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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

# Electronews

## The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc.

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## FROM THE CEO

# Electric Co-ops Grow for the Communities They Serve

## October is National Co-op Month

October is National Co-op Month, and Victory Electric is joining cooperatives across the U.S. to celebrate. Co-ops come in all shapes and sizes, but they each have a common goal: to provide goods or services for the members of the co-op.

Electric co-ops like Victory Electric exist to serve their members. Our priority is to provide affordable, reliable energy to our local communities. Because we are led by you, the members we serve, we can evolve to meet your needs.

Interest in solar energy continues to rise across the U.S. and in our

community. Cooperative members who want to invest in solar energy may not have the budget or live in a location that's suitable for installing rooftop solar panels, though.

This fall, residential members of Victory Electric will have the option to subscribe to our new **COMMUNITY SOLAR PROGRAM** at a cost of \$5 per share (equivalent to 125 kWh)



Shane Laws

*Continued on page 12B ►*

## TO THE MEMBERS OF THE VICTORY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION, INC.

# Notice of Board Meeting

The Board of Trustees of The Victory Electric Cooperative Association, Inc., will meet on **TUESDAY, OCT. 31, AT 8:30 A.M.** at the cooperative's corporate office, located at 3230 N. 14th Ave. in Dodge City, to discuss and vote upon a proposal to implement a Renewable Energy Rider, revisions to the Energy Cost Adjustment (ECA) Tariff, and deletion of the Grid Availability Charge from multiple tariffs.

This meeting is open to any member who wishes to attend. Members have the right under K.S.A. 66-104d(g) to request that the Kansas Corporation Commission review any rate change. For complete information on the proposed Renewable Energy Rider or the tariff changes, please visit our website at [www.victoryelectric.net/member-notice](http://www.victoryelectric.net/member-notice).




**CO-OPS GROW**  
*Communities*

**Electric cooperatives are joining co-ops across the U.S. to celebrate National Co-op Month in October.**

**As your local electric co-op, our services are shaped to meet your specific needs. We love growing with you, the members we are proud to serve.**

## Electric Co-ops Grow for the Communities They Serve *Continued from page 12A* ▶

per month in addition to members' monthly energy bills. Their energy costs will reflect the performance of the subscribed number of solar shares on their monthly electric bill. This will be based on the amount of power generated by Johnson Corner Solar Farm and the revenues from the power sold to the energy market each month. Providing members with this new option for convenient, economic solar participation is one way Victory Electric responds to the needs of our members.

This October, as we celebrate Co-op Month, we're focusing on this and other ways "Co-ops Grow" for our members.

### **CO-OPS GROW COMMUNITIES:**

Co-ops help communities grow by promoting economic empowerment, fostering community engagement and supporting the unique needs of co-op members. Concern for Community is one of our core principles — and being community focused is essential to everything we do at Victory.

Victory Electric invests in the economic development of our community through infrastructure projects such as the revitalization of downtown Dodge City, updates at the **DODGE CITY ROUNDUP ARENA** and expansion projects in partnership with area businesses. We enjoy participating in community events like the upcoming **PUMPKIN PAINTING FEST** and the **PARADE OF LIGHTS AND CHILI COOK-OFF**.

**CO-OPS GROW TOGETHER:** Co-ops are all about cooperation, not competition. That's why electric co-ops work together to share lessons learned, successful strategies and better ways to serve our members. We cooperate with other cooperatives by sharing training and communication resources and helping each other during widespread outages caused by extreme

weather events. We're better when we grow together.

### **CO-OPS GROW TOMORROW'S**

**LEADERS:** Electric co-ops serve as fertile ground for growing tomorrow's leaders through a variety of youth engagement programs. Whether through school safety demonstrations or community events, we're committed to providing opportunities for local youth to learn and thrive in our community and beyond.

Victory also invests in our community's youth leadership development by sponsoring the **LIGHTNER COMMUNITY SPIRIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM** as well as trips to the **COOPERATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP** in Colorado and the **ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE YOUTH TOUR** in Washington, D.C. These opportunities offer invaluable leadership training and enable our local youth to engage with students from across the country.

**CO-OPS GROW FOR YOU:** At Victory Electric, your satisfaction is our No. 1 goal. It's why we were formed many years ago to fulfill a uniquely local purpose. We've come a long way since then, and your needs continue to evolve. That's why we'll never stop growing for you. You empower the co-op through your membership.

Giving back to the community is woven into the cooperative spirit. To support local small businesses and show our commitment to growing the communities we serve, Victory Electric is once again celebrating National Co-op Month with our **CO-OPS LOVE LOCAL** campaign. Co-ops Love Local will benefit 50 locally owned businesses and 50 community members through a giveaway of 50 gift cards to area businesses in the amount of \$50 each. Learn more at [www.victoryelectric.net](http://www.victoryelectric.net).

**THANKS, SHANE**

# Co-ops Love Local

## Gift Card Giveaways Return

Since Victory Electric launched Co-ops Love Local in 2020, the campaign has helped 50 local businesses and 50 community members every October during National Co-op Month. Throughout the month of October, Victory Electric will draw 50 names to win \$50 gift cards to area businesses.

As a member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative, Victory Electric strives to serve the communities in our service area through leadership, integrity, accountability, innovation and community involvement. Giving back to the community through Co-ops Love Local and other outreach programs aligns well with the core cooperative principle of Concern for Community.

Winners of the \$50 gift card drawings may then post on Facebook using the hashtag #CoopsLoveLocal2023 or email Victory Electric at [askcommunications@victoryelectric.net](mailto:askcommunications@victoryelectric.net) with a description of how they spent their gift card

locally. Doing so will enter them in the Week of Giving drawing for a \$100 Victory Electric bill credit on Nov. 20. Winners who include a photo in the post or email showing how they spent the money locally will qualify them for an additional entry.

No purchase is necessary, and winners will be chosen at random. To win, you must be age 18 or older and a Victory Electric member or household member. Read the complete contest rules at [www.victoryelectric.net/co-ops-love-local](http://www.victoryelectric.net/co-ops-love-local).

We hope you join the giveaway fun and sign up to win by submitting the entry form at [www.victoryelectric.net/co-ops-love-local](http://www.victoryelectric.net/co-ops-love-local) beginning Oct. 1. One entry makes you eligible for the weekly drawings, which will be held each Monday of October beginning Oct. 9. Watch Victory Electric's social media (facebook.com/victoryelectric and instagram.com/victoryelectric2022) for more information and to see the winners.

Victory Electric is celebrating  
**National Co-op Month** in October  
with our Co-ops Love Local campaign.

Co-ops  
**LOCAL**

Are you ready?!

**OCTOBER IS CO-OPS LOVE LOCAL MONTH!**

**Starting Oct. 1, enter to win at  
[www.victoryelectric.net/co-ops-love-local](http://www.victoryelectric.net/co-ops-love-local)**

DRAWINGS WILL BE HELD EACH MONDAY IN OCTOBER BEGINNING OCT 9.

## Victory Remembers Longtime Trustee

**LOREN OCHS**, 87, passed away Aug. 25 at the Hodgeman County Health Center ISB in Jetmore. Ochs served on Victory Electric's Board of Trustees from 1970 until retiring in 2013. He represented Victory on Sunflower Electric's Board of Directors from 1979-2013, also serving as chairman.

In 2010, a Dodge City substation was named after him in recognition of his invaluable contributions to the cooperative world. The Loren Ochs Energy Center was constructed to support the Boot Hill Casino and Resort Conference Center, United Wireless Arena and other city expansion projects.

Ochs was born to Vernon and Nola E. Hill Ochs on Dec. 13, 1935, in Dodge City. He farmed and ranched in the area and served in the U.S. Army. Ochs attended Grace Community Church in Dodge City, and he enjoyed playing cards and going out to eat with friends.

On Aug. 6, 1961, he married Beverly Kay Fagen in Jetmore. He is survived by his wife; a son, Brad, Jetmore; a daughter, Carol (Jeff) Jarnagin, Holcomb; a daughter-in-law, Stephanie Ochs, Jetmore; seven grandchildren, Jarvis Jarnagin, Jenna

(Troy) Krehbiel, Jesse Jarnagin, Janae (Ryan) Falconer, Garrett (Kelsey) Ochs, Taylor (Caleb) Sheets and Gentry Ochs; 11 great-grandchildren and three sisters-in-law, Joyce Ochs, Jetmore; Karen Ochs, Wichita; and Julie Ochs, Jetmore. He was preceded in death by his parents; one son, Steve Ochs; and three brothers, Charles, Marion and Alan Ochs.

We are thankful for Loren's service and dedication to the cooperative for more than 40 years. He will be missed.



Loren Ochs flips the switch to energize the Loren Ochs Energy Center substation in 2010.



Loren Ochs (fourth from left) and other trustees visit the substation named in honor of Ochs in fall 2010.

## Be Cyber Smart

Cyber scams have been around for many years. This year marks the 20th Annual Cybersecurity Awareness Month. The methods that cybercriminals use may have adapted to changing technology and become more sophisticated over the years, but users can still take common-sense actions to protect themselves.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency recommends following these four simple steps to improve your "cyber hygiene."

► **USE STRONG PASSWORDS AND A PASSWORD MANAGER:** Strong passwords are critical to protecting data. They are long, random, unique and include all four character types (uppercase, lowercase, numbers and

symbols). Password managers are a powerful tool to help you create long, random and unique passwords for each of your accounts. Plus, they make storing passwords and user IDs easy.

► **TURN ON MULTIFACTOR AUTHENTICATION (MFA):** You need more than a password to protect your online accounts, and enabling MFA makes you significantly less likely to get hacked. Enable MFA on all your online accounts that offer it — especially email, social media and financial accounts — and use authentication apps or hardware tokens for added security.

► **RECOGNIZE AND REPORT PHISHING:** Phishing emails, texts and calls are the primary way data gets compromised. Be cautious of unsolicited emails, texts or calls asking for personal information — including calls claiming

to be from a representative of Victory Electric. Victory will never ask for confidential, personal financial information over the phone. Avoid sharing sensitive information or credentials over the phone or email unless necessary, and don't click on links or open attachments sent from unknown sources. Verify the authenticity of requests by contacting the individual or organization through a trusted channel. Report phishing attempts to the appropriate authorities or IT department.

► **UPDATE SOFTWARE:** Ensuring your software is up-to-date is the best way to make sure you have the latest security patches and updates on your devices. Regularly check manually for updates if automatic updates are not available and keep operating systems, antivirus software, web browsers and applications up-to-date.

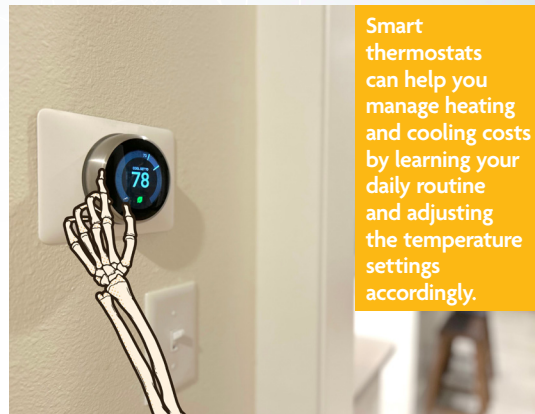
# SPOOKY Energy Savings

This spooky season, we're sharing a few energy-saving tricks so you can treat yourself to lower energy bills. Here are four simple ways to summon the spirit of energy efficiency.

Conjure instant savings with a smart thermostat. One of the easiest ways to save energy is through thermostat control, since home heating and cooling account for a large portion of monthly energy use. **SMART THERMOSTATS** can help you manage heating and cooling costs by learning your daily routine and adjusting the temperature settings accordingly. You can control a smart thermostat from anywhere (through your smart phone), which allows you to prevent unnecessary energy consumption while you're away. Sorcery!

Get rid of goosebumps by eliminating ghostly drafts. The winter chill is just around the corner, so now is the time to **SEAL AIR LEAKS** around your home. Apply caulk and weatherstripping around drafty windows and doors to make your home more comfortable and lower your energy use.

Illuminate your lair with energy efficient lighting. **LED BULBS** use 75% less energy and last 25 times longer than incandescent lightbulbs. Make the switch to reduce energy used for lighting.



Smart thermostats can help you manage heating and cooling costs by learning your daily routine and adjusting the temperature settings accordingly.

Remember to use LEDs when it's time to decorate for the upcoming holiday season. LED light strings offer an average of 88% energy savings compared to traditional incandescent light strings.

Stir up savings with countertop cauldrons. Cooler weather summons our favorite soup recipes. Small countertop appliances like **SLOW COOKERS** use less energy than cooking meals on the stovetop. Grab your book of spells (or recipes) and start stirring up savings in the kitchen.

When we look around our homes, there are many opportunities to save energy. So this spooky season, investigate your space and unlock a different kind of magic — the kind that brings real energy savings.



LED bulbs use 75% less energy and last 25 times longer than incandescent lightbulbs.



Small countertop appliances like slow cookers use less energy than cooking meals on the stovetop.

## Victory Welcomes New Linemen

Two new linemen recently joined Victory Electric's line crew.

**JASON BATRES** is currently a second-class lineman for Victory. He was born and raised in Dodge City and graduated from Dodge City High School. He received his associate's degree in electrical power technology at Pratt Community College's Dodge City lineman program. Batres worked as a lineman for the City of Garden City before returning home to Dodge City to work at Victory Electric.

"I wanted to come back because all my family is here," Batres said. "It's a great company to work for from what I've heard."

As he progresses toward the journeyman level, he is glad to be part of the Victory team.

In his free time, Batres likes to go to the gym and spend time with his significant other and his son.

**TREVOR GRASSER** is a fourth-class lineman at Victory Electric. He graduated from Cimarron High

School and attended line school in Dodge City through Pratt Community College. He completed an internship as an apprentice lineman at CMS Electric for a year and a half before joining Victory.

Grasser said he appreciates being close to the family farm again and is eager to continue his lineman progression at Victory.

"I look forward to working to become a journeyman lineman," he said.

Grasser previously worked at R&P Calf Ranch as a maintenance technician. His hobbies include hunting, fishing and rodeo.

"We are glad to have Jason and Trevor, who will be able to contribute right away," said Manager of Operations Eric Speer. "With all the work we have going on and being shorthanded, their addition will have an immediate impact. We are always excited to have local kids that are wanting to stay local."

Welcome to Victory, Jason and Trevor! We are happy to have you join the team.



Jason Batres



Trevor Grasser

# PUMPKIN FESTIVAL

## FESTIVAL DE LA CALABAZA

OCTOBER  
28

VICTORY ELECTRIC CO-OP  
9 - 11 A.M. | 3230 N. 14 AVE.  
PUMPKIN PAINTING | GAMES  
COSTUMES | FACE PAINTING  
PINTAR CALABAZAS | JUEGOS  
TRAJES | PINTURA DE LA CARA

Throw on your costume to join us for fall fun for the whole family. A pumpkin will be provided free to the first 500 children ages 12 and younger. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

Ponte tu disfraz para celebrar con nosotros en la diversión de otoño para toda la familia. Se proporcionará una calabaza gratis a los primeros 500 niños de 12 años y menores. Todos los niños deben estar acompañados por un adulto.



# Working on the Line

Victory Electric's line crews completed their annual pole-top rescue training in September. The exercise prepares linemen to safely and quickly secure and lower an injured coworker from the top of a pole to the ground. Linemen have four and a half minutes to put on their gear, climb the pole, properly secure a dummy and lower it to the ground.



Dayton Denton quickly scales the pole to rescue his practice dummy and lower him to safety.



Chantz Brungardt prepares to lower the practice dummy to safety.



Crew Chief Pat Deaver climbs the pole to complete his annual pole-top rescue training.

## CALLING ALL JUNIORS!

Do you love traveling and connecting with other teens?  
Are you interested in taking the trip of a lifetime for **FREE**?

Start putting together your résumé and polishing your video skills! Applications for the 2024 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., and the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Colorado will open in November at [www.victoryelectric.net](http://www.victoryelectric.net).

Each year Victory selects four high school juniors from our service area to participate in one of two youth program experiences.

Don't miss your opportunity to experience places you've never been, make new friends and gain valuable leadership skills.

# Pogue Attends Professional Training

Victory Electric employees bring a wealth of experience and expertise when they join the cooperative. Opportunities for continuing education enable them to keep up-to-date with rapidly changing technology and industry trends, further develop their skills and advance in their careers.

**DANIEL POGUE**, staking and construction coordinator, recently took the Introduction to Distribution Engineering (IDE) class in Madison, Wisconsin. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association course provides students with hands-on learning opportunities focused on reliability/resiliency, safety and economics — three key components of distribution engineering work.

“My class in Wisconsin helped me in many ways,” Pogue said. “I have a better understanding of sizing wire in many different situations. They provided us

with knowledgeable worksheets for sizing transformers and services.”

The training covered system design and construction, finding and interpreting applicable codes and standards, anticipating and solving common distribution problems, and identifying distribution engineering tools and processes.

At Victory Electric, Pogue is responsible for checking field sites and preparing field layouts, materials requirements and cost estimates. He also works directly with customers and coordinates with field engineering for the construction and maintenance of electricity distribution facilities.

“It is always nice to attend classes and have the opportunities to interact with other cooperatives across the U.S. and learn how they do things in comparison to what we do. I enjoy making contacts and having additional resour-

es to reach out to,” he said.

Continuous learning contributes to employees’ professional and personal growth as well as the future of the cooperative.

“Having Daniel participate in the Introduction to Distribution Engineering course is a benefit to Victory and our members,” said Vice President of Engineering Rob Henry. “Training like this is specialized and helps employees understand the ‘why’ behind what we do. Daniel is one of the first employees that most people will encounter when they are needing something from Victory Electric. When he understands the most efficient way to coordinate a job, that saves everyone time and money.”



Daniel Pogue

SHARE IN THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF SOLAR POWER WITHOUT THE COST OF INSTALLING ROOFTOP PANELS

COMING SOON!

# Solar Made Easy!

Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc. COMMUNITY SOLAR

- ☀ AN AFFORDABLE ALTERNATIVE TO OWNING AND MAINTAINING A SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM
- ☀ NO ROOF DAMAGE
- ☀ NO LARGE, UPFRONT INVESTMENT
- ☀ SIMPLE SIGN-UP AND BILLING
- ☀ AVAILABLE TO OWNERS AND RENTERS
- ☀ EASY WAY TO SUPPORT RENEWABLE ENERGY

\*\*\* Shares are limited to no more than the average of your previous 12-month electric use. If your 12-month average = 1,000 kWh, then a max of 8 shares is allowed.

CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE:

[VICTORYELECTRIC.NET](http://victoryelectric.net) | 620.227.2139 OR 800.279.7915