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Electronews

THE VICTORY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSN., INC.

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FROM THE CEO

Victory Electric Celebrates 80 Years of Powering Community

2025 is a notable year for Victory Electric — the 80th anniversary of our founding. Victory Electric received its charter on June 1, 1945. The name of our cooperative recognized the victory of U.S. and Allied forces at the conclusion of World War II earlier that same year. After constructing distribution infrastructure over the next two years, Victory Electric energized its electric system on Aug. 13, 1947.

RURAL ELECTRIC HISTORY

Although Dodge City first had electric lights in 1886, rural Kansas didn't have electricity until much later. Only about 10% of rural homes in America had electricity by 1930 because it cost too much for electric companies to extend infrastructure to areas with a lower population density.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt understood the necessity of electrifying rural America. He established the

Rural Electrification Administration (REA) by executive order in 1935, and Congress passed the Rural Electrification Act the following year. Transmission expansion and the development of rural electric cooperatives brought electricity to rural America's farms and ranches in the following years. Thanks to REA, 417 cooperatives were established, serving 288,000 households.

Victory Electric was part of that cooperative effort. In the early days, Victory Electric served parts of nine southwest Kansas counties with around 300 miles of transmission and distribution lines. In 2025, we serve 13,000-plus members with more than 20,500 meters and over 3,200 miles of lines.



Shane Laws

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OUR OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON JAN. 1.



AUTOPAY MEMBER NOTICE

For Victory Electric members enrolled in our AutoPay billing option, automatic payments by bank draft or credit card are now scheduled to be withdrawn on the bill due date of the 28th or 29th of each month. If you need to make any updates or changes to your payment details or want to sign up for AutoPay, you may do so by contacting Victory Electric at 620-227-2139 or through SmartHub at least 10 days before the bill due date for your updates to be effective.

Henry Joins Victory Electric

Victory Electric welcomes Cimarron native **KYLER HENRY**, who began working as a warehouse clerk at the cooperative in December. He previously worked for IdeaTek as a fiber technician and at JR Farms.

Henry comes from a hard-working family. "I'm accustomed to working hard and grew up farming. From farming, I went into the internet side — laying cable and that type of thing," Henry said.

He said he looks forward to being part of a team with other people at Victory Electric. "Every other job I've had, I've worked by myself," he said.

Henry married his wife, Brinn, in July 2024, and they live in Dodge City. He enjoys cooking, especially steaks or ribs.

WELCOME TO VICTORY, KYLER!



Kyler Henry

Parade of Lights and Chili Cook-Off Celebrates 25th Anniversary

Dodge City's 25th Annual Christmas Parade of Lights and Chili Cook-Off kicked off the holiday season on Dec. 2. Nineteen teams prepared 24 entries for the chili contest. A panel of judges awarded **ARROWHEAD WEST** first place for serving the tastiest chili; **96.3 THE MARSHAL** followed in second place; and **CARGILL** placed third. After visitors sampled the chili entries and voted for their own favorites, the People's Choice awards went to **ARROWHEAD WEST**, first place; **CARGILL**, second place; and **FORD COUNTY FIRE & EMS**, third place. Boot Hill Museum offered festive sugar cookies to attendees.

Santa visited with local children at the Convention and Visitors Bureau's information center. Hundreds of visitors also attended the Building Solutions snowball drop and mayor's tree lighting, heard a performance by the Dodge City High School madrigals, and had hot chocolate provided by Salvation Army and hot dogs provided by Long Branch Lagoon. The Parade of Lights concluded the evening, featuring marching bands and floats decorated for the season.

Thank you to everyone who made this year's festivities a success!



Arrowhead West placed first in the Judges' Choice contest.



Long Branch Lagoon sponsored a hot dog feed during the Dec. 2 holiday events in downtown Dodge City.



Victory Electric employees (from left) Mike Clark, Kyndell Penick and Justin Straight offer chili samples to visitors at Boot Hill Museum.



Victory Electric adorned a bucket truck with holiday lights for the Parade of Lights Dec. 2.

Scholarship Program Celebrates Community Spirit

Victory Electric encourages high school seniors and current college students who are passionate about their communities to apply for one of 10 scholarships for \$1,000. Victory Electric proudly sponsors the annual Lightner Community Spirit Scholarship program to recognize area scholars who have excelled academically while demonstrating a commitment to bettering their communities.

The name of the scholarship honors the Lightner family of Plymell, Kansas, who provided many years of dedicated service to Victory Electric. George Lightner served Victory Electric's board of trustees for 31 years, and his son, Richard, served in that role for 36 years. Both strongly supported the cooperative's community and youth programs.

"As a not-for-profit cooperative, one of our guiding principles is 'Commitment to Community,' and I can't think of a better way than honoring students with scholarships to give back to our local communities," said Shane Laws, Victory Electric CEO.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the scholarship, applicants must be a dependent of an active cooperative member in good standing, have and maintain a 3.0 GPA on a 4.0-point scale, and be a current full-time student or entering an accredited trade school, college or university in fall 2025. Students may win only once, and the scholarship award is not renewable. Previous applicants are encouraged to apply again if they were not selected as a Lightner Community Spirit Scholarship winner.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for a Lightner Community Spirit Scholarship, students will need to submit the following:

- ▶ Completed application form, including the Victory Electric account number of the applicant's parent or guardian;
- ▶ Biographical statement introducing the applicant, educational goals, financial need and other information deemed important;
- ▶ Essay explaining how Victory Electric demonstrates the principle of "commitment to community" and sharing examples of how the applicant makes his or her community better;
- ▶ Headshot, including a copyright release if the photo was taken by a professional photographer; and
- ▶ Résumé listing school activities, clubs, awards, work experience and volunteer work.

Scholarship winners will be required to send an official transcript to Victory Electric via mail or email from a counselor or other school official.

Please contact us at askcommunications@victoryelectric.net if you have any questions about the application process. Visit www.victoryelectric.net/lightner-community-spirit-scholarship for more information and to apply.

APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED BEGINNING JAN. 15, 2025, AND THE DEADLINE TO APPLY IS FEB. 28.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT

LIGHTNER COMMUNITY SPIRIT SCHOLARSHIP

SCAN TO APPLY



Applications are open from
Jan. 15-Feb. 28

 **10** \$1,000 scholarships available!

▶ High school seniors or current students at a university, college or technical school who are dependents of a Victory Electric member, have a 3.0 GPA and have demonstrated a commitment to their community are encouraged to apply.

To apply, scan or visit www.victoryelectric.net/lightner-community-spirit-scholarship.

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR ENERGY

When you need to fill up your gas tank or buy groceries, you choose when to do so and how much to spend. When your gas gauge gets close to empty, you can fill up your vehicle or buy several gallons of gas at a time. When your refrigerator and pantry need to be restocked, you can decide whether to buy only a few staples to get you through the weekend or to shop in bulk for the whole month.

IT'S YOUR BUDGET. IT'S YOUR CHOICE.

Did you know Victory Electric offers a billing plan that gives you the power to decide when and how much to pay? PowerMyWay is now Prepay Power, a self-managed, pay-as-you-go program that allows you to pay for electricity whenever you choose — at an amount that fits your budget. If you would prefer the flexibility of paying a smaller amount several times a month instead of having a single monthly bill, Prepay Power.

PREPAY POWER BENEFITS

- ▶ No deposit.
- ▶ No late charges.
- ▶ No credit check.
- ▶ No reconnection fees.

HOW DOES PREPAY POWER WORK?

- ▶ Residential member-owners may open a Prepay Power account by loading \$50 to their account for future energy use. Victory Electric records your daily energy usage and deducts the amount of that day's electric service from your credit balance.
- ▶ There are no additional costs or fees with the Prepay Power billing plan, and the member is not required to make a security deposit or pay disconnect, reconnect or late fees.
- ▶ Members monitor their daily usage.
- ▶ Prepay Power members receive a notification when your account balance reaches \$25 or less, and you can "recharge" your account easily and immediately using SmartHub.
- ▶ If the balance falls below \$0.01, electric service is disconnected. It can be reconnected as soon as you add funds to your account, with no disconnection or reconnection fees added.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CAN I SWITCH MY EXISTING RESIDENTIAL ACCOUNT TO PREPAY POWER?

Yes, if you currently have a conventional monthly billing plan with Victory Electric, you can still switch to Prepay Power. An existing security deposit will be applied to any outstanding balance, including unbilled use, and the remainder can be refunded or transferred to your new Prepay Power account.

HOW DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH POWER I USE EACH DAY?

Our automated, digital meters provide you and Victory Electric near real-time energy use information about how much, when, and at what rate energy is used. As the home uses electricity, your account balance updates daily depending on the amount of kilowatt-hours used. You can also use the consumption information to monitor power in your home for energy conservation and money savings.

WHAT IS A THRESHOLD AND WHY DO I NEED TO SET ONE?

The threshold is the smallest amount of money you can have in your account before we send you a payment reminder. Victory Electric automatically sets the threshold at \$25, but you can adjust this amount so you have plenty of time to make a payment after receiving the reminder. Once your account falls below the threshold balance, you will be alerted each day the balance is below your threshold by text message, call, email or all three — depending on what notifications you choose. It is important to update your contact information in SmartHub any time it changes.

NEED HELP?

Call one of our member service representatives at 620-227-2139 with any questions about Prepay Power or to set up your SmartHub account.

PREPAY POWER

PREPAY POWER

YOUR POWER. YOUR PLAN. YOUR CHOICE.

Does the timing of your electric bill match the timing of your payday? Would you like to take the stress out of due dates and avoid late fees? Take charge of your energy dollars. Victory Electric's Prepay Power billing plan allows you to pay for electricity how and when you choose — at an amount that fits your budget.



NO DEPOSIT

- Easily convert an existing account.
- Start with a \$50 initial account balance.
- Existing security deposits can be used to pay for current unbilled use, and any remainder can be applied to your Prepay Power account or refunded to you.



NO HIDDEN FEES OR CHARGES

- No security deposit or credit checks to open an account.
- No late payment fees.
- No disconnect or reconnect fees.



CANCEL AT ANY TIME



NO CREDIT CHECK



FLEXIBLE PAYMENT SCHEDULE

- No monthly bills or due dates — purchase electricity anytime, anywhere.
- Choose your own payment schedule and pay what you want, when you want.



SAME RATE AND SERVICES

- Enjoy the same rates and services as other accounts.

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR ENERGY USE AND BUDGET

- The self-managed, pay-as-you-go program allows greater flexibility to budget for your monthly expenses.
- Review account balance and payment information on SmartHub from the convenience of your phone or computer.
- Receive convenient low balance reminder notifications by text message, email, a phone call or a combination of all three.
- View and monitor your electric use to better understand how you use electricity every day and manage your energy costs.

Victory Electric's Member Satisfaction is Strong

The Victory Electric Cooperative Assoc., Inc. completed its annual member-wide customer satisfaction survey. The member responses were sent to the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI®), a company that measures customer satisfaction across multiple industries throughout the entire United States.

For 2024, Victory Electric received an ACSI score of 85, on a 100-point scale.* Victory Electric's score is higher when compared to publicly measured investor-owned utility scores and municipal utility scores reported in the syndicated 2024 ACSI Energy Utility Study and places Victory Electric 11 points higher than the average investor-owned utility score of 74, as well as 10 points higher than the municipal utilities score of 75, per the industry ratings. For more information, please visit <https://theacsi.org/industries/energy-utilities>.

*Compared to publicly measured energy utilities in the ACSI® survey of customers rating their own energy utility. Results based on data provided by Victory Electric, collected between Nov. 4-15. ACSI did not regulate the survey administration or sample size. ACSI and its logo are registered trademarks of the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. For more about the ACSI, visit www.theacsi.org.



COMMUNITY SOLAR SHARES NOW ONLY \$4 EACH

Victory Electric's Community Solar program allows eligible member-owners to support renewable energy without the high cost or long-term commitment of buying, installing and maintaining rooftop solar panels.

Purchasing shares in the energy produced at Sunflower Electric's Johnson Corner solar farm now costs only \$4 per share per month! Take advantage of solar energy with no long-term commitment or any installation on your property. Learn more about the program and how to apply at victoryelec-tric.net/community-solar.



Victory Electric
COMMUNITY
SOLAR

Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: 202-690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

Victory Electric Celebrates 80 Years of Powering Community *Continued from page 12A* ►

CHANGING TIMES

Victory Electric and the electric utility industry have experienced many changes in the past 80 years. Electrical technology has become much more sophisticated and efficient since our cooperative's early days. Keeping up to date with the evolving needs of our industry and the challenges of providing energy in our always-on culture has become more costly and complicated. Victory Electric's board and leadership team are committed to keeping costs as low as possible for our member-owners without sacrificing reliability or safety.

Enhancing the grid and updating aging infrastructure with modern technology boosts reliability and safety. Replacing transformers and cables with more efficient and long-lasting equipment improves reliability, too. Smart grids improve the monitoring and management of electricity distribution, enabling faster detection and response to issues or potential dangers. Automated systems can identify irregularities and isolate problem areas, reducing the risk of widespread outages and enhancing safety.

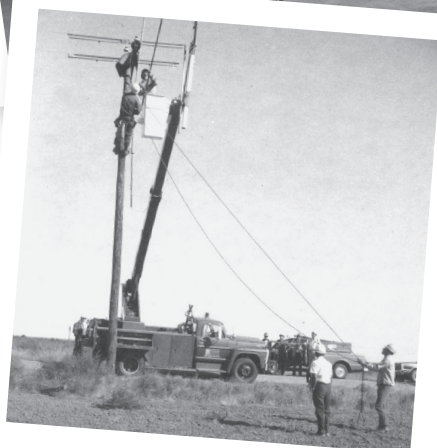
Renewable energy sources continue to expand and complement our diverse electric generation portfolio. Victory Electric works with member-owners who are interested in installing a rooftop solar system so they can avoid scams and understand their options. For those who want to support renewable energy without the expense and hassle of rooftop solar, we offer a Community Solar program. Shares for this program are now only \$4 each. (See Page 12F to learn more.)

Consumer education and empowerment have also changed over the years. Victory Electric takes its responsibility for educating members about electric safety and efficiency seriously, providing important information in print, online and in person.

Whether we are restoring power to members' homes after a storm, sharing energy-efficiency tips to help you save money, strengthening grid security and reliability, or partnering with area groups on community development initiatives, Victory Electric has never stopped making our communities' needs a priority. That commitment will continue in 2025 and beyond.

Eighty years ago, Victory Electric was built by members of the communities it served — and we remain focused on community today. We will keep powering the moments that matter as we provide safe, reliable, affordable energy to our member-owners. Have a great year!

THANKS, SHANE



Eighty years ago, Victory Electric was built by members of the communities it served — and we remain focused on community today. This year we're celebrating our history by sharing some photos of our past.

LOOK FOR THE **KANSAS COUNTRY LIVING** READERSHIP SURVEY IN YOUR EMAIL!

Kansas Country Living has engaged **INSIDE INFORMATION**, a research and data analytics company in Smithville, Missouri, to oversee a readership survey beginning this month. The

short, 21-question survey will be conducted through email and will help *Kansas Country Living* — the official communication channel for your electric cooperative — measure reader engagement and perceptions about the publication and your electric cooperative's local pages.

The magazine is the most cost-effective way to share essential business information with our consumer-members, along with articles about legislative and regulatory issues potentially affecting our rural way of life, cooperative youth programs, outage and construction activities, features highlighting the great state in which we live, safe electricity tips for around the farm and home, plus ways to use electricity wisely. By law, some of this information must be received by members and verified, and the magazine fulfills that requirement in the most cost-effective way possible.

If you are one of the lucky randomly selected readers to receive the survey, the email will come from **SURVEY@KANSASCOUNTRYLIVING.COM** and the email headline will clearly indicate it is a survey from *Kansas Country Living* magazine.



When you complete the survey, you will be entered into a drawing for ONE OF 15 \$25 GIFT CARDS as our thank you for helping us keep you informed of co-op-related matters as an owner of

VICTORY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE.

Going through tough times? Help is available.

Application period
is open until **5 p.m.**
on **March 31, 2025.**

**Scan here
to apply.**



The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is a federally funded program that helps eligible households pay a portion of their home energy costs by providing a one time per year benefit.

