

NEWS

ROLLING HILLS ELECTRIC CO-OP, INC.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Michelle Brokes, President
Wilson — District 1

Paul Wilson, Vice-President
Burr Oak — District 2

Justin Trost, Secretary
Concordia — District 3

Corey Dlabal, Treasurer
Wilson — District 1

Eric Andersen, Trustee
Jamestown — District 3

Mike Brzon, Trustee
Courtland — District 3

David Dubbert, Trustee
Beloit — District 2

John George, Trustee
Lebanon — District 2

Sarah Goss, Trustee
Kanopolis — District 1

Tom Marr, Trustee
Formoso — District 2

STAFF

Jason Rabe,
CEO/General Manager

CONTACT US

3075B U.S. Hwy. 24 | P.O. Box 339
Beloit, KS 67420
785-534-1601 or 800-530-5572

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

For outage updates,
energy efficiency tips and
cooperative news.

Upcoming Board Elections

The election process is not only a privilege, but also a civic duty and a responsibility that we, as citizens of the United States of America, should take seriously.

As a consumer-member of Rolling Hills Electric, you also have this privilege and responsibility. You have a voice in choosing who serves on the board. Trustees are elected representatives and act in the best interest of you, the cooperative's consumer-members.

A trustee candidate submits a nominating petition that contains at least 20 signatures of current members

of the cooperative who reside within the candidate's district. The petition had to be filed at the Rolling Hills office in Beloit on or before Nov. 30. Nominating petitions are submitted to the secretary who determines that candidates meet the qualifications to be nominated and the petitions were valid.

Continued on page 12D ▶

2024 BOARD OF TRUSTEES NOMINEES

DISTRICT 1

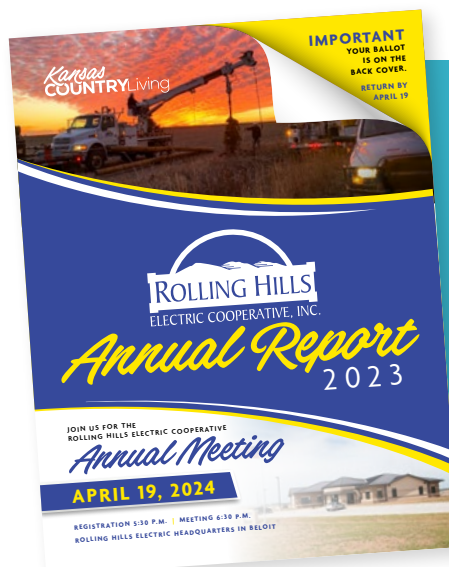
SARAH GOSS
Kanopolis

DISTRICT 2

PAUL WILSON
Burr Oak
WAYNE FROST
Esbon

DISTRICT 3

JUSTIN TROST
Concordia



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

ANNUAL MEETING IS
APRIL 19

5:30 P.M. Registration and Meal

6:30 P.M. Meeting

ACCEPTING BIDS FOR MOWING SUBSTATIONS

Rolling Hills Electric is accepting sealed mowing bids for four areas. The frequency of mowing each substation is dependent on the weather to keep the areas well maintained.

TO SUBMIT A BID, PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:

- ▶ Total cost to mow all substations listed in that area.
- ▶ Ability to provide proof of \$3 million in liability insurance at start of mowing season.
- ▶ Current W-9 form.



Sealed bids will be accepted through **MARCH 31, 2024**. Complete and submit the your bid online at <https://rollinghills.coop/form/substation-mowing-bid>. You can also print and return the

form by mail or deliver to the dropbox at:

ROLLING HILLS ELECTRIC
3075B US 24 HWY
P.O. BOX 339
BELOIT, KS 67420

For more information, please call 785-534-1601 or email lcolson@rollinghills.coop.

Ellsworth Area	Beloit Area
Bunker Hill	Esbon
Ellsworth	Gilbert
Glendale	Hunter
Holyrood	Ionia
Kanopolis	Jewell
Lucas	Lovewell
Vesper	Mankato
Wilson — City	Mankato Radio Tower
Wilson — Rural	Solomon Rapids
Belleville Area	Osborne Area
Ames	Alton
Aurora	Bellaire
Clifton	Cedar
Concordia	Covert
Cuba	Osborne
Jamestown	
Republic	
Rice	
Scandia	

Need Assistance Paying Your Bill? Apply for LIEAP by March 29

Rolling Hills Electric receives requests for assistance with member electricity bills throughout the year. The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is a federally funded program that helps eligible households pay a portion of their home energy costs by providing a one-time per year benefit.

THE 2024 LIEAP APPLICATION PERIOD IS FROM DEC. 18, 2023, THROUGH MARCH 29, 2024, BY 5 P.M. To qualify, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- ▶ An adult living at the address must be personally responsible for paying the heating costs incurred at the current residence, payable either to the landlord or the fuel vendor.
- ▶ Applicants must demonstrate a recent history of payments toward purchases of the primary heating energy.
- ▶ The combined gross income (before deductions) of all persons living at the address may not exceed 150% of the federal poverty level.

The benefit levels vary according to the following factors:

- ▶ Household income.

2024 INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES			
Persons Living at Address	Maximum Gross Monthly Income	Persons Living at Address	Maximum Gross Monthly Income
1	\$1,823	7	\$5,678
2	\$2,465	8	\$6,320
3	\$3,108	9	\$6,963
4	\$3,750	10	\$7,605
5	\$4,393	11	\$8,248
6	\$5,035	12	\$8,890
+1	\$643 for each additional person		

- ▶ Number of persons living at the address.
- ▶ Type of dwelling.
- ▶ Type of heating fuel.

For more information and to apply, visit **WWW.DCF.KS.GOV**, select the **SERVICES** tab at the top, then scroll down and click on **ENERGY ASSISTANCE (LIEAP)**. Applications must be received at the DCF office prior to 5 p.m., March 29, 2024. Late arrivals will not be considered for assistance. The state will contact Rolling Hills Electric to verify payments are being made on the account and the account is active in the applicant's name. LIEAP payments will come directly to Rolling Hills Electric and be applied directly to the account.

For more information or assistance in completing the application, please contact the LIEAP office at 800-432-0043.

COLD WEATHER ACCOMMODATION ENDS MARCH 31

Spring is just around the corner and with it, warmer weather. As a friendly reminder, the Cold Weather Accommodation for residential members ends March 31. For more information about Rolling Hills' cold weather accommodation policy, please call 785-534-1601.

RHEC IS PROUD TO HONOR THE RETIREMENTS OF

Craig & Jerry



CRAIG CLARK

38 YEARS



JERRY ROESTI

23 YEARS

Preventing Frost Damage to Fruit Trees This Spring

BY MADDY ROHR, K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION NEWS SERVICE

As fruit tree selection begins for the spring, Kansas State University horticulture expert Ward Upham said certain species will be more sensitive to frost and, thus, decreased fruit production.

“Spring in Kansas is often unsettled with apricot and peach tree flowers being very vulnerable to late frosts that can kill fruit buds,” Upham said. “Of course, the tree itself will be fine, but there will be none to little fruit for that year.”

Upham said the closer a tree is to blooming the more sensitive it is, but apricot and peach trees are by far the most vulnerable.

“Apricots are more likely to have frost kill flowers than peaches because they bloom a bit earlier. Though there are late-blooming apricot varieties, the differences between full bloom on early and late-blooming varieties appears to be slight,” Upham said.

In addition to bloom time, fruit bud hardiness is important in peach tree varieties.

“In this case, fruit bud hardiness refers to hardiness to

late frosts rather than the ability to survive extreme low temperatures during the winter,” Upham said.

Location is also a factor in preventing frost damage to fruit trees. Upham recommends planting on a hill that allows cold air to drain to lower elevations, or a location in town that will be more likely to have a warmer micro-climate than an exposed location.

“Some gardeners will add a heat source under a tree during cold nights if they are close to a building,” Upham said. “Heat lamps and charcoal briquettes are sometimes used but safety should be the first consideration.”

Upham and his colleagues in K-State’s Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources produce a weekly Horticulture Newsletter with tips for maintaining home landscapes and gardens. The newsletter is available to view online or can be delivered by email each week.

Interested persons can also send their garden and yard-related questions to Upham at wupham@ksu.edu, or contact your local K-State Research and Extension office.

ROLLING HILLS WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEES

Rolling Hills is excited to welcome back two summer interns as full-time second-year apprentice linemen in the Beloit district. Both attended Manhattan Area Technical College to complete linemen school and earned associate degrees in electric power and distribution.



Tate Kadel



Braden Burks

TATE KADEL grew up in Beloit and enjoys hunting and golfing in his spare time.

BRADEN BURKS grew up in Jewell and enjoys hunting, fishing and golfing in his spare time.

Welcome to the Rolling Hills Electric cooperative family!

UPCOMING BOARD ELECTIONS

Continued from page 12A ►

This year, your 2023 annual report and board of trustees ballots will be included in *Kansas Country Living* magazine. The magazine will be mailed on March 25. Be sure to look for your ballot when you receive April's edition of *Kansas Country Living*. Upon receipt of the ballot, please mark your choice or write in a candidate, sign the back of the ballot envelope (certificate of membership), and return your ballot immediately. **BALLOTS MUST BE RECEIVED IN BELOIT BY APRIL 19, 2024.**

The nominees listed on Page 12A will appear on your ballot. A complete biography along with a picture of each candidate will be included with the ballot. If you have any questions or need a replacement ballot, please call our office at 800-530-5572 or 785-534-1601.

Valentine's Day — Not Just For Sweeties

Some of us remember that when we were kids, Valentine's Day was simple — it meant exchanging tiny, store-bought valentines at school and perhaps seeing our parents exchange greeting cards.

Fast forward to today. Valentine's Day is America's third largest spending holiday, with more than half of us celebrating the day and spending nearly \$26 billion, according to the National Retail Federation. Chocolates and flowers are the top gifts for the day, but jewelry has also become popular with 21% of gift-givers buying that perfect piece of jewelry for their special someone.

Before the 1840s, Valentine's Day was just another forgotten Old World saint's day with very few, if any, celebrating the day. It was nothing like the commercialized holiday we see today with stores housing aisles upon aisles of paper valentines, stuffed bears holding hearts in their paws and every type of chocolate you can imagine.

The shift in the holiday's modern-day meaning occurred because advertisers saw an opportunity to market Valentine's Day to the masses. After all,

the word valentine originally referred to a person (cue the song, "My Funny Valentine") but today, it also means an item one can purchase and give to someone they care about.

Yet, many people feel left out of the occasion. That is why in recent years Galentine's Day, observed on Feb. 13, has made a splash as a way for women to celebrate friendships. Palentine's Day is a global holiday celebrating friendships and every other form of platonic love. It is celebrated annually on Feb. 13, but can be observed on Feb. 14 as well, and complements Valentine's Day, which celebrates romantic love.

Regardless of your relationship status, consider splurging on yourself for Valentine's Day. Make that restaurant reservation, get fancy carryout, indulge in a box of fancy chocolates, or buy flowers just because. Indulge in a bubble bath and sip your favorite wine. Or try something you have always wanted to try like painting or yoga.

Valentine's Day is not just for lovers anymore. Grab a pal or gal, buy your own gifts, spend it with your sweetie or all the above.

How Do I Love Thee?

LET ME COUNT THE WAYS, I MEAN DOLLARS.

According to the National Retail Association, more than half of U.S. consumers celebrate Valentine's Day.



It is the third largest spending holiday in America, behind Christmas and Halloween.



Close to 67% expect their partners to get them something.



About 36% expect their sweetie to spend at least \$50.



Many people, especially millennials, buy gifts for their pets.



Individuals spent \$25.9 billion in 2023 on gifts for the holiday.



The average household spent \$192.80 in 2023.



Valentine's Day flower sales account for 30% of total annual flower sales.

VALENTINE'S DAY GIFT GIVERS SPEND \$26B.

SOURCES: NRF, WALLETHUB, VESTED

TOP GIFTS



CANDY



CARDS



FLOWERS



AN EVENING OUT



JEWELRY