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Electronews

The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc.

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- Daryl Tieben – Vice President
- Cedric Drewes – Secretary/Treasurer
- Gary Gillespie – Trustee
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- Shane Laws – CEO
- Amy Grasser – Vice President of Corporate Services
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- Rob Henry – Vice President of Engineering
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- Ryan Miller – Vice President of Operations
- Jerri Whitley – Vice President of Communications
- Angela Unruh – CFO

CEO MESSAGE

Co-ops Love Local

Victory celebrates National Co-op Month in October with member giveaways



Shane Laws

Many small businesses, whether retail or restaurants, have had a tough year. Community members may be struggling as well. Giving back to the community is

woven into the cooperative spirit.

To help boost spirits, support local small businesses, and to bring the power of caring to the communities we serve, Victory Electric is celebrating National Co-op Month this October with a new **CO-OPS LOVE LOCAL** campaign.

Co-ops Love Local will benefit 50 local businesses and 50 members through a giveaway of 50 gift certificates in the amount of \$50 each.

Anyone who lives in the cooperative service area may enter the giveaway by

visiting our Facebook page or website. Drawings will be held throughout the month of October.

“From serving our members to giving back to the community, this is what we do,” said Jerri Whitley, Victory Electric vice president of communications. “Co-ops Love Local fits well with one of our seven core cooperative principles, concern for community.”

Each dollar spent at local, independent businesses returns three times more money to the local economy than shopping at a chain or mega online retailer. Local businesses are the heart and soul of our communities and we are incredibly lucky to have vibrant, diverse and resilient small businesses in our area.

The Dodge City Area Chamber of Commerce recently rolled out a Love Local campaign to help support and

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Many great sponsors and golfers made the 2020 event a great success.

“FORE” A GOOD CAUSE

The second annual Co-ops Care Charity Golf Tournament, co-hosted by Victory and Wheatland Electric, was held on Friday, Aug. 28, at Mariah Hills Golf Club in Dodge City.

The 18-hole, four-man scramble tournament hosted 31 teams. The event kicked-off with a welcome from Victory Electric CEO Shane Laws and Wheatland Electric CEO Bruce Mueller followed by a short ceremony presented by the Avenue of Flags Color Guard. Throughout the day, golfers had the opportunity to participate in many activities such as a men's and women's longest drive contest, longest putt contests, closest to the pin contests and a game called “green on the green,” which participants could play for a chance to double their \$5 if their ball made it into a circle painted around the pin.

“Overall the tournament went really well,” said Kyndell Penick, Victory Electric manager of key accounts. “We had a great turnout. A lot of cooperative members and vendors came together to support some great causes.”

Together, Victory Electric and Wheatland Electric were able to raise just over \$16,000 to split between two area charities, the Dodge City Veteran's Council Avenue of Flags and Wheatland Electric's Cram the Van. Each organization's focus is on giving back and making a difference in their communities so we all have a better place to live, work and play.

“Giving back to the community is what cooperatives do,” said Jerri Whitley, Victory Electric vice president of communications. “We couldn't be happier to be a part of building and supporting strong and healthy communities.”

Avenue of Flags organizes and conducts annual events honoring veterans at Maple Grove Cemetery in Dodge City. In addition, the organization maintains the flagpoles at the cemetery, each of which is dedicated in memory of a veteran. Avenue of Flags is raising funds to purchase and install additional flagpoles and flags for a newly planned cemetery road, to be named Bob Hughes Boulevard. The road recognizes Hughes' many years of volunteer service to the organization. Bob Hughes was also a Victory Electric lineman. During his time at Victory Electric and after his retirement in 2009, Hughes served as the chairman of Avenue of Flags.

Wheatland Electric's Cram the Van food drive program started six years ago in response to an appeal from cooperative members who wished to have a method to help other members within their own communities. The big, red “Cram the Van” van travels each fall to several communities

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“Fore” a Good Cause Continued from page 16B

across western and central Kansas including Holcomb, Tribune, Great Bend, Scott City, Caldwell and Conway Springs collecting donations and non-perishable food items. Since the program began, just under 100,000 pounds of food has been donated to

local food banks in the city/county in which it was donated.

“We really owe a lot to all of our sponsors. With their generous support, we were able to host an excellent tournament and give back to our community,” Penick said.



1. Two Victory Electric trustees, Kenny Wehkamp and Cedric Drewes, formed a team with Tim Gleason and Rocky Fairbank, both of Cimarron.

2. The Avenue of Flags Color Guard on the course sidelines.

3. Employees Mikey Goddard and Kyndell Penick teamed with Wheatland Electric employee Quinten Wheeler and participant Tyler Dye.

4. After the CEOs welcome from Shane Laws and Bruce Mueller, the Avenue of Flags ceremony takes place.



Co-ops Love Local

Continued from page 16A

revive local small businesses and the economy. Victory Electric developed Co-ops Love Local in conjunction and in partnership with the Dodge City Area Chamber of Commerce campaign.

Anyone interested in learning more about Co-ops Love Local or to view the rules and listing of gift certificates can visit our website at victoryelectric.net.

THANKS, SHANE

Rules for Co-ops Love Local Giveaway

INDIVIDUALS MAY ENTER TO WIN BY:

- ▶ Liking Victory Electric's Facebook page and commenting on the giveaway post each week
- ▶ OR completing the form on Victory Electric's website each week

ENTRIES OPEN ON A WEEKLY BASIS and the winners announced on Monday via Facebook or phone call.

- ▶ **WEEK 1** Entries open Oct. 1, 2020, at 12:01 a.m. and close Oct. 4, at 11:59 p.m. Twelve winners announced Oct. 5
- ▶ **WEEK 2** Entries open Oct. 6, 2020, at 12:01 a.m. and close Oct. 11, at 11:59 p.m. Twelve winners announced Oct. 12
- ▶ **WEEK 3** Entries open Oct. 13, 2020, at 12:01 a.m. and close Oct. 18, at 11:59 p.m. Twelve winners announced Oct. 19
- ▶ **WEEK 4** Entries open Oct. 20, 2020, at 12:01 a.m. and close Oct. 25, at 11:59 p.m. Twelve winners announced Oct. 26

TO BE ELIGIBLE TO WIN prize claimants must be 18 years of age or older and reside in Victory Electric's service territory. Victory Electric employees, trustees, and contractors, and members of their households are ineligible.

WINNERS WILL BE CHOSEN AT RANDOM.

- ▶ Need not be present to win.
- ▶ If Victory Electric cannot make contact with a winner within five days, another entry will be drawn.
- ▶ Winners are required to pick up the gift cards from Victory Electric's office. Must show ID.
- ▶ Individuals are only eligible to win once.
- ▶ Prizes are not transferable.
- ▶ No purchase necessary.

Cold Weather Rule Begins Nov. 15

Though Victory Electric is a self-regulated electric utility, we participate in the special Kansas Corporation Commission Cold Weather Rule disconnect procedures for residential members during the time period of Nov. 15 through March 15. The guidelines set out below were established to protect not only you, the electric member but also your member-owned cooperative.

Residential cooperative members unable to pay their electric service bills during the cold weather period may qualify, provided they fulfill certain good faith requirements when attempting to pay.

Some members believe once the Cold Weather Rule is in effect, electric bills can be ignored and the cooperative will not disconnect service — this is not true. The cooperative can and will disconnect for non-payment if certain criteria are not met. Victory Electric reserves the right to disconnect between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday when the temperature is at or above 35 degrees. In no event during cold weather rule will the cooperative disconnect service if the temperature is forecast by the local National Weather Service to fall below 35 degrees within 24-hours following the time of disconnection.

The Cold Weather Rule does not apply to PowerMyWay accounts. If the account balance is \$0.01 or below during inclement weather, the account will be disconnected regardless of the Cold Weather Rule.

Cold Weather Rule Payment Guidelines

Cold Weather Rule payment arrangements are only available from Nov. 15 to March 15, for a maximum of 11 months, and end no later than October's bill due date. When a member initially establishes a

Cold Weather Rule payment arrangement, payment is required for 1/6 of the total amount owed. The remaining balance is divided into the remainder of the installment months available. As the Cold Weather Rule period progresses, members have fewer months in which to divide the outstanding balance of the payment arrangement.

Each payment arrangement installment is due each month along with the current month's total balance on the current bill's due date. Paying either the current bill or payment arrangement late constitutes a broken payment arrangement, and makes the account subject to disconnection when the temperature is forecast to be 35 degrees or above in the 24 hours following the time of disconnection.

Any outstanding balance remaining not set up on a payment arrangement by March 15 is required to be paid-in-full by March 16 to avoid disconnection. In the event the account is disconnected for nonpayment, any past due balance plus the reconnection fee must be paid-in-full to restore power.

Any check or payment used to establish a payment arrangement returned to Victory Electric for non-sufficient funds (NSF) is considered a default on the payment arrangement. The member is responsible for immediately paying the NSF penalty and reissuing the funds to Victory Electric, by cash, credit card, or money order, to avoid possible disconnection.

Please be mindful Victory Electric is very strict with implementing the Cold Weather Rule requirements and payment arrangement guidelines, and we encourage members to make every effort to comply to avoid broken payment arrangements and/or disconnection. Two or more broken payment arrangements will initiate a deposit or a modification of a deposit.

Be Cyber Smart it's Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Technology is a vital part of our lives, but just like in any other facet of life, it is important to take precautions to protect your safety. Though a threat to your cybersecurity does not put you in physical harm, it can still cause significant damage. In honor of October's National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, here are five tips to help you be cyber smart and stay cyber safe.

Use Passwords Effectively

Don't use all the same passwords for all of your devices. Change factory-set passwords provided by the manufacturer. Make your passwords complex. Change your password often to help curtail hackers.

Never Give Out Personal Information

Never give out login, password or other personal information in an email, over the phone, or for any other reason unless you are the one contacting the company directly via the verified phone number or other trusted method of contact.

Use Public Wi-Fi With Caution

Public and home Wi-Fi connections are not always secure. Avoid logging into personal accounts, like email and financial sites when you do not recognize the connections. If you

must connect to public Wi-Fi, consider using a virtual private network (VPN) or personal hotspot.

Beware Unknown Senders

Tips for spotting phishers and hackers: 1) They often disguise themselves as someone you know. 2) They offer a financial reward, threaten you or claim to need help. 3) They ask for your personal info. 4) They want you to download a file or click a link.

If it Seems 'Phishy,' it Probably is

Sometimes someone you know has become a victim of a phisher/hacker. In an attempt to hack your account, this phisher/hacker may use your friend's (social media or email) account to contact you. Their messages will often contain requests for money, personal information, or prompt you to click a link.

By increasing awareness and enhancing understanding of basic cybersecurity practices, we can all work together to combat cyberthreats. The human element is often the biggest cybersecurity risk. Each of us has a critical role to play to ensure the security of our personal and professional data. For more information on what you can do to protect your cyber presence visit staysafeonline.org.