

Always On The Line, Forever In Our Hearts

Victory Electric remembers employee Steven Hornung



Victory Electric Cooperative lost one of its own, Steven A. Hornung, on July 9, 2010, in a tragic vehicle accident east of Dodge City.

Steven, a lineman, had worked for Victory Electric since March 23, 2009. In his short time at Victory Electric, he made a strong impact on those who knew and worked with him.

"Steven was a wonderful person, dedicated and loyal to the cooperative," said Terry Janson, general manager. "He is missed every day."

Crew Chief Eric Speer worked with Steven approximately nine months on a digger truck rebuilding

line for FEMA ice storm projects.

"Steven was a hard worker, laid back and a lot of fun to work with," Speer said. "He balanced me out. Where I tend to be high strung, he was always relaxed and calm. He was a quick learner. If I told or showed him something, I never had to worry about it again."

In his time at Victory, Steven spent the majority of his time rebuilding line throughout the system. Doing a job that is considered tedious and time consuming, operations supervisor, Ryan Miller, recalls Steven always being upbeat and he never knew him to have a bad day.

"He was the one people wanted to work with," Miller said. "He was a good guy, a smart aleck, but one who I could depend on. The combination of his work ethic, humor and personality was unique and he will be hard to replace."

Terry Janson remembers conversations with Steven about his future plans at the coop, plans for the farm, and moving to Offerle.

"I'm not with the line crews day-in and day-out so I didn't get to know Steven as well as others did, but he came in my office once in a while." Janson said. "During those visits, he was very courteous and kind, and an overall solid guy. He was willing to accept and commit to any job or challenge we put in his path. He talked a lot about his family, the family farm and cattle, and hoped to become a more integral part of the family farm."

Previous to working at Victory Electric, Steven attended the Pratt Community College for the Electrical Lineworker Program. His classmate and roommate, Keith Connelly, a lineman for Victory Electric, remembers Steven as a lighthearted and fun-loving friend.

"Steven was a carefree, usually late, goofball that made everyone laugh," Connelly said. "I remember one time he showed up late for class and the professor told him to leave, so he went home and slept for the rest of the day. He didn't realize the professor meant

leave for the rest of class, not for the rest of the day."

Steven and Keith both interviewed and started together at Victory Electric. They not only worked together, but they were also roommates and good friends outside of work.

"At work, Steven was a hard worker, and when he was done here, he would go home and work more on the farm," said Connelly. "But despite working so much, he always found time to spend with his fiancé Nelda, and baby girl, Jadiana."

Jadiana was born in early 2010 and many remember the day when Steven brought his newborn daughter, Jadiana, to Victory's headquarters.

"He was a proud daddy," said Miller. "I could see it in his face, he loved his little girl."

His love for Jadiana, Nelda, parents Norbert and Rebecca Birzer Hornung, and farming was well known among his friends at Victory.

"He always talked about his kid and how he was ready for another one," Speer said. "That and cattle and farming. He couldn't wait to get off work so he could go home and work some more."

Steven's sunny personality is something everyone at Victory seems to remember. Many say they can't remember him without a smile on his face.

According to Speer, Steven was always in a good mood. "He had a way of making everyone smile and laugh. It was infectious"

In the days following Steven's accident, his friends and coworkers wanted something tangible to remember Steven by, and so a decal was developed in remembrance of him (pictured right). It is a silhouette of a lineman with the words *Always on the Line, Forever in our Hearts*. All of the Victory Electric line trucks sport the decal, in addition to many of the cars and trucks of his friends and family.

He was born in Dodge City on January 27, 1988. Growing up in Offerle, he attended St. Nicholas Catholic Grade School and graduated from Kinsley High School in 2006. Before he attended line school at Pratt Community College, he graduated from North Central Kansas Technical College in Beloit. He was a lifetime member of the Kinsley Gun Club, Knights of Columbus, and St. Joseph



Steven is pictured with daughter, Jadiana, and fiancé, Nelda, in summer 2010.

Catholic Church.

Steven was a beloved member of the Victory Electric family and he will be greatly missed, but not forgotten, by all of us at Victory Electric who had the privilege of knowing him and being his friend. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his daughter, fiancé, parents and extended family. As stated on the remembrance decal, he is *Always on the Line, Forever in Our Hearts*.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
P.O. Box 1335, 3230 N. 14th Ave.
Dodge City, KS 67801
620-227-2139
www.victoryelectric.net

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ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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FROM THE MANAGER

High Electric Bills in the Summer

In the past weeks and month, Victory Electric has received several phone calls inquiring about the high cost of electric bills, and I want to take a little time to address the issue.

First, this summer has been unusually hot, and this makes a difference in the amount of energy it takes to keep your home comfortably cool. In extremely hot summers, such as this year, we use more power than we can produce, forcing us to purchase energy on the open market. Prices on the open market can be both expensive and volatile. Historically, excess energy on the open market was affordable, but in recent years, that excess has dried up and what's left has become increasingly expensive due to competition for that excess energy.

Also, in January, Victory implemented a rate increase for MKEC members (former Aquila customers). This was an overall average increase of eight percent for all rate classes or a 7.3 percent increase for residential members. This increase may have not been as noticeable in the cooler months.

Third, starting July 1, summer rates were implemented. The summer rate comes to about one cent more per kilowatt hour compared to the winter rate.

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Terry Janson

Prices on the open market can be both expensive and volatile.



CFL Charlie Says

"Come Get Your Free CFL Bulb!"

And this month's lucky winners are... Robert Temaat, Kenton Setzkorn, Raymond Blackburn, Isaac Cerbvantes, Maria Hinojo, Pedro Huizar, Vernon Faulkner, Brad Doan, Keith Crotinger, and Gloria Deleon. Come by Victory Electric Cooperative and get your free compact florescent light bulb (CFL).

Every month Victory Electric will be giving free CFL light bulbs. Congratulations winners!

High Electric Bills in the Summer

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The extra one cent helps to offset generation capacity and the cost of buying energy at peak times.

I mentioned above about the volatility of buying energy on the open market. This volatility is one of the main reasons why we are still campaigning for Sunflower Electric and the Holcomb Expansion Project, which would add an extra 200MW of coal power for western Kansas. Recently, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) held public hearings in Overland Park, Salina and Garden City to hear the public's concerns about the project. We are not sure why they didn't

hold hearings in Liberal and Dodge City, closer to the expansion site. KDHE plans to hold another public comment period, after which the KDHE Hearing Officer will review the comments and issue a report. The report will then be given to KDHE Secretary Rod Bremby for his decision on issuing the air permit.

Victory Electric works hard to serve you, our member, and provide you with the most reliable and affordable energy possible. And always remember, Victory

Electric is a not-for-profit electric cooperative of which you are a member-owner and any profits



Artist rendering of the proposed Holcomb Expansion Project

come back to you in the form of capital credits. Please feel free to contact one of our customer service representatives if you have a question or concern about your bill.

'Til Next Time, TJ

Dodge City Days Proves Successful for Victory

Victory Electric Wins 3rd Place in Dodge City Days Parade

Once again, Victory Electric had a successful Dodge City Days week.

The theme for Dodge City Days this year was "Celebrating 50 Years". In the parade, Victory Electric exhibited a line truck, a barrel train, and also a large float with

lots of water to cool down the crowd and candy for the kids.

We were pleased to have won third place and want to thank all our employees and their families for volunteering their time to make this year's float a success.

In addition to the parade, Victory also grilled burgers for Media Night, sponsored the rodeo, and displayed some trucks for the Touch-A-Truck Event.

Congratulations to all winners of the Dodge City Days Parade.



Over 100 people from Victory Electric, including employees and their families, participated in the Dodge City Days Parade

Local Students Attend Leadership Camp

Lock and Nuñez participate in Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp

Kate Lock, Cimarron, and **Vanessa Nuñez**, Dodge City, joined youth from across Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming for the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp, July 17-23 in Steamboat Springs, Colo.

In addition to Lock and Nuñez, Mellisa Bosley, Garden City, traveled along as a chaperone and counselor. Bosley represented Victory Electric at camp in 2007, and then returned in 2008 as an ambassador.

Lock and Nuñez were selected from a group of high school students by Victory Electric Cooperative. To win this trip, they were asked to create a resume, take a short quiz over cooperatives, and be interviewed by a panel of judges.

During their week-long stay in Colorado, the students created a complete cooperative based on the product of candy. They established a board of trustees and a general manager that held daily membership meetings. When students arrived at camp, they elected the board and manager and paid dues. In the evenings, they marketed their product at the canteen. At the end of the week the group decided how to handle any profit margins.

"The students this year exhibited amazing leadership potential," Shana

Holsteen, Kansas Electric Cooperatives director of communications said. "Throughout the week, campers developed their leadership skills and learned about electric cooperatives through camp activities. It is amazing to see how much the students' skills grow in just one week."

The campers also participated in legislative presentations, a light and high voltage display, and a competition to build a transmission line from craft supplies. They explored the Old Town Steamboat Springs and toured Craig Power Plant and Trapper Mine.

Victory Electric is proud to support the Cooperative Youth Leader-

ship Camp," said Jerry King, director of marketing and communications. "Our hope is that local students will gain some awareness of how our cooperative system works and how important it is for the youth to be involved in our community."

Victory sponsors the trip of two students to camp each year. In addition, two students are awarded a trip to Washington, D.C. For more information, contact Jerri Imgarten at 620-371-7730.

On the following page, both Lock and Nuñez have written a short essay about their experiences and memories of the trip.



Top: From left, Kate Lock, Cimarron, Mellisa Bosley, chaperone from Garden City, and Vanessa Nuñez, Dodge City, traveled to Steamboat Springs, CO. Bottom: The students from Kansas and Oklahoma who participated in Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp.

Kate Lock Cimarron High School

I would like to thank everyone who helped make this trip, and all of the experiences I had during it, possible.



Kate Lock, right, and a friend pose at a rock climbing wall during an outing in Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

ers and I went shopping. The two boys in our group decided they needed to buy "raccoon skin" hats. Right then, I knew we would be very close friends.

I wouldn't change anything I did or any people I met at camp. It was truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

I did or any people I met at camp. It was truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Going into the trip, I was counting down the days until we could hurry and get on our big bus and come home. But by about Monday, I was wishing camp would last forever.

The first night in Denver was when I really began meeting people and making friends that I knew would be friends with forever. We ate at Hard Rock Cafe, then three other camp-

The various activities we did; rafting, lectures and small group activities really made camp an amazing experience. My favorite day included the volleyball tournament and a dance all in one, which was a perfect fit for me.

I've made friends and memories that will last a lifetime. Although I got thrown into the pool four times, the camp record, I wouldn't change anything

Vanessa Nuñez Dodge City High School

Bears, coyotes, and snakes were some of the few things that were on my mind on the way up to Colorado for the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp. But all worries

of having to wash my hair in the river or forgetting my toothbrush (which I didn't) left my mind when I saw the beautiful mountains of Colorado.

This past July, I was given the opportunity to represent Victory Electric at camp, an experience that will always stay with me. Making new friends was one of the most amazing parts of camp as well as one of my favorites.

However, it wasn't the only thing on my list, visiting Denver and eating at the Hard Rock Café was incredible, I sat between Johnny Cash's shoes and Bono's shirt. River rafting on the Colorado River takes it all, especially for me who's afraid of just about anything. Camp wasn't just about what we did it was also what we took with us, I learned that it takes a team to get something accomplished such as a cooperative does and every person plays a role no matter how big or small, their important.

I'd like to thank Terry Janson and all of Victory Electric for giving me this opportunity. And above all thanks to the members because without you this trip would never have been possible.



Vanessa Nuñez, center, is pictured with two friends at the dance during Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp.

Camp wasn't just about what we did, it was also about what we took with us.