

# K.C. ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 2021

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**Our mission** is to provide our members with safe, reliable service at the lowest cost, while maintaining an environmentally responsible, accountable and sustainable operation now and in the future.

# JOIN K.C. ELECTRIC'S GRASSROOTS PROGRAM

BY DAVID CHURCHWELL

GENERAL MANAGER



DAVID CHURCHWELL

Think back 85 years ago to 1936. The world was quickly changing, and innovations were being introduced that would reshape our way of life forever. Electric grids were being developed, bringing power to towns and cities across the West. Along with this grid development came the convenience of lights, washing machines, refrigerators and many other electric devices that we take for granted today. Electricity in homes and businesses increased convenience, quality of life and prosperity to those who had access to it. Many rural areas like ours were literally being left in the dark due to expected low profitability, which didn't look attractive to large investor-owned utilities that were developing these electric grids.

In 1935 President Franklin Roosevelt issued Executive Order 7037, which created the Rural Electrification Administration, and in 1936 Congress passed the Rural Electrification Act, which was a major step for rural America.

Instead of looking at profits, local leaders took advantage of this new approach and sought federal funds to electrify our rural area. Records indicate a discussion was held at a Flagler Farm Bureau meeting in 1942 to organize an REA cooperative in our area.

As the process evolved, K.C. Electric's founding members initiated a grassroots movement for rural electrification through which each member would become personally invested in the co-op. The "sign up" for REA began in 1945, and the Kit Carson Electric Association (later changed

to K.C. Electric Association) was incorporated in 1946.

This grassroots effort of our founding members was the first step that led us to where we are today: a nonprofit electric cooperative owned by our consumer-members. The incorporation of K.C. Electric made electricity available to our rural communities, increased our quality of life and provided consumer-members the means to expand the agricultural community that we enjoy today.

**Each of us has a voice  
that must be heard so  
our rural communities  
continue to thrive.**

Today we have access to safe, reliable and affordable electricity. But our work is not done. New legislation continues to be introduced and passed that has the potential to negatively impact our local economies and way of life. As cooperative members, we all have a voice, and our voice needs to be heard by legislators so our values and way of life continue to thrive.

I'm asking you to join our grassroots effort now and use your voice to support our rural communities, economy and way of life. Joining is easy. Simply select the Community tab on our website www.kcelectric.coop, scroll down to Grassroots and fill out the online form. If you don't feel

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# Q & A WITH THE BOARD: **ERIC POSS**



*Eric Poss represents Lincoln County on the K.C. Electric Association Board of Directors. This is the second in a series that will run here in Colorado Country Life and is one way for consumer-members to become familiar with their board of directors.*

## **Tell us about yourself and your family.**

I was born and raised in Hugo. I graduated from high school in Hugo and attended college at the University of Wyoming where I met my wife, Rhianna. I completed school and came back to Colorado and began farming as a third-generation family member with my father and mother, Fred and Joie Poss, and my brother and his wife, Scott and Emily Poss, on the farm that has been in our family since 1946. Rhianna and I have two children: Cy, who is 8 years old and Charli, who is 7 years old. We run a cow/calf operation along with raising feeder cattle. We grow wheat, corn, proso and feed for the cattle operation.

## **Why did you make the decision to run for the K.C. Electric Board of Directors?**

I think it is important to get involved in different businesses in small communities. Cooperatives are what rural communities are about and they are what keep our communities strong and affordable. Cooperatives equate to ownership of a vital piece of our day-to-day lives in rural communities and therefore it is passed on to other entities of our rural life.

## **What strengths will you bring to the K.C. Board of Directors?**

I have something to add as a younger generation that runs a small business, and can contribute by making difficult but good, solid decisions. I feel that cooperatives must make hard decisions every day concerning what is best for their members, and we make hard decisions every day on the farm. I feel I can contribute in a positive way in that regard. I can learn by getting to know our linemen and other personnel and what they do every day. This will help me to try to make the right decisions to help our consumer-member-owned cooperative by having a good understanding of the workings of the operation from the ground up.

## **What are the major challenges you believe K.C. Electric will face in the future?**

Tri-State Generation and Transmission is seeing drastic changes every day in the renewable market and legislation, which, in turn, are creating challenges that affect every facet of the electric industry. This, at times, puts a larger burden on rural electric cooperatives like K.C. Electric Association to keep rates as low as we can for our consumer-members and ensure that our electric supply is sustainable and reliable for the future.

## **What are your thoughts on the status of the electric industry in Colorado?**

I have seen in my short time on the board how renewables are the driving force in the industry and how they affect us in terms of supply, as well as legislation and regulatory aspects.

## **What industry changes do you believe will affect the electric industry in the next 10 years?**

- Coal use regulations
- Battery use as an energy source
- Technology in the day-to-day energy industry
- Renewables

## **What do you feel you would like to accomplish as a director for K.C. Electric Association?**

Short term: Learn more about the energy industry. Due to COVID, it is hard to learn from in-person networking and being able to access others for the valuable knowledge that they can convey in that regard.

Long term: Fight for the small communities and teach others that we matter, be a strong, solid voice for our rural communities. Work to keep electricity affordable for all the rural communities, and the consumer-members of the REAs.

## **What is the greatest concern you have for the electric industry and how it will impact eastern Colorado?**

Ensure we have a solid, ample electricity supply to fit our rural demand due to the need to sustain our way of life, which, in turn, keeps it affordable for all. Renewables are the biggest thing I see that could be a positive as well as a burden due to affordability, and this affects our rates to our consumer-members. Keeping our costs down is the key to our rural communities being able to stay in business, and with affordable electricity that is one important part to achieving that goal.

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# Claim Your Savings

Each month, consumer-members have a chance to claim a \$20 credit on their next electric bill. All you must do is find your account number, call the Hugo office at 719-743-2431 and ask for your credit. The account numbers are listed below. How simple is that?

You must claim your credit during the month in which your name appears in the magazine (check the date on the front cover).

**Charles Clapper, Stratton**  
— 1116320000

**Joe Fritzler, Flagler** — 1131040000

**Tracey Weeks, Kit Carson**  
— 718370002

**Nedrick Walker, Hugo**  
— 623950008

In August, two consumer-members called to claim their savings — Kim Schallenberger, Kit Carson; and Vickey Dahlberg, Seibert.

## Q & A with Eric Poss

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**How will the projected electric industry changes impact the ag industry as well as the rural community and landscape?**

Reliability and affordability are the biggest factors in keeping a rural community sustainable.

If that is affected in the coming years due to a transition to renewables as well as not ensuring that other methods are available, this could drastically affect us in both of those aspects.

## Grassroots Program [continued from page 7]

comfortable filling out the online form, use the form below to share your information. Cut out and mail it to K.C. Electric at P.O. Box 8, Hugo, CO 80821. Another way to sign up is to contact K.C. Electric Member Services Manager George Ehlers at 719-743-2431, give him your information and have him sign you up.

Joining our grassroots effort does not lead to any commitments. Rather, it allows K.C. to reach out to you by email and ask you to return prepared letters and emails to elected officials in support of affordable energy. As a member-owned electric cooperative, we are responsible for providing elected officials the information they need to make effective policy decisions. It is important that legislators get to know our consumer-members and the issues that are important to each of us and our rural communities.

Each of us has a voice that must be heard so our rural communities continue to thrive.



## JOIN OUR GRASSROOTS CAMPAIGN!

Prefix

First Name

Last Name

Home Address



City

State

ZIP Code

Phone

Email



### Issue Interest(s):

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> EPA/GHG Rules | <input type="radio"/> ESA              |
| <input type="radio"/> RUS Funding   | <input type="radio"/> Pole Attachments |
| <input type="radio"/> Solar/DG      | <input type="radio"/> Cybersecurity    |
| <input type="radio"/> FEMA          | <input type="radio"/> Broadband        |

Mail completed form to K.C. Electric  
PO BOX 8, Hugo, CO 80821-0008





▲ K.C. Electric employees Cameron Klann (left) and Darren Fox accept the 2020 no lost-time accident award from CREA.

## K.C. Electric Recognized by CREA for Safety in 2020

CREA, the statewide organization for Colorado electric cooperatives, annually recognizes electric cooperatives whose employees work the entire year without experiencing a lost-time accident. During CREA's recent Loss Control Seminar, K.C. Electric Association employees were awarded a plaque for working the entire year of 2020 without experiencing a lost-time accident. Not only did K.C. employees work the entire year without a lost-time accident, but they also worked the entire year without experiencing any medical reportable incidents. A medical reportable incident is an incident that requires medical treatment beyond basic first aid. This is quite an accomplishment, considering the extreme weather and dangerous conditions employees work in daily to keep the lights on. "Safety is our cornerstone," K.C. Electric General Manager David Churchwell said. "I am very proud of the culture of safety that has developed over the years at K.C. Electric and the professional service our employees provide on a daily basis for our membership."

## K.C. ELECTRIC IS HERE FOR YOU

### We're All About Community

Our co-op was founded to serve the local community when others wouldn't. We work hard to deliver reliable, affordable energy to our members.

### A Focus on Improving Quality of Life

Providing essential services that can improve the quality of life for our members is one way we stay relevant.

### We're About Members and the Community

A portion of our excess revenue is returned to our consumer-members as a benefit of membership.



### We're Committed to Education

Today's electric utility industry is complex, which makes it even more critical to equip our staff and leaders with the knowledge, skills, tools and resources needed to help our co-op thrive.

### We're Ready for the Future

Our co-op strives to anticipate and plan for the future needs of our members and the communities we serve.

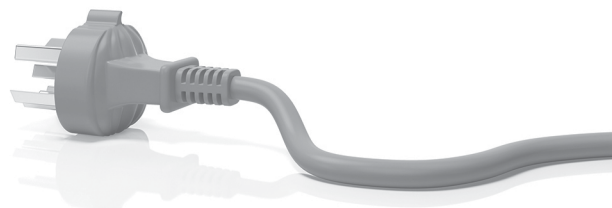


## K.C. Conducts High-Voltage Training

▲ K.C. Electric Association employees recently conducted high-voltage training for local first responders, Black Hills Energy and City of Burlington employees. If your organization would like electrical safety training, please contact the Hugo or Stratton office



Don't overload your **extension cords** when decorating.



**Safe Electricity.org**