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Electronews

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CEO MESSAGE

Unplug With Meaningful Community Programs

Most adults vaguely remember that “checking for messages,” meant listening to a machine. We carried on with our days without relying on cell phones and managed just fine. But today, we are more connected than ever through our smartphones and other devices.

Our phones are so much more now — from cameras to calendars to social media connections — and truly disconnecting from them can be tough. But it’s even harder for our kids to unplug because they only know life with these tiny screens. It’s difficult for them to imagine life without computers, gaming devices, tablets or cellphones.

But there’s great value in unplugging for children and adults, even if its for just a short period of time. For kids, time away from the screen to be outside with other children allows them to connect with nature and others in a way that a virtual experience simply does not allow. They are able to experience life in the moment and allow their creativity and energy to break free.

Fortunately, we have access to great community programs and organizations that provide children with a safe place to play, learn and grow, while cultivating new skills and interests.

These types of clubs and programs

offer kids an opportunity to explore activities and interests outside of school academics. Children can investigate areas they might not otherwise have access to and discover new interests and passions. They often learn new skills and strengthen existing ones. It’s no secret that the broader the range of experiences and activities children are exposed to, the more likely they are to find their own path and possibly a career. Community programs also foster important leadership development and public speaking skills. Through guided and informal play and activities, children learn problem-solving and interpersonal skills that enable them to resolve conflicts peacefully and improve interpersonal relationships.

Adults can also find meaningful opportunities to spend time with the kids when we all unplug. From board games to craft projects to playing in the park, there are many ways we can unplug for some family fun.

While you and your children are



Shane Laws

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Celebrating National Co-op Month with Gift Certificate Giveaways

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.

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.

Giving back to the community is woven into the cooperative spirit and to help boost spirits, support local small businesses, and bring the power of caring to the communities we serve, Victory Electric celebrated National Co-op Month in October with our Co-ops Love Local campaign.

Co-ops Love Local benefitted 50 community members through a giveaway of 50 gift certificates in the amount of \$50 each.

Each Monday in October, drawings were held via Victory Electric's Facebook page and website where members entered and won a \$50 gift certificate purchased from 50 different, locally-owned businesses.

"This campaign supports the full circle of one of our seven core cooperative principles, Concern for Community. By purchasing the gift cards locally we are supporting those local businesses and giving the opportunity back to members to do the same," said Chanda Schulte, Victory Electric vice president of communications.

Victory Electric developed Co-ops Love Local in conjunction with National Co-op Month, to help support local small business and the economy, as well as to celebrate and give back to members.



Janice Scott received a \$50 Ace Hardware gift card.



Amy Scheweis, received a \$50 Cowboy Capital Grill gift card.



New Hires at Victory Electric

Chanda Schulte, Vice President of Communications

CHANDA SCHULTE grew up in Fowler and upon graduation from Fowler Junior-Senior High School, she attended Fort Hays State University. Originally majoring in finance, she was quickly intrigued by management and marketing, switching her major and earning her bachelor's degree in business administration with an emphasis in marketing.

After Fort Hays State, Schulte served as the marketing assistant at Conklin Cars of Hutchinson for one year before moving back home to southwest Kansas. She stayed in the automotive industry as the marketing and advertising manager for Magouirk Chevrolet-Cadillac for an additional five years, before the finance industry called back to her. She accepted the senior branch manager, assistant vice president role at Sunflower Bank where she spent the last eight years.

Schulte is excited to be back to marketing and

communications. "I felt like something was missing professionally and I really missed writing," said Schulte. "So when the position at Victory Electric opened up, I had to go for it."

"We are excited to have Chanda as part of the Victory team," said Victory Electric CEO, Shane Laws. "She brings with her a wealth of management and marketing and communications knowledge. Her ideas and perspective are welcomed and we look forward to the growth she and Victory will have in her department."

Chanda has been married for 10 years to her husband, Justin. They have two daughters, Reece and Lakyn. When not at work they enjoy camping and other outdoor activities. You can also find her watching any level of volleyball she can find.



Chanda Schulte

Eddie Cardenas, Substation Technician

Victory Electric welcomes **EDDIE CARDENAS** as the newest member of the substation department. Cardenas is a longtime Dodge City resident and graduated from Dodge City High School in 2009. Soon after, Cardenas began working at National Beef in the maintenance department and later transitioned to plant's electrical department. During his five-year tenure with National Beef, Cardenas completed welding classes at Dodge City Community College.

"There is always a need for people with electrical knowledge in almost any industry," Cardenas said. "I like the challenge working in the electrical field brings. There is always more to learn."

Cardenas left National Beef in 2018 and continued to pursue various jobs in the electrical and energy fields. In 2019, Cardenas took a job with

Cargill Meat Solutions in the electrical department, where he was employed prior to being hired at Victory Electric.

"We are excited to have Edward join our team," said Kyndell Penick manager of substations and key accounts. "We look forward to getting him associated with electrical distribution and substation work. Edward has the electrical and troubleshooting knowledge and skills that will be a great asset to our substation program."

Cardenas has two children, Ava and Alexander. In his free time, he enjoys woodworking, building gaming computers, and playing in a softball league.

Victory Electric is excited to have him as part of the team. Welcome, Eddie!



Eddie Cardenas

Unplug With Meaningful Community Programs *Continued from page 16A* ▶

disconnecting, take a moment to identify potential energy savings. Unplug electronics that are not in use to avoid "vampire" energy loss. This is the energy that is drained from technology and electronics even when they are not in use. For example, although it is turned off, your TV is waiting to receive signal from the remote and your DVR is waiting to record the new show or perform an update. When you're

unplugging from your electronics, try unplugging them from your home to achieve those energy savings.

Let's encourage youngsters to step away from the screens and join in, to play and be part of an organization that helps them connect with others and find meaningful interactions and explore new activities and interests.

THANKS, SHANE

POWER MY WAY

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR ENERGY FUTURE



Sign up



Visit victoryelectric.net or stop by our office for information on how to get started.

Charge account



Put money in your account via the SmartHub app and other payment methods.

Check balance



Get updates and low account balance reminders by text, email or phone.

Recharge



Online at victoryelectric.smarthub.coop or via your SmartHub app on your mobile device.

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.