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FreeState
Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

**FREESTATE ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC.**

*The***Outlet**

**FREESTATE ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC.**

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MCLOUTH OFFICE

P.O. Box 70
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TOPEKA OFFICE

1100 S.W. Auburn Road
Topeka, KS 66615

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Thursday
7 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

FREESTATE FORUM

We want to understand member issues, and we want to serve you to the best of our ability. Tell us more at WWW.FREESTATE.COOP/FORUM.

FROM THE CEO

A FunDay and Farm Fresh Air

At FreeState, we understand serving communities is more than poles and wires — because being a part of an electric cooperative is more than purchasing electricity. A cooperative is about safety and service. Here are some highlights of what we do for members, like you!

For the past three years we've held events at the Topeka Zoo for families and friends to meet and spend the day together. The event spanned generations and promoted family fun. We've taken those same principles and applied them to a new event this year — **FREESTATE FAMILY FUNDAY AT GARY'S FARM FEST! ON SUNDAY, SEPT. 29, FROM 10 A.M.-4 P.M.** your electric cooperative staff will be at Gary's Farm Fest (also known as Gary's Berries) near Grantville to celebrate your cooperative membership.

Why Gary's Farm Fest? Well, we know Gary's is a popular place to be in the fall and we hope to introduce more families to this staple in our area. So, we've decided to move our event to the country and breathe in some fresh, farm air. FreeState will pay admission for our members and provide lunch for the first 1,000 folks on Sept. 29.

We want this to be a day you spend with your family enjoying fresh air, games, corn mazes and the pumpkin patch. We'll have a bucket truck,

safety displays and energy efficiency information to share as well.

Part of the cooperative difference is a personalized touch. You aren't a customer number; you are a member-owner — a part of what makes co-ops unique. We hope that our event will be unique, too.

The week before the event, Sept. 23-26, you can visit either FreeState office to pick up wristbands (similar to previous zoo events). Picking up wristbands in advance will get you in the gate faster when you arrive on Sept. 29.

Our express pass is located on Page 12D in this issue of *Kansas Country Living* and in the September paper bills. You can also download the express pass on our website at www.freestate.coop/farm. Simply complete the form and have it ready at the gate for faster entry on Sept. 29.

We hope you'll join us for Family FunDay. We are excited to have the opportunity to meet with our members (some for the first time) and talk to you during the event!



Chris Parr

“Stop by either office Sept. 23-26 to pick up your wristbands for quicker entry to Family FunDay.”



Ava Gustin attended Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in July representing FreeState Electric Cooperative.

AT THE PEAK OF *Leadership*

BY AVA GUSTIN



My name is **AVA GUSTIN** and I was generously selected to represent FreeState Electric Cooperative as a youth delegate for Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp (CYLC) near Steamboat Springs, Colorado, this year. I cannot express how thankful I am to all FreeState Electric members, supporters, staff and administration for this opportunity. Sarah Farlee, FreeState, and Shana Read, Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., were chaperones on the trip and provided me with so much support throughout my experience. They deserve special recognition for all of the work they put into

making CYLC as beneficial as possible. When I stepped on the camp bus in Topeka, I had no idea what I was getting myself into. With what little courage I possessed, I stepped into a journey that I never could have imagined I would be part of. At each bus stop through Kansas, new friends entered my experience that were kind and thoughtful. But the bus did not end my experience. Upon arriving in Steamboat Springs, leadership opportunities were immediately available, and each camper learned about the structure of cooperatives. From there I got to know people from Oklahoma, Colorado and even Wyoming. I stepped out of my comfort zone and learned what it truly means to be a leader, which is not someone who is front and center, but someone

who cares about others and participates in every opportunity available to them.

There is no doubt in my mind that I will be a more educated and productive member after experiencing CYLC. I learned about careers in cooperative industries from seasoned professionals, developed a sense of voltage and safety, comprehended sustainability within the electric field and experienced first-hand how energy is generated throughout American society. When I begin to purchase energy on my own, I will undoubtedly choose to place my money in cooperatives that allow every voice to be heard and additionally give back to the community.

I am also extremely grateful to receive a scholarship from the cooperative. It will be essential to financially support my education so I can better serve with all the knowledge I have gained through CYLC.

In the future, I hope to attend either Kansas State University, the University of Kansas or the University of California, Berkeley, to major in Clinical Laboratory Science in hopes to eventually become a physician so I can give back to others, in the same way you have generously given back to me.

“I built my leadership skills through hands-on experiences all while gaining meaningful connections with other students and obtaining more knowledge of the cooperative and electric industry. I have been inspired by the people I’ve met. Leadership is full of all personalities and backgrounds. They have welcomed me into a second family and I’m so grateful for them!” AVA GUSTIN, CYLC REPRESENTATIVE



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Ava Gustin met many new friends while stepping outside of her comfort zone at camp. She participated in a small group and many camp activities like rafting on the Colorado River, a high voltage safety demo, volleyball tournament, and learning about raptors and how cooperatives work to protect them.



TOP: Ava Gustin takes in the beautiful scenery and weather near the Elk River.

ABOVE CENTER: One stop on the road trip to camp was iFly Denver to experience skydiving without the plane.

ABOVE: Ava Gustin (right) poses with FreeState Communications Manager Sarah Farlee who attended the camp as a counselor.



FreeState Member Appreciation Event

Sunday, Sept. 29, 2024 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

www.freestate.coop/farm

Don't have time to pick up your tickets at either FreeState office Sept. 23-26? No problem!

Complete the form below including your FreeState account number and bring it with you to Gary's Farm Fest on Sunday, Sept. 29 for Family FunDay.

Arrive any time between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. at Gary's Farm Fest (5991 17th St., Grantville, KS 66429) and present this page at the registration table to receive your wristbands that will provide free entry. Children two and under will not need a wristband. Lunch will be served starting at 11 a.m. until the food runs out. Visit www.freestate.coop/farm for more information.

HAVE YOU BEEN SIPPIN' ALL SUMMER? DON'T FORGET TO BRING YOUR POP TABS FOR THE RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES.

Name _____

Address _____

Account Number _____

How many wristbands? _____

Wristbands only valid for entry on Sept. 29, 2024.



FreeState At Gary's Farm Fest

