

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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## THE VICTORY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

# electronews



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### FROM THE MANAGER

## Use Caution with Fourth of July fireworks

What would the Fourth of July be without cookouts, baseball games, and pyrotechnic displays in the night sky? But it's easy to forget that fireworks are dangerous explosives, and carelessness could have deadly consequences.

Every year, thousands of people are injured by fireworks—8,600 in 2010 alone, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). The agency also reports that three people died the same year.

The federal government has banned sales of the most dangerous fireworks to consumers, such as cherry bombs and M-80s. But sparklers, firecrackers, and other smaller fireworks remain legal in most states.

To help make sure your holiday celebrations don't end with a trip to the emergency room, follow these safety tips from the CPSC:

- ▶ **Sparklers aren't safe** for small children. They burn at very high temperatures—up to 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit, hot enough to melt some metals—and can easily set clothes on fire.
- ▶ **Ignite fireworks in a clearing**, away from power lines, homes, other structures, dry leaves and grass, and other flammable materials. Never light them in any type of container.
- ▶ **Keep a bucket of water handy** in case of emergencies and for fireworks that fail to ignite or explode.
- ▶ **Check instructions for storage**, but generally keep fireworks in a cool, dry place.
- ▶ **Do not place any part of your body directly over fireworks** while you're lighting them, and immediately move away as soon as the device is lit.
- ▶ **"Homemade" fireworks kits are illegal**. Never try to make your own.
- ▶ **After fireworks have completely burned out**, soak them with a hose before throwing them in the trash to help prevent fires.

The Fourth of July is a time to celebrate, but I urge you to use caution with fireworks—and always look up for power lines before you shoot anything skyward.

'Til Next Time, TJ



Terry Janson

“Every year, thousands of people are injured by fireworks.”

## Ochs Re-Elected Chairman of Sunflower Board

Sunflower Electric Power Corporation held its 55th annual meeting at Holcomb Station, Holcomb, on May 18. At the annual meeting, **LOREN OCHS**, representing Victory Electric, was re-elected as chairman of the board of directors.

Ochs began his career on the Sunflower board of directors in 1979. He was elected chairman in 2008 and has twice served as the board's vice-chairman. His service to the Victory board began in 1972.

"We are very pleased that we have dedicated Board members such as Loren that take such an active role

in their electric cooperatives," said Stuart Lowry, Sunflower President and CEO. "His experience and vision within the industry are invaluable as we face challenging times in the electric industry."

Sunflower Electric is one of Victory Electric's two wholesale power providers. As a regional wholesale generation and transmission supplier, Sunflower operates wind, gas, and coal-based generating units and a 2,254-mile transmission system for the needs of its six member cooperatives who serve in central and western Kansas.



Loren Ochs

## Victory Electric Awarded for Advanced Technology

The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc. was recently recognized as a "Dedicated Partner" by Landis+Gyr, the industry leader in electric and gas metering solutions.

One of thousands of electric and gas utilities who use Landis+Gyr technology around the world, Victory Electric was chosen to receive the award based on their willingness to work hand-in-hand with Landis+Gyr's product research and development teams.

"Victory Electric was an early adopter of the Gridstream RF solution. Throughout the entire deployment process, Victory Electric was a positive partner," said Prasanna Venkatesan, SVP systems and services of Landis+Gyr. "Victory Electric has willingly hosted visits

from other utilities exploring smart metering and grid automation solutions. They have shared their experiences and lessons learned to the benefit of the entire utility marketplace."

Victory Electric's partnership with Landis+Gyr began several years ago when Victory Electric began researching technology to replace an antiquated metering system.

"We first selected a technology called Stat Signal from Landis+Gyr," said Harold Flax, systems analyst for Victory Electric. "After installing 2,500 meters, we decided we wanted more flexibility with remote connect/disconnect options. That's when we decided to switch to the Gridstream RF technology."

Gridstream RF was designed primarily for rural areas, and initial deployment in Dodge City went very well. In order for it to be effective in a rural setting, software changes needed to be made. Landis+Gyr chose two sites, one being Victory Electric, to perform a pilot program testing Gridstream RF in rural areas. The pilot program proved successful and Victory Electric has Gridstream technology deployed in approximately 65 percent of its territory. Residential deployment is expected to be complete by the end of 2012 and the remaining territory by end of 2013.

"We were honored to have received this award," said Terry Janson, Victory Electric CEO. "The relationship between Victory Electric and Landis+Gyr has been symbiotic. We needed a unique metering solution that worked in both our urban and rural territories, and they were able to use our system to test and further develop their product."



The team responsible for researching and implementing the Gridstream metering solution at Victory Electric. Pictured from left: Greg Underwood, Craig Renick, Harold Flax, Tom Lowery, Heith Konecny, Rob Henry, Terry Janson, and Ryan Miller.



## Victory Electric Communicator Elected Secretary of National CCC Board

**JERRI IMGARTEN**, communications specialist for The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc., has been elected to serve a two-year term on the Certified Cooperative Communicators (CCC) program board of directors and will also serve as board secretary for one year. The CCC program is a national program offered by the Council of Rural Electric Communicators, which is affiliated with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).



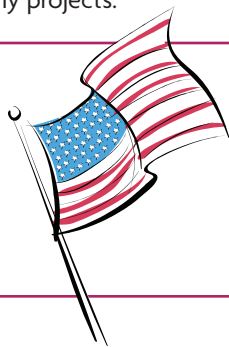
Jerri Imgarten

The CCC Board is composed of 10 fellow communicators who are employed in the electric co-op industry and who have already earned a CCC designation. As board members, they assume oversight and leadership of the program and are responsible for setting policy and program guidelines. Board members' prior experience, achievement of the credential, and professional ethics and integrity qualifies them to oversee the CCC program.

"We are very proud of Jerri for representing Victory Electric on a national level," said Terry Janson, CEO of Victory Electric. "We encourage all of our employees to go above and beyond in both their professional and personal lives. This makes for well-rounded employees who represent Victory Electric well."

Imgarten earned her CCC designation in October 2011. The CCC program recognizes individuals who have demonstrated a professional level of excellence in the practice of electric cooperative communications. Imgarten is among nearly 300 cooperative communicators who are certified across the nation.

Imgarten has been with Victory Electric as a communications specialist for four years. She is the coordinator of several community events such as the Victory Electric Community Health Fair, Pumpkin Painting and Carving Festival and numerous other cooperative events. She also writes the monthly newsletter, oversees the web site and social media, and coordinates graphic design, writing, and photography projects.



## Happy 4th of July

The staff and employees of Victory Electric would like to wish everyone a happy and safe 4th of July holiday. Our office will be closed on Wed., July 4th for the holiday.

## Schmidt Elected President of KMSDA

The Kansas Member Services Directors Association (KMSDA) elected officers at their meeting last month in Wichita. The membership elected **JOSH SCHMIDT** of Victory Electric as president. Also elected were Ron Graber, Heartland, vice president, and Abby McGreevy, Sunflower, secretary.



Josh Schmidt

KMSDA is a group of communications, marketing, and member services professionals from electric co-ops across the state of Kansas. The purpose of the organization is to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information and the development of common programs relating to energy efficiency, load management, member communications, and other topics relating to the electric co-op industry.

## Employees Complete Leadership Course



Heith Konecny, Steve Stecklein, Rae Jean Amy and Mikey Goddard.

Congratulations to Victory Electric employees **RAE JEAN AMY, HEITH KONECNY, MIKEY GODDARD** and **STEVE STECKLEIN** for completing the Leadership Dodge program.

Leadership Dodge is a program hosted by the Dodge City Chamber of Commerce. The goal of the program is to train and educate the future leaders of the community. Class members visit various sites around the community, including the meat packing plant, schools and educational system, law enforcement, economic development, among others.

## Bicycles Donated to Deserving Local Students

### Bicycle Winners

**Juana Lorenzo**, Beeson Elementary

**Sunday Perez**, Beeson Elementary

**Michelle Medina**, Sunnyside Elementary

**Jesus Aguirre**, Sunnyside Elementary

**Esperanza Morales**, Central Elementary

**Alan Lopez-Agustin**, Central Elementary

**Marisol Hernandez**, Miller Elementary

**Andrew Finley**, Miller Elementary

**Ryan Durr**, Wilroads Elementary

**Jasmin Castillo**, Wilroads Elementary

**Yared Petronilo**, Ross Elementary

**Amy Soberanes**, Ross Elementary

**Martin Rangel**, Linn Elementary

**Citlaly Real**, Linn Elementary

**Hector Adame**, Northwest Elementary

**Viviana Nguyen**, Northwest Elementary

**Hugo Garcia**, Comanche Intermediate

**Victoria Garcia**, Comanche Intermediate

Victory Electric recently partnered together with the local Kiwanis Club for their Terrific Kids program. The program is aimed to award local elementary kids for their hard work and dedication. Students chosen are those who have shown growth and excelled in their studies, many of which improved their grades/scores by several letters. Several students from each elementary were chosen to receive a backpack full of goodies, and two students from each school received a bicycle for their hard work.

The local Kiwanis Terrific Kids program is coordinated by Becky Escalante. Victory Electric would like to thank Becky for her time organizing the program and dedication to the students of Dodge City.

Kiwanis is a worldwide service organization of individuals who want to improve their communities. The primary focus of Kiwanis is "serving the children of the world." According to Kiwanis International, Terrific Kids is a "student recognition program that promotes character development, self-esteem and perseverance." The TERRIFIC acronym stands for Thoughtful, Enthusiastic, Respectful, Responsible, Inclusive, Friendly, Inquisitive, Capable.

Victory Electric congratulates all of the student winners of both the backpacks and the bicycles and encourages students to continue to do their best in school.



Pictured from left: Ryan Ausmus, Adult Learning Center; John Montford, Principal of Sunnyside Elementary; Rebecca Escalante, Becky's Bail Bonds; Micaela Morales, Victory Electric; Maria Garcia, mother of student winner; Michelle Medina, student winner of bicycle; and Jerri Imgarten, Victory Electric.

## Why Buy Local? The Advantages of Keeping Dollars Local

Why buy local? There are numerous benefits to buying local. First, when those coveted big, job creating, businesses look to locate in a city or town, they look at the statistics of how many people buy local. Ford County has total retail sales of \$484.7 million, and compared to other towns and counties approximately the same size, Ford County doesn't do as well.

In Finney County (Garden City), they have total retail sales of \$680.7 million, almost \$200 million more in sales than in Dodge City. Great Bend and Liberal do approximately the same in total retail sales, but they have approximately 2,000 less households than Dodge City.

Therefore, towns like Garden City, which is approximately the same size as Dodge City, will attract more businesses because they draw in more local buyers.

Another important fact that many forget when they travel is the cost to travel to those places. Using Wichita and Garden City as examples, using the calculation (IRS mileage rate x the miles) + (average Ford County hourly wage x time to drive), the average person is spending almost \$17 going to Garden City and \$57 going to Wichita, without even opening your wallet at a store.

Victory Electric recognized a need for a buy local campaign. Along

with United Wireless, Cox Communications, Dodge City Community College, and Weece Furniture Outlet, "Buy Close By" was formed.

The idea behind the marketing campaign is to encourage consumers to stay in Dodge City and Ford County for their shopping. Local businesses are offering discounts, coupons, giveaways and much more.

For more information on the discounts being offered, please visit the website at [www.buycloseby.com](http://www.buycloseby.com) or [facebook.com/buycloseby](https://www.facebook.com/buycloseby).

If you are a business and are interested in participating, contact Josh Schmidt at 620-227-2139 or Micaela Morales at 620-371-7744.



## Victory Supports Local Business



Pictured from left: Jerry King, Victory director of marketing and communications; Terry Janson, Victory CEO; Ed Stegman, Victory staking engineer; Carolyn Hoagland, head cashier at Jetmore Food Center; Larry Schneweis, Victory warehouse clerk; Mark Wellbrock and Linda Wellbrock, owners of Jetmore Food Center; and Josh Schmidt, Victory manager of member services.

Amidst the chaos and fun activities of the Horsethief: The Festival, a unique opportunity presented itself to the management and employees at Victory Electric.

When asked to grill burgers for the first 500 people to Friday night's Horsethief festivities, Victory Electric began to organize the details. Cargill generously donated the beef patties, and Victory Electric was to furnish the grill, grillers, buns, fixings and chips.

"Victory Electric is a big proponent of shopping local and keeping tax dollars local," said Terry Janson, CEO of Victory Electric. "We thought this would be a great opportunity to lead by example and since the festival was in Hodgeman County, we decided to purchase the buns, fixings and chips from the local Jetmore Food Center. We contacted Mark Wellbrock, and he and his staff at the Jetmore Food Center were great. They

took care of ordering everything, and it was ready and waiting when we arrived to pick up the food."

In addition to buying local, Victory Electric has also been active in creating programs to encourage all citizens to shop local. Last year, partnering with Dodge City Community College and several other local businesses, Victory Electric helped create the web site [buycloseby.com](http://buycloseby.com). It is a free site that any local business can advertise their business and products, and citizens can visit the site to see what local businesses have to offer.

"We try to do what we can to boost the local economies of the communities we serve," Janson said. "In addition to promoting the [buycloseby.com](http://buycloseby.com) web site, we also feature local businesses in the *Kansas Country Living* magazine quarterly. It really is a community effort, and we would like to think we are doing our part."

## Trucks For Sale

Victory Electric has several vehicles for sale. For questions or to make an offer, please contact Mike Clark at 620-371-7719.



2003 Ford F550 **\$11,500**



2005 Chev. Colorado **\$6,500 OBO**



2003 Chevrolet **\$900 OBO**



2003 GMC 1500 **\$3,250 OBO**

## Cover the Swimming Pool to Keep It Comfy

“Everybody into the pool!” rings as a time-honored summer rallying cry. But when it’s time for everyone to get out, the pool ought to be covered—especially if it’s heated.

That’s the advice from the Cooperative Research Network (CRN), the

research arm of the Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. CRN and its strategic partner, E Source, have been looking at ways that homeowners, swim clubs, and other pool operators can reduce heat loss.

About 70 percent of the heat lost from pools—both indoors and outdoors—results from evaporation. “You experience evaporation both from the sun and from the wind,” explains Brian Sloboda, CRN senior program manager. “People tend not to realize that wind causes water evaporation—a lot of it.”

He adds: “You end up replacing lost water with tap water, which is going to be colder. So you have to reheat it, which increases your electric bills.”

To save energy, cover a pool when it’s not in use. Pool size and shape factor into choosing the right cover.

The most expensive pool covers are incorporated into the pool structure and can come with an automatic retraction and storage system. Manual covers may be cheaper, but removing them can be a dirty job. You can also choose solar covers resembling bubble wrap. All three have liability issues that need to be addressed.

“If you don’t want to use a physical cover, opt for a chemical cover,” Sloboda offers. “You essentially create a layer of fatty oil on top of your pool. When the water is calm the oil floats to the surface to provide a barrier. While swimmers won’t notice it, it’s not 100 percent effective because when people are swimming or if the wind blows hard pool water mixes with the oil.”

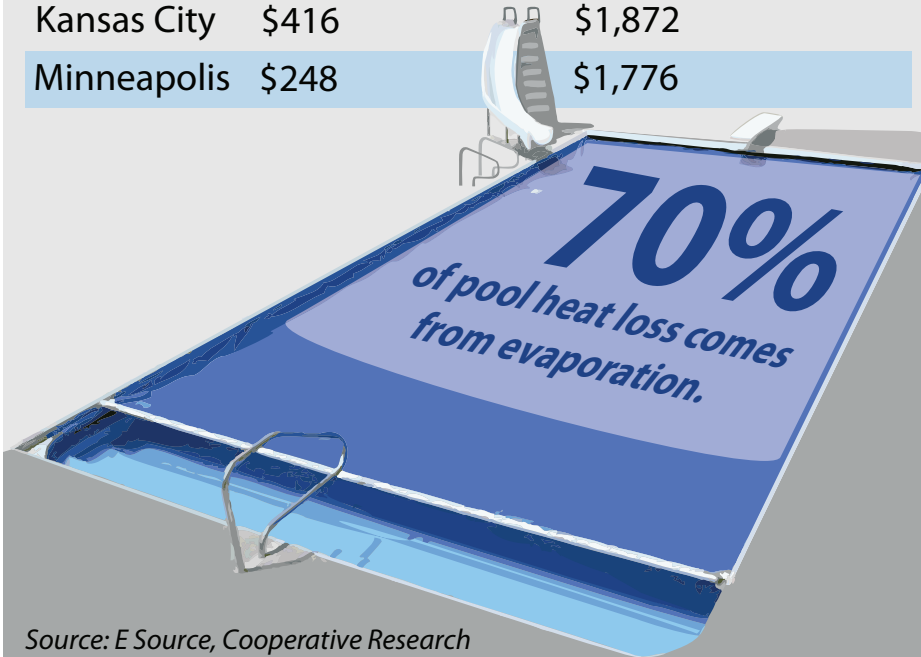
CRN and E Source looked at the cost of heating outdoor pools in several cities and found that it costs \$168 to heat a covered pool in Phoenix, for example, over a seven-month season. Without a cover, the price tag skyrockets to \$1,776—more than 10 times higher.

For more ways to save energy, visit [EnergySavers.gov](http://EnergySavers.gov), [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com), or call Victory Electric at 620-227-2139.

### Cover Pools to Save Energy!

Cut outside pool energy consumption 50 percent or more by covering it up when not in use. Here’s how much you could save in different areas of the country:

City	Cost With Cover	Cost Without Cover
Atlanta	\$424	\$2,248
Chicago	\$296	\$2,096
Dallas	\$280	\$1,920
Denver	\$168	\$2,120
Kansas City	\$416	\$1,872
Minneapolis	\$248	\$1,776



Source: E Source, Cooperative Research Network. Based on a 1,000-square-foot pool heated with an 80 percent efficient gas heater at 50 cents per therm and a pool temperature of 80°F.

# Cubrir la Piscina para Mantenerse Confortable

“Todos a la piscina! “suenan como una reunión de verano consagrada. Pero cuando llega el momento de salir todos, de la piscina debería ser cubierta, especialmente si es climatizada.

Este es el Consejo de la red de investigación cooperativa (CRN), el brazo de investigación en la base de Arlington, Virginia Rural Electric Cooperative Asociación Nacional. CRN y su socio estratégico, fuente E, han estado buscando maneras que propietarios, clubs de natación y otros operadores de piscina pueden reducir la pérdida de calor.

Alrededor de 70 por ciento del calor perdido de piscinas—tanto en interiores como en exteriores, es el resultado de la evaporación. “Experimenta evaporación del sol y del viento,” explica Brian Sloboda, CRN senior program manager. “Las personas tienden a no darse cuenta de que el viento provoca evaporación del agua, mucha de ella.”

Y agrega: “termina reemplazando al agua perdida con agua del grifo, que va a ser más frío. Así que tienes a, lo cual aumenta sus facturas eléctricas recalentar.”

Para ahorrar energía, cubrir una piscina cuando no esté en uso. Piscina tamaño y forma factor en la elección de la cubierta derecha.

Las cubiertas de piscina más caras están incorporadas en la estructura de la piscina y pueden venir con un sistema automático de retirada y almacenamiento de información. Portadas manuales pueden ser más baratas, pero quitarlas puede ser un trabajo muy sucio. También puede elegir cubiertas solares parecidas a bubble wrap. Los tres tienen problemas de responsabilidad que deben abordarse.

“Si no desea utilizar una cubierta física, optar por una cubierta química, “ofrece Sloboda. “Esencialmente crear una capa de aceite graso de su

piscina. Cuando el agua está tranquila el aceite flota a la superficie para proporcionar una barrera. Mientras que los nadadores no notificación, no es 100 por ciento eficaz porque cuando las personas están nadando o si el viento sopla duro piscina agua se mezcla con el aceite.”

CRN y E Source miraron el costo de la calefacción de piscinas al aire

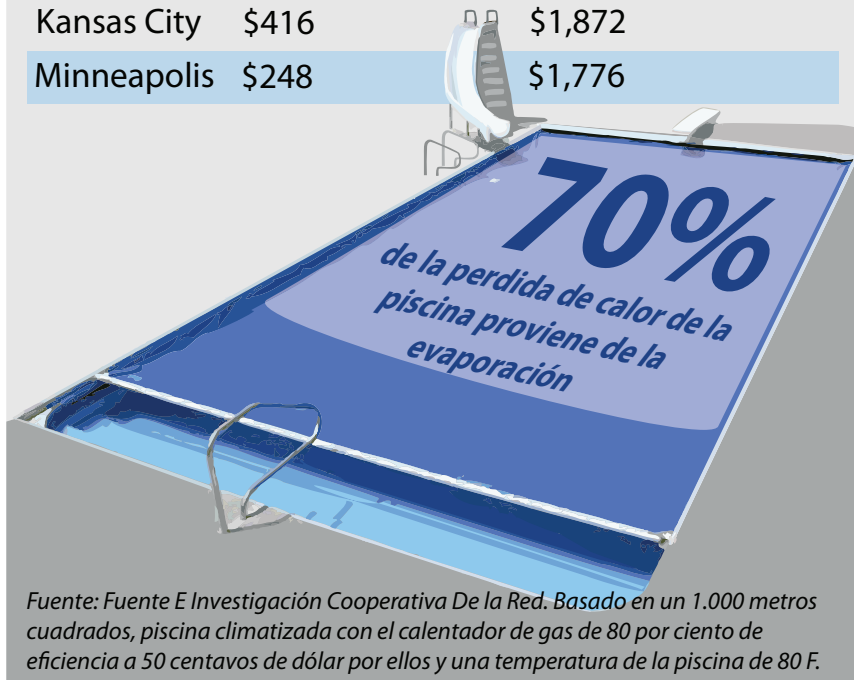
libre en varias ciudades y encontraron que cuesta \$168 para calentar una piscina cubierta en Phoenix, por ejemplo, durante una temporada de siete meses. Sin una cobertura, la etiqueta de precio está por los cielos \$1.776—más de 10 veces superior.

Más formas de ahorrar energía, visite [EnergySavers.gov](http://EnergySavers.gov) O [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).

## Cubierta de Piscinas para Ahorrar Energía

Corte de energía fuera de la piscina el consumo de 50 por ciento o más por encubrimiento cuando no este en uso. He aquí como usted puede ahorro mucho en las diferentes áreas de país:

Ciudad	Costo Con Tapa	Costo sin cubierta
Atlanta	\$424	\$2,248
Chicago	\$296	\$2,096
Dallas	\$280	\$1,920
Denver	\$168	\$2,120
Kansas City	\$416	\$1,872
Minneapolis	\$248	\$1,776





## DCCC Tax Credits Offer Unique Opportunity

We all do it—pay taxes. A lot of times we look at the money being deducted from our paychecks without a thought of what it funds. But what if we could tell the government where we want our tax money to go?

That's exactly what you can do when you buy tax credits from Dodge City Community College and Area Technical Center.

DCCC currently has two tax credit programs available—a 60 percent tax credit to fund deferred maintenance projects on the DCCC campus, and a 50 percent tax credit to fund the construction of additional classroom space on the Manufacturing Technology Building.

"We are very fortunate to have available 60 percent tax credits from the Kansas Department of Revenue and 50 percent tax credits from the Kansas Department of Commerce," said Roger Proffitt, DCCC Foundation Director. "We really appreciate the number of people that took advantage of our tax credits before the end of the year, but we do have more available. They are a real source of funding for the college and can be a financial benefit to individuals and businesses."

Funds generated from the 60 percent tax credit program are designated for deferred maintenance on existing DCCC campus facilities, which means they cannot be used for new construction. Funds can be used for remodeling projects such as the current Student Union remodeling project. The Student Union is undergoing a major renovation to make it more accessible and user-friendly to students and community members.

Funds generated from the 50 percent tax credit program are solely for the purpose of building additional classroom space on the Manufacturing Technology Building. Over the past 10 years the need for welding

professionals in Dodge City and southwest Kansas has greatly increased. Many manufacturing companies in Dodge City need expert welders on staff and need quick training for new employees so they look at DCCC to help provide the training.

"For DCCC to be able to increase the amount of trained welders and meet the increasing needs of our local and regional industries along with the welding majors, we must create a classroom and computer lab attached



to the existing welding shop," Proffitt said. "This will allow us to double the production of courses offered and teach classes simultaneously. Currently, we are unable to teach simultaneous classes and talk over the production work going on in the shop itself."

So here is an example of how 60 percent tax credits can affect the tax bracket. It is suggested you consult your tax advisor as to how the tax credits might apply in your particular situation.

► **25 Percent Tax Bracket:** Based on a federal tax rate of 25% for 2010, a married taxpayer who had taxable income of at least \$68,000 and less than \$137,300, would realize a tax savings of approximately \$4,575 if they make a \$5,000 contribution and had itemized deductions of at least \$11,400 before the contribution (\$13,600 if both are 65). This results in a net cost of \$425 after taxes for making the contribution (8.5%).

► **28 Percent Tax Bracket:** If the married couple have taxable income of at least \$137,300 and less than \$209,250, and had at least the same itemized deduction before the contribution as shown above, would have approximately \$4,725 reduction in taxes and their net cost of \$5,000 contribution would be \$275 (5.5%).

► **33 Percent Tax Bracket:** If you have taxable income of at least \$209,250 and less than \$373,650 and can itemize before the contribution, your contribution would result in a reduction of approximately \$4,975 for a contribution of \$5,000. This results in a net cost of \$25 after taxes for making contribution (.5%).

► **35 Percent Tax Bracket:** If you have taxable income over \$373,650 and can itemize before the contribution, your contribution would result in a reduction of approximately \$5,075 for a contribution of \$5,000. In this situation you would actually "make money" by making the contribution (you would net 1.45% for each dollar contributed).

"The great thing about these tax credits is that by purchasing them, you get to decide where your Kansas income tax money goes instead of sending it to Topeka and the government deciding where to spend it," said Dr. Don A. Woodburn, DCCC President. "This is a new and creative way the state of Kansas is funding community colleges. We need local people to utilize our tax credits; it offsets the need to raise the mill levy. So I encourage everyone to keep their tax dollars right here at home where it helps the college, lowers their local taxes and benefits everyone in Dodge City and southwest Kansas."

For more information about the tax credit programs, contact Roger Proffitt, DCCC Foundation Director, at 620-227-9422.