



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

501 S. Huston Ave, P.O. Box 368, Altamont, KS 67330  
866-784-5500  
www.twinvalleyelectric.coop

TWIN VALLEY  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

# NEWS

## Twin Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Ron Holsteen CEO

### Board of Directors

**Daniel Peterson**  
President

**Bryan Coover**  
Vice President

**Ronald McNickle**  
Secretary

**Larry Hubbell**  
Treasurer

**Rodney Baker**  
Trustee

**Tom Ellison**  
Trustee

**Bryan Hucke**  
Trustee

**Dareld Nelson**  
Trustee

**Robert Webster, Jr.**  
Trustee

### Office Hours

Monday-Friday  
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

### Contact Us

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620-784-5500  
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## Co-op Connections Card Savings Update

Last month, members saved \$31.25 in prescriptions using the Co-op Connections Card. That's a total of \$197.61 in 2014.



## FROM THE MANAGER

# Your Role in Co-op Nation

*There is a Reason We Say Member, Not Customer*



Ron Holsteen

Twin Valley Electric Cooperative is connected to a network of cooperatives. You might be thinking, "Really? How does that work?"

Twin Valley is a member of Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., (KEC) We do this to keep in close contact with our "sister" utilities and to stay up to date on how to best serve you. They are there to assist with local training, legislative issues affecting us in Topeka, and when we have a severe outage, we can call on them to assist in getting your electricity back on as soon as possible. This is one of the ways we

live up to our seven cooperative principles, which includes "cooperation among cooperatives."

Twin Valley is also a member of Kansas Electric Power Cooperative (KEPCo). This is the organization that produces the power that we buy at the wholesale level and enables us to provide safe, reliable, and efficient power to you at the lowest possible cost. KEPCo is also a cooperative, and we hold a seat on the organization's Board of Directors to represent your interests.

But wait, there's more! Twin Valley is also a member of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) that unites electric cooperatives in the 47 states we serve. NRECA provides important benefits such

*Continued on page 16-C ▶*

## New Headquarters to Open August 18

Our new headquarters facility, at 1511 14,000 Road in Altamont, is scheduled to open August 18.

Almost all of the construction work has been completed and builders are finishing the painting and preparing to install the flooring. Once the phone system and computers are installed, we will plan the move from our existing offices to the new building. Our office will be open to serve our members with as little disruption as possible.

We will have an open house as soon as we get settled in.

Twin Valley's new office will be located at 1511 14,000 Road.



## NOTES FROM OPERATIONS

## Preventing Lightning Strike Damage



William Worthy

**“The reason lightning doesn’t strike twice in the same place, is that the same place isn’t there the second time.”**

WILLIE TYLER

Lightning is a frighteningly beautiful anomaly of nature that we battle every time a storm rolls in. Theories of lightning tell us that clouds contain separate areas of negative and positive charges. The charge along the base of a cloud induces an opposite charge on the earth. The cloud and earth become plates of a giant capacitor (an electrical component used to store a charge temporarily), and a potential gradient exists between the capacitor plates. Eventually, the charge in the cloud increases until the gradient exceeds the failure point of air. When this happens lightning leaders circulate from the cloud and spread to earth. A leader strikes the earth and a return stroke, following the same path of the leader, flashes from earth to the cloud.

Lightning can strike your Twin Valley distribution line directly causing a surge in voltage, or lightning can strike near the line and induce a charge on the line. Either of the occurrences neutralizes the cloud, but the distribution line needs a way to get rid of the charge on the line. Direct or induced strikes on the system cannot be prevented, but we utilize lightning arrestors to help prevent damage to critical pieces of line equipment.

Lightning arrestors are protective devices that help drain off the excess voltage that can accumulate after a lightning strike. Your Twin Valley Electric Cooperative system operates on 7,620 primary volts, or 7.6 kV. We install 9 kV arrestors to help protect our equipment. The arrestor will direct the excess voltage to ground, basically causing a short. This can operate an oil circuit re-closer (OCR). If the voltage excess drains quickly enough, your lights will blink and then come back on.

In the occurrence of larger strikes, a transformer or line fuse may blow or the OCR may be forced open. In either of the latter two events, a Twin Valley line crew will need to be dispatched to restore power. Our trained crew will patrol the line to make sure no piece of equipment received a direct strike resulting in a catastrophic failure or a potential hazardous situation. Once our linemen have made any needed repairs and are satisfied with the condition of the line, they will restore power.

Secondary arrestors, or surge protectors, are a way you can protect your home from lightning. They are available at your local hardware or home improvement warehouse. Make sure to read the fine print on any protection device that guarantees 100 percent protection. The 100 percent guarantee may lead you with a false sense of security that you will not lose anything in your home.

A common misconception is that lightning comes in only through the power line. In the following list of components, think of how many are entering or leaving your home: electric, telephone, water (rural supply or well), satellite dish, T.V. antenna, sewer (public or personal septic), power supply from your house to outbuildings or barns, trees next to the structure, or the structure itself. All of these listed can provide lightning with a path of destruction.

Twin Valley is dedicated to the protection of the distribution system, but it is up to you to protect your home and the valuable contents found within.

Comments or questions can be sent directly to me at [wworthy@twinvalleyelectric.coop](mailto:wworthy@twinvalleyelectric.coop).

## Go Paperless Today!

Whether you’re busy taking care of your family, or just always on the go, we know how hard it is to get everything done in 24 hours. That’s why Twin Valley Electric is proud to offer online bill pay.

You have the ability to pay your bills online, view your account history and your statements with our Online Bill Pay system. Just visit our website at [www.twinvalleyelectric.coop](http://www.twinvalleyelectric.coop) and click the Online Bill Pay icon. You’ll be directed to our secure site. Once there you will need to create a user ID, the

first time you log on. You can then view and pay your bill online. It’s really that easy.

Our Online Bill Pay system is secure and designed to protect your account and payment information. Payment methods include personal check, or use your Visa or MasterCard.



## Your Role in Co-op Nation Continued from page 16-A

as representing our interests with federal lawmakers and the Administration (the executive branch of our government). NRECA also provides health and retirement benefits to our employees, as well as training for board members and employees.

NRECA is a member of both the National Cooperative Business Association and the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), which is made up of a wide range of cooperative businesses including those in agriculture, banking (credit unions), health care, housing, purchasing and many others in more than 80 countries. Many of these businesses represent some of the best known global brands in the world.

In 2013, the ICA released the “Blueprint for a Cooperative Decade” designed to promote the cooperative business model as the best way to meet both the economic and social needs of individuals and communities.

The report (which is available for free at [www.ica.coop](http://www.ica.coop)) describes the five key areas that all co-ops emphasize:

- ▶ Participation (member engagement)
- ▶ Sustainability (how we help our communities prosper)
- ▶ Identity (making sure people understand and showcase the cooperative business model)
- ▶ Legal Framework (making sure laws

and regulations help, not harm our ability to operate for your benefit)

- ▶ Capital (ensure we have the money we need to finance our operations)

Member-owners of Twin Valley have a role to play in all of these areas, but it is participation (member engagement) that is critically important. We strive to have members actively participate in our governance through voting or running for our board of directors.

Back in the early days of Twin Valley, we never could have existed without the active participation of all of our members. While technology and reliability have improved, we still need you to be involved. In many ways, it is more important than ever that you feel like you belong to our co-op.

Margaret Mead, the cultural anthropologist, once said, “Never doubt the ability of a small group of people to change the world, indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”

Twin Valley is connected to a world full of people who believe in the cooperative principles and values, and we need you to be connected to us by more than just the electric line. So, get involved. Come to our annual meeting in April of each year and make your voice heard. Together, we can make Co-op Nation stronger than ever.

## Gartner Attends Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp

Twin Valley Electric Cooperative selected **MADISON GARTNER** to attend the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, CO, from July 12-18. Upon arrival, Gartner joined youth from across Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, and Wyoming, totaling 94 participants.



**Madison Gartner**

Gartner was selected from a group of high school student applicants through an application process that included an interview and quiz.

“Twin Valley Electric Cooperative is proud to participate in the cooperative Youth Leadership Camp and send our youth to develop essential leadership and teamwork skills,” said Ron Holsteen, CEO. “Through this trip, we hope that local students will gain some awareness of how our electric cooperatives work and how important it is for the youth to be involved in our community.”

At the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp, youth had daily membership meetings, established committees, and elected a General Manager and Board of Directors. They also toured Fish Creek Falls, Trapper Mine and Craig Power Plant; visited Steamboat Springs; went river rafting; and enjoyed camp activities such as volleyball, swimming, a dance, and a talent show.

“The students are selected for this camp on the basis of academic achievements, activities, positive attitudes, and their overall abilities as leaders,” said Shana Read, Kansas Electric Cooperatives Director of Communications. “During the week they will learn new leadership and teamwork skills, and about the work of their electric cooperatives.”

Twin Valley Electric sponsors the trip of one student each year. For more information, contact Jennifer Winters 620-784-5500.

## Meet Dareld Nelson, Board Member

Meet one of your newly elected board members **DARELD NELSON** of Edna.

Nelson and his wife, Carolyn, live in rural Edna and have two daughters.

Nelson is originally from Minnesota and graduated from Mankato State University with a degree in Business Administration.

He has lived in the Twin Valley territory for 20 years. He currently works for John Deere Coffeyville Works in purchasing. He enjoys part-time farming, fishing, and shooting skeet.



**Dareld Nelson**

# Beery Visits Washington, D.C. on Youth Tour

Teaching 35 high school students about electric cooperatives, as well as helping to develop their leadership skills, was an important objective of the 54th annual Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., June 12-19.

**BRITTINEY BEERY** was selected from a group of high school applicants by Twin Valley Electric. To win this trip, students were asked to submit an application, take a quiz and be interviewed in front of a panel of judges.

“Twin Valley Electric is proud to support the Youth Tour program and send our youth to experience government in action,” said Ron Holsteen, CEO. “Our hope is that local students will gain some awareness of how our political system works and how important it is for the youth to be involved in our community.”

The trip, sponsored by Kansas’ electric cooperatives, began in Topeka with several guest speakers at the kick-off banquet. Bruce Graham, Kansas Electric Cooperative’s CEO, led the event and introduced Brant Laue, Chief Counsel for Gov. Sam Brownback, who attended youth tour in 1978; Steven Johnson, Kansas House of Representatives District 108, who attended in 1983; Kyle Hoffman, Kansas House of Representatives District 116, who attended in 1989; and Travis Couture-Lovelady, Kansas House of Representatives District 110, who attended in 2000.

Before leaving Kansas, the students visited Kaw Valley Electric where they learned how electric cooperatives work and rode in a bucket truck. They also toured the Kansas State Capitol and Brown vs. Board of Education historic site.

Once in Washington, D.C., the group visited with Senators Jerry Moran and Pat Roberts, and Congressman Tim Huelskamp, allowing the students to learn about the nation’s government and talk with their elected officials. For many students, meeting their representatives was inspiring and motivated them to set leadership goals.

Despite flight delays and cancellations upon departure, the youth were still able to tour the Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Smithsonian museums, Mt. Vernon, Arlington National Cemetery, several memorials, along with seeing the Disney’s *The Lion King* at the Kennedy Center. The delegates also attended the NRECA Youth Day, which celebrated the 50th anniversary of NRECA coordinating Youth Tour.

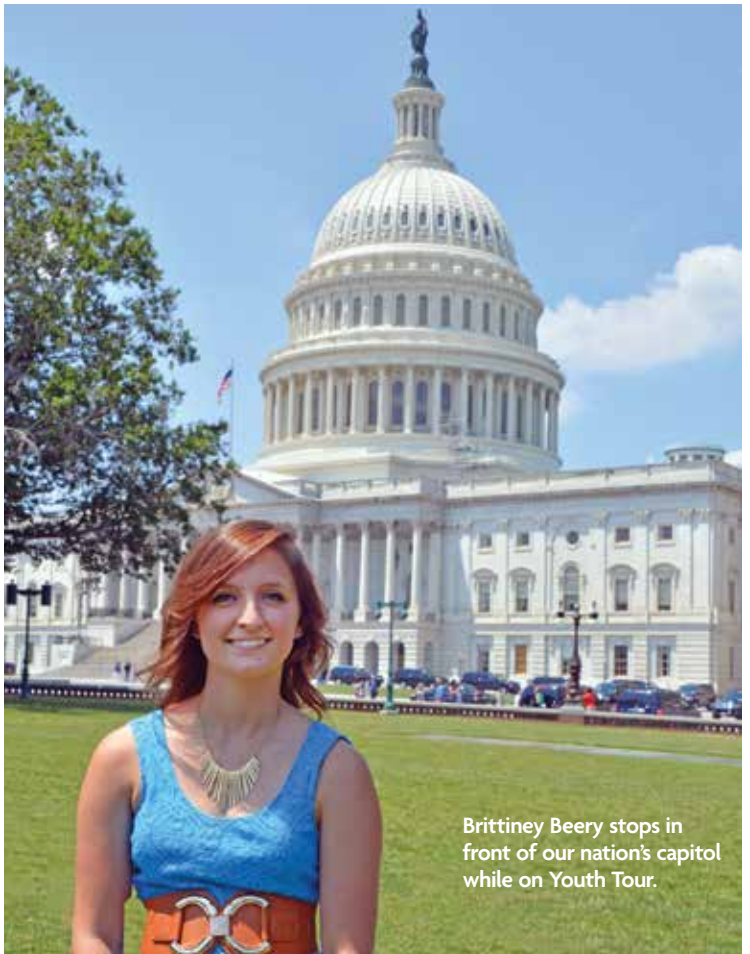
“KEC promotes this trip as the trip of a lifetime, and that certainly isn’t an exaggeration by any means,” said Shawn Powelson from Wheatland Electric, who chaperoned the trip. “The experience is one I will not soon forget. Kansas and its electric co-ops were represented well. I can’t imagine a better investment than in these young people, the future leaders of Kansas and our country.”

Many of the students expressed how this trip has changed their view on the world, and also their view on themselves.

“This trip really made me realize that there is so much more out there than just what I see in southeast Kansas,” Beery said. “All the places we went were unreal. It was really an amazing experience.”

Twin Valley Electric sponsors the trip of one student each year. For more information, contact Jennifer Winters at 620-784-5500.

All the places we went were unreal! It was really an amazing experience.



Brittiney Beery stops in front of our nation’s capitol while on Youth Tour.