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Our Mission

The Kansas Cooperative Council exists to promote, support and advance the interests, business success and understanding of agricultural, utility, credit and consumer cooperatives and their members through legislation and regulatory efforts, education and public relations.

Co-op News is published four times a year by the Kansas Cooperative Council for its members and constituents.

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ABOVE: A thick layer of ice covered fences, power and phone lines across Kansas in December. LEFT: On the first day of DDP, Dee Roths and Bruce Seiler of Andale Co-op attended a class in Wichita that was led by Vern May of CoBank.



Director Development Program Rescheduled

Congratulations to the fourteen individuals who were able to attend the one day of our Director Development Program (DDP) in mid-December. Ice storms across the state forced the cancellation of director development training for Day Two in Wichita and both days in Manhattan.

We have rescheduled DDP for February 18-19 in Manhattan. This is tentatively planned to take place once again at the Clarion Hotel. Please watch your e-mail box and the KCC Web site (www.kansasco-op.coop) for developing information.

Day Two of Wichita will not be rescheduled; however, **if you were originally scheduled for Day Two in Wichita, you’re welcome to come to the rescheduled event in Manhattan.**

If you planned to attend the DDP sessions that were cancelled due to the ice storm and would like to sign up to attend the rescheduled class dates in Manhattan, please call our office at 888.603.2667. We will soon be contacting the December participants to see if they would like to attend the makeup sessions. All registration fees will be refunded to those who are unable to attend.

Also, if you’d like to take the DDP classes but were unable to come in December, you may sign up as a new enrollee for the February event. Registration forms are available on our Web site. The deadline for new registrations is Feb. 11, 2007.

Thank you, again, for your participation and support of this important program.

**KANSAS COOPERATIVE COUNCIL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Piqua, Kansas

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Dodge City, Kansas

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Stuart Lowry
Kansas Electric Co-ops, Inc.
Topeka, Kansas

Gary Friesen
Scott Co-op Assn.
Scott City, Kansas

Notes from the Chairman

Foul weather reminds us why we work together as cooperatives



By Marvin Lynch

The year of 2007 has just ended, and none too soon. It has been a very bad year weather-

wise—one of the worst that producers and cooperatives have experienced in many years. We have had ice, tornados, floods, drought, and a lot of snow.

Adverse conditions such as those we're currently seeing aren't unlike those experienced by our predecessors when they started the cooperative system. The events we've seen this last year show the continued importance of working together as cooperatives.

This year has been a transition year for your council, with staff changes taking place at KFSA. With Leslie Kaufman's leadership, the transition has gone very well.

The Kansas Cooperative Council is very fortunate to have the support of KSFA. Without their help, we would not be able to provide the services presently offered at the current dues structure. I would like to thank KSFA staff, on behalf of the council, for all of the help they provide.

The Co-op Council Legislative Action Day and Dinner is Thursday, Jan. 24, 2008. Please mark your calendars for this event and plan to attend so that you may visit with your legislators about any issues you may have on your mind.

KCC Policy Committee Makes Important Recommendations

By Leslie Kaufman

The Kansas Cooperative Council's Legislative Action Committee (LAC) met in Hutchinson on Nov. 12, 2007, to review public policy issues and recommend position statements to help guide the KCC's 2008 advocacy activities.

Marvin Lynch, KCC board chairman and LAC member, says the committee plays an important role in guiding the council's member-oriented policy process. "The annual fall Legislative Action Committee meeting is a core component in developing our position statements," he says.

The LAC is one of several standing committees that provides advice to the council's board of directors. "The

committees allow us to involve a greater number of members in our activities and governance," Lynch explains.

The LAC's recommendations address a broad array of issues important to cooperatives including co-op structure, regulation of agricultural products and working environments, cooperative financial entities, water issues and others. These recommendations were approved with minor changes by the board of directors in December.

If you have an interest in serving on the LAC or other KCC committees, please contact Leslie Kaufman at 888.603.2667.

KDOT Secretary to be the Featured Speaker During 2008 Legislative Day in Topeka

By Leslie Kaufman

Cooperative leaders from across the state will meet in Topeka on Thursday, Jan. 24, 2008, for the annual KCC Legislative Action Day and Legislator Appreciation Dinner. Make plans now to attend this year's event. We encourage cooperative managers, key employees, local directors and members to join in the day's activities.

This year, the afternoon briefing will be presented by Deb Miller, secretary of the Kansas Department of Transportation. With the current transportation plan set to expire in 2009, Secretary Miller will discuss plans for the next comprehensive transportation plan and what may lay ahead for our transportation infrastructure.

In addition to the secretary, we will also be briefed by key legislative leaders, observe the Senate in session and view committee hearings. There will be several opportunities

throughout the afternoon for co-op members to visit with their individual legislators. We encourage you to contact your senator and representative and schedule a time to meet with them. Visits do not have to be long—ten to fifteen minutes is enough time to convey your interest in the process and discuss one or two of the cooperative council's key issues.

We will provide members with information about our focal issues when we kick off the KCC Legislative Action Day at 1:30 p.m. At that time, we will conduct an issues briefing at the Manor Conference Center at the Capitol Plaza Hotel. From there, we will shuttle members to the Capitol and spend the afternoon learning more about legislative activities.

We will end the day back at Manor Conference Center and have dinner with legislators, agency personnel and other association friends. Cooperatives will have the opportunity to sponsor a

table or meals for their legislators. We encourage you to contact your senator and representative and invite them to sit with you during dinner. It is the perfect opportunity to share your co-op's story as well as the importance of the cooperative movement in Kansas.

More information on the event, including registration forms for the day's activities, will be sent to your cooperative soon and posted on our Web site at www.kansasco-op.coop.

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Capitol Plaza Hotel, if you are interested in staying there. However, you will be responsible for making your own lodging arrangements.

To receive the special rate of \$91 per night (plus taxes), call the hotel before Friday, Jan. 4, and identify yourself as a member of the Kansas Cooperative Council.

You may contact the Capitol Plaza Hotel at 1.800.579.7937.

UPCOMING EVENTS

January

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 14 | Kansas Legislative Session begins, Topeka |
| 23-25 | Natl. Council of Farmer Cooperatives Annual Meeting, Orlando, Fla. |
| 24 | KCC Legislative Action Day, Topeka Legislator Appreciation Reception/Dinner, Topeka |
| 28 | KEC Legislative Reception, Topeka |
| 29-30 | 2008 Arthur Capper Cooperative Center Symposium, Hutchinson |
| 30 | Kansas Credit Union Assn. Legislative Day, Topeka |

February

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|-------|--|
| 8-9 | Women Managing the Farm Conference, Hutchinson |
| 18-19 | Director Development Program Reschedule Dates, Clarion Hotel, Manhattan, Kan. |

March

- | | |
|----|--|
| 10 | KCC/KFSA Annual Meeting, Hutchinson |
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Annual Meeting Notice Given

Notice is hereby given that the regular annual meeting of members of your Kansas Cooperative Council will be held at the Grand Prairie Hotel and Convention Center in Hutchinson, Kan., on Monday, March 10. The official business meeting will begin at 1:30 p.m. for the following purposes:

- To receive officer and management reports.
- To receive financial and audit reports.
- To elect directors at caucus.
- To transact all the business that may come before the meeting.

—David Barton, Secretary

In an Election Year, Being Aware and Involved is Even More Crucial to the Future of Cooperatives



By Leslie Kaufman

Each legislative session has its own unique twist, particularly in election years. This is even more noticeable in a year when all 125 House members and 40 senators are up for re-election. In addition to the Kansas races, the national campaign for president is in full swing with states competing to

see which can hold their primary election or caucus before everyone else, and candidates scurrying to get a leg up in the early races.

Many of the issues being debated on the federal level are likely to see state-level discussions, as well: taxes, renewable fuels, immigration, energy standards... the list goes on and on. There is a lot to keep up with, and many could have an impact on cooperative businesses and local co-op members.

Technological advances such as around-the-clock TV news coverage and streaming video allow increased numbers of everyday citizens to catch glimpses of their governmental representatives at work. Still, it is nearly impossible to care for a family, fulfill your duties at work, honor commitments to your church, community and civic groups, and keep an eye on all the issues in Washington, D.C., and Topeka that could impact your

KCC Ambassador Program

How would you like to have a KCC representative come out to your co-op to talk about what KCC is doing for you and your business?

Your board of directors and Leslie Kaufman have agreed to make themselves available to you as KCC ambassadors, and will be happy to come speak for several minutes during events such as your annual meeting.

During this time, you can learn about KCC's advocacy role and the impact of this role in Topeka, as well as the many programs sponsored by the council such as Legislative Day, director development and youth education.

Call 888.603.2667 for more information.

ability to make a living and raise a family. That's why associations such as the Kansas Cooperative Council are so important.

We are your eyes, ears and voice in the daily political process. We communicate your concerns to legislators and policymakers. Then, we relay back to you the news of key happenings to keep you well-informed. Even so, as important as associations are, we are only as good as our members. Our real value comes from individuals who give of their knowledge and time and contribute to our organization.

We need members to participate in policy development with our Legislative Action Committee, serve on our board, respond to action alerts and build relationships with their local elected leaders. As we work together, we are able to achieve more for our industries and members than we could alone. And that, after all, is what the co-op movement is all about.

So come on, get involved! Whether it's as simple as calling a legislator or a more formal role such as serving on a committee, there is a place for you and a role to fulfill. Together, we can make a difference for cooperative members across Kansas.

Web Site Sneak Peek



Here's a look at the homepage of KCC's newly designed and soon-to-be relaunched Web site. The full site will likely become "live" sometime this spring.

Over time, members will be able to register online for KCC events. We may also add handy links that will allow you to access information about legislators in your district.

KCC Board Director Spotlight: Gary Friesen, Scott Co-op Association

Gary Friesen can't recall a time when cooperatives weren't a part of his life. The son of a thirty-year employee and general manager of the Johnson (Kan.) Co-op Grain Company, Friesen spent most of his childhood untarping trucks at the elevator, sacking groceries at the cooperative store, and working in the co-op's hardware store and service station.



He earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Fort Hays State University, then embarked on an agribusiness career in Dodge City, where for six years he served as office manager of Servi-Tech, Inc.

In 1981, Friesen joined the Scott Co-op Association as an assistant manager, then returned as an office manager in 1993 after serving as general manager of the Kensington Co-op Association for several years. In 2003, he was named the Scott Co-op general manager.

He became a board member of the Kansas Cooperative Council one year ago. "When I took the job, I thought I was going to be dealing solely with agriculture and grain marketing supply co-op issues," he says. "I was pleasantly surprised to find it also involved credit unions and utility people."

Friesen says the experience has been beneficial to him, personally, because it's allowed him to see how cooperative issues operate from a legislative standpoint. "The best part of being on the KCC board is that it provides the opportunity to voice our interests to legislators and other people, allowing the council to speak for all of us."

His previous knowledge about the council, he says, was limited. "I knew that the KCC certainly did a nice job of representing our co-op interests, but I didn't know the full extent of it. (Executive Director) Leslie (Kaufman) is doing what seems to be a very good job of handling issues that are important to co-ops today."

Friesen and his wife, Carol, a dental assistant, live in Scott City.

Risk Management, Business Structure Choices the Focus of This Year's ACCC Symposium and Leadership Roundtable

**By Dr. David Barton, Director
Arthur Capper Cooperative Center**

The 2008 Symposium and Leadership Roundtable will be held Jan. 29-30, 2008, at the Grand Prairie Hotel and Convention Center in Hutchinson, Kan.

This meeting, sponsored by the Arthur Capper Cooperative Center and Kansas Cooperative Council, will address key issues facing cooperatives today, including risk management strategies and business structure choices.

In today's volatile global economy marketplace, information is the key to handling risk effectively. Educate yourself on all of the different business structures and changes happening in the cooperative business world.

During the symposium, experts in risk management and cooperative business leaders who have experienced these changes will tell their stories and

provide "food for thought" as you move forward in your own leadership positions at your local and regional cooperatives.



Registrations are due by Tuesday, Jan. 15, 2008. You may register online at www.agecon.ksu.edu/accc/symposform.htm or fax a registration form to 785.532.6925.

To receive a special ACCC Symposium room rate of \$71 (plus taxes) per room (1-4 people, includes water park passes), call the Grand Prairie Hotel at 866.577.7527 by Sunday, Jan. 13.

Contact Seleise Barrett, ACCC educational program manager, by phone at 785.532.1522, or e-mail her at sbarrett@ksu.edu if you have any questions.

We hope to see you in Hutchinson in January!



PO Box 1747
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Leslie Kaufman, Executive Director

Four cooperatives win Kansas Co-op Month awards

A credit union, farm cooperative and two rural electric cooperatives have been recognized as winners of the state Co-op Month award.

Farmway Credit Union of Beloit, Kan., Sublette Cooperative, Inc., in Sublette and Butler Rural Electric Cooperative of El Dorado were named first-place winners in their respective categories, while Pioneer Electric Cooperative, Inc., of Ulysses received an honorable mention.

The four cooperatives will be formally recognized on Monday, March 10, 2008, during the Kansas Cooperative Council's annual meeting in Hutchinson.

State Co-op Month winners are chosen based upon the activities and events they plan each October to help educate Kansans about cooperatives and communicate their community involvement, economic development activities, employment and other community contributions.

Farmway Credit Union held an international credit union day in October, a secure paper shredding event the same day, and cosponsored a "Co-opportunity Day" cookout for co-op members in a local park.

Sublette Cooperative hosted an open house and luncheon, and raised money for the local school foundation through two-cents-per-gallon donations on Fridays.



Butler Rural Electric initiated a member-benefit card program that gives members local and national discounts, held a member appreciation week of events at the co-op, participated in the fall corn festival and gave high-voltage demonstrations at a water festival.

They also sponsored a coloring contest, assisted with a new permanent exhibit at the county museum, sponsored high school and community college football games, and updated a link on their Web site to the national Co-op Month Web pages.

Pioneer Electric held a safety festival, staged safety demonstrations and sponsored a poster contest for third-graders. They also hosted a high school football tailgate party, luncheons at area senior centers and a Grant County Chamber of Commerce coffee at the co-op.