture. In addition, Kaw Valley does not generate our own power. We purchase it from

Westar, and our infrastructure distributes it to our members.

Our cooperative prides itself on service. As I explained earlier, your service provider was

determined decades ago by your location on the map. However, we approach every situation by asking the question, "If a member had a choice of any other provider, would they choose Kaw Valley again?" Members of our cooperative are my friends and neighbors. I meet them at the bus stop or see them in the community. Some of them are employed here or serve on our cooperative Board of Trustees. Our staff is personally committed to each of our members to make sure they receive the best service we can offer.

It is our hope that the personal touch, coupled with some cooperative history, will help explain the cooperative difference. Thank you for being our members!

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## Survey Results Say Members are Satisfied with Service

In January, Kaw Valley Electric participated in a customer satisfaction survey conducted by Pittsburg State University. The survey included American Consumer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) markers in order to benchmark the cooperative across several industries performance measurements.

The ACSI markers allowed comparison as a uniform and independent measure of household consumption experience. As an economic indicator, the ACSI tracks trends in customer satisfaction and provides benchmarking insights of the consumer economy for companies, industry trade associations, and government agencies. It also includes an Energy Utilities Index which is an independent customer satisfaction measure of the U.S. Top-30 investor-owned gas, electric or combination utilities.

The survey results were outstanding—**KAW VALLEY ELECTRIC SCORED A 93**. This puts the electric cooperative in an elite class of customer service.

Kaw Valley scored well above the average Touchstone Energy Cooperative, as well as inventor-owned utilities. Touchstone Energy Cooperatives scored an 81,



Jerry Manning (standing at left), Kaw Valley Manager, and Steve Foss (standing at right), LJEC manager, commend the employees for their role in the high member satisfaction scores for the cooperative during a recent employee meeting.

while investor-owned utilities scored 75. When looking across the Touchstone Energy Cooperative score distribution only four other cooperatives in the industry scored above 90. Kaw Valley was the highest at 93.

This outstanding effort is attributed everyone at Kaw Valley. All employees played some part in exceeding expectations of our membership.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the survey. With your help, we will build a better, stronger cooperative.

## Commitment to Community: Kaw Valley Employees Deliver Meals on Wheels

Kaw Valley Electric illustrates the cooperative principle “commitment to community” in many ways. Co-op volunteers deliver meals twice a month



Sarah Broxterman (left), Financial Accounting Assistant, and Mary Barker, Administrative Assistant, deliver Meals on Wheels to residents in the Topeka area.

through Meals on Wheels to provide the ability to live independently for homebound, seniors, and disabled individuals.

“I enjoy working with Meals on Wheels because it not only is helping those in need in the community, but it allows me to make a connection with residents in the area,” said Sarah Broxterman, Financial Accounting Assistant. “Delivery day is enjoyable on so many levels, but knowing you’re delivering a hot meal and even a smile that can make a difference is rewarding.”

Broxterman is joined by fellow employees on her delivery route. “It’s great to get other employees out to help,” she said. “It’s a great feeling to get others involved in something I’m passionate about and enjoy doing.”



A Meals on Wheels employee packs hot and cold boxes into the Kaw Valley truck for delivery in southwest Topeka.

# FUN FIVE

Get to Know Your Co-op Staff

## Kyle Hallgren

Apprentice Lineman  
1.5 years at Kaw Valley



Kyle Hallgren

Q: If you could have a super power, what would it be?

A. I'd be invisible.

Q: What is your favorite thing to do on a Sunday?

A. I like spending time with my family and friends.

Q: What is one

thing most people don't know about you?

A. I can't think of anything. I'm an open book!

Q: Do you collect anything?

A. I like Ford pickups from the late 70s that I fix up and drive.

Q: What is the best part of your job?

A. Working in less than desirable conditions that most people wouldn't.

## Don't Forget to Fall Backward! Time Change is November 1

Don't forget to fall back and turn your clocks backward one hour on Sunday, November 1 when Daylight Savings Time ends.



## Alliance Question of the Month

### Will my member benefits change?

Yes, the benefits will get better! Through the alliance you can take advantage of all of the value-added services and discounts available through both cooperatives. As we move closer to consolidation we will be announcing even more member benefits that will be available to members of both cooperatives. This consolidation allows us to utilize resources that were untapped prior, giving our members even more benefits.

Each month we'll address a question regarding the cooperative alliance between Leavenworth-Jefferson Electric Cooperative and Kaw Valley Electric. Do you have a question you'd like us to address regarding the alliance? Feel free to submit your question to [info@kve.coop](mailto:info@kve.coop).



Have you followed us on

# SOCIAL MEDIA?

Engage with us!

Follow along or like us for updates on your service, outages, the cooperative alliance, new programs, and much more!

Facebook and Twitter!  
[www.facebook.com/KawValleyElectric](http://www.facebook.com/KawValleyElectric)  
[@KawValleyElec](https://twitter.com/KawValleyElec)



## 1-800-794-2011

Have questions? Give us a call!

Get more information about our services: [www.kve.coop](http://www.kve.coop)