



Doug Elliott

GENERAL MANAGER'S MESSAGE: ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE

Kootenai Electric Cooperative's (KEC) 85th Annual Meeting of the Membership took place at the Kootenai County Fairgrounds in the Jacklin Building on May 20, 2023. Nearly 130 member households attended the event. Congratulations to our prize winners (pictured below with KEC employees), Mike Wilson, Rockford, who won the grand prize, a \$300 bill credit.

Mike elected to donate his \$300 bill credit to our Operation Round Up[®] program. Thank you, Mike! Dawn Workman, Post Falls, was the winner of the runner up prize, a Stihl Leaf Blower. More than 25 other prizes were awarded at the meeting. Thank you to our vendors for donating the prizes.



Annual Meeting Minutes

KEC is accepting comments on the 2023 Annual Meeting minutes through August 1, 2023. Draft 2023 Annual Meeting minutes are posted at www.kec.com and are also available at the KEC office. Comments may be submitted by email: cec@cec.com or mail: Kootenai Electric Cooperative, Attn: General Manager, 2451 W. Dakota Ave. Hayden, ID 83835.

Board of Director Election Update

We had two board seats up for election. District 3 was a contested election with two candidates. District 4 was uncontested with only one candidate. Per KEC's Bylaws if there is only one candidate in a district seeking election, then the candidate is elected by acclamation at the Annual Meeting. Congratulations to District 3 director Todd Hoffman and District 4 director David Bobbitt who were re-elected by the membership.



Election Prize Winners

Members who cast their votes online and have a SmartHub account were entered into a drawing for a \$300 KEC bill credit. Congratulations to winner Stephan Tanner, Coeur d'Alene. Those voting by mail or online without a SmartHub account were entered into a drawing for one of three \$100 KEC bill credits. Congratulations to winners:

- Sally Richter, Post Falls
- William McMillan, Spokane
- Harvey Rink, Rathdrum

Employee Spotlight: Mike Stevens

Mike Stevens is KEC's Operations Services Superintendent and has worked for KEC for 14 years.

What made you interested in working for KEC? How did you prepare for work in this field?

I started my career at Interstate Concrete & Asphalt where I trained to be a mechanic. I worked nights on their fleet while the trucks weren't on the road. After starting a family in 2008, I began looking for a day job and the opportunity to work for KEC as a fleet mechanic opened. Then in 2018 I was promoted to Operations Services Superintendent.

What does a day look like for you as the Operations Services Superintendent?

In my current role I manage the warehouse, fleet, purchasing and facilities. I usually start my day by checking in with the mechanics to see how our fleet of more than 115 vehicles is performing. This includes receiving updates on which vehicles are out of service or currently undergoing maintenance.

Next, I check in with our three warehousemen, who are responsible for the staging of materials for line construction jobs, inventory controls and salvaging/recycling materials.

The majority of my day is spent working closely with our purchasing agent to procure all of the materials and equipment we need. In addition, I've taken the lead on coordinating with the contractor building our Rathdrum headquarters on various portions of that project including utility placement, warehouse planning, change orders, generators and more.

Tell us about procuring materials and equipment for the cooperative.

The pandemic, disruptions in the supply chain, rising costs due to soaring inflation and labor shortages have increased the cost of living and doing business. The cost of the electrical equipment the cooperative



purchases to provide our members power has more than doubled and these materials have also been in scarce supply.

You probably are aware of how much vehicle prices have skyrocketed in recent years, and this is affecting KEC in a big way. For example, we cannot order the one-ton trucks needed for our fleet and bucket trucks are also in short supply. It's important to note that we keep and maintain our fleet vehicles for many years after purchasing them—they are one of the faces of KEC on the road.

Vehicle purchasing isn't the only concern. Single phase transformers ordered today will be delivered in four years and they have quadrupled in price. Insulated rubber goods, such as splices, elbows and other materials can take up to a year to deliver after ordering. These are significant challenges for a growing utility such as ours.

However, these are not challenges KEC is facing alone—utilities across North America are also affected. Our team at KEC is thinking outside the box for our purchasing strategy and considering new and innovative approaches.

Story continued on the next page.

Thank You for 'Rounding Up' for Our Community!

Operation Round Up® is supported by KEC members who voluntarily “round up” their monthly electric bills to the nearest dollar to help our neighbors in need. The extra pennies go into the Kootenai Electric Trust fund, which distributes grants to worthy causes in KEC’s service territory. Through this program, nearly \$1.4 million has been invested in our community.

In May 2023, the Trust Board awarded Operation Round Up® grants to the following organizations:

- \$2,500 to the Post Falls Food Bank to help support their operations including fuel, maintenance and vehicle repairs.
- \$2,500 to Orchard Ridge Senior Living facility to provide an additional handicap access to a sidewalk.
- \$2,500 to Faithful Fields to help purchase supplies and support their foster kids program. This organization connects dogs and people who need each other for mutual support.
- \$2,500 to One More Time, which offers memorable experiences to adults with life-limiting conditions.
- \$2,500 to Habitat for Humanity of North Idaho for their home repair program, which is offered to low-income homeowners in Kootenai County to assist with providing interior and exterior repairs.
- \$2,500 to Christ the King Lutheran Church to help organize and maintain the Wolverine Clothing Closet at Lakes Middle School that provides clothing to families in need.
- \$2,388 to Lakeland Middle School for the purchase of portable radios for safety and security (see photo at right).
- \$650 to Seltice Elementary School for the Idaho History Rendezvous program.

To apply for a grant, please visit www.kec.com for the online application. Applications are due July 21, 2023.

Members who choose not to contribute to Operation Round Up®, or who would like to begin contributing, may simply “opt-out” or “opt-in” on their bill/in SmartHub or contact KEC by phone, letter or email.



NEWS BRIEFS

WIN A \$50 ENERGY CREDIT

Below are 10 KEC account numbers. If you find yours, contact us at 208.765.1200 to receive a \$50 bill credit.

1490651, 1830358, 1822254, 1245434, 1332603, 1319522, 1585308, 1846147, 1855901, 1624902

KEC BOARD MEETINGS

Members are welcome to attend monthly board meetings. Meeting dates vary—call Constance Felten at 208.292.3211 for details.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT CONTINUED

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

Absolutely material shortages. Our mission is to provide exceptional service to our members and I want to ensure we have the materials needed to do just that.

What is the best part of your job?

KEC is a great place to work—they take care of my family. I also really enjoy helping with our new headquarters. It’s exciting to see where we are now after all the planning we have done. I’m looking forward to working there for the next 17 years.

STAY IN THE KNOW: Keep Your Contact Information Updated with Us

At KEC, we are constantly striving to improve our operational efficiency so we can provide the most reliable electric service possible for our members. We rely on data for nearly every aspect of our operations, which is why we need your help. By ensuring we have your most accurate and complete contact information, we can continue to provide the high level of service that you expect and deserve.

Up-to-date contact information can potentially speed up the power restoration process. For example, the phone number you provide is linked to your service address in our outage management system. This means when you call to report an outage, our system recognizes your phone number and matches it with your account location. Accurate information helps our outage management system predict the location and possible cause of an outage, making it easier for our crews to correct the problem.

While we always do our best to maintain service, we occasionally plan outages to update, repair or replace equipment. In these instances, we can provide advance notification to affected members through automated phone messages, text messages or email, if we have your updated contact information and communication preferences. Please take a moment to confirm or update your contact information by logging into SmartHub and visiting "settings" or "manage notifications." If you are not enrolled in SmartHub or have questions you may also contact us at 208.765.1200 or kec@kec.com.



Energy-Saving Projects for the Weekend Warrior

Are you a weekend warrior? If you're considering home improvement upgrades that save energy and money, we've got a few project ideas for you—all of which can be completed in a day or less! Here is one energy-saving project that you can easily tackle whether you're a weekend warrior pro or a DIY dabbler.

Create fresh savings with a DIY clothesline. If you have enough outdoor space available, installing a clothesline is a great way to save energy. Not only will you save on dryer costs, in the summer, you can also save on cooling costs since unwanted heat from the clothes dryer won't be added to your home (which makes your air conditioner work harder). Additionally, air drying is much gentler on fabrics and will keep your clothes and linens looking fresh longer.



You can create your own clothesline with two T-posts, wire and hook-and-eye turnbuckles. Depending on your soil, you may need a small amount of Quikrete to set the posts. Another option is installing the line between two trees. A typical load of laundry requires about 35 feet of line, so keep this in mind as you're determining the best location.

If an outdoor clothesline isn't an option, no sweat! You can easily create an indoor drying rack that folds to save space. Home improvement websites like www.thespruce.com and www.hgtv.com offer step-by-step tutorials for a variety of indoor clothes racks.

Check out www.kec.com/energy-saving-tips for two more energy-saving projects!