

Northern District
2731 Milo Terr.
Lebo, KS 66856

Southern District
9346 Jewell Rd.
Fredonia, KS 66736

Payment Center
2501 W. 18th Ave., Ste. B
Emporia, KS 66801

4 RIVERS

Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

4 RIVERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

CURRENTS

4 Rivers Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Board of Trustees

Michael Springer
President

Robert Converse
Vice-President

Gene Huston
Secretary

David Engelman
Treasurer

Tom Ayers
Trustee

Randal Bunnell
Trustee

Larry Felts
Trustee

Nick Frankenbery
Trustee

Robert Harkrader
Trustee

Stacy Heins
Trustee

David Kunkel
Trustee

Warren Schmidt
Trustee

Sandy Smith
Trustee

Carol Wehmeyer
Trustee

Staff

Dennis Svanes
General Manager/CEO

Mark Doebele
Assistant General Manager/COO

Dennis Duft
Manager of Operations

Roger Cole
CFO

Ken Caudell
Manager of Member and Corporate Services

FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Annual Review: State of the Co-op

2020 — may the rest of the year be less “eventful” than the first five months. The 4 Rivers staff had much to accomplish for the consolidation this year and then was faced with how to work within the parameters of a global pandemic. I hope all of you have figured out a way to stay safe and move forward during these challenging times. Since we did not get the opportunity to attend our annual meeting, I want to take a moment to reflect on what is going on at your cooperative.

COVID-19

If you are like me, you are tired of talking about the pandemic. As a distributor of electricity, 4 Rivers is one of the many businesses considered to be an essential function in the Kansas economy, so our work never stopped though special precautions were taken to keep staff and members safe.

Any staff who could work from home did, and those that could not honored social distancing requirements established by management. Your cooperative, like other industries, saw significant reductions in sales during this period. Low petroleum prices led to reduced electricity usage by those consumers, while unseasonably cool weather reduced electric sales over the last few months for our household members.

As trustees, we stopped cooperative-related travel and did not hold our

board meetings in March and April. With that said, our offices are now open, and we look forward to greeting our consumer-members that visit our buildings at a “safe social distance.”

CEO

Dennis Svanes, our general manager/CEO, recently completed his first year of service with our cooperative. Our board appreciates his passion for the electric business and its consumer-members. As we start to return our operations to normal, I hope that more consumer-members get a chance to meet Dennis in and around our communities. Our board feels like your co-op is in good hands with him.

Annual Meeting

We were ready to host our first annual meeting on March 21 just ahead of the Governor’s order to shut down the state of Kansas for the pandemic. Our board met in May and decided to wait until 2021 to have our annual meeting. We hope that by waiting until 2021, our consumer-members’ fears of the virus would be lessened and lead to better attendance.

Voting on the bylaws for your cooperative is such an important item of business for the membership. You may



Michael Springer

Continued on page 16B ▶

State of the Co-op

Continued from page 16A ▶

wonder how the co-op will operate since the proposed bylaws have not been adopted by the membership. Kansas law says that any cooperative can operate on the “Articles of Consolidation” until a meeting of the members is held. We look forward to hosting you in 2021 to complete that task.

Renewable Energy

Currently, our board is considering adding more renewable energy to our portfolio. Together with our staff, we are working on two 1 MW solar projects — one in each of our northern and southern districts. This project is in the early stages, so please look forward to more news in the future.

Summer Peak

In the electric business, we purchase power based on our “peak usage.” Meaning, we must have enough power available year-round to satisfy the maximum amount of load our members put on the system. During June-September, we run three peak-shaving generators during times of high demand in the summer to help keep peak rates under control.

You, as consumer-members, also can help shave the peak by adjusting when you use power when possible. If you save activities that contribute to a higher electrical load like running your clothes dryer, using your oven, charging electrical vehicles, etc., until after the peak time of day, you can help control the peak and save the co-op money. Peak time is during the hottest part of the day generally from 3 to 7 p.m. Even turning your thermostat up one degree during the peak time can help everyone in the cooperative achieve lower electric rates.

I want all members to know that our doors are open to your ideas. If you want to talk to someone about your co-op, please feel free to contact any of our staff at our three office locations or any board member directly.

It is an honor to serve the members of 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative. We look forward to meeting you in person at our 2021 Annual Meeting.

FROM THE MANAGER

Cooperative Update

4 Rivers Electric Cooperative’s Board of Trustees has decided not to hold the 2020 Annual Meeting of Members due to concerns surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic and the risk posed to our consumer-members. This decision did not come easily to the board. Part of being a cooperative is consumer-member input, communication and governance. Fortunately, because of the consolidation, there was not a scheduled election for the board this year. We do have the cooperative bylaws that need to be ratified by the membership, but this can wait until next year.

At the Annual Meeting, we typically discuss the state of the cooperative — how things went during the past year and how are things looking currently. In our case, we do not have a previous year for 4 Rivers — this being our first year of existence. We do, however, have a rich history in our cooperatives and the people who built and ran them. Lyon County Electric and Coffey County Electric consolidated creating Lyon-Coffey Electric Cooperative. Last year, Lyon-Coffey and Radiant consolidated, and 4 Rivers is here because of the successful hard work of the employees and trustees of those previous co-ops.

So far at 4 Rivers, the employees have worked to make the consolida-

tion happen as smoothly as possible. There were some hiccups and delays along the way, but our staff stepped up and worked through the challenges. The board of trustees has come together very effectively and is serving you, the membership, very well.

In our first few months of consolidation, we had the COVID-19 global pandemic erupt, creating challenges we never expected. While the impact is still being felt, I am hopeful we are through the worst of it at this point. We will continue to monitor and make decisions as needed to keep our employees and consumer-members as safe as possible. Our offices reopened on June 8 to the public, and we are working on the new normal.

I want to thank all of you for your cooperation and support during this time. I appreciate your understanding of the office closures and restricted face-to-face access. All of us are looking forward to when we can conduct business in person again and greet one another with a handshake.

Please stay healthy and safe!



Dennis Svanes

In Sympathy: Charles C. Thomas

Former Radiant Electric Cooperative board member Charles C. Thomas died May 31 at the age of 92.

Charles served on the Radiant Electric board from 1992 to 2001. He was appointed by the board as Radiant’s alternate delegate to the Kansas Electric Power Cooperative’s board from 1993 to 2001.

Charles was a rancher/farmer and member of Radiant Electric since 1973 and then a 4 Rivers Electric member until his death.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Spending more time at home? Try an online energy audit to assess the overall efficiency of your home. Visit www.energystar.gov, then enter “home energy yardstick” in the search box to get started.

Source: energy.gov

Meet Your 4 Rivers Trustees!

We have introduced many of our employees to you over the last few months, but this issue features the consumer-members who make up your cooperative's governing body. Our board of trustees is comprised of 14 representatives from across 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative's territory. The board is elected from the membership, by the membership.



Michael Springer

Michael Springer — PRESIDENT

Springer is a third-generation farmer in Wilson County. He and his wife, Christy, and sons, Mason and Cooper, live on their farm south of

Fredonia. He is the managing partner of Springer Family Foods, a farrow to finish hog farm. They also raise wheat, corn and soybeans. Springer was elected to the board in 2014 and served as Radiant board president for two years and then was elected to serve as 4 Rivers' board president. He has received the National Rural Electric Cooperative's (NRECA) Credentialed Cooperative Director certification. He also serves as trustee for Wilson Medical Center and as a member of the State Board of Agriculture. Springer is also involved in Farm Bureau and Kansas Pork Association. He enjoys advocating for agriculture and rural communities and considers it a privilege to raise kids on the farm and serve the community with them.



Robert Converse

Robert Converse — VICE-PRESIDENT

Converse joined the Lyon Coffey Electric board in 1996, serving as president from 2010-2019, and now serves as vice-president of the 4 Rivers

Board. He also served as the co-op's delegate on Kansas Electric Power Cooperative's (KEPCo) board from 2016-2020. Converse has completed NRECA certifications for Credentialed Cooperative Director, Board Leadership and has earned the Director Gold Credential. He continues to farm and ranch with his family in Harveyville. His wife, Diana, and daughters, Millicent and Kaytlyn, share his love of country life.



Gene Huston

A.E. "Gene" Huston — SECRETARY

Huston and his wife, Janice, have two daughters. He is a Wichita State University graduate, retired from BNSF and resides in rural

Americus. Currently, he is a part-time local pastor at the United Methodist churches of Hartford and Neosho Rapids. He is a 40-year resident of northern Lyon County and a 30-year member of the cooperative, serving on the board for nine years. He has received certification for NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director, Board Leadership and the Director Gold Credential.



David Engelman

David Engelman — TREASURER

Engelman and his wife, Elaine, have four children, Amanda, Adam, Andrew and Aaron. He owns and operates Engelman Appraisals, L.L.C. with

his son, Andrew, and they also have a cow-calf operation. He performs agricultural inspections for First National Bank of Fredonia. He is a graduate of Altoona-Midway High School and Kansas State University with a bachelor's degree in animal sciences and industry. He has served on committees and boards for Zion Lutheran Church of Chanute, two terms on Altoona Midway School Board, and as club leader for High Prairie Pioneers 4-H Club.

He has completed NRECA's Credentialed Cooperative Director certification.



Tom Ayers

Tom Ayers — TRUSTEE

Ayers and his wife,

Alana, reside in rural Altoona. They have four children and seven grandchildren. He retired in 2008 as a rural mail carrier with 30 years of service. He taught math in Fredonia USD 484 school district for six years while also serving in Kansas National Guard (1969-1976). Ayers has served as a board member of his church, school, County Conservation, state Young Farmers and Ranchers and Wilson County Farm Bureau. He is still a Farm Bureau Crop Specialist agent with 38 years serving farmers. He is certified as NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director, Board Leadership and Director Gold Credentialed and serves as 4 Rivers' alternate delegate to the KEPCo Board of Directors.



Randal Bunnel

Randal "Randy" Bunnel — TRUSTEE

Bunnel is a third-generation farmer located south of Welda in Anderson County. He raises corn, soybeans, wheat and hay and

has a cow-calf herd. He serves as chief of the Welda station of Anderson County Fire Dept. His hobbies include tinkering in the shop, attending school activities and Facetimeing with his daughter and grandson. His wife, Betsy, is employed by USD #365 Garnett as a Reading Recovery teacher and assistant principal. Bunnel has completed NRECA certifications for Credentialed Cooperative Director, Board Leadership and the Director Gold Credential.



Larry Felts

Larry Felts — TRUSTEE

Felts and his wife, Ruth, reside west of Liberty. They have three grown children, Kristi, Kelly and Tommy, and eight grandchildren. He is a grain and livestock

producer and partners with his brother, Richard,

Continued on page 16D ►

Meet Your Trustees!

Continued from page 16C ▶

to operate Felts Farms. He is a graduate of Field-Kindley High School and Kansas State University with a bachelor's degree in animal sciences and industry. He is vice chairman of Liberty United Methodist Church Administrative Board, treasurer of Montgomery County Rural Fire District #1 Fire Fighters Relief Assoc., a member of Liberty Division of Montgomery County Rural Fire District #1, and past member of Montgomery County Local Emergency Planning Committee. Felts also chairs Verdigris Drainage District #3. He served 15 years on Radiant Electric's board and is proud to serve on the founding board of 4 Rivers Electric. He obtained NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director certification, Board Leadership certification and Director Gold credential.



Nick Frankenberg

Nick Frankenberg — TRUSTEE

Nick and his wife, Kira, reside northeast of Fredonia. They are the parents of two children, Kaelyn and Cohen. He is a grain and livestock

producer. He graduated from Altoona-Midway High School and Kansas State University with a bachelor's degree in agribusiness. He is a member of Fredonia United Methodist Church and serves on the church's board of trustees and foundation board. He is a member of Farm Service Agency's county committee for Wilson and Woodson counties. He is certified as NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director.



Robert Harkrader

Robert Harkrader — TRUSTEE

Harkrader has been a consumer-member of the co-op since 1989 and served on the board for three years. He is originally from Wilson County and

a graduate of Fredonia High School and Kansas State University. He worked for USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for 36 years before his retirement in 2017. He now works as a

biologist with Pheasants Forever/ Quail Forever. He and his wife, Janet, live in New Strawn and have two grown sons, Allen and Bryan.



Stacy Heins

Stacy Heins — TRUSTEE

Heins and her husband, Travis, live on a small farm in Olpe. She has been a teacher at USD 244 Burlington for 19 years. She is a member of Ebenezer

Methodist Church in Olpe. She enjoys spending time with her three children: Marley, Darren and Kinley. She appreciates the opportunity to serve 4 Rivers as a board member and has enjoyed the new relationships she has built as a representative. She has received her certification as NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director.



David Kunkel

David Kunkel — TRUSTEE

Kunkel has been an electric co-op member for 50 years, the same amount of time he has been married to his wife, Connie. They have three grown

children, Jerry, Kristi and Jennifer, and seven grandchildren. He retired from the postal service after 23 years as rural mail carrier. They operate their farm southeast of Waverly. He attended Independence Junior College and Emporia State University. He serves as the co-op's delegate to Kansas Electric Cooperative's board and has received NRECA certification for Credentialed Cooperative Director, Board Leadership and the Director Gold Credential.



Warren Schmidt

Warren Schmidt — TRUSTEE

Schmidt was born in Lyon County and grew up in rural Hartford. He and his wife, Sharon, have two sons and six grandchildren. His background is

in cropland, dairy, swine, cattle feeding and

market lambs. He currently works for Prairieland Partners John Deere in Emporia, where he has been in sales for 26 years, as well as many other capacities. He also operates their family's third-generation farm. Schmidt has served on the co-op board for seven years. He has NRECA certification for Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership.



Sandy Smith

Sandy Smith — TRUSTEE

Smith and her husband, Randy, live southeast of Fall River. They grow wheat, soybeans and corn and have a cow-calf operation. She owns The Plant Station, a

flower and gift shop in Fredonia's historic train depot. They have two sons and four grandchildren. Her grandmother was one of the farmer wives who originally gathered the \$5 fees to start the electric co-op. Smith has served on the board for seven years and is certified for NRECA's Credentialed Cooperative Director, Board Leadership and Director Gold Credential.



Carol Wehmeyer

Carol Wehmeyer — TRUSTEE

Wehmeyer and her husband, Gerald, reside east of Tyro and raise beef, buffalo and elk. They have a grown son, Brent.

Wehmeyer graduated from Field-Kindley High School and Coffeyville Community College. She is customer service coordinator for national and international accounts at Standard Motor Products in Independence and a member of Tyro Christian Church. She has served on Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board; as women's chairman of Montgomery County Farm Bureau; as member and secretary of Montgomery County Extension Council Executive Board; member of Radiant Electric scholarship committee; Fawn Creek 4-H Club leader, chaperone of Kansas 4-H Youth to 4-H Citizenship Washington Focus.; and Leadership Coffeyville alumni. She is NRECA certified for Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership.