

## You've Won a Free CFL

This month's lucky winners are...

**CHRIS ZORDEL, KAREN BLASI, JEAN BONE, JAIME HERNANDEZ, LIONEL PADILLA, DICK SEARS, JOSE J ALFARO, and MALINDA THAYER.**

Come by Victory Electric Cooperative to get your free compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL). Every month, Victory Electric gives members free CFL light bulbs. Congratulations, winners!

Visit our Website & Join us on Social Media



Visit our website at victoryelectric.net. On our website, you will find a calendar of events, frequently asked questions, bill pay and energy calculators—just to name a few!

You can also follow Victory Electric on Facebook and Twitter by searching for "The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc." Check our pages for updates, outage information and energy efficiency tips. Social media is a great way to stay in touch with your co-op.



Happy Easter – April 16

Victory Electric hopes you have a happy and blessed Easter.

## Third Graders Receive Dictionaries



Pictured left to right back row: Miceala Morales, Tayvn, Heremias, Jared, Jordan, Andres, Angel, Kenya and Gwen Pendergast, teacher. Front row: Ulisses, Alberto, Jesse, Albertine, Nelly, Paulina, Juana and Miranda.

The Dodge City Rotary Club, along with Victory Electric and others partnered together to purchase and donate dictionaries to third grade students across Dodge City.

The goal of the dictionary project is to assist all students in becoming good writers, active readers, creative thinkers, and resourceful learners by providing them with their own personal dictionary. The dictionaries are gifts to the students for them to use at school and at home for homework and projects for years to come.

Since The Dictionary Project's implementation in 1995, more than 18 million children have received dictionaries because thousands of people recognized the same

need in communities across the U.S. The program has been adopted and refined by individuals, businesses, and civic organizations all over the country. Groups such as Rotary clubs, Kiwanis clubs, Elks lodges, Granges, Lions clubs, The Republican Federation of Women, Pioneer volunteers, parent organizations, and many more, have implemented The Dictionary Project where they live.

Victory Electric has come together with the area Rotary clubs for nearly 10 years to purchase third graders a personal dictionary.

Ms. Pendergast's class at Beason Elementary in Dodge City received dictionaries courtesy of Victory Electric and Dodge City Rotary club.

# Working on the LINE

Wild fires on March 6 left 12 damaged poles and approximately 1,200 outages until the poles could be replaced.

## Cooperatives Unite to Support "Building a Brighter Future" Campaign for Russell Child Development

CoBank, Pioneer Communications, Pioneer Electric Cooperative, Inc., Southern Pioneer Electric Company, The Victory Electric Cooperative Association, Inc., and Wheatland Electric Cooperative have joined efforts to support Russell Child Development Center and its "Building a Brighter Future" Campaign.

Combined, the five cooperatives have pledged \$75,000 over the next three years. CoBank has committed to match the cooperatives' donations, bringing the total donated to \$150,000. The goal of the "Building a Brighter Future" campaign is to ensure Russell Child Development Center will have a facility with the capacity and flexibility to accommodate service needs and adequately support all the programs and staff members serving families in southwest Kansas.

"The generous donation by area cooperatives will help us toward our goal of building a facility to meet our current and future needs," said Deanna Berry, Russell Child Development Center Executive Director. "We depend on the generous support of donors to cover the funding gap between actual costs for providing services and available government funding."

Russell Child Development Center is a community-based nonprofit with a mission to lay a foundation of

success for all young children and their families through the delivery of high-quality, inclusive services. Russell Child Development Center has four main programs aimed at providing free services to address the needs of at-risk, young children to improve child health and education outcomes.

"Russell Child Development Center provides much-needed free services to families across southwest Kansas," said Victory Electric CEO Shane Laws. "In the cooperative spirit of helping the communities we serve, Victory Electric is happy to support the tremendous efforts and the services Russell Child Development Center brings to southwest Kansas. We would also like to sincerely thank CoBank for their generous support, which helped multiply the impact of the cooperatives' donation."

CoBank is a cooperative bank that provides loans, leases, export financing and other financial services to agribusinesses and rural power, water and communications providers in all 50 states. CoBank believes strongly in the cooperative principle of "Concern for Community," and partners with its customers to support worthy causes as a way to make a positive difference and fulfill its mission of service to rural America.



Pictured left to right: Anita Wendt, Pioneer Electric Cooperative and Southern Pioneer Electric Company; James Davis, RCDC Board President; Katrina Lowry, RCDC Building Blocks Director; Dana McNutt, RCDC Financial Officer; Kasey Krueger, Pioneer Communications; Deanna Berry, RCDC Executive Director; Seth Hart, CoBank Vice President of Electric Distribution, Water, & Community Facilities; Alli Conine, Wheatland Electric Cooperative; Jose Olivas, RCDC Board Member; and Kennedy St. George, Victory Electric Cooperative.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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THE VICTORY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

electronews



### The Victory Electric Co-op Assn., Inc.

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Manager of Operations

**Tom Lowery**  
Manager of Special Projects

### FROM THE CEO

## Join Fellow Members at Victory Electric's 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting



Shane Laws

It's that time of year again; Victory Electric is gearing up for the 2017 annual meeting, which will be held April 11, 2017, at the Western State

Bank Expo Center starting at 5 p.m. A steak meal will be served to those attending.

The annual meeting is a special time for co-op members to gather, share experiences, hear from co-op leadership and, perhaps most importantly, vote to elect your new board members.

Victory Electric employees work hard to host this fun event, and we encourage you to attend and exercise some of the many rights you have as a member of an electric cooperative. We know the food and prizes are the best parts of the meeting, but there is so much more to the event.

Did you know the annual meeting is an occasion to discuss and learn more about the issues affecting our community and the electric utility industry? The recently implemented rate change;

the attempt to list the Lesser Prairie Chicken as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, as well as the Clean Power Plan. This is an opportunity to learn more about the topics that impact you and talk about what we as a community can do to address our most pressing challenges and take advantage of opportunities.

Your annual meeting is also the occasion to exercise one of the greatest benefits of being an electric co-op member: voting for the upcoming year's board of trustees. As a member, you are an owner and have a voice.

Your electric cooperative is not owned by far-away investors. Your electric cooperative is run by a democratically-elected board that is given the privilege to serve because of your vote.

At this year's annual meeting, not only will you have a blast (and maybe win a prize!), but you will feel good knowing you had a voice in a very important decision that impacts one of our most vital resources, electricity.

We hope to see you at the annual meeting.

Thanks, Shane

## Co-op Employee Updates



Shea Ricke Felix Strauss Tami Henry

Victory Electric announces a recent crew chief promotion and adds two more to the team.

### Ricke Promoted to Crew Chief

**SHEA RICKE** has been chosen to fill a crew chief position.

"I started my career at Victory as a warehouse guy, and I am looking forward to the new challenge and advancing my career," Ricke said.

Ricke started at Victory Electric in October 2004. In April 2007, he moved to the line crew. Congratulations, Shea on your achievement.

### Victory Electric Adds Groundsman

Newly-hired lineman **FELIX STRAUSS** is an Abilene native and begins his career at Victory Electric as a groundsman.

Strauss graduated from Northwest Lineman College in Idaho. Help us welcome Felix to the area.

### Accounting Department Adds

Accountant and Business Analyst

Victory Electric welcomes **TAMI HENRY** to the team as an accountant and business analyst.

Henry is a Dodge City native and a graduate of Fort Hays State University with a degree in computer information systems and an additional degree in accounting from Baker University.

"I am looking forward to the challenge and stepping out of my comfort zone," Henry said. "I hope to make a difference in the company and take what I've learned in the past and pass the knowledge onto someone else."

Congratulations, Tami, and welcome to Victory Electric!

## Lineman Appreciation Day 2017



Victory Electric celebrates Lineman Appreciation Day April 10, with the rest of the cooperatives across the U.S. Help us #ThankLineman.

America's electric cooperatives have designated the second Monday of April as National Lineman Appreciation Day. On April 10, 2017, Victory Electric will honor the hard working men who often work in challenging conditions to keep the lights on.

"Electric linemen do not often receive the recognition they deserve," said Shane Laws, Victory Electric CEO. "They work all hours of the day, often in hazardous

conditions far from their families, going above and beyond to restore power to their communities. Our linemen, as well as linemen from across the nation, truly deserve this special day of recognition."

Victory Electric invites members to take a moment to thank a lineman for the work they do. Use #ThankLineman to show your support for the men and women who light our lives.

## CO-OP CONNECTIONS SPOTLIGHT

### Shop Local with New Auto Store



Cars and a dream led Dodge City native Robert Dominguez to own **ROBERT'S AUTOMOTIVE**.

Newly opened Robert's Automotive offers three free oil changes with a purchase of a vehicle to Victory Electric members using their Co-op Connections Card.

Dominguez's love for cars and his dad's ownership of a mechanic shop led him to buy the car lot just six months ago.

"I had a dream, so I wrote a goal and met it" said Robert Dominguez, owner of Robert's Automotive. "I grew up with cars. My dad is a mechanic, so they've always been a part of who I am."

"My warranties are great and

they are honest sales," Dominguez said. "The cars are ready for any use when they leave the lot."

While Robert's Automotive is newly opened, Dominguez is no new kid on the block to maintaining and selling cars.

"This has been a dream of mine since I was young. Being in my hometown and achieving my goal is a great feeling," Dominguez said.

Robert's Automotive has any vehicle you're looking for and if it isn't on the lot, Dominguez will help you find it.

Located on South Second Ave. in Dodge City, Robert's Automotive is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Saturday and by appointment on Sundays.

# 2017 Candidates for the Victory Electric Board of Trustees

## District Two

### JOHN LEIS, Minneola

I have been proud to serve on the Victory Electric board of trustees for the past 12 years. Victory Electric has experienced many changes during the past

few years with the implementation of various new technologies designed to save Victory Electric members money and increase system efficiency.

Victory Electric continues to be a community-minded leader, and I hope to be a part of the effort to promote the future growth and success of both our community and the cooperative. I will do my best to adhere to our mission statement of providing members with safe, reliable service at a competitive rate.

I would like to thank the members of District 2 for your support over the years, and I would be grateful for the opportunity to continue to serve as your trustee.



John Leis

## District Four

### JIM IMEL, Buckin

In my time on the board, I've had the opportunity to be a part of numerous accomplishments. We have also had many challenges, none more so than the current rate change. While we never want to change rates, I'm proud it has been six years since the last rate change. Costs rise every day, and for the financial health of the cooperative, it's time for that change.

My time and experience serving on the Victory Electric Board of Trustees have been invaluable. I have gained extensive knowledge of cooperative business and finances that will be of benefit to the members of Victory Electric. I've also had the opportunity to diversify my knowledge of the electric industry by representing Victory Electric on the Sunflower Board of Directors.

I am very thankful for my district members' support and input, and I am dedicated to facing any upcoming challenges at Victory Electric with increased knowledge and experience.



Jim Imel

## District Six

### KENNY WHEKAMP, Cimarron

I have been honored to serve and represent the members of Victory Electric on the board of trustees. I will continue to represent the members as I have in the past.

As a self-employed farmer, I am well-versed in fiscal responsibility and business management, and I am dedicated to using those skills to maintain the financial stability of the cooperative.

The recent implementation of a rate change was not a decision that came easy to the board, but after carefully weighing our options, we chose a path that best balanced members' interest with meeting the cooperative's financial obligations. I acknowledge that no one wants to see their rates go up, me included, but I am proud the members in my district haven't seen a rate change in six years.

I feel I am qualified to continue to serve as a representative for District 6, and I remain committed to working with all the members of the board and the community to ensure Victory Electric is a cooperative of which we can be proud. Thank you for your vote.



Kenny Whekamp

## District 10

### RANDY QUINT, Dodge City

It has been an honor serving as your Victory Electric trustee for the Dodge City district for the past six years. I have enjoyed being on the board and feel my background and experience provide me the qualifications to push Victory Electric in a direction that is good for employees, members and the community as a whole.

In total, I have more than 25 years of experience in the electric utility industry. My wide range of job experiences in the field gives me insight into the day-to-day operations of an electric cooperative from an employee and a member viewpoint. In that sense, I am able to bring a unique perspective to the Victory Electric Board of Trustees.

Thank you for your confidence in me during the past six years. I would be honored to serve you again, and would appreciate your vote.



Randy Quint

### JEFF REINERT, Dodge City

I have been extremely fortunate to return to my family farm in southwest Kansas. Being able to live and raise my family in the community where I grew up reaps many rewards.

Dodge City faces the same battle as the rest of rural America, with retention of young, capable leaders and providing them with viable opportunities to succeed in all aspects of life. I feel the Victory Electric Cooperative system and the board of trustees offer the opportunity for young leaders, such as myself, to collaborate, serve and lead; an honor I would passionately welcome.

I believe my background as a director of the board for Pride Ag Resources for the last six years, the last two serving as vice-president, also gives me the experience to be an asset in the electric cooperative system. I have completed all five courses of director training provided by the Kansas Cooperative Council and I am a class eight graduate of the Kansas Agricultural and Rural Leadership (KARL) program. Victory Electric is an integral part of this community and I would appreciate your support and look forward to serving on your behalf.



Jeff Reinert

## Annual Report & Voting Ballots Mailed to You

The business and affairs of the cooperative are directed by the board of trustees.

The cooperative territory is divided into districts, all of which are represented by a trustee. Trustees are elected at the annual meeting for a three-year term.

Districts two, four, six and ten are up for election this year. Every member of Victory Electric will receive an annual report in the mail. A spanish version is available on victoryelectric.net.

Mail-in ballots are enclosed for those members in districts up for election. Ballots must be received by 5 p.m. on Monday, April 10.

Only mailed ballots will be counted in the election. No voting will be held electronically or at the annual meeting.



Watch for your annual report and ballot in the mail.

The cooperative territory is divided into 10 districts, all of which are represented by a trustee. Victory Electric's bylaws require the city of Dodge City to be one district represented by three trustees.

Trustees are elected at the annual meeting for three-year terms of office. Each year, Dodge City has one trustee up for election. The other nine districts' trustees are up for election on a three-year rotation.