

Rolling Hills Electric Co-op, Inc.

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FROM THE MANAGER

Rolling Hills Returns \$450,000 in Capital Credits to Members

How familiar are you with the “cooperative difference” and what that entails? One of the many differences a cooperative offers its consumer-members is the return of capital credits, which your board of trustees recently approved. Consumer-members who received service from Smoky Hill Electric, Jewell-Mitchell Electric or NCK Electric during 1991, 1992 and 1993 will receive a “patronage refund” credit on their December electricity bill. If the consumer-member no longer has an active account, a check will be mailed to the last known address on file.

The cooperative pays back its margins, or the money left after bills are

paid, by retiring capital credits to members. Rolling Hills Electric is a not-for-profit utility owned by the consumer-members who receive or have received electricity from us. The cooperative relies on its consumer-members to cover the operating costs on a day-to-day basis.

The third cooperative principle, Members’ Economic Participation, refers to the money Rolling Hills Electric needs to cover the operating costs, which



Doug Jackson

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Progress Continues on New Kanopolis Substation

Work has been underway the past six months on replacing the Kanopolis Substation. In June, a new 32,000 pound, transformer was delivered to the City of Kanopolis. Marc Martin, operations manager, said that he has not moved a transformer of this size in his years here at Rolling Hills Electric.

Members receiving power from this substation experienced a few planned extended outages in the past few months, some of which were on weekends to avoid disrupting school and businesses. Members should now only see brief interruptions and will be notified when and if they occur.

What's the reason for this rebuilding and upgrading of the substation? Simply put, the current Kanopolis substation is at the end of its life. Rolling Hills is taking a proactive approach to help avoid issues in the future — outages being the main reason — to help keep our members' power uninterrupted as much as possible.

KDOT Electrical Safety Demo



Kendall Strutt, Scott Splichal, Riley Moore and Marc Martin performed the safety demonstration for approximately 50 employees in attendance.

Rolling Hills Electric crew members were invited to perform an electrical safety demonstration for the District Two Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) workers at their Concordia location. There were approximately 50 people in attendance. This demonstration was part of a two-day training for workers preparing for winter weather that will soon arrive. The electrical safety demo reminded KDOT workers to use caution around power lines and how to respond if they ever find themselves in a situation that involves electricity.

In the KDOT November Newsletter Doug Newquist, Mankato area superintendent, said "It was good to see what effects electricity has on the body and what to do if we are put in a situation where we're in contact with a power line, such as how to get away."

Contact Catie Mellies, member services, if your group would be interested in a free electrical safety demonstration at 785-534-1601.

Co-opportunity Day 2021

Farmway Credit Union, Central Valley Ag and Rolling Hills Electric, all local cooperatives in Beloit, celebrated National Co-op Month on Oct. 15. This is the fifth year Rolling Hills has hosted the picnic. Approximately 175 meals were served. Employees from each co-op assisted in setup, cooking, serving and clean-up. Members and guests were served burgers, baked beans, chips, cookies and iced tea. Tables were safely distanced, and proper protective equipment was worn by food servers and was offered to attendees. The turnout was a success despite any challenges presented by COVID-19. It was a beautiful fall day spent with our members and the community!



Left: Attendees enjoyed a free lunch and were able to safely social distance.

Right: Brandi Miller (left), Kansas Cooperative Council president, and Kaitlyn Nick (right), Rolling Hills Electric, help serve a picnic attendee.

Preparing for the Unthinkable

Linemen perform annual pole top rescue exercises

It's the type of training that a lineman wishes they never have to use; however, it is essential to know how to respond in case the unthinkable happens. Being a lineman is a difficult, dangerous job. It only takes a split-second loss of concentration to be injured or electrocuted.

Pole top rescue exercises were performed by Rolling Hills Electric crew members last month, which is an exercise that simulates a lineman having an electrical contact injury (or medical emergency) and becoming unconscious at the top of a utility pole. This training is a yearly OSHA-mandated safety requirement that evaluates each lineman on their ability to properly rescue an injured/stranded lineman. These exercises are performed at our Beloit facility on a designated utility pole that has no electricity or power line attached to it.

However, each lineman is evaluated as if every aspect of the training were real, and an energized power line were present.

The exercise begins with a 150-pound mannequin secured to the top of a utility pole by a safety harness. Each lineman must climb 20 feet up the pole using their climbing and fall arrest equipment. Once they reach the mannequin, the lineman secures a rope around the mannequin's chest, loops the rope over a cross arm, then lowers the mannequin to the ground. All of this has to be done as quickly as possible, as an injured lineman's life may hang in the balance.

The purpose of pole top rescue is to quickly and safely remove a victim from a power pole. There are many reasons why a person may need to be rescued from a pole and lowered to the ground. Some reasons are electrical shock, heart attack, heat stroke, physical injury, and equipment failure. No matter the reason, when a victim is unable to remove themselves from a pole, a lineman must perform a pole top rescue. When it happens, the speed, rescue method, and knowledge of first aid may save a life. In fact, an individual's life could depend on the ability to perform the procedure quickly and safely. Therefore, pole top rescue is a skill that linemen must develop and maintain proficiency in.

Anytime the power goes off to even one customer, linemen respond quickly, knowing the importance electricity plays in the lives of our members. However, this dedication to keeping the power on also requires extreme diligence to perform the work safely. Rolling Hills Electric is proud of its linemen and the important work they do each day to keep our members supplied with safe and reliable electricity. If you know a lineman, the next time you see them, take a minute to thank them for the work they do to keep the power on!



Steve Habiger
Journeyman Lineman
Ellsworth District



Trent Webb
Journeyman Lineman
Osborne District



Riley Moore
Apprentice Lineman
Beloit District



Todd Eitzmann
Journeyman Lineman
Belleville District



Kendall Strutt
Foreman
Belleville District

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comes directly from the members paying their monthly electric bill.

“Patronage” is the money you pay for your bill each month. Each year, the board allocates the margins to your capital credits account based on your patronage.

The board then examines the cooperative’s financial position and determines whether to retire capital credits to its members. This year, the board approved retiring the remaining margins from 1991, 100% of 1992 and 25% of 1993 totaling \$450,000.

If you or someone you know who was a past member who has had a change of address since leaving our service, please let them know to contact our office at 785-534-1601 during business hours (Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.) to update their contact information.

Dlabal Completes Board Leadership Program

COREY DLABAL, board treasurer from District 1, recently completed the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Board Leadership Program. This program consists of a series of courses focusing in greater depth on specific industry and governance issues. Congratulations, Corey!



Don't Forget to Apply for 2022 Youth Tour and Scholarships!

ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS: Are You Eligible for the Trip of a Lifetime?

- ▶ All high school juniors whose parents or guardians reside on Rolling Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc. lines.
- ▶ Complete and return the entry form at right by Dec. 21, 2021. You may also find the form at www.rollinghills.coop, in the *Kansas Country Living* magazine, from your high school counselor and on Facebook.
- ▶ Contestants will receive an entry packet. Finalists will be chosen from a completed application, resume, open-book quiz and short essay.
- ▶ Finalists will be interviewed to determine winners (time and date to be announced).
- ▶ Trip winners are expected to speak at Rolling Hills Electric’s Annual Meeting.

Rolling Hills Electric is now accepting applications from high school juniors who are interested in competing for a “trip of a lifetime.” In addition to the two trips to be awarded, each recipient will receive a \$500 scholarship upon high school graduation. Parents or guardians must reside on Rolling Hills Electric’s power lines. Material packets will be mailed to applicants Dec. 22, 2021.

For an eligible high school junior to enter the competition, the cooperative office should receive the completed form below **BY DEC. 21, 2021**. Submit your application by email to cmellies@rollinghills.coop. You can also mail or deliver your application to: Rolling Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc., Attn: Catie Mellies, P.O. Box 339, Beloit, KS 67420.

2022 YOUTH TOUR APPLICATION

Applicant Name _____ Birth Date _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Student Phone _____ Student E-mail _____

Grade _____ School _____

Name of Parent(s) or Guardian(s) _____

Electric Account # _____

Parent/Guardian(s) Phone _____

Parent/Guardian(s) E-mail _____

I agree that all information supplied in this application is accurate and true.

Applicant Signature _____

The safety of our students and chaperones is our top priority. If the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour or Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp organizers feel that travel is unsafe due to concerns with the coronavirus (or any other acts of terrorism, disaster, civil disorder, or curtailment of transportation facilities), then the trip will be canceled.