

The CIRCUIT



*** Proudly Serving Rural Kansas for Over 75 Years

December 2016



Merry Christmas!

From the Employees
and Trustees of
Your Electric Cooperative

In observance of the Holiday Season, we will be closed on December 23rd from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm, all day on December 26th, and all day on January 2nd to celebrate the New Year.

If you have an outage or trouble on your lines, please call 1-888-297-9212.

May the warmth, joy, and peace of this Christmas be with you and yours now and throughout the year.

Congratulations!

October was Cooperative Appreciation Month

To honor its members, Ark Valley Electric held a drawing to give away an infrared quartz heater. The winner of the drawing was **Jim Rein of Buhler, KS.**

Drawing Winner

LOREN KREHBIEL is the winner of our \$25.00 readership drawing.

Loren, to claim your prize, please contact Ark Valley by December 30, 2016 & give us the account number from your electric bill.

Avoid Fees

If you are planning to have some work done that requires your meter to be pulled, please call the Ark Valley Electric office before hand.

Our new AMI metering system can detect outages, which may result in a lineman being dispatched to check things out. If a lineman is sent on an outage that was a result of your meter being pulled without giving us notification, you will be charged a service call fee.

YOU Get The Credit!

Ark Valley Electric retires more than \$1,390,000 to members

It's time for you to get the credit —capital credits, that is— for helping build, sustain, and grow your local electric cooperative. This December Ark Valley Electric retires – or pays – more than \$1,390,000 to members like you across portions of nine counties served by the co-op.

When you signed up to receive electric service from Ark Valley you became a member of an electric cooperative. While investor-owned utilities return a portion of any profits back to their shareholders, electric co-ops operate on an at-cost basis. So instead of returning leftover funds to shareholders, Ark Valley allocates excess revenue, known as margins, to members as “capital credits”, and periodically retires them when the co-op’s financial condition permits.

This month, people and organizations who were members of Ark Valley from 1995, 1996 and 2015 will receive capital credit retirement checks in the mail. The amount of each allocation and retirement is based on how much individual members paid the co-op for electric service during that period.

The allocated capital credits helped us keep the lid on rates, reduced the amount of money we needed to borrow from outside lenders to build, maintain, and expand a reliable electric distribution system, and covered emergency expenses. Now it's time for the members who helped build this electric cooperative to get the credit.... through retired capital credits.



Winter Storm Safety

Snow and ice storms are an inevitable part of the winter season. However, they can lead to downed power lines and outages. Remember the following tips to stay safe and warm should you find yourself in the dark after a severe winter event:



- Never touch a fallen power line, and assume all wires on the ground are electrically charged. Call Ark Valley Electric at 888-297-9212 to report it immediately. Avoid contact

with overhead lines during cleanup and other activities.

- Generators should be installed in accordance with code utilizing a double throw switch which will allow for the safe operation during an emergency situation for both members and linemen.
- Generators and conductors should be properly sized and grounded to avoid damage to equipment.
- Keep your trees and limbs away from service lines and maintain the access to electric lines and poles on your property which will allow Ark Valley Electric vehicles a safe and efficient path to restore your power.
- If you use a portable generator to power a heating source, be sure the generator is located outside your house for proper ventilation. Do not use a generator in an attached garage. Follow manufacturer's directions for operating the generator.



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Alden Student Wins CoBank Scholarship

Karly Frederick of Alden, Kansas, a senior in agribusiness; Allison Nickelson of Penokee, Kansas, a junior in agribusiness; and Kristin Stiebe of Kinsley, Kansas, a junior in agribusiness, have each been awarded the CoBank Outstanding Student Scholarship through the Arthur Capper Cooperative Center and the Department of Agricultural Economics at Kansas State University.

Karly Frederick is a member of Food for Thought and the Agriculture Economics and Agribusiness Club. She also serves as an ambassador for the College of Agriculture, is a student fellow for the Center for Risk Management Education and Research, was a Koch Discover Days Scholar and was a previous recipient of the CoBank Outstanding Student Scholarship. Karly has also participated in a study abroad experience to Ireland through the Agricultural Economics Department. In addition to school, she works on the Frederick Harvesting crew and has had internships with CoBank and Publix Supermarkets. Karly is anticipating a May 2017 graduation and would like to pursue a career in the agricultural finance industry. The Frederick family is affiliated with the following cooperatives: MKC, Central Prairie Cooperative, Walters Cooperative Elevator Association, Ark Valley Electric Cooperative Association, CHS, Triangle Communications, Kanza Cooperative Association and Farmers Cooperative Grain Company of Abbyville.

"The CoBank Outstanding Student Scholarships are one way CoBank contributes to the education of future agricultural leaders with an interest in a career in finance or banking at Kansas State University," states Professor Brian Briggeman, director of the Arthur Capper Cooperative Center. This scholarship has awarded over \$65,000 since 2006. To be eligible for a scholarship, students must be a sophomore, junior or senior in high academic standing in K-State's Department of Agricultural Economics at the time the scholarship is received. Preference is given to students who are studying agricultural economics or agribusiness, who have demonstrated an interest in pursuing a career in banking or finance, have taken accounting or finance classes and are residents in one of the following states: CA, CO, CT, IA, KS, KY, MO, MN, NE and TX.



Board Meeting *Highlights*

The Board of Trustees for the Ark Valley Electric Cooperative Association held its regular meeting for the month of October on Halloween night at 7:30 pm.

The main action taken at the meeting was the retirement of capital credits. Capital credits represent a member's portion of the net margin received by the Cooperative. The more electricity a member purchases, the larger the portion of the net margin would be attributed to the member in the form of capital credits. Currently, Ark Valley is on a 20-year rotation system on retiring outstanding capital credit balances. To conform with the Board's policy, and to follow best practices for electric cooperatives, the Trustees retired all outstanding capital credit balances, both from Ark Valley and those allocated by KEPCo, from 1995 and 1996, \$149,524.29 and \$603,008.17 respectively. It also retired 40% of only Ark Valley's outstanding capital credit balances for 2015, \$644,760.99. The overall amount retired totaled \$1,397,293.45. Cooperative members and former members will receive their capital credit checks sometime during the month of December.

The Board also received an update on the performance of the Cooperative's distributed generation unit. The generator was purchased and operational at the beginning of summer last year. It runs when it is estimated the Cooperative may hit coincident peak, which is the most expensive electricity charged by the Cooperative's energy provider, KEPCo. By lowering our coincident peak during the summer of 2015, the Cooperative saved approximately \$137,900. This summer, the generator ran for 44 hours, produced 4,000 kW of electricity at peak, and lowered the coincident peak enough to save Ark Valley \$163,782.28.

Want to Become a Lineman?

Ark Valley Electric Cooperative is offering its members a \$1,000.00 SCHOLARSHIP to any graduating senior, high school graduate, or recipient of an equivalent degree (GED, etc.) that plans to enroll in a Kansas line school.

(Must be a member or have parents that are members of Ark Valley Electric to qualify.)

If interested, call (620)-662-6661 or pick up an application from your School Counselor.

Applications must be returned to Ark Valley Electric by March 15, 2017.



The Ark Valley Electric Cooperative Association, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.