

P.O. Box 1335, 3230 N. 14th Ave.
Dodge City, KS 67801
620-227-2139
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Electronews



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FROM THE CEO

Forum Spotlights Large Loads and Local Impacts

As Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, Inc. CEO Steve Epperson and I explain in part two of Victory and Sunflower's joint "Behind the Cost of Power" series (see Page 12B), electric utilities across the country face challenges like supply chain constraints, growing energy demand, aging infrastructure and rising costs for equipment and labor.

These pressures were also part of the conversation at Victory Electric's July 21 member forum. Around 250 people gathered at the Boot Hill Casino and Event Conference Center in Dodge City for the event, which gave our members the opportunity to hear presentations from Victory, Sunflower and county and city officials about the rapidly growing demand for electricity and the potential impact of large energy users on our electric system and future rates.

More importantly, members were able to ask questions, get answers and share their concerns about potential data centers locating in Ford County, rising costs and other related topics.

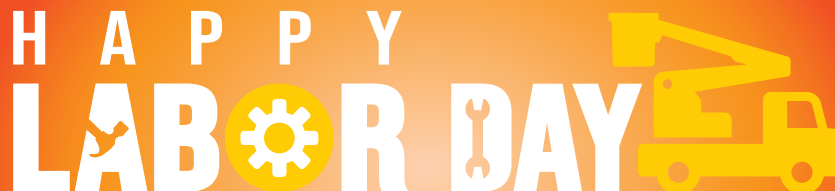
At the forum, Corey Linville, Sunflower senior vice president and chief operations officer of power supply and generation, discussed the power-supply side of providing electric service as well as the requirements for connecting a new electric consumer to the grid. He explained the partnership between the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), Sunflower and Victory and the interconnection process.

Linville stressed that potential large loads must cover the costs they cause,



Shane Laws

Continued on page 12D ►



In observance of the holiday,
our office will be closed on Monday, Sept. 7.

BEHIND THE COST OF POWER | PART 2

Planning Today's Transmission Infrastructure for Tomorrow's Power

BY STEVE EPPERSON, CEO, SUNFLOWER ELECTRIC POWER CORPORATION
CO-AUTHORED BY SHANE LAWS, CEO, VICTORY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



Steve Epperson



Shane Laws

When something works as expected, we often take it for granted. Most of us don't think about the roads, water systems, or electrical infrastructure powering our homes, farms, schools, hospitals, and businesses. Like all critical infrastructure, these systems require ongoing maintenance and strategic investment to continue serving our communities safely and reliably.

In the first article of this series, we introduced the partnership between Victory and Sunflower Electric Power Corporation and explained how the cooperative business model keeps decisions local and focused on serving our members. In Part 2, we take a closer look at the transmission system, an essential part of delivering reliable electricity, and how we manage those costs responsibly.

THE FOUNDATION OF RELIABLE POWER

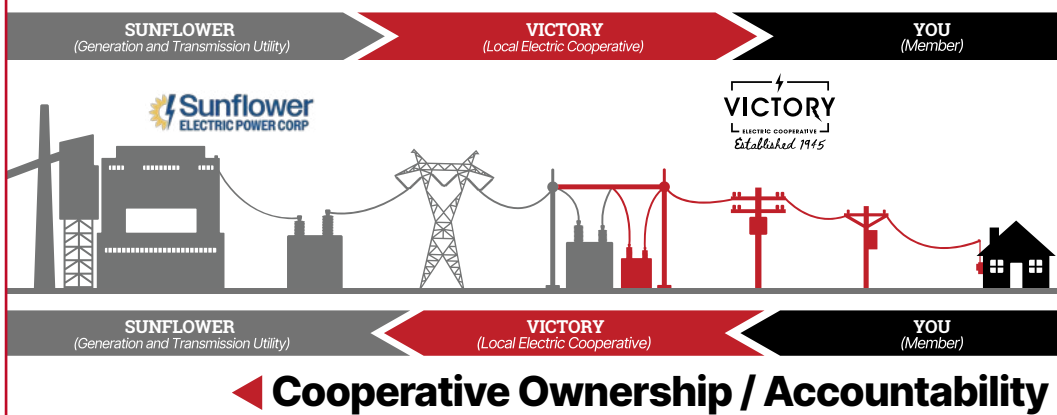
The high-voltage transmission network plays a critical role in the electric grid. Transmission lines move electricity from power plants to local

substations, where local cooperatives like Victory deliver it to homes and businesses.

Today, Victory's wholesale power supplier, Sunflower, maintains nearly 2,347 miles of transmission line across central and western Kansas, along with the substations and equipment needed to provide reliable electric service. Just as homeowners replace a roof or upgrade plumbing before problems occur, utilities evaluate every asset to determine whether maintenance, upgrades, or replacement will provide the greatest long-term value. Planning ahead helps minimize outages, reduce costly repairs, and maintain reliability.

At the same time, the current infrastructure is aging nationwide. The North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) says "electricity demand is increasing at a pace not seen in decades" as communities grow, and new businesses and industries expand. To meet tomorrow's energy needs, utilities must maintain today's system while strategically expanding the grid for the future.

Flow of Power / Affordability ▶



Electricity flows one direction. Accountability flows the other. One of the unique advantages of the cooperative model is the people making decisions about your power supply are accountable to you, the member. Victory and Sunflower work together to make decisions focused on reliability, responsible planning and the long-term interests of our members and local communities.

HOW COSTS AND RATES DIFFER

We know rising costs are top of mind for families and businesses, and we are feeling those pressures, too. Like many industries, electric utilities continue to experience higher costs for materials, construction, labor, and financing.

It's important to understand, however, that costs and electric rates are not the same thing.

While operating costs may increase, Sunflower



uses several strategies to help stabilize electric rates. These include operating power plants efficiently, planning and investing carefully in transmission infrastructure, participating in Southwest Power Pool's energy market, managing finances responsibly, and growing the system thoughtfully.

MANAGING RESOURCES RESPONSIBLY

As not-for-profit cooperatives, Sunflower and Victory provide reliable electric service while making responsible decisions on behalf of members like you. That means focusing on the costs we can control.

Instead of waiting for equipment to fail, Sunflower uses inspection data and planning tools to focus maintenance where it will make the biggest difference. This helps balance risk and reliability and make informed decisions about maintaining and modernizing our system.

Sunflower crews also use advanced technologies, including aerial and infrared inspections, to detect changing line clearances, vegetation concerns, structural wear, and overheating equipment that routine inspections may miss. When small issues are addressed early, we help prevent larger repairs and support reliability.

Likewise, transmission structures receive regular inspections above and below ground. When inspectors identify minor deterioration, treatments such as preservative pole wraps can

often extend the life of a wood pole and delay replacement while maintaining safety and reliability. In many cases, aerial inspections also allow Sunflower to replace an individual crossarm rather than an entire transmission structure, which reduces costs and extends asset life.

Sometimes, managing members' dollars responsibly means investing a little more today to save significantly more tomorrow. For example, Sunflower strategically installs ductile iron poles in locations near highway, railroad, creek, and distribution line crossings. Although they cost 5–8% more upfront than wood poles, which have an average service life of about 75 years, steel poles are designed to last 100+ years. Their longer service life, combined with better resistance to severe weather and vehicle impacts, reduces replacement needs and lowers long-term ownership costs.

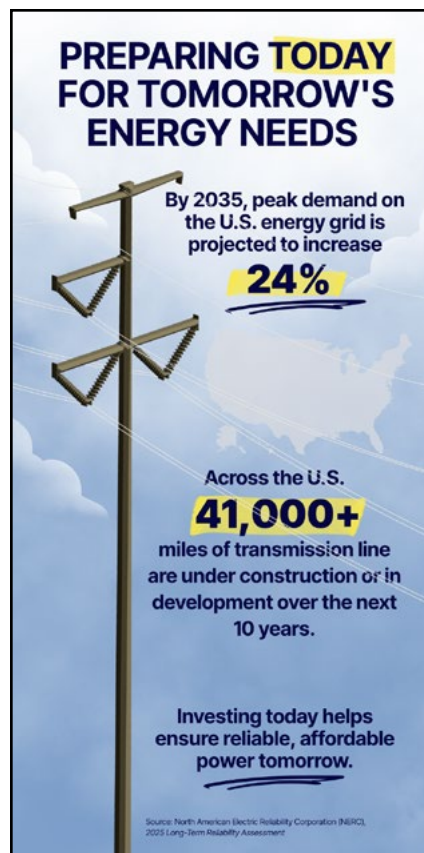
These examples reflect an important principle: The lowest upfront cost does not always create the best long-term value if it leads to more repairs, a shorter service life, or higher long-term expenses. Using members' dollars wisely is more than a promise; it is our responsibility.

LOOKING AHEAD

As electricity demand grows, transmission infrastructure is just one piece of a much larger story. In future articles, we will explore the factors influencing the wholesale cost of electricity, including power generation,

regional energy market dynamics, supply chain challenges, and the steps cooperatives take to help provide long-term rate stability.

Through every challenge and opportunity, one thing remains unchanged: the partnership between Sunflower and Victory. Together, we remain committed to planning carefully, investing wisely, and managing every dollar responsibly so we can provide reliable electric service for our members and communities.



Forum Spotlights Large Loads and Local Impacts *Continued from page 12A ►*

including those for interconnection facilities, transmission upgrades and generation capacity requirements. Regional transmission costs will affect Victory and Sunflower members whether a data center locates in Ford County or somewhere else in the SPP footprint. But if we can connect larger electric consumers and develop load growth in our footprint, we can get additional revenue, or margin, from that load growth. Large-load growth helps to spread fixed costs over more kilowatt-hour sales and create margins that could reduce pressure on electric rates.

We are legally obligated to serve businesses that locate in our service area. We can't pick and choose which businesses we will serve or refuse to connect a particular type of business. But as Linville said during the forum, we have an obligation to serve — but that does not mean we must do so no matter the cost. We need to make sure it is cost-effective and fair to all members. Interconnection guidelines help ensure that existing members won't be left "holding the bag" for generation or infrastructure built for large loads.

Sunflower and Victory do not make local permitting or zoning decisions; local governments do. We also do not oversee land-use decisions or the public hearing process. But because we have an obligation to serve customers that locate within our service territory, we work closely with potential

commercial and industrial members and coordinate with local government and others to make sure power can be delivered reliably, costs are assigned appropriately, and the interests of all our members are protected.

Victory has a role in the overall process when a new business of any kind wants to come to our territory. We must exercise due diligence, and we have a fiduciary duty to our members to research and make sure potential projects benefit existing members.

At the member forum, Dodge City and Ford County officials addressed strategies they use when considering new business development and how they evaluate service for potential significant water users. They also explained their position that evaporative water cooling is off the table for any data center projects in our area.

Google has been doing a lot of background work to determine whether to move forward with a Ford County data center project. To date, Google has not submitted a formal application for the project, but they expect to make a decision by the end of the year. Other companies have also expressed interest in locating in Ford County.

We know data centers are a hot topic and that our members want their views to be heard. You may have concerns about the potential effects on environmental resources, electric rates and our county. Regardless of what side of the aisle you're on regarding data centers and other large industrial businesses locating in our area, your voice matters. We fully support civil dialogues and back-and-forth conversations like these. We value transparency and want to provide our members as much information about these projects as possible.

We encourage you to continue asking questions, having discussions with one another, and sharing your thoughts with local officials to help them make important decisions for our city and county. Victory is committed to transparency and open dialogue about these matters from our perspective as a distribution cooperative.

I've been given clear orders and direction from the Victory Board of Trustees to operate on your behalf as members and to do what is in your best interest while engaging with potential businesses, local officials and industry partners.

We posted a video of the forum, presentation slides and a summary of the questions and answers on our website at www.victoryelectric.net/large-load-information. I encourage you to watch the video and send any additional questions to communications@victoryelectric.net.

THANKS, SHANE



FARM AND RANCH LIFE IS FULL OF VALUABLE LESSONS

— but also serious risks, especially for kids. Think twice before letting kids drive tractors; more than 40% of fatal farm accidents include those younger than 15.



SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG



SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH



- ☒ Be ready before the storm.



- ☒ Stay connected during an outage.



- ☒ Learn how to use your backup generator safely.



- ☒ Create a plan for your loved ones.

SOURCE: NATIONAL RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

Unruh, Hertel and Edmunds Promoted



Angela Unruh



Brenda Hertel



Cory Edmunds

Victory Electric recently announced promotions for three employees: **ANGELA UNRUH**, **BRENDA HERTEL** and **CORY EDMUNDS**. Unruh was named CFO and assistant CEO, Hertel is now manager of corporate services and Edmunds has been named a crew chief.

Unruh joined the cooperative in January 2015 as the CFO. In her new role, she will take on additional executive responsibilities to support CEO Shane Laws while continuing to oversee Victory's accounting department. She holds an associate degree from Dodge City Community College and a bachelor's degree in accounting from Fort Hays State University.

Hertel joined Victory in September 2019 as a member services representative (MSR) and was promoted to human resources and MSR coordinator in October 2025. In her new role she oversees the MSRs and member service functions. She graduated from Dodge City High School and earned an associate degree in general studies with an emphasis in human services from Fort Hays State University.

Edmunds joined Victory in January 2020 as a groundman and reached journeyman status in January 2024. The Dodge City native previously completed Dodge City Community College's lineman course.

Congratulations, Angela, Brenda and Cory!

EVEN PAY IT JUST MAKES CENTS

QUESTIONS?
CALL - 620.227.2139
VISIT OUR WEBSITE



WHAT IS IT?

Even Pay is Victory Electric's budget billing program that allows you to pay the same amount for your bill each month.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Your monthly payment is based on your average electric use over the last six months. It is reviewed and updated biannually.

DO YOU QUALIFY?

- ☒ Residential member
- ☒ Must reside at the address for at least one year
- ☒ No late payments for at least one year

SPP Grid Condition Reporting

September is National Preparedness Month — a great time to plan for severe weather and make sure you and your family are prepared for emergencies. Victory Electric and our network of partners also follow plans and procedures to prepare for storms and other situations that might cause energy emergencies.

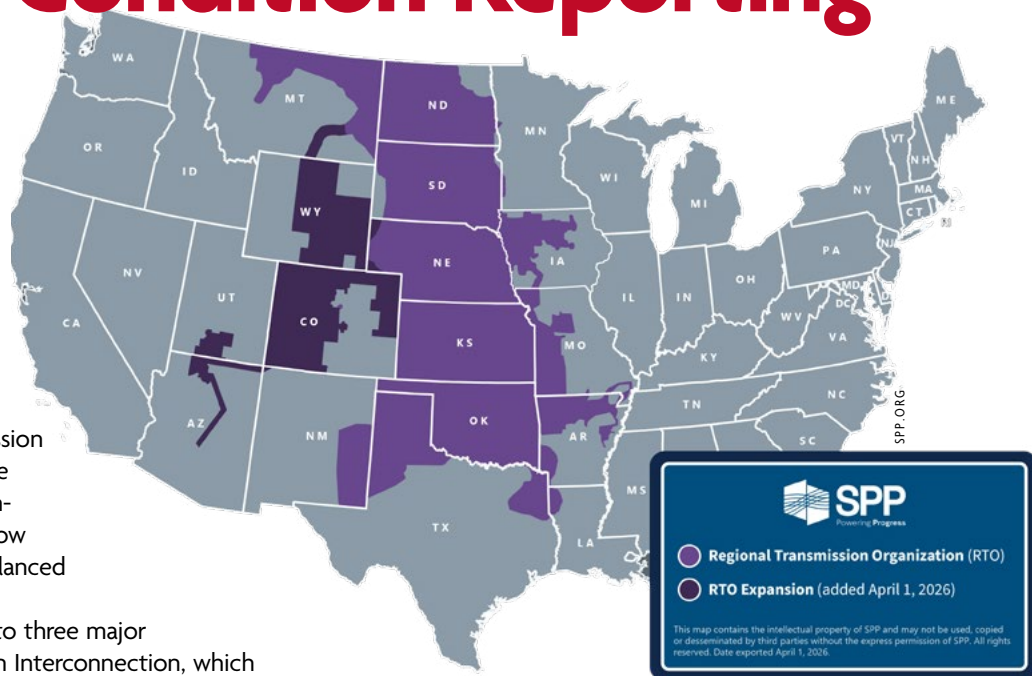
Kansas is part of the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), a regional transmission organization (RTO). SPP functions like an “air traffic controller” for the high-voltage electric grid, directing the flow of electricity to ensure a reliable, balanced power supply.

The U.S. electric grid is divided into three major interconnections regions: the Eastern Interconnection, which operates in states east of the Rocky Mountains; the Western Interconnection, which operates from the Pacific Ocean to the Rocky Mountain states; and the Texas Interconnection, which covers most of Texas. In April, SPP expanded its service territory based in the Eastern Interconnection to include areas within the Western Interconnection. The expansion made SPP the first RTO in the country to have service spanning two interconnections.

SPP constantly monitors grid conditions across its 17-state territory and sends advisories and alerts to its member utilities — including Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, Inc., Victory’s generation and transmission utility — to keep them informed. These notices explain whether the grid is operating normally with enough generation to meet demand and reserves; whether extreme weather or heavy electric use could lead to significant outages; or whether conservation measures are needed because of weather, environmental, operational or other conditions. Member utilities then follow the appropriate procedures based on SPP’s guidance.

Sometimes SPP must take measures to mitigate strain on energy sources. SPP has three levels of energy emergency:

- **ENERGY EMERGENCY ALERT LEVEL 1 (EEA 1)** indicates all resources are being used to meet electricity demand and the system is at risk of not meeting its required energy reserves.
- **ENERGY EMERGENCY ALERT LEVEL 2 (EEA 2)** signals that SPP is unable to meet its expected energy needs and must implement additional procedures to maintain regional reliability. The public is asked to conserve energy.



- **ENERGY EMERGENCY ALERT LEVEL 3 (EEA 3)** is triggered when operating reserves are insufficient to meet demand. SPP will begin controlled service interruptions, also known as rolling blackouts, to protect the safety of the regional grid and prevent widespread damage to the system.

Since the expansion, when SPP reports grid conditions it identifies which Balancing Authority Area (BAA) the resource advisory or emergency alert affects — the West or East BAA. Kansas is located entirely in SPP’s East BAA, which encompasses SPP’s legacy footprint inside the Eastern Interconnection.

In late July, extreme temperatures and other conditions led to SPP’s declaration of an EEA 2 for its West BAA. However, SPP did not issue any EEAs for its East BAA, including Kansas.

Members can rest assured that if SPP ever issues a level EEA 2 or EEA 3 for the East BAA, Victory Electric will notify our members by text message or email and on our Facebook page with further information and requests for conservation if needed. While you’re updating home emergency kits during Preparedness Month, please also make sure the email address and phone number associated with your Victory Electric account is current so you can receive notifications from us in the event of energy emergencies.

Victory Joins in the Fun at Dodge City Days

Victory Electric employees have had plenty of summertime fun while joining in several Dodge City Days events. This year's annual event celebrated 250 years of American history.



Victory joined the Dodge City Days Western Parade in Dodge City July 25. Several employees also drove vehicles for other local organizations.



FROM LEFT: Victory's Amy Grasser, Denzil McGill, Mike Clark, Ryan Miller and Shane Laws grill hamburgers before Hilmar Cheese's public cheeseburger feed at Wright Park July 25 during Dodge City Days.



Victory participated in the Touch-a-Truck event in Wright Park Aug. 1 during Dodge City Days.

Two Employees Join Victory's Operations Team

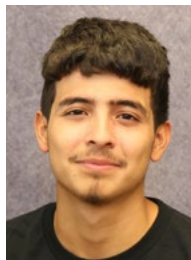
Holcomb native **ALAN ORTEGA** recently joined Victory Electric as a substation technician. He interned at the Great Bend branch of Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, Inc. He also completed the electrical power technology program at Pratt Community College after graduating from Holcomb High School.



Alan Ortega

During his internship, Ortega worked with Sunflower on the generation and transmission side of the new Butter and Egg substation being constructed outside of Dodge City. The project also gave him the opportunity to work with Victory crews, including Richard Torres, lead substation technician at Victory. Torres is now Ortega's supervisor in his new role on the substation team at Victory.

"I've heard a lot of great things about Victory Electric, so I was glad when the opportunity to apply for this position opened up," Ortega said.



Isaiah Manriquez

He enjoys listening to country music and watching sports, especially the Minnesota Vikings and the Boston Red Sox, in his free time. His faith and family inspire him the most.

Victory's summer lineman intern, **ISAIAH MANRIQUEZ**, accepted a full-time groundman position after completing his internship. He graduated from Satanta High School and attended Pratt Community College's electrical power technology program at the Dodge City location.

Manriquez will continue lineman training in Victory Electric's operations department as he works toward his journeyman certification.

In his free time, he enjoys fishing, spending time with his family and friends and playing video games.

WELCOME TO VICTORY, ALAN AND ISAIAH!



If your machinery, vehicle or other equipment makes contact with a power line, guy wire or electrical box, do not get out of your cab. Stray power could energize your equipment and the ground.

TO AVOID ELECTROCUTION:

- ▶ Call 911 and wait for us to arrive to cut the power.
- ▶ Wait to exit your cab until the power is de-energized.

If you need to exit to escape smoke or fire, jump out without touching any part of the tractor or vehicle, and hop away as far as you can, keeping both feet together as you hop.

SOURCE: WWW.SAFELECTRICITY.ORG

Farm Safety and Health Week

SEPT. 21-25

As harvest season approaches, take time to think about electrical safety

- ▶ When operating machinery, watch for overhead power lines.
- ▶ Look up before moving tall equipment and keep it at least 10 feet away from power lines.
- ▶ Never approach a downed power line. Report it immediately.
- ▶ We're proud to power the farms that power our communities.

Stay safe out there!



Camp Develops YOUTH LEADERS

BROOKLYN REED and **JAEDEN STIMPERT**, both seniors this year at Bucklin High School, represented Victory Electric while attending the 49th Annual Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp (CYLC) held July 10-16 near scenic Steamboat Springs, Colorado. The camp brought together 80 high school student leaders from Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Wyoming, sponsored by 46 electric and agriculture cooperatives.

Victory selected Reed and Stimpert for their leadership skills, academic excellence, involvement in extracurricular activities and character as demonstrated by their application materials. These winning student leaders were selected by a panel of judges, who evaluated students' applications, résumés and electrical safety video submissions. The candidates also completed an interview at Victory and answered questions about their school leadership experience, extracurricular involvement, community service and future plans.

Throughout the weeklong camp, students gained hands-on experience in cooperative business operations by forming and managing a mock candy cooperative. They elected a board of directors, appointed a general manager, created committees and held daily membership meetings, mirroring the real-world structure of member-owned cooperatives. Educational sessions covered leadership development, conflict resolution and co-op career opportunities.

Highlights included electric safety demonstrations by cooperative linemen, a live raptor and avian presentation from HawkQuest, and a tour of the Craig Power Station.

CYLC offered more than just leadership and professional growth opportunities; it also fostered a sense of camaraderie and adventure.



Brooklyn Reed (left) and Jaeden Stimpert recently attended Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Colorado.

Students experienced the charm of downtown Steamboat Springs and braved the rapids of the Colorado River on a rafting trip. Recreational highlights included a volleyball tournament, swimming, a talent show and a dance.

Stimpert said she appreciated the opportunities at camp to meet new people, try new things and get out of her comfort zone. "What on this trip inspired me was truly all of the other campers and ambassadors leading the rest of us campers and showing how fun it is when you step out of your comfort zone," she said.

Reed reported she had the "best time ever" at camp. "What affected me the most were the speakers we had throughout camp. Every single speaker taught me something new and valuable to take back home — especially how to be a better leader and listener to those around me," she said.

Every year, Victory Electric sponsors four high school juniors from our service area; two students attend CYLC and two attend the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. For more information about Victory's youth programs, please contact Director of Communications Chanda Schulte at 620-227-2139 or visit www.victoryelectric.net/youth-tour-leadership-camp. The application period for 2027 trips will open in November.



LEFT: Kansas campers pose for a photo while riding the bus from the camp to Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

BELOW LEFT: Campers show off their tie-dye T-shirts while visiting Steamboat Springs.

BELOW RIGHT: Brooklyn Reed (center) raises her arms while participating in a demonstration in the main tent.



Jaeden Stimpert (front left) and other campers celebrate a successful week of leadership camp at the final banquet.



Jaeden Stimpert (second from left) helps her team assemble a power plant model after learning about how the electric system works.



Victory Hosts Chamber Coffee

On Aug. 11, Victory Electric hosted the monthly Dodge City Area Chamber of Commerce coffee. Red Beard provided coffee for the event, which brought together area Chamber members and business leaders for fellowship, door prizes and networking.

