

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative   
 101 Main, P.O. Box 230, Scott City, KS 67871  
 620-872-5885  
 www.weci.net

**WHEATLAND  
 ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

**NEWS**

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 Electric  
 Co-op Inc.**

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- Garden City—620-275-0261**  
2005 W Fulton, P.O. Box 973  
Garden City, KS 67846
- Great Bend—620-793-4223**  
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Great Bend, KS 67530
- Harper—620-896-7090**  
906 Central, P.O. Box 247  
Harper, KS 67058
- Leoti—620-375-2632**  
N Hwy 25, P.O. Box 966  
Leoti, KS 67861
- Scott City-Main—620-872-5885**  
101 Main St., P.O. Box 230  
Scott City, KS 67871
- Syracuse—620-384-5171**  
206 1/2 N Main  
P.O. Box 1010  
Syracuse, KS 67878
- Tribune—620-376-4231**  
310 Broadway  
P.O. Box 490  
Tribune, KS 67879

**FROM THE MANAGER**

**Back to School**

Electric co-ops are continually learning to improve service for members.



**Bruce W. Mueller**

It's a new school year and kids of all ages are getting ready for a fresh year of learning! From kindergarten through college, students attend school to gain knowledge about a variety of subjects and learn new skills that will prepare them for the future. In a similar vein, Wheatland Electric Cooperative Inc. (WEC) is continually learning to advance technology that improves electric service, reliability and safety and in turn, enhances quality of life for the members we serve in our local communities.

With the energy sector rapidly changing, WEC keeps well-informed

of industry trends. Innovations in technology and energy types are fueling demand for more options. On the consumer front, people are looking for more ways to manage their energy use with smart technologies. Consumers expect more convenient payment methods—whether through automatic bill pay, prepay, online or in person.

We're working to help sift through the options for our members in ways that benefit the greater community. At the same time, we never lose sight of our Mission: Delivering Energy for Life.

**Technology Improves  
 Operational Efficiency**

For example, advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) is an integrated system of meters, communications

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**SAFETY**

**Tip of the Month**

To ensure safety, motorists should always slow down and use caution when approaching farm equipment. Farm vehicles make wide turns and the large equipment often crosses the center line. So, please watch out. Your diligence could save a life.



Member

# SPOTLIGHT

## GREAT BEND EVENTS CENTER



Wheatland Electric's Annual Meeting was hosted at the Great Bend Events Center, located at 3111 10th Street.

Wheatland Electric was proud to host our 2019 Annual Meeting at the **GREAT BEND EVENTS CENTER**, which is nestled along Great Bend's bustling 10th Street. The Great Bend Events Center hosts numerous events each year, such as weddings, community events, reunions, meetings and conferences. The Events Center also houses The Great Bend Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB).

Originally built in 1981, the "Convention Center" complimented the Holiday Inn next door. Over the years, the hotel changed hands several times before closing, however, the Convention Center continued to serve as a gathering space for local events and large out-of-town conferences such as the annual Polka Dancers convention and the National Retired Teachers Association. In late 2011, a group of local investors bought the property and gifted the building to the City of Great Bend, which still operates the building, now the Great Bend Events Center, and maintains this vital event space.

The city recently invested in numerous renovations for the building. In 2018, the Events Center received new flooring throughout the entire venue and the kitchen was updated with

new cabinetry and an ice machine. Additionally, the city added a portable dance floor, made improvements to the parking area and purchased all new chairs, tables and a sound system.

The exterior of the building has also received a face-lift as an awning was added in 2018 and fresh, exterior paint was completed in 2019. Future goals include remodeling the bathrooms and purchasing additional air walls, which would accommodate larger conferences' need for additional rooms to host breakout sessions.

With over 12,000 square feet of meeting space, the Events Center is available to rent. The full room can accommodate roughly 700 people. That same space can also be divided into two separate meeting rooms for smaller events. Additionally, the facility has a conference room, which can accommodate approximately 50 people. Anyone interested in using the facility can reach out to CVB visitor coordinator, Emily Goad at 620-792-2750.

Wheatland Electric would like to thank the City of Great Bend for their investment in this property and for their hospitality during our 2019 Annual Meeting in April.

### GREAT BEND EVENTS CENTER

3111 10th St, Great Bend, KS 67530

620-793-4111

[www.greatbendks.net](http://www.greatbendks.net)



A packed house for a community event hosted at the Great Bend Events Center!

# Back to School

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networks and data management systems that enables two-way communication between utilities and consumers. In the event of an outage, AMI helps distinguish between events that impact a single home or multiple outages. This is critical because resolving either issue is a very different process. The two-way communication is integral to AMI because it provides a means to verify that power has been restored after an outage. However, one of the biggest benefits from improved technologies, especially for outages caused by extreme weather is pinpointing the outage location, which helps to reduce risk for crews out on the road during severe weather events.

In addition to providing essential information during major outages, Wheatland Electric analyzes AMI data for anomalies including faults, damaged meters or energy theft. Detecting these problems early helps our cooperative save money and improves reliability for the WEC service territory.

WEC is always exploring how emerging technologies can better serve our members. Our "school year" is never over. We continually listen to and learn from our members about their priorities for the future, and we will continue to study and research the issues so that we can better serve you, now and in the future.

*Until next time, take care.*

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL  
**FOOD BANK!**  
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

**WHEATLAND  
ELECTRIC'S  
FOOD  
DRIVE  
IS  
BACK!**

**CRAM THE  
VAN**  
WHEATLAND  
ELECTRIC

WATCH FOR THE  
**BIG RED VAN**  
IN YOUR COMMUNITY!

**CRAM  
THE VAN**  
IT'S TIME TO DONATE  
SUPPORT YOUR  
LOCAL FOOD  
BANK

**SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER  
WATCH FOR THE BIG RED VAN IN YOUR  
COMMUNITY!**

# Meet Wheatland Electric

As summertime rolls around each year, so does a new group of Wheatland Electric interns. For the past 25-plus years, it has been wonderful to have an energetic group of students shadowing our crew.

While the number of interns each year fluctuates, Wheatland Electric is proud to have four interns with us for the summer. Each of the linemen interns learn under a foreman's crew. We hope you enjoy getting to know this year's summer interns!

We value our relationship with area lineman schools located in Manhattan and Pratt. We've always been impressed with the talent of students from these schools and the high-quality hires we've been able to make.

If you or someone you know is interested in an internship opportunity with Wheatland Electric, please feel free to reach out to our HR Department, or submit your resume online at [resumes@weci.net](mailto:resumes@weci.net).

**Interested in an internship?  
Submit your resume online at [resumes@weci.net](mailto:resumes@weci.net).**

## Tell us about yourself.

## What was your favorite part?



**Braden Antes**

I was born in Emporia and raised in Lawrence and McLouth. I attended high school in McLouth. After high school, I earned credits toward an associates degree at Allen County Community College. I now attend Manhattan Area Technical College where I am finishing my associates and earning a Certificate in Electrical Power and Distribution.

My favorite part has been learning all the tools and secrets to the trade, as well as getting to know my co-workers. They go out of their way to make sure that I have the tools and knowledge to learn.



**Colby Gugelmeyer**

I am 20 years old. I have lived in Lakin my whole life and still live there. I attended Northwest Lineman College in Denton, Texas. I grew up on a ranch/farm.

Getting to know the "ins and outs" of the electrical system and learning how a substation works. Also, meeting a bunch of really good guys.



**Aaron Sherrill**

I was born and raised in Jetmore. I graduated from Hodgeman County High School. I worked for an electrician during the summer of 2018 and in January 2019, I enrolled in the Dodge City Community College Lineman program.

I have enjoyed learning about this trade. My favorite part of my internship is the many new things I have learned.



**Manuel Carrillo Turner**

I graduated from Scott Community High School in 2012 and received my bachelor of business management from National American University in 2016. I then obtained my Electrical Distribution Certificate from Dodge City Community College in 2018.

Being exposed to the trade every day has been awesome. There is a lot to learn and having people who enjoy their jobs and teach me to the best of their ability is great.

# c's 2019 Summer Interns

## What did you learn?

## What surprised you the most?

## What was the most difficult part?

## What or who inspired you to pursue this career?

## What are your future plans?

I have learned several new names and uses for tools. I have also learned more about transformers and how the job as a whole works.

How willing the guys are to stop and take time to teach me; to teach me right and in detail.

I would say the most difficult part is not being able to be up close and personal during hot-work and understand the reasons and tricks to certain tasks.

The need and demand for linemen, the honor and getting over my fear of heights.

To finish at Manhattan Tech this fall/winter and hopefully be hired by Wheatland!

So far, I've learned some of the different components of a substation and how to take oil samples from a transformer.

When I first started I was skeptical about being in the substation department, but now that I am here, I really enjoy it.

So far, the only thing I've struggled with is opening up and being more social with everyone. I've always been quiet and I like to keep things to myself.

In high school, I met some linemen and talked to them about their career. It seemed like something I would want to do. I love manual labor and working with my hands, but I'm not much of a mechanic or welder, so I figured this would be my best shot!

At the end of the summer, I would really like to get hired by Wheatland. I really enjoy working here. This is a good company that takes care of its employees.

I have learned to set poles, frame poles, operate digger trucks and string up wire.

How many little things go into making a job look perfect when it's completed.

Learning everything every day, but I enjoy it, so I don't take it as a difficulty.

I've always had an interest in the electrical trade. My biggest influence would be my stepfather, who is a journeyman lineman.

Work hard and hopefully continue my career with Wheatland Electric!

Finding faults, splicing procedures, identifying tools and their purpose, framing and setting poles.

Practices are somewhat hard to comprehend, however learning every bit is quite rewarding. Everybody is very welcoming and shares their knowledge, which is something I did not expect.

Being so fresh in the industry, therefore tools, tasks, and ideas are often vague, when I hear work orders. It is tough to follow and be proactive until it is dummed down to something I comprehend.

The nature of the job inspired me to become a lineman. I have always been exposed to the environment for work and truly enjoyed it. It also requires mental and physical aptitudes that only certain people possess.

I want to be a journeyman lineman, stay in southwest Kansas, build a family, and be able to learn and lead just like they have done with me.

# Thank You to Our Dedicated Staff and Board Members

## 30 YEARS

Chris Huber, Great Bend

## 25 YEARS

Bruce Loy, Leoti

Curtis Peterson, Garden City

## 20 YEARS

Matthew Riley, Syracuse

Carlos Pardo, Garden City

## 15 YEARS

Kevin Morphew, Garden City

Nick Buehler, Scott City (WBS)

Dave Morris, Garden City

## 10 YEARS

Woody Barnes, Harper\*

Vic Case, Leoti\*

Clinton Gulick, Caldwell

Bob Hiss, Great Bend\*

Nathan Porter, Leoti

Kyle Strickert, Garden City

Debbie Stonestreet, Syracuse

Trent Suchy, Great Bend

## 5 YEARS

Mario Diaz, Garden City

Logan Mattheyer, Garden City

Blake Reed, Great Bend

Rabbecca Lopez, Garden City

\*Indicates Wheatland Trustee



# Kansas' Largest Solar Project Breaks Ground

On June 17, 2019, Mid-Kansas Electric Company Inc. and Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, Lightsource BP, and National Renewables Cooperative Organization (NRCO) broke ground on the 20 megawatt Johnson Corner Solar Project in Johnson City.

Wheatland Electric Cooperative Inc. is a member of both the Mid-Kansas Electric Company Inc. and Sunflower Electric Power Corporation.

The 241-acre site is located 2 miles southwest of Johnson City in Stanton County, and approximately 75,000 solar panels will be installed making it the largest solar facility in the state upon completion of the project. Construction is expected to take place in mid-2019, with the expected commercial operation of the project in early 2020.

Mid-Kansas Electric Company Inc., a wholesale generation and transmission supplier, is a coalition of five rural electric cooperatives and one wholly owned subsidiary that serve approximately 200,000 Kansans throughout 33 counties. Mid-Kansas' members in addition to Wheatland Electric include Lane-Scott Electric Cooperative Inc. (Dighton), Prairie Land Electric Cooperative Inc. (Norton), Pioneer Electric Company (Ulysses), The Victory Electric Cooperative Association Inc. (Dodge City) and Western Cooperative Electric Association Inc. (WaKeeney).

Mid-Kansas has signed a 25-year power purchase agreement with Lightsource BP, who will finance, construct, own and operate the project. NRCO facilitated the partnership. The project will capitalize on the abundant solar resource in southwest Kansas and provide an on-peak, fixed-price hedge against the market price of energy.

"Wheatland Electric is especially proud to be a part of



**From left: Kevin Christy, COO North America at Lightsource BP; Rep. Martin Long (R-Ulysses); Clare Gustin, Sunflower vice-president member services and external affairs of Sunflower and Mid-Kansas; Corey Linville, Sunflower vice-president power supply and delivery of Sunflower and Mid-Kansas; Wes Campbell, Sunflower board chairman; U.S. Rep. Roger Marshall (R-Kansas); Stuart Lowry, president and CEO of Sunflower and Mid-Kansas; Stephen Epperson, Mid-Kansas board chairman; Kyle Nelson, COO of Sunflower and Mid-Kansas; Sen. John Doll (R-Garden City); Todd Bartling, vice-president of renewables development for National Renewables Cooperative Organization.**

this project," said Bruce W. Mueller, general manager of Wheatland Electric. "We would like to congratulate all partners in this strategic project and are looking forward to the benefits this innovative opportunity will bring to rural Kansas and our members."

Additional benefits of this project are the diversity it adds to the generation resource and fuel source portfolio. The new facility will produce approximately 55,500 megawatt-hours annually, powering more than 4,900 homes across central and western Kansas. This will also be an attractive feature to potential commercial and industrial members looking to locate in our service territory. Finally, the value derived from energy, capacity and transmission savings provides a positive impact on keeping rates low to our members.

## Increasing Efficiency with Online Billing Interface

At Wheatland Electric, we offer multiple ways for members to pay their electric bill. Many members use an online bill pay service to set up a secure online account that lets you pay bills from one place. Just as technology is making it easier for members to pay, Wheatland will soon be utilizing an online billing interface (OBI) to help make this payment process more efficient. With OBI, payments are made electronically and directly to the member's account, eliminating the paper payment processing and the time it takes for Wheatland to either receive an electronic payment or paper check.

"Rather than having to deposit a paper check, it's processed the same day as the payment comes in," said Pam Brungardt, director of consumer services. "It's a much more streamlined process. It saves our CSRs (customer service representatives) from manually posting payments."

Every one of Wheatland's members are different which is why Wheatland offers a host of secure payment options. OBI will help Wheatland save time by automating payment processing and we are excited to offer this payment interface to any member who uses an online bill pay service to pay their electric bill.

# CO-OPS CARE CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

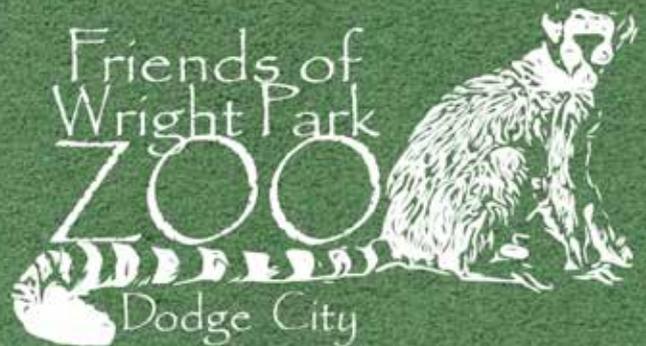
The Golf Club at Southwind

**FRIDAY**  
SEPTEMBER 13

**9 a.m. SHOTGUN START**

**4-MAN SCRAMBLE/ \$100 PER PLAYER**

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFITING



Wheatland's Cram the Van Food Drive and Friends of the Wright Park Zoo in Dodge City



TO REGISTER CALL 620-275-4080 OR EMAIL [NNUMRICH@WECI.NET](mailto:NNUMRICH@WECI.NET)