

NOW FEATURING: DEPOT THEATER

Standing tall and statuesque near downtown, the Depot Theater has a rich history in Dodge City.

Dedicated in 1898, the building was originally used as a train station and Fred Harvey hotel and restaurant for more than 50 years. Today, the Depot is the largest, still-standing, train depot built for the Santa Fe railroad in Kansas. It is now home to the Depot Theater.



Barbara Straight and Connie Penick, right.

Santa Fe Railroad to build a more permanent stone railroad depot in Dodge City.

"Santa Fe Railroad heard about the wild going's-on at Dodge City and stories about cowboys riding horses through buildings," said Connie Penick, Depot Theater manager of operations. "To get the depot built, the city's fathers agreed to not allow horses in the depot and to provide hot and cold running water, steam heat, and electricity to the new building."

For the next 50 years, the Depot was a staple on the Santa Fe Railroad line and served thousands of travelers. Fred Harvey, owner of more

than 80 Harvey Houses along the Santa Fe railroad operated the restaurant with efficiency, cleanliness and good service.

"Fred Harvey brought civility and manners to the west," said Barbara Straight, Depot Theater Guild president. "He brought women from back east, gave them a respectable job and home, and they worked for him in the hotel and restaurants. They brought their culture with them and were educated in service and manners."

After World War I, passengers started to rely less on trains, and Harvey Houses slowly started to close their doors. The Dodge City Depot was abandoned in the 1950s, with the exception of being open during World War II for soldiers on troop trains, and didn't reopen until the local theater company decided to move from their locations at Boot Hill and the old Elks Lodge and make the Depot its home.

"We opened the building in 1994 and found the original floors, metal ceilings, fireplaces, and much of the old furniture and items to be intact," Penick said. "It cost \$12 million and took 13 years to renovate, but it was such a labor of love for us. We fell in love with the history of the building and now it makes for a wonderful story."

According to Penick, they wanted the renovations throughout the building to be historically and architecturally accurate, but also include a

state-of-the-art theater. This meant the theater had to stay in the same footprint as the original foundation and be no higher than the original roof line.

"The theater is the vision of Don Steele," Penick said. "He had envisioned a dinner theater with all the modern technologies including lights, sound, and fly space. The final design for the theater seats 162 and has three distinct levels so everyone has a great view of the stage."

The Depot Theater is a community theater that employs three full-time and two part-time employees. It is open year around and produces five main stage productions, two sidetrack productions, and three cabarets.

"Community theaters typically only last seven years before running out of steam, but we have wonderful community support and a great group of people who work and act in our productions," Penick said. "This support has kept us going since 1984."

The building is also available to use for a variety of purposes including dinners, meetings, receptions, conferences, weddings, and a variety of other events.

"Anyone can call with a request and we will do our best to accommodate their needs," Penick said. "Something is always happening here, and we welcome the public to come and enjoy the historical building."

This article is part of a series designed to educate citizens on the economic advantages of using local services, buying locally and features great local shopping options.

Friendliest Flower Shop in Town

Flowers By Irene is a unique experience in Downtown Dodge City

Tucked on the corner of Front and Second streets in downtown Dodge City, Flowers By Irene is a unique shopping experience.

Owned and operated by Mike and Lisa Jackson, Flowers By Irene caters to people's everyday needs. The florists design unique and original arrangements for any occasion including birthdays, holidays, weddings, sympathy, funerals and more.

"Many of our customers say that we are the friendliest flower shop in town," said Lisa Jackson, owner and operator. "The customers like that the business, began by Irene, started here and is the oldest flower shop in town. We have owned the business for two and a half years and we would like to continue to grow and serve Dodge City."

According to Jackson, the shop is steadily busy in the holiday season, meaning Thanksgiving through wedding season in the summer. With Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and prom all in that time frame, there is always something happening.

"There is always something next," Jackson said. "Always another holiday or event. It keeps things interesting. You might think most weddings are in the summer, but I have three in November and several the in following

months."

Currently, with the Christmas holiday season in full swing, Flowers By Irene has several projects in the works, including helping with the Christmas Holiday Home Tours.

"Every year, the Carnegie Center has their Christmas Home Tours for their annual fundraiser, so we donate some arrangements, centerpieces or whatever is needed for the homes," Jackson explained.

Not just flowers and plants, Flowers By Irene also creates balloon, candy, stuffed animals, candles arrangements. In addition to the floral business, they have a small gift shop that customers can choose items to buy or customize a gift arrangement.

Florist Mitzi Cox enjoys the friendly atmosphere at Flowers By Irene.

"I enjoy my job and working with all of the customers on their specific needs," Cox

said. "It's a nice feeling to come to work knowing I like what I do."

So if you are in the downtown area, stop by, have a unique shopping experience, and say hi to the Jacksons at Flowers By Irene.

"I always encourage people to stop by and do something old-fashioned and shop downtown," Jackson said.

This article is part of a series designed to educate citizens on the economic advantages of using local services, buying locally and features great local shopping options.



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electronews

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FROM THE MANAGER Past and Future

It's nearing the end of a busy and successful year at Victory Electric, and that has me reflecting on the past and the future.

In the past year, we have kept busy with a variety of projects. Our biggest project was the completion of a new substation for the Dodge City Casino and Resort and the new events center. It was completed within a few months and is now up and running.

Our line crews are still working hard on replacing and rebuilding the 909 miles of line damaged in two ice storms in 2007. Work from the first storm is complete and only 95 miles of line remains from the second.

We have also hosted, participated or sponsored many events such as Dodge City Days, Victory Electric Health Fair, Pumpkin Painting and Carving Festival, Christmas Parade of Lights and Chili Cook-off, our Annual Meeting, and various other events.

Last year, we started installing new smart grid meters on our system. We are about 95 percent complete with Dodge City with more than 10,540 new residential meters installed. Soon, we will start installing commercial meters in Dodge City.

Looking into the future, Victory Electric will be starting on a new AMI pilot program in Copeland to test the effectiveness of the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system in a rural setting. You can look at page 16-C of this newsletter for more information on the pilot program. We also have Youth Tour selections in the spring, our Irrigation and Technology Seminar coming up February 4, Annual Meeting in April, and much more.

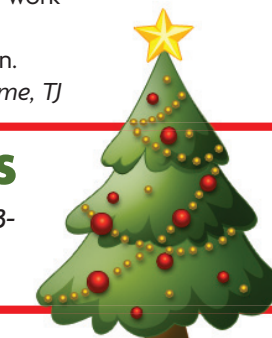
As another year comes to an end, we will strive and work hard in hopes for another successful year.

Last, I want to wish everyone a happy holiday season.

'Til Next Time, TJ

Closing for the Holidays

Victory will be closed for Christmas on December 23-24 and for New Years Monday, January 3. We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season.



Terry Janson

It's nearing the end of a busy and successful year at Victory Electric.

Irrigation and Technology Seminar Scheduled



Farmers attend 2010 meeting. Victory Electric announces the 13th annual Irrigation and Technology Seminar. The seminar will be held on February 4, 2011, at Victory's office located at 3230 N. 14th in Dodge City.

If you are an irrigator on Victory's system, we will be sending invitations soon.

Please feel free to come out and listen to the great lineup of guest speakers and also visit with the exhibitors.

If you have any questions, please call 620-227-2139 and ask for Josh Schmidt.

Victory Electric Trustee Achieves Credentials



Carl Hubbell

Carl Hubbell, trustee for Victory Electric Cooperative, has received the Board Leadership certificate from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

Hubbell was recognized at NRECA's Region VII meeting for his commitment to education and attainment of the Board Leadership certificate before an audience of electric cooperative officials from four states—including Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska and Wyoming.

Today's electric utility environment imposes new demands on electric cooperative trustees, particularly increased knowledge of changes in the electric utility business, new governance skills, and a working knowledge of the

cooperative principles.

"The courses offered by NRECA allow the trustees to stay current on such important issues as power supply, regulatory requirements, and environmental stewardship," said Terry Janson, Victory Electric general manager. "This is a great achievement for Carl and Victory appreciates his service to the cooperative."

NRECA's director education programs are specifically designed to address the learning needs of electric cooperative directors. The Board Leadership Certificate recognizes individuals who continue their professional development after becoming a Credentialed Cooperative Trustee. Trustees who attain the Board Leadership Certificate complete 10 credits in advanced, issues-oriented courses.

Victory Electric congratulates Hubbell on his achievement.

Letter from the President

Victory Seeking Board Member Nominations



Richard Lightner

Dear Victory Electric Members, It is time once again to start thinking about Victory Electric's Annual Membership Meeting held in April 2011. We are currently soliciting nominations for Victory Electric's Board of Trustees. Positions up for election are in District 2, currently held by John Leis, Minneola; District 4, currently held by Jim Imel, Bucklin; District 6, currently held by Kenny Wehkamp, Cimarron; and District 10, currently held by Milam Jones, Dodge City.

To qualify, you must be a naturalized U.S. citizen; and your principal residence must be served by Victory Electric and located within our territory and within the district which you wish to represent.

Also, if a close relative of yours—within the third degree—is an employee or a trustee of Victory Electric, you are not eligible to run for a trustee position.

Duties of an elected trustee include: attending a monthly six-to-eight hour board meeting, board training opportunities, and some travel will be required.

If you would like to run for a position, or you know someone interested, please send a letter of interest with qualifications to Terry Janson or Richard Lightner at Victory Electric, PO Box 1335, Dodge City, KS 67801. Sincerely, Richard Lightner, Board President

Smart Meters Going Rural

Victory to Begin Smart Meter Pilot Program

Victory Electric and partner Landis+Gyr are planning the deployment of a "smart" meter pilot program in Copeland and the surrounding area. In the next few months, Victory hopes to start implementation in residential homes.

Last year, Victory Electric announced the deployment of a new Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI) system in Dodge City. This new "smart" meter system allows Victory to receive instantaneous meter information and alerts us in seconds of a power outage.

We indicated at that time that we would start installing the new meters in Dodge City, all the while continuing to research similar "smart" meter system for rural areas.

The current AMI Gridstream technology being used in Dodge City encompasses four main components, a collector, routers, meters and the Command Center software created by Landis+Gyr. It is considered a two-way, self-healing, mesh communication system, which means the meter "talks" to us and we can "talk" back. The meters have the capability to "talk" to each other, finding the easiest path to a router. If its path is interrupted, the self-healing feature allows the device to find a path through another meter. The router sends information (i.e. meter reads, errors, meter tampering, etc.) to the collector, which sends the

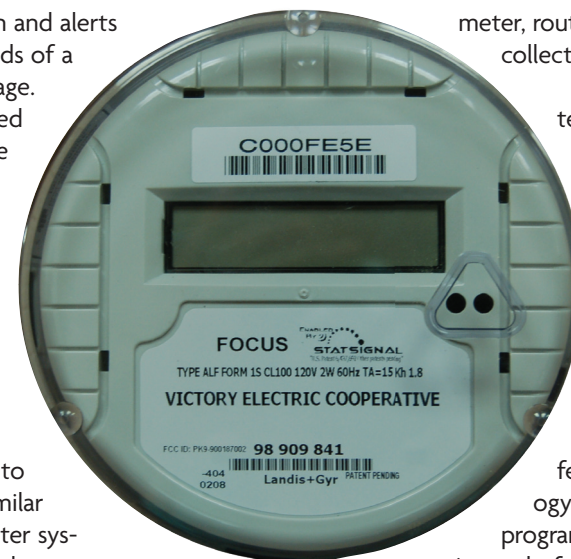
information back to our office into Command Center.

The technology is working well in Dodge City with more than 10,540 meters installed, we have an automated reading rate of 99.6 percent. The other .4 percent are read manually while we continue to work out issues. While this technology is very successful in the urban areas, the rural areas get a little tricky because of the distances the radio signals

have to travel to reach another meter, router or the collector.

The pilot technology will use the same Gridstream meters as we are installing in Dodge City, but will have slightly different technology and software programming. Also, instead of routers, we will be using mesh extenders (a device that extends the distance signals can travel).

The pilot program is a partnership between Landis+Gyr and Victory to create a system that is accurate and reliable for the rural areas. If the pilot program is a success, Victory will use the same thumbprint as the Copeland pilot program and proceed to install the meters and technology in the rest of small towns and rural areas in our territory. If the program doesn't work, Victory will install the current technology being used in Dodge City in the small towns and continue researching technology options for the rural areas.



High School Juniors: Win a Free Trip

to Washington, D.C., or Steamboat Springs, Colorado



Last year's D.C. winners were (from left) Shelby Durler and Becca Heeke, both of Spearville.

Two Winners, All-Expenses-Paid "Government in Action" Youth Tour June 9-16, 2011, in Washington, D.C.

If you are a high school junior and would like to increase your leadership skills, meet new friends and travel, you can apply for Youth Tour through Victory Electric.

During the Government In Action Youth Tour June 9-16, 2011, students will join 1,500 youth from across the nation in Washington, D.C. Participants will visit the monuments and other attractions,

as well as visit Capitol Hill to learn more about how our government works.

At the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp, July 9-15, 2011, students will join youth from Colorado, Wyoming, Oklahoma and Kansas. Campers will form a mock cooperative, participate in leadership activities, and learn about the cooperative industry.



Last year's camp winners, Kate Lock, Cimarron, left, and Vanessa Nuñez, Dodge City, right. Also pictured is camp chaperone, Mellisa Bosley, center.

Two Winners, All-Expenses-Paid Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp July 9-15, 2011, in Steamboat Springs, CO.

Students will be selected based on a résumé, application and an interview.

To apply, contact your high school counselor, high school principal, or Jerri Imgarten at Victory Electric Cooperative by calling 620-371-7730 or 800-279-7915 for more information about the contest.

The deadline for applications is February 11, 2011.

Victory Electric and DCCC Host Pumpkin Festival

The 4th Annual Pumpkin Painting and Carving Festival was held on October 30 at Victory Electric.

Sponsored by Victory Electric and Dodge City Community College, the event was free for the approximately 400 youth who participated.

"The kids really love coming out and using their creative abilities to create pumpkins that are artistic and uniquely their own," said Melissa McCoy, director of business, technology and continuing education at DCCC. "I enjoyed planning and sponsoring such a fun and festive event for the youth of the Dodge City community."

In addition to painting and carving, there were also Halloween-theme games for the youth to enjoy.



Above: left, kids enjoy the Duck Race game and right, the Pumpkin Train. Below: Approximately 400 kids participated.

