

electronews

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FROM THE MANAGER

The Federal Government Must Invest in Rural America



Shane Laws

Here's a simple fact we at Victory Electric know all too well: The 21st century economy runs the risk of leaving much of rural America behind. It's a concern shared by

electric cooperatives across the country, because their strong community ties give them a bird's-eye view of the quality of life of the members they serve.

Rural America grows most of the food, generates much of the power and manufactures many of the goods used throughout the country. When the modern economy threatens to leave much of the country on the wrong side of the ledger, that's bad news regardless of where you live and work.

Today, fewer than 15 percent of U.S. businesses are located in rural areas and small towns. Bank loans for amounts less than \$1 million, primarily to family-owned small businesses and farms,

have dropped by nearly half since 2005. These are warning signs for the basic building-blocks of the economy that serve as the foundation of America's economic stability.

The solution isn't simple, but it is within reach. It will take a concerted, long-term commitment from Congress and the administration to reverse this trend.

The Trump administration and Congress already have taken significant steps to jump start programs that bolster the rural economy. That's helping turn the tide in many communities. But reversing this trend requires a sustained focus across the executive branch and Capitol Hill.

The omnibus budget bill Congress approved earlier this year is providing key resources and tools to foster development of energy, telecommunications and other essential services in rural America, including \$600 million for high-speed internet access in under-served regions.

Other sections of the omnibus bill
Continued on page 16B ▶

Office Closed for Forth of July

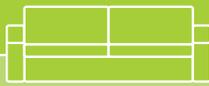
Victory Electric's office will close Wednesday, July 4, 2018, for the Fourth of July. We wish everyone a happy Independence Day and remind you to keep safety in mind while celebrating.

Save Energy with LEDs

LED lights last up to 30 times longer than incandescents. Below are LED lighting suggestions for your home.

Living Room Lamps

Table or floor three-way lamps using LED bulbs provide 620, 1,600 or 2,150 lumens of soft white light and deliver up to 25,000 hours of light.



Kitchen

Dimmable recessed LED conversion lights add a warm glow of up to 1,200 lumens and add far less heat to your kitchen. Each bulb could last 10 years.



Bedrooms & Hallways

Long-life LEDs are ideal for ceiling fixtures. A 9-watt LED produces the same 800 lumens of light as a 60-watt incandescent and uses about 80 percent less energy.



Bathrooms

Omnidirectional LED globe bulbs are designed to provide a warm glow ideal for bathrooms. A 6-watt bulb produces 450 lumens and lasts up to 15,000 hours.



Outdoors

A 6-watt, 500 lumen LED bulb can replace a 40-watt incandescent bulb. Designed to last up to 30,000 hours, it could be a one-time switch.



The Federal Government Investment

Continued from page 16A ▶

fully fund low-interest government loans or enhance the efficiency of permitting for rural electric programs to improve grid reliability. These are positive steps. But there's more work to do.

As local businesses built by the consumers we serve, electric cooperatives have meaningful ties to America's rural communities. And they are making strategic infrastructure investments to give communities the flexibility to adapt to tomorrow's energy needs, investing \$12 billion annually in the areas that they serve.

It takes more than smart energy infrastructure to rejuvenate rural communities. Cooperatives also leverage public-private partnerships to enhance the quality of life.

Over the last two decades, cooperatives have partnered with community stakeholders through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's rural economic development programs on hundreds of projects to construct essential infrastructure, renovate hospitals, build libraries and expand businesses.

There's a major piece of legislation moving in Congress that offers an opportunity to bolster these important public-private programs while giving rural America an additional boost: the Farm Bill.

As Congress continues discussing the Farm Bill, it should support a stronger rural America and enhance key rural development programs by including:

Additional funding for rural broadband grants and loans. A reliable, modern grid and vibrant rural communities depend on a robust communications infrastructure.

- ▶ Ample support for proven rural economic development programs.
- ▶ A focus on accelerating energy innovation to build new renewable energy resources and modernize the electric grid.
- ▶ Continued funding for rural electrification programs.

The need to invest in rural America is real for all of us. So too are the opportunities for our leaders to make a meaningful difference in its trajectory.

Thanks, Shane

VICTORY ELECTRIC SAFETY SHARE

Metallic Balloons Cause Outages

Metallic balloons are great indoors and at birthdays, graduations and other special occasions. However, you must know how to use and dispose of metallic balloons properly, or you could cause a power outage and damage to utility electrical equipment.

Because of the metallic coating, they conduct electricity well and can short out circuits in Victory Electric's equipment. You and your neighbors could lose power, traffic lights could go out, and entire blocks of homes and businesses could



A metallic balloon landed on a transformer and caused blinks and disrupted service for members in May.

go dark. To prevent this, keep metallic balloons secured. When finished with the balloons, deflate them and throw them in the garbage. Do not release them.

Never tie a metallic balloon to a child's wrist. If the balloon comes in contact with electricity, it will travel through the balloon and into the child.

Metallic balloons have been known to float for several days before losing their helium and returning to Earth. If one lands within the fence of an electric utility substation, it can cause electrical fires and loss of electric service.

Scheve and Renick Begin New Roles in Engineering

Victory Electric is pleased to announce promotions for **CRAIG RENICK** and **JAROD SCHEVE**. In recent months, Victory Electric's engineering department has undergone several staff changes, including a retirement, resulting in position vacancies

Scheve Promoted to Manager



Jarod Scheve

Jarod Scheve was promoted to manager of substation technology. Scheve has been in the substation department since 2014 but joined Victory

Electric in 2002.

"I started my time with Victory Electric as a warehouse clerk," Scheve said. "I tried being a lineman for a couple of years before deciding it wasn't for me. I went back to the warehouse before moving to substations in 2014.

"Substations are the beginning of our member's electricity as far as Victory Electric is concerned," Scheve continued. "The power comes from a generation and transmission (G&T) power plant and enters a substation. The substations transform voltage so it can be distributed across Victory Electric lines."

Victory Electric has 53 substations across its service territory to monitor and maintain.

"One of our primary jobs is to keep the supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system running properly and program breakers," Scheve said. "Each day is different. When I

come to work, I could have a plan and within five minutes it can change; that's what I like the most about my job."

Rob Henry, vice president of engineering, says "Scheve's experience with SCADA will serve the members well. I know he will do a great job. I have no doubts in his ability to continue doing great work for the substation department."

"The promotion is exciting. There is a lot to learn and a lot I haven't experienced yet," Scheve said. "It's those things that make me both nervous and excited."

Renick Moves to Substation Department



Craig Renick

Craig Renick changed capacity at Victory Electric and switched from the metering department to the substation department.

"I am always looking to learn," Renick said. "I want to broaden my horizons in the cooperative and gain more knowledge of the systems and how they work."

Renick started at Victory Electric in 2008 as a lineman. He had experience in the electrician trade and used his skills to help the electrician department when Victory Electric still provided those services.

Most recently Renick served as a journeyman meterman.

"I was hired as a meterman not even a year after beginning at Victory Electric," Renick said. "I enjoyed wiring meters and troubleshooting them and



Victory Electric has 53 substations to get power to your homes and businesses.

now I want to learn more. I never stop learning."

Renick's move to the substation department is a great shift according to Rob Henry, vice president of engineering.

"Craig's experience as an electrician and a lineman will help his transition to substations and will come more easily for him," Henry said.

In his new role Renick will help maintain the SCADA system and perform tests on transformers.

We hope you will join us in congratulating Jarod and Craig on their outstanding performance and wish them best of luck in their new positions. We know they will continue to work hard for our members and provide the service you expect.

Members Win FREE CFL

Every month Victory Electric gives away free CFL light bulbs to members. **This month's lucky winners are... THAYNE E. ABBEY, ERNESTO O. FERNANDEZ, AMY M. KUHN, MELISSA LOPEZ and JACEUELINE REGAN.** Come by Victory Electric's office to get your free compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL). Congratulations winners!



ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE YOUTH TOUR

Victory Electric Sends Frink and

CODY FRINK, Cimarron, and **REGAN RHODES**, Mullinville, were awarded the opportunity to attend the 58th Annual Electric Cooperative Youth Tour with 1,800 peers from across the nation from June 7 through 14. Victory Electric selected the students as our representatives through an application and interview process.

These students joined 38 Kansas and four Hawaii students to spend a week touring Washington, D.C. There, delegates learned how to become community leaders.

“Youth Tour is a great opportunity that can change these students’ lives,” said Kennedy St. George, Victory Electric communications specialist. “After touring our nation’s capital, meeting our senators and congressional representatives and learning firsthand about how our government operates, they will return home with a greater knowledge and memories

that will last a lifetime.”

In addition to Capitol Hill, the Youth Tour stops included the Holocaust Memorial

Museum, the Smithsonian museums, Mt. Vernon, Arlington National Cemetery, and many memorials and historical sites. The students also attended a professional baseball game, a theater performance at the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts and saw the pandas at the National Zoo.

“Seeing all of the amazing sites in real life has struck me the most,” said Frink. “Seeing these places in textbooks just doesn’t do them justice.”

As part of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association’s National Youth Day on June 11, all of the state groups convened to learn from inspirational speakers. This year’s keynote speaker was Mike Schlappi, a four-time Paralympic Medalist and two-time world wheelchair basketball champion, who shared his inspiring message, “Just because you can’t stand up doesn’t mean you can’t stand out!”

To learn how you can participate in Victory Electric’s Youth Tour program, contact Kennedy St. George by email at kennedy@victoryelectric.net or at 620.371.7738. For more information about Youth Tour, visit youthtour.coop.

Seeing all of the amazing sites in real life has struck me the most. Seeing these places in textbooks just doesn’t do them justice.

CODY FRINK



Thirty-nine delegates from Kansas and Hawaii stand



Regan Rhodes helps paint the mural at Brown vs. Board of Education Museum in Topeka.



Cody Frink (right) and his new friends tour the Jefferson Memorial.

nd Rhodes to Nation's Capital



in front of the White House during their tour of Washington, D.C., July 7-14.



Regan Rhodes and Cody Frink visit the U.S. Capitol.



Cody Frink

CODY FRINK

The Youth Tour of 2018 is a trip I will never forget. I enjoyed every second of taking in our nation's capital and making new, lifelong friends.

During this trip I was completely in awe. I could not believe I was able to stand where many of our founding fathers stood. Seeing the places I had only

previously seen in textbooks was really a dream come true. I also gained a better understanding of our local cooperatives and the inner workings of one similar to Victory Electric.

Throughout this life-changing week, I experienced a new perspective on what it truly means to be an American. Seeing the Changing of the Guard, the Iwo Jima memorial, and Arlington Cemetery really made me see and appreciate the unending sacrifices that have been made for us to live in this great nation.

One of my favorite memorials was the World War II memorial. The clean and symbolic layout of the beautiful memorial amazed me. Although I am saddened that many of the World War II Veterans are no longer around to see it, I hope it can inspire many future generations as it inspired me.

I would like to thank everyone at Victory Electric for making this trip possible. This organization has given many students the opportunity of a lifetime and I am thankful and blessed to be one of them.



Regan Rhodes

REGAN RHODES

The trip to Washington D.C. was the trip of a lifetime for me. Even now, back at home, it's hard for me to believe I was there. I walked in the footsteps of millions of people, looked at monuments and museums I never dreamed I'd see, and met some of the most amazing friends I'll ever have in my life. This trip would never

have been possible if not for my local electric cooperative, Victory Electric. I thank them for choosing me to represent them on this life-changing trip.

There were many things I saw and did that effected me greatly. The most impacting thing I saw was definitely the Holocaust Museum. It was sobering and horrifying all at once. It was something I needed to see, to remind me that people did those things to other people. It hit me hard, but I'm very glad I got to see it.

My favorite memorial was the Vietnam wall. It's strange how such a simple design and shape can do justice to every single person who lost his or her lives or went missing in action in the Vietnam War. I read some of those names as I walked and I think some of us made promises that day to never forget the people we lost.

Experiences like these can't be replaced. The memories I made with the 38 other students will last forever. I will never forget those people or those places as long as I live.

Victory Electric Awarded 2018 “Best of the Best” Awards

Victory Electric won two “Best of the Best” titles, hosted by the *Dodge City Daily Globe*. The survey celebrates the businesses, organizations, people who contribute to the community of Dodge City. Voting was held online between April 25 and May 14 and was open to anyone.

For the second year, Victory Electric’s member service representative **DANIA BLATNICK** won the best customer service award.

“I just do my job,” Blatnick said. “I make a conscious decision when a member walks through the door or when the phone rings to make sure the member leaves or hangs up satisfied with us and the service.”

“I was surprised when friends started texting me that I had won,” Blatnick said. “I saw the list of contenders and there were so many good people from companies bigger than us. I appreciate everyone who voted.”

“We strive to provide excellent service to our members every day,” said Amy Grasser, vice president of corporate services. “I am so proud of Dania for being recognized for two years in a row and I am happy for the support the community shows.”

Victory Electric was also named the best place to work by the public. Each nominee came from a reader placing a nominee into the category.

“In a town the size of Dodge City, it is an honor to be



Amy Grasser (left) vice president of corporate services and Shane Laws, CEO, present Dania Blatnick (center) with a banner and the official certificates from the Daily Globe for her award in best customer service.

voted best place to work,” Grasser said. “We have less than 100 employees and compete with huge businesses. For the community to recognize our work and what we offer our employees means we have a great team here at Victory Electric.”

The Best of the Best contest is held every year and Victory Electric congratulates all other winners and competitors.



Two \$100 Bill Credit Drawings Left for Vittles for Vets

The past three summers, Victory Electric and our members have joined forces with VFW Post 1714 to help stock the food pantry in Nimitz Hall at Fort Dodge Soldiers Home. It is time to restock the pantry again. Victory Electric is hosting a food drive and for every THREE items you brings to Victory Electric’s office, you will be entered to win a \$100 bill credit.

DRAWING DATES

TWO — \$100 bill credits — July 26

TWO — \$100 bill credits — August 30

Patriotism in Action Benefits the Whole Community

Perhaps no other day of the year evokes such a sense of patriotism than Independence Day. With flags rippling in the wind—red, white and blue bunting adorning porches and store fronts and local parades and marching bands on display, it's easy to feel a swell of pride for our country.

Another, perhaps deeper, form of patriotism is active engagement in public and civic life. Involvement in your town promotes a richer community life and ensures that institutions thrive and communities remain vibrant and inviting places to live work and play. Besides being enjoyable, your participation in community events and activities makes a difference. Simple things like supporting the **VITTLES FOR VETS** food drive or attending a local high school event signals to the people in your community that you care and support them and that the community itself is worth sustaining.

In fact, there are civic engagement opportunities through Victory Electric. You may recall one of our most important cooperative principles is that of democratic participation. If you receive electric service from Victory Electric, you are a member of the cooperative with an opportunity to provide input through voting during our annual meeting.



Victory Electric lineman Jeremy Elling replaces a flag. Victory Electric's commitment to community is one of seven guiding principles.

Victory Electric, like other types of cooperatives, originated to serve a need that was not being met by traditional for-profit electric companies. We make decisions based on a long-term thinking—what decisions will benefit the larger community vision? One of the best ways you can engage with Victory Electric is by casting your vote when it's time to elect board members. These are folks just like you, and our board members live in the community and provide guidance to leadership on a myriad of issues and decisions, both short and long term.

Perhaps you haven't voted in the past because you didn't think you were qualified to weigh in on a particular topic, or maybe you simply didn't have time to vote. But you do have an opinion on the issues that affect our community, and Victory Electric wants your particular perspective.

Diverse perspectives benefit the whole community. You may have a different view than your neighbor, but together, those perspectives provide a more balanced view of the community. You could be bringing new information that hadn't been previously considered. We seek more members participating in the process, because greater numbers reflect a consensus on the direction of the future and the will of the people.

Every April, you have the opportunity to vote in the board elections. Victory Electric's service territory is made up of 10 districts and each board member serves a three-year term. Voting, whether in the cooperative or in local and national elections, is a form of patriotism, as it reflects a devotion to one's community and commitment to ensure it thrives.

Democracy is not a spectator sport; it takes active civic engagement by citizens to thrive. This Independence Day, we hope you will embrace the local celebrations and actively participate in your community.



Jerri Imgarten, vice president of communications (middle) delivers food for the 2017 Vittles for Vets food drive. Your participation in community events makes a difference.

Stay Away from Electrical Substations

An electrical substation converts electricity to a lower voltage so it can be safely routed and delivered to your home. Because high-voltage power runs through substation equipment, please avoid substation areas and the fences that surround them. Keep the safety tips below in mind.



Never release metallic balloons near substations. If they get caught in the equipment or lines, they can cause power outages.



Never fly kites or drones near electrical substations. If you do and the kite or drone gets caught inside the fence, let us retrieve it for you.



Teach youngsters to stay away from electrical substation fences. The area is dangerous, and these fences are NOT for climbing.



If you see a substation fence or transformer cabinet that is open or looks to be vandalized, please contact us immediately.