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Electronews

THE VICTORY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSN., INC.

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FROM THE CEO

Supplying Energy to Meet Growing Demand

If you visit a coffee shop before work or grab a cheeseburger in the drive-thru of your favorite fast-food chain at noon, you may have to wait in a long line. During busy times like these, businesses may open more registers or offer multiple traffic lanes to handle additional traffic. Even when there isn't a rush of customers to serve, they still need to have enough food and drinks available to meet customer demand at any time while they are open.

Though the process is more complicated than this illustration shows, demand for electricity follows similar patterns and varies throughout the day. Electricity demand tends to be highest in early evening while people are making supper, catching up on household chores and connecting to various electronic devices. Unlike restaurants, though, electricity providers need to supply power 24/7 — no matter how much electricity you need or what time you need it.

Reliably generating and distributing power can be challenging. Electric demand is dynamic and varies hourly, daily and seasonally. Electricity demand and energy needs are expected to continue to grow in this always-on, always-connected world.



Shane Laws

Victory Electric and its energy provider network must plan for and supply enough electricity so that it's constantly available for members to power their homes, businesses, schools and farms. While making sure we have an adequate supply of energy resources available to meet the highest demand, we also need to maintain grid reliability and manage costs.

We do that by working with a team of valuable partners. Victory Electric is an electric distribution cooperative, so it does not generate power for

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Victory Electric

Hosts Annual Meeting at New Venue

Victory Electric hosted its 79th Annual Meeting on April 9 at a new venue — the Boot Hill Casino and Resort Conference Center in Dodge City. The trustees, leadership team and employees enjoyed connecting with member-owners and guests. Attendees learned about the projects, finances and the work of the cooperative over the past year.

Spearville High School senior Danica Halling sang the National Anthem, and Pastor Kirk Larson led the invocation. Victory Electric Board of Trustees President Pat Morse called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. and thanked the 204 attendees for participating during their busy week.

Morse introduced his wife, Shannon, as well as the other trustees and their spouses in attendance: Vice President Daryl Tieben and Carol; Secretary-Treasurer Cedric Drewes; Terri Larson and Kirk; Jim Imel and Cindy; James Ochs and Deb; Randy Quint and Lynne; Ken Schulte and Gwen; Kenny Wehkamp; and Megan Evans. Trustee John Leis was unable to attend. Morse then introduced CEO Shane Laws and Ali, and Attorney Dave Snapp and Debbie. He welcomed guests representing Sunflower Electric: CEO Steve Epperson, Corey Linville, Taylor Calcara, Diane Stiles and Anne Erbert. Special guests Richard Lightner, former trustee, and Representative Jason Goetz, District 119, were also recognized.

The minutes of the 2023 annual meeting were approved as printed in the *Kansas Country Living* magazine by the 167 member-owners in attendance, and readings of the official notice affidavit of mailing, minutes of the nominating committee and report of the nominating committee were waived.

Morse thanked the nominating committee members: Lisa Mazza (chairperson), Ken Winter, Ron Schneewis, Shane Bangerter, Dale Stein, Levi Benjamin, Alan Schneewis and Dillon Keller. Attorney Snapp announced all incumbent trustees were reelected as follows: District 1, **DARYL TIEBEN**; District 3, **KEN SCHULTE**; District 8, **CEDRIC DREWES**; and District 10, **TERRI LARSON**.

A video highlighting the cooperative's efforts to improve reliability in 2023 and moving forward was shown. Important initiatives in the areas of information technology and security, engineering, operations, key accounts and economic development, member services, accounting and communications were covered.

Before a question-and-answer session with member-owners, Laws addressed upcoming community appreciation events scheduled in our service area, the recent cost-of-service study, and the results of a member satisfaction survey completed last fall to learn what member-owners want most from the cooperative.

"What we recognize are the main things for customer satisfaction — rates, reliability and helping you manage your energy consumption — and that's our primary focus going forward," Laws said. Reliability and safety will continue

to be priorities at Victory Electric as well, he noted.

Morse adjourned the meeting, and guests visited with Victory Electric staff and trustees, browsed the information tables and talked to their friends.

Victory Electric is grateful for the generosity of our 2024 door-prize sponsors: Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, Stanion Wholesale Electric Company, AV Energy, Midwest Electric Transformer Services, Alltech Corporation, Border States, Huxford Pole & Timber, Wesco and Techline.



Victory Electric employees were on hand to register members, answer questions, provide golf cart rides and distribute door prizes.



Victory Electric Board of Trustees President Pat Morse (right) welcomes a member to the meeting.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR DOOR-PRIZE WINNERS

- ▶ \$200 Bill Credit (Victory Electric)
ERVIN BURKHART, BART RATTS, JOHN GIESSEL and PAUL WETZEL
- ▶ Roomba (Sunflower Electric)
ROBERT KLEWENO
- ▶ Quiet Blender (Border States)
JOHN WEBER
- ▶ Insta Air Fryer (Border States)
FRANK SUMAYA
- ▶ Impact Driver Bit Set (Stanion)
PAMELA WETZEL
- ▶ Terminal Kit with Control Cycle Crimp Tool (Stanion)
TRACY LERCH
- ▶ Bluetooth Speaker (Victory Electric)
GLEN KELLER
- ▶ Callaway Chrome Golf Balls (Midwest)
J. ORINNE WINSOR
- ▶ \$150 Visa Gift Card (Techline)
CHESTER ZIMMERMAN
- ▶ \$25 Visa Gift Card and Steel Travel Mug (AV Energy and Alltech)
ETNA PYLE IV and TRAVIS BUEHNE
- ▶ \$25 Starbucks Gift Card and Steel Travel Mug (Stanion and Alltech)
GALEN SCHAWA
- ▶ \$50 Walmart Gift Card (Huxford Poles)
JEFF MCDANIEL and GALEN FRICK



CEO Shane Laws shares the results of a recent member satisfaction survey, which showed rates, reliability and managing energy consumption are the most important issues to members.



Member-owners ask questions after Victory Electric CEO Shane Laws' remarks.



Victory Electric employees greet Ken Schulte (left), District 3 trustee, who was reelected in the 2024 election.



Member Services Representative Brenda Hertel (left) registers a member before the meeting.



Thanks to generous sponsors, registered members had a chance to win door prizes for attending the meeting.

10 Lightner Community Spirit Scholarship Winners Selected

Ten outstanding students have been selected to receive a \$1,000 Lightner Community Spirit Scholarship. Victory Electric's annual scholarship program recognizes area students who have demonstrated academic success as well as a commitment to improving their community.

An impartial, external panel of judges reviewed the submissions of 56 eligible applicants, a record high, to determine the 2024 winners based on their commitment to community, ideas, academic achievement, voice and writing skills. The judges noted they were impressed by the accomplishment of all the young adults who applied.

Launched in 2016, Victory Electric's scholarship program honors the Lightner family of Plymell, Kansas. Richard Lightner served on the Victory Electric Board of Trustees for 36 years after his father, George, served on the board for 31 years. The Lightners strongly supported Victory Electric's community and youth programs during their extensive service to cooperative members.

"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 a scholarship program to give back to the communities we serve and encourage youth to be involved in their own community," said Victory Electric CEO Shane Laws.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR'S WINNERS

- ▶ **LANE BEERY**, son of Neal and Dana Beery, Cimarron, is a sophomore at Garden City Community College.
- ▶ **EVANN DREWES**, daughter of Cedric and Diane Drewes, Dodge City, is a senior at Dodge City High School.
- ▶ **PAYTON DUNN**, daughter of Wade and Amy Dunn, Dodge City, is a senior at Dodge City High School.
- ▶ **BO ELSEY**, son of Craig and Tina Elsey, Minneola, is a senior at Minneola High School.
- ▶ **HENRY FITZTHUM**, son of John Fitzthum, Dodge City, and Julianne Fitzthum, Hays, is senior at Hays High School.
- ▶ **KARLA GARCIA SEPULVEDA**, daughter of Rogelio and Petra Garcia, Dodge City, is a senior at Dodge City High School.
- ▶ **MADISON GWALTNEY**, daughter of Kevin and Jordan Gwaltney, Dodge City, is a senior at Dodge City High School.
- ▶ **MITCHELL LEHMAN**, son of Roy Lehman and Deann Gillen-Lehman, Garden City, is a senior at Ingalls High School.
- ▶ **LINCOLN MARTIN**, son of Eric and Holly Martin, Bucklin, is a senior at of Bucklin High School.
- ▶ **HALLE ROBINSON**, daughter of Dave Robinson and Debra Schartz-Robinson, Dodge City, is a junior at Northwestern Oklahoma State University.

For more information about the Lightner Community Spirit Scholarship, visit www.victoryelectric.net/lightner-community-spirit-scholarship.

LIGHTNER COMMUNITY SPIRIT SCHOLARSHIP

2024 WINNERS



**LANE
BEERY**



**PAYTON
DUNN**



**EVANN
DREWES**



**BO
ELSEY**



**HENRY
FITZTHUM**



**KARLA G.
SEPULVEDA**



**MADISON
GWALTNEY**



**MITCHELL
LEHMAN**



**LINCOLN
MARTIN**



**HALLE
ROBINSON**

We Appreciate You!

The Victory Electric Board of Trustees, leadership team and employees thank you, the member-owners, who make our cooperative possible. To connect with the communities we serve and express our gratitude, we've scheduled member appreciation events throughout our service area.

We kicked off the 2024 community celebrations with end-of-school hamburger and hot dog feeds in Bucklin on May 14 and Ingalls on May 17. The festivities also featured giveaways, prize drawings for bill credits and other goodies, safety demonstrations by Victory Electric linemen, and more.

Watch *Kansas Country Living* magazine, Facebook and Instagram for details about more member appreciation events. We look forward to visiting your community soon!

UPCOMING MEMBER APPRECIATION EVENTS

- ▶ **JUNE 7:** Batter up and join Victory Electric June 7 at Cavalier Field in Dodge City for a Dodge City A's baseball game.
- ▶ **JULY 12:** Breeze into Spearville July 12 for the City of Windmills (COW) Festival.

Supplying Energy to Meet Growing Demand

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cooperative members. Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, Victory's generation and transmission electric cooperative, generates and purchases power and delivers it to Victory Electric via high-voltage transmission lines. Victory then reduces the voltage and transmits power directly to you on smaller distribution lines.

Sunflower Electric is part of the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), a regional transmission organization that acts like an air traffic controller as it directs the flow of electricity for the power providers in its 14-state network. SPP's wholesale energy market is designed to provide cost-effective power delivery, protect grid reliability and relieve transmission congestion. The organization helps ensure that electricity providers have the capacity to keep providing power, even during extreme weather and other events that put additional strain on the grid.

As part of our combined efforts to make sure that members' electric supply meets demand, we depend on a diverse fuel mix of natural gas, coal, wind and solar. Taking a holistic, all-of-the-above approach to energy generation means strategically using both traditional and renewable energy sources.

In the coming months, Victory Electric will share more about energy supply and demand issues and how we are working to address the many challenges facing the electric industry. We appreciate the efforts made by member-owners like you to save energy.

THANKS, SHANE

FRIDAY
June 7
1ST 200 PEOPLE:
MEAL VOUCHERS,
GIVEAWAYS &
PRIZES!
7 P.M.
**CAVALIER
FIELD**

Spark
at the Park
by VICTORY ELECTRIC

DODGE CITY
A'S
BASEBALL

THE VICTORY
Electric Cooperative
Assoc. Inc.

We're swinging for the fences! 🏏 Help us root for an A's victory as we show our members how much we appreciate you. **Come join in on the fun!**

★
HAPPY
4TH OF JULY
★★★
Our office will be closed on July 4, for the holiday.

Working on the Line

In April, Victory Electric placed a 110,000-pound transformer at a substation in south Dodge City. The new transformer will serve the Hilmar Cheese Company's cheese and whey protein processing plant, which began construction in September 2022 and is expected to open for production in fall 2024.



Workers set the transformer on the pad.

Victory Places New Transformer



The 110,000-pound transformer is delivered to the substation.



Victory Electric's substation crew members discuss plans for placing the transformer.



Workers unhook the crane rigging after the transformer is in place.

STAY SAFE: ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS FOR WORKING OUTDOORS

Last month, we shared on-the-job related electrical safety tips to keep in mind when working indoors. Victory Electric and Safe Electricity remind you of the following outdoor tips, some of which also apply at home:

- ▶ If you are doing work outdoors, be vigilant about power line locations. Window washers, roofers, painters and other workers have been injured and killed after making contact with power lines either with a tool or object they were holding or by direct contact.
- ▶ If your employer asks you to trim trees, do not trim any foliage or limbs within 20 feet of a power line in any direction. Trimming near power lines should be left to OSHA-certified line clearance workers.
- ▶ If you operate farm machinery or drive a truck that has hydraulic beds or lifts (dump truck, for example), bins (grain truck) or arms/extensions (garbage truck, concrete truck), always be aware of power line locations and use a spotter.

Contact with a power line can kill. If your truck, tractor or equipment does come in contact with a line, DO NOT get out. Call 911 and wait for your electric co-op to de-energize the power so you can safely exit.

- ▶ If you rent/use scaffolding or a boom lift to raise you up, always be aware of power line locations.

AROUND WATER

- ▶ Be careful when working around water. Water and electricity should not mix and it greatly increases the chance of shock. Keep all electrical equipment away from standing water or damp conditions (indoors or outdoors) and do not operate equipment with wet hands.
- ▶ Make sure any outlet near a water source (and all outdoor outlets) are ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protected. If you have questions about electrical safety at work, contact Victory Electric at 620-227-2139. For more information about electrical safety, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

Energy Scams *Unmasked*

Consumers with water, gas and electricity connections have long been targets for utility scams. But in today's digital world, every swipe or click increases the risk of potential scams.

Scammers are more sophisticated than ever before, and they understand our increasing reliance on technology. With their sharpened digital knives, scammers have adapted their tactics to trick unsuspecting consumers through a variety of methods.

Victory Electric wants to help you avoid energy scams, whether a financial loss or leak of your personal information. Read on to learn about some of the latest utility scams and get tips to help you stay safe from even the craftiest scammers.



RECENT UTILITY SCAMS

Scammers typically disguise themselves — either physically or digitally — as utility employees or representatives to steal consumers' money or personal information. A common trick is to claim a consumer's bill is past due and threaten to disconnect service if payment isn't received immediately. Scammers approach consumers through a variety of means, including phone calls, text messages, emails and even in-person visits. However, the digital line of attack is increasingly more common.

For example, new capabilities disguising caller ID or "spoofing" can make the phone number you see on caller ID appear to be from a trusted source. Spoofing makes it easier for scammers to deceive you because it's more difficult to immediately verify the call. Another recent scam uses fraudulent websites that are identical to a utility payment webpage — and what's worse, these pages are often promoted on search engines to trick consumers into clicking and making a payment.

Another recent scam involves phone calls, text messages or emails claiming you overpaid your electric bill and will receive a cash or banking refund. This offer may seem too good to be true, and it is — it's likely a scam aimed at stealing your personal information.

SPOTTING A SCAM

There are several red flags you can watch for to identify an energy scam.

Scammers often use high-pressure tactics to create a sense of urgency, like claiming your electricity or other services will be disconnected if a payment isn't made immediately.

Additionally, scammers may ask for unusual payment methods such as gift cards or cryptocurrency. If someone is pushing for an unusual payment method, it's likely a scam.

You've probably noticed that many digital scams, like emails or text messages, include poor grammar, spelling errors and odd email addresses. These are red flags, so when you see these dodgy forms of communication, consider it a potential scam.

WHAT VICTORY ELECTRIC WILL (AND WON'T) DO

Victory Electric will never demand an instant, immediate payment and threaten to disconnect your service without prior notices or warnings. We strive to resolve challenging situations and work with our members to avoid disconnects.

We will never ask for your Social Security number or banking details over the phone or through email. We offer several secure payment options, including in-person, mail, secure phone system, www.victoryelectric.net, and the SmartHub app.

AVOIDING SCAMS

Whether in-person, over the phone or online, always be suspicious of an unknown individual claiming to be a Victory Electric employee requesting banking or other personal information. We will only send you text messages if you have opted in for important messages like outage updates, emergency alerts and notices when your bill is available. To review or change your notification settings, visit <https://victoryelectric.smarthub.coop/ui/#/manageNotifications>.

If you're ever in doubt about a potential energy scam, give us a quick call at 620-227-2139 so we can assist you and answer any questions. Victory Electric wants to help protect you and our community against utility frauds, and by notifying us about potential scams, you can create the first line of defense. We encourage you to report any potential scams so we can spread the word and prevent others in our community from falling victim.

Day AT THE Farm

Victory Electric lineworkers attended the Ford County Farm Bureau Association's Day on the Farm event for local fourth graders at the Western State Bank Expo Center Dodge City this April. They presented electrical safety demonstrations to several hundred students, who experienced the sights, sounds and smells of what happens when contact is made with a power line.



Students ask for autographs from Victory Electric linemen.



LEFT: Students try on lineworkers' gloves. RIGHT: Manager of Safety Justin Straight (left) shows safety equipment to students.



An arc shoots up during the high-voltage demonstration providing students an impressive lesson on staying away from electrical lines.



Manager of Safety Justin Straight (left) and Vice President of Key Accounts & Safety Kyndell Penick show students the inside of a grapefruit "zapped" by electricity during the power line demonstration.

Upcoming Events

JUNE AND JULY 2024

JUNE
07

Dodge City A's Baseball Game
7 p.m. | Cavalier Field

JUNE
13-21

Electric Cooperative Youth Tour
Washington, D.C.

JULY
12

Spearville City of Windmills
(COW) Festival
5-7 p.m. | Greenstreet Park

JULY
12-18

Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp
Near Steamboat Springs, Colorado

JULY
26

Dodge City Days Western Parade
9:30 a.m. | Sixth Avenue and
Soule Street