



KANSAS ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE, INC.

# NEWSMAKER

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Fall 2019

## A Moment with the CEO



Suzanne Lane

With the changing in the seasons from summer to fall comes picturesque foliage, exciting football games, cooler temperatures, and a back-to-school routine. Here at KEPCo, fall also means strategic planning implementation, the end of the peak season, another refueling outage at the Wolf Creek Generating Station (WCGS), a renewed commitment to safety, and the completion of a much-anticipated, demand-side management (DSM) study.

With regard to strategic planning, our Board of Trustees and senior staff recently completed KEPCo's first strategic planning session since 2016. This was a great opportunity to evaluate our areas of strength and opportunities for improvement, and was ideal timing considering half of our Board members are new since 2016, as are the members of our Executive Team. Brad Kitchens, with ScottMadden, Inc., led us through the effort, which resulted in five key areas of focus: risk management, economic development, load management, rates and rate design, and emerging technologies. We are now formulating measurable, reportable goals to assure these areas – in addition to our core purpose of providing reliable, reasonably-priced power – are at the forefront of our mind as we continue partnering closely with our members on these important initiatives.

The 2019 peak season was the reversal of the adage “in like a lion, out like a lamb.” Despite record-breaking precipitation, the summer started out mild. We eventually saw some of the Kansas heat and humidity to which we are accustomed, but when looking at the entire summer in aggregate, we saw lower overall energy sales, a lower average peak demand, and less need for peak management from our membership. We can't express enough appreciation for our members' – and their members' – support and efforts this summer to help us operate efficiently and in a manner that finds the most cost savings for our members.

Another significant event for KEPCo that takes place

this fall is the 23<sup>rd</sup> refueling outage for WCGS. This important endeavor occurs approximately every 18 months at nuclear reactors like WCGS, and is very crucial from a safety, cost, and production perspective. The staff at WCGS has a detailed schedule that involves heavy planning, coordination, and communication, all while assuring safety remains the #1 focus. The outage is planned for 40-45 days, and in the interim, the replacement energy for our members comes from our power supply agreement with Westar Energy.

Like many of our members' managers, I had the privilege of recently completing the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) “Commitment to Zero Contacts” to demonstrate my commitment to our employees' and members' safety. In addition, our Board of Trustees passed a resolution formalizing their commitment to and support of our staff's safety as well. These public examples of our dedication to safety, in addition to the recent formation of KEPCo's first Safety Committee, place constant emphasis on the expectation to act safely, and a renewed excitement for creative training, sharing, and practice enhancements are just a few of many reasons that our team continues to work with **zero safety incidents in over six years!**

As for DSM, we are very close to finalizing – in close partnership with our members and a consultant – KEPCo's first DSM study. The scope of this study involves fully evaluating all aspects of KEPCo's current rate structure, practices, power supply contracts, services, programs, and members' desires, while incorporating ideas for enhancements to the current framework. The ultimate goal is to partner with our members to determine the ideal DSM program(s) from a cost-minimizing, operational effectiveness, member-friendly perspective. We look forward to the outcome of the study, and to working side-by-side with our members to implement any resulting recommendations as efficiently as possible.

These are just a few of the many exciting activities we have going on here at KEPCo. We wish everyone a safe, enjoyable autumn and holiday season, filled with happiness, blessings, and precious time with family! And happy “Cooperative Month” in October!

## LCC Selects Consultant for Rate Study



Kansas State Capitol

On July 29, the Legislative Coordinating Council selected, by unanimous vote, London Economics International, LLC (Boston, MA.) as the consulting firm to complete the first section of study topics in Substitute for Senate Bill 69 (retail rate study bill). Topics to be studied include retail choice, various aspects of rate making, net metering, transmission investment, securitization, and taxes, among others. Section one is to be completed and published on the Kansas Corporation Commission website by January 8, 2020. Section two of the bill has been let for Request for Proposal, with responses due later this year.

London Economic International, LLC, established in 2000, is a global economic, financial, and strategic advisory professional services firm specializing in energy, water, and infrastructure.

## KEPCo Attends KEC Congressional Fly-In

Suzanne Lane and Phil Wages represented KEPCo at the Kansas Electric Cooperatives Congressional Fly-In in Washington, DC. Meetings were held with each member of the Kansas delegation and the topics discussed included the RURAL Act (co-op tax exempt status), expansion of rural broadband, expanding access to sustainable energy (EASE Act), and the Endangered Species Act regarding the lesser prairie chicken.



Suzanne Lane and Kansas electric cooperative representatives with Congressman Steve Watkins.

## KEPCo Selected to Receive NRECA Cybersecurity Training



KEPCo has been selected as a Category B participant to receive cybersecurity training through NRECA's Rural Cooperative Cybersecurity Capabilities (RC3) program. The program is made available to electric cooperatives, at no cost, through funding from the U.S. Department of Energy.

The RC3 program is dedicated to promoting a culture of cybersecurity and improving the cybersecurity and resiliency capabilities of the electric cooperative community. The program approaches building cybersecurity awareness and resiliency using a portfolio of resources, training, and technical assistance specifically shaped to support the cooperative community.

The training for Category B participants is geared towards staff of distribution/G&T cooperatives who have cybersecurity experience and who are willing to mentor staff from other cooperatives to help them improve their cybersecurity skills.

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## Matt Ottman Receives Certifications



Matt Ottman

This summer, Matt Ottman, Information System Specialist II, received two certifications from CompTIA. Both certifications required weeks of studying and passing written exams.

One of the certifications from CompTIA is Network+. This certification encompasses the design and implementation of functional networks; configuring, managing, and maintaining essential network devices; the use of devices, such as switches and routers, to segment network traffic and create resilient networks; identifying benefits and drawbacks of existing network configurations; implementing network security, standards, and protocols; troubleshooting network problems; and supporting the creation of virtualized networks.

The second certification is Security+, which emphasizes hands-on practical skills and focuses on the latest trends and techniques in risk management, risk mitigation, threat management, and intrusion detection.

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## KEPCo Hires Manager, Regulatory Affairs



Rebecca Fowler

KEPCo is delighted to announce the hiring of Rebecca Fowler as Manager, Regulatory Affairs. Rebecca comes to KEPCo after a 15-year tenure at Westar Energy, where she most recently served as Regulatory Analyst Lead.

“We are thrilled to have Rebecca working with us. Her experience and knowledge base in the utility industry has already proved to be a tremendous asset to KEPCo,” said Susan Cunningham.

Rebecca attended Pittsburg State University and graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Accounting. Rebecca is a Certified Public Accountant, Certified Management Accountant, and a Certified Internal Auditor.

Rebecca has three children, John (22), Ava (20), and Isaac (18). In her spare time, Rebecca enjoys tending to her flower gardens, reading, and playing the piano.

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## KEPCo Attends Pony Meadows Dedication

On July 25, Butler Electric Cooperative Association, Inc. held a dedication ceremony for its Pony Meadows Solar Farm. Approximately 75 people attended the event, including county commissioners, rural electric cooperative managers, and Kansas State Senator Ty Masterson, among others.

KEPCo Services Incorporated (KSI) provided technical support and project management for the facility. Mark Barbee, KEPCo Senior Vice President, Engineering & Operations, provided remarks at the event regarding the technical aspects of solar generation and of the Pony Meadows facility.



Mark Barbee

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## Meet a KEPCo Employee



Mark Doljac

Mark Doljac began his career with KEPCo in 2009 as Director of Rates & Regulation. Currently, Mark is the Executive Director, Regulatory Affairs & Planning. Prior to joining KEPCo, Mark worked 16 years at the Kansas Corporation Commission, where his last role was Chief of Energy Rates.

Mark graduated from Kansas State University with a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering and from Baylor University with a Master of Business Administration.

Mark lives in Lawrence and in his spare time enjoys playing the bass guitar, attending KSU football games, bicycling, and working on cars.

## KEPCo Attends Co-ops Vote Events



Daryl Tieben (right) and Phil Wages (middle) listen to Rep. Brad Ralph address the attendees of the Co-ops Vote event in Dodge City.

KEPCo attended the Co-ops Vote event at the offices of Lyon-Coffey, Victory, and Ninnescah. Each event was attended by electric cooperative employees, city and county officials, and area state legislators.

Co-ops Vote advocates for preserving the way of life in rural America, but not letting future generations be left behind technologically; advocating for policies that will modernize our nation's energy supply in a way that keeps costs affordable, promotes system reliability, and avoids imposing undue burdens on our energy supply system; and to be an active voice in the community and promote the democratic system of governance for all our nation's institutions, from our co-ops to the halls of Congress.

## KEPCo Volunteers at Ronald McDonald House

Several members of the KEPCo staff and their family members volunteered at the Topeka Ronald McDonald House. KEPCo staff prepared a wonderful meal and donated food items, cookware, cleaning supplies, toiletries, card games, as well as cleaning inside and outside the house.

KEPCo staff chose the Ronald McDonald House as a volunteer opportunity as a way to give back to an organization that has provided valuable resources to the families of KEPCo staff.



KEPCo staff and family members at the Ronald McDonald House.