ROLLING HILLS
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

P.O. Box 339, Beloit, KS 67420
www.rollinghills.coop

ROLLING HILLS
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
NEWS

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3075B U.S. Hwy. 24 | P.O. Box 339
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For outage updates, energy efficiency tips and cooperative news.

Rabe Announced as Next Rolling Hills CEO/General Manager

Rolling Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc. is excited to announce that **JASON RABE** has accepted the CEO/general manager position effective June 1, 2023.

Rabe currently serves as the City Manager for the City of Beloit. He has a combined 20 years of private and public sector management experience including leading multiple successful organizations and providing a unique perspective on problem-solving, facilitation, and efficiency.

"I am excited to join the Rolling Hills Electric Cooperative team as their next general manager. The opportunity to build on the great foundation that Rolling Hills has with their system, staff, and facilities is what drew me to the position," Rabe said, "I am looking forward to meeting our members, learning our system and operations, and tackling our challenges head on."

Rabe received his bachelor's degree in marketing management from Bob Jones University and holds a master's degree in public administration from Arkansas State University. He has over 13 years of general utility experience and six and a half years of electric utility experience. He and his wife, Julia, live in Beloit along with their three kids — Kaden, Keira and Kael. They have enjoyed the Beloit community and are excited to be able to remain here.

Jason Rabe will replace Doug Jackson who announced his plans to retire as general manager of Rolling Hills Electric Cooperative, effective June 30, 2023.

Rabe will replace Doug Jackson who has announced his plans to retire as general manager of Rolling Hills Electric Cooperative, effective June 30, 2023. Jackson has 41 years of electric utility experience and has served as general manager at NCK Electric and Rolling Hills Electric Cooperatives since 1992. He will continue to lead Rolling Hills Electric until the transition date.

> "I am looking forward to meeting our members, learning our system and operations, and tackling our challenges head on."

2023 Youth Leadership

Congratulations to the 2023 Rolling Hills Electric Cooperative Youth Tour trip and scholarship winners **THADDEUS (THAD) DONLEY**, **AUBREY GENGLER** and **DOAK GUTTERY!**

Rolling Hills Electric's strong tradition of promoting youth leadership continues by offering these winners all-expenses-paid leadership programs this summer. Winners were selected based upon application data, a written essay, and scores on an open-book electric co-op exam. The competition this year was tough, and we thank all the applicants for their time and efforts in applying!

Electric Cooperative Youth Tour Winner

THAD DONLEY will attend the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., which will resume this year after being canceled for the past three years due to ongoing concerns with the COVID-19 pandemic. He is the son of John and Vicky Donley of Kanopolis. He is homeschooled and plans to study aviation at K-State Salina or attend Kansas State University to major in animal science after graduation.

Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp Winners

Two students were chosen to attend the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in July near Steamboat Springs, Colorado. **AUBREY GENGLER** is the daughter of Craig and Jolene Gengler of Beloit. She attends St. John's Catholic High School in Beloit and plans to study business or marketing at Benedictine or Kansas State University. **DOAK GUTTERY** is the son of Brice and Shana Guttery of Alton. He attends Osborne High School and plans to study animal science at Kansas State University after graduation.

Rolling Hills Electric's scholarship program also provides a $500 scholarship to each winner upon completion of the designated trip. What a great group of young people we have representing Rolling Hills Electric! We wish them much success as they enter their senior year in high school and soon begin their college education.

Youth applying for the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour and Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp were asked to write an essay on how life would be different regarding the use of electricity if they were to travel backward or forward in time. Enjoy reading the winners' essays!

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE YOUTH TOUR WINNER ESSAY

Thad Donley

Imagine ... you are a teenager in the year 2075. In school, you have been reading about what electricity and its production used to be like. You are contemplating about how much it has changed over the years. Today, the way we produce and use electricity is substantially different than before. To produce electricity we now are able to burn hydrogen. One renewable power source quickly to be growing is hydroelectric power. New things that use electricity are cars and semi-trucks. We also have better technology to repair the power grid if any outages occur. From what I can tell, we have advanced immensely over the past half century.

Ever since we were able to find a way to contain the energy from burning hydrogen, there have been hydrogen power plants popping up left and right over the United States. Hydrogen power is rapidly passing many other forms of power production. Another reason why hydrogen power is quickly growing is because there is now a much more cost effective way of producing it. We are now able to isolate the oxygen atom from the hydrogen atoms, creating the hydrogen molecule. In turn, we are also able to produce nuclear power in this way.

Renewable energy such as hydroelectric power plants are also quickly growing because they are a cost effective, clean way to create energy. They are cost effective because they are cheaper to build and maintain. Where there is adequate water and other impediments are removed, hydroelectric power plants have been the fastest growing power source in the last half century. Hydroelectricity shows no signs of slowing down and should be around for years to come.

From my reading and research, there are many new things to be powered from electricity than there were half a century ago. Today, more than 25% of the semi-trucks are powered from electricity. The electric cars and pickups on the road are around 40% compared to gas and diesel vehicles. My research has shown that many people, years ago, thought the electric vehicles would take over the gas and diesel powered vehicles. I presume that the electric versus gas and diesel powered vehicle ratio will stay about the same in the near future.

A new technology that we have now are, sensors that locate where the outage in a power line occurs. We also have better engineering on the stability of our power lines, wires, and insulators. Because of this, there are fewer outages that occur from storms and other incidents. With this technology, it invokes an even more reliable grid and makes it so the electric cooperatives have less people on call.

I am grateful for the advances in electricity, not only over the past half century, but even the fact that we now have electricity while people did not two centuries ago. If it was not for the advances in power production, electrical transportation, renewable energy, and technology, we would not even be close to where we are today. Advances in electricity are advances in our world, which provides a better future for years to come.

Thad Donley

Scholarship Winners

COOPERATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP WINNER ESSAY

Aubrey Gengler

Imagine living in a time when electricity wasn't available in rural Kansas. This would be the reality if you traveled backward in time to the first half of the twentieth century. During that time period, life was much more difficult and required more back-breaking work to do ordinary activities. When electricity was introduced to rural Kansas, the landscape changed because of the ability to farm more land, simplify household work, and improve the overall living conditions of all people.

Rural houses would have looked much different than today as the houses during that time period lacked the electricity that makes modern conveniences possible. For example, the water had to be carried in for the kitchen whenever it was needed for cooking or cleaning the house.

When the sun went down at night, the only light in the house would come from a kerosene or gas lamp that would create a small circle of light for the whole family to gather around. The stove would have most likely been heated by wood that had to be cut and stacked outside. The stove also served as the main source of heat for the whole house before electricity was introduced to rural America. Because there wasn't any electricity, there was no way to pump water into the house, so the outhouse was placed outside.

Without rural electrification, farming would have also looked different and been much more challenging. Water had to be pumped by hand and carried by a bucket to where it was needed. The farmers had to rely on the sun for light and their typical day would end at sunset. If they needed to work in the barn before sunrise or after sunset, farmers would have had to use a kerosene lamp inside the barn. Without the use of electricity, the tools needed for farming were much simpler than today's options. If they needed to move grain, they had to use a shovel instead of an auger like today. Farmers also didn't have the ability to do extensive repairs on machinery.

Repairs had to be taken to town and worked on by the local blacksmith. Because of electricity today, farmers are able to weld and use other electric or battery-powered tools from their shops.

When farmers and other businessmen saw the need for electricity and the opportunities that it would bring to rural America, they started forming electric cooperatives. These cooperatives were able to bring electricity to Kansas through funds provided by the Rural Electrification Administration (REA), now the Rural Utilities Service (RUS). Not only has life changed for farmers, but it has changed for everyone in rural communities. Communication, health care, and transportation have all improved with the introduction of electricity in rural Kansas.

For these reasons, life in the first half of the twentieth century was much different than what our lives look like today. People didn't have the same modern conveniences inside their houses that are available to everyone in rural communities today. Farming required much more back-breaking work and a farmer's day was built around the sunlight that was available. After electricity was brought to rural communities through electric cooperatives, other aspects of life like healthcare and communication were enhanced. Looking back, electricity was one of the dominant factors that brought us to where we are today.

Aubrey Gengler

COOPERATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP WINNER ESSAY

Doak Guttery

It's 1923 and I'm watching Taylor Sheridan storytelling about the settlement of the western frontier. I'm drawn to the ruggedness and independence of the wide-open spaces, fat cattle with grass knee-high, and strong, fast horses fit for farming and riding. These men and their families built their empires with sweat, tears and back-breaking work.

How they must have laughed and sneered at the introduction of inventions we now take for granted. No good rancher would have wanted a car driving around his land leaving tracks in the grass or bothering the livestock. They had horses that could run faster than those first automobiles, and the horse was more affordable and reliable than any automobile. Nor would they have wanted those tall, ugly, wooden poles strung across the prairie or farm ground obstructing the view and cutting up their fields. They poked fun at the city-slickers that boasted about the necessities of life being indoor plumbing, electrical lights, and automobiles. These men were soft and lazy. They didn't have the "know-how" of survival in the wilderness. They would go hungry if they had to hunt and fish for their supper or preserve their food for a long winter. The city-folk saddened the true frontiersmen. They would shake their heads in disgust looking at all of us today.

But tonight, as I'm asked by my dad to help him check heifers in the snow, I'm grateful for those "ugly" wooden poles that surround our farm. With the flip of a switch, the bright LED light illuminates the 100 foot x 200 foot calving pen behind our house all through the night. All the bred heifers are bedded down on the blown straw we scattered earlier in the day with the tractor and bale processor. This task took less than 30 minutes with equipment, but it would have consumed our whole afternoon if we would have done it using horses to pull the hay trailer and spreading the bales by hand.

We have several pairs we ran into the barn earlier today so the new babies wouldn't have to endure the harsh cold. I checked them too and again, with the flip of a switch was able to see all were calm and content. I bucketed water from the hydrant close-by to one of the pens. I went to the rock house and fixed up a bottle of milk replacer to feed a twin that had been born earlier in the week. Within seconds, I had hot water available to quickly

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2023 Youth Leadership Scholarship Winners *Continued from page 12C ▶*

mix up the milk and later to clean and disinfect. It is hard to imagine the time it took those early settlers to cut the wood, stoke the fire, and heat the water to make a bottle of milk replacer. They could have used a nurse cow, but what would they have done if she got sick or came down with mastitis. Where would they store the penicillin to give her or keep the good milk fresh? With such time-consuming chores, I sure wouldn't be allowed to play basketball or hang out with friends after school looking for something to shoot for sport.

After chores were done, we go in the house, clearly taking for granted the electric furnace that runs without failure each winter and keeps us warm. Dad and I are both able to enjoy a hot shower with the turn of a knob.

Again, thankful we don't have to heat water over a fire and bucket water to run a bath. We relax on the couch to watch the local TV newscaster report on the current weather and forecast for tomorrow. It sounds like it will be more of the same: snow, wind and cold. Who knows how many animals we have been able to save by getting the news and weather forecasts the day before.

I set my alarm on my cell phone before turning into bed. I definitely won't oversleep waiting for the sun to wake me. My alarm will blast me out of bed for the 5 a.m. heifer check. About that same time, some electrical linemen will be up, too. Those guys are the true frontiersmen of our era. They go out on calls in the snow, rain and wind risking their lives so that mine can be easier. I still recall Dec. 15, 2021, when we lost electricity and fires were on our property north of Alton. Dad was in the tractor moving dirt to keep the fire from jumping as easily. Mom and I had to moved the cattle from the winter pasture to a nearby wheat field. With all the smoke and crazy wind, there wasn't time to saddle horses to move the cattle like they would have in 1923. Instead, we jumped in the feed truck and called them into green wheat grass with the sound of the pickup horn. Cell phones were key that night as you didn't know, and definitely couldn't see, which direction the fire was coming from since it seemed to jump and skip in the dirt storm from one field to the other in a matter of seconds. The local water pump in Alton was down because of the power outage and there was no backup generator to use. With so much water being used by the firefighters, they called on local farmers to pull any water they had stored to a central location so it could be readily available. Luckily, they got the fires put out before any homes near Alton were lost and power was restored that same night by the linemen so more water could be pumped and sprayed on the hot spots.

History ... it sure can be nostalgic as long as you're not the one living through it. It sure is enjoyable to watch shows such as "1923" and imagine the freedom and independence these men must have known being so removed from towns and cities. However, I'm grateful for the conveniences we have today with the introduction of electricity to the farm and ranch. I wonder if that will be the theme of Taylor Sheridan's next series.

Doak Guttery

Employee & Board Recognition

Miner Joins Rolling Hills Team

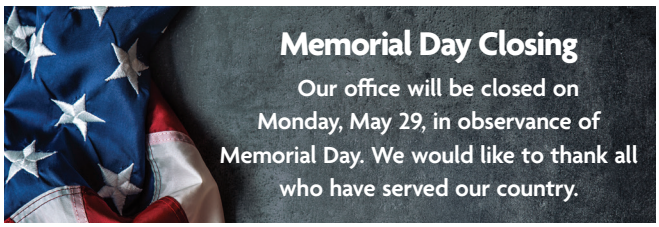
DEREK MINER joined the Rolling Hills Electric family in March as a third-year apprentice lineman at the Osborne outpost. He previously worked for the City of Russell. Miner grew up in Osborne and graduated from Osborne High School. He has a son, Kameron, and a daughter, Kendall. Welcome to the cooperative family, Derek!

Derek Miner

Marr Completes Board Leadership Program

TOM MARR, board trustee from District 2, recently completed the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Board Leadership Program. This program consists of a series of courses focusing in greater depth on specific industry and governance issues. Congratulations, Tom!

Tom Marr



SAFETY TIP

Before beginning an outdoor project, always look up and look out for overhead power lines. Use extra caution when carrying a ladder or removing debris from gutters.