

The CIRCUIT

Ark Valley Electric Cooperative



*** Proudly Serving Rural Kansas for over 83 Years

May 2022

Ark Valley Electric's 83rd Annual Meeting

The 83rd Annual Meeting of The Ark Valley Electric Cooperative Association, Inc. was held on Tuesday, April 12, at the Kansas State Fairgrounds in Hutchinson.

There were 225 registered members, and 5 registered by proxy. About 460 people attended the dinner meeting, which was catered by Carriage Crossing Restaurant & Bakery of Yoder.

JAIME HOWARD of Alden and **STEVE SCHWEIZER** of



Jaime Howard

Plevna were elected to a three-year term on the Ark Valley Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees.

Afterward a drawing was held for door prizes. All members attending the meeting received an Ark Valley Electric outdoor thermometer. If you were not able to attend and would like

an outdoor thermometer, they can purchased for \$10, while supplies last. All money received will benefit Ark Valley Electric's scholarship fund.



Steve Schweizer

Board Meeting Highlights

The Board of Trustees for the Ark Valley Electric Cooperative Association held its regular meeting for the month of March on March 28, 2022.

Kansas rural electric cooperatives, including Ark Valley, had joined together to challenge their ad valorem property tax assessments. Given delays attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic, their appeal to the Board of Tax Appeals (BOTA) had been put off for nearly two years. Unfortunately, BOTA's ruling finally came out against the electric cooperatives last month. Under Kansas law, an unsuccessful property tax appeal can be reviewed in either the Kansas district or appellate court at the landowner's request. The electric cooperatives' tax consultant, Mark Nelson, is evaluating the BOTA ruling to determine whether or not to appeal the matter and, if so, which court would be more appropriate.

As is the case in almost every business sector, Ark Valley is facing supply chain issues and increased costs. Electrical equipment orders take months to fulfill. Bucket truck orders are estimated to be two years behind, so the Cooperative will place orders for the next two bucket trucks that are scheduled to be retired. Additionally, the Board directed Cooperative staff to develop a plan to install a fuel tank in the yard and purchase diesel in bulk in order to lower Ark Valley's exceptionally high fuel bill and to help guarantee fuel will be available for its vehicles.



- Top Left:** Keith McNickle gives President's Report.
- Top Middle:** Megan Ratzlaff presents winning essay.
- Top Right:** Jackie Holmberg gives General Manager's Report.
- Bottom Left:** Terry Bruce announces election results.
- Below Middle:** Brad Gover of Hutchinson, winner of a TV donated by Royer Brothers Tree Service.
- Below Right:** Hudson Ohnmacht, age 8, winner of the children's prize.

Below: Members of the 83rd Annual Meeting.



Considering Solar?

If you are considering installing solar at your home it is important for you to be aware of the cogeneration policy at Ark Valley Electric. The process should begin by submitting an application, agreement, deposit and fee for review by the cooperative. The installation should follow the approval of the application.

In some cases, solar companies that our members have worked with have provided misleading information by assuming net

... continued on page 2



Ark Valley Electric Cooperative
10 E 10th Ave, South Hutchinson, KS 67505

(620) 662-6661
www.arkvalley.com

Peak Shaving Can Save You Money

Summer is upon us, and with the heat comes the highest consumption of electricity. During the peak times in the summer months, we pay more for electricity. In fact, over half of our wholesale energy costs are determined in the summer months. Since Ark Valley is a not-for-profit entity, all these costs are passed back to you through the electric rates.

Our goal at Ark Valley is to do the best we can to serve you, always mindful of the costs to keep your lights on, your businesses running, and your homes cool. The summer rate was designed with that in mind. It gives you the opportunity to save money just by focusing on three hours of each weekday in the summer.

Adjusting when you use certain appliances to the late evening or early morning during the weekdays in June through September from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. helps save wholesale costs, and also helps save you money on your bill. A few examples are to do laundry or bake in the morning or late evening. Don't operate your dishwasher during this time frame. If you have a well and water your lawn, water it early in the morning. If you have an electric water heater, consider installing a timer to avoid heating the water during the peak hours.

Considering Solar? ... cont. from page 1

metering is offered, or they have used the wrong electric rate when calculating the return on investment. These assumptions calculate a much better return on the member's solar investment than will actually be realized. Also, some members have been led to believe that they will no longer receive a bill from Ark Valley after they install solar.

Ark Valley has a parallel generation policy, so when grid-interconnected solar systems generate more electricity than the member can utilize the instant it is produced, the excess electricity is fed back into the grid and used elsewhere on the distribution system. Ark Valley purchases the excess electricity at the rate of 150% of the wholesale monthly system average cost of energy per kilowatt-hour. This cost varies month to month, but in 2021 the average rate was \$0.03/kWh.

This rate may be less than you expected, but keep in mind that it is the energy portion of our wholesale rate, not the retail rate. Also, there are several components to the wholesale rate the cooperative pays, but the only component that is quantitatively reduced on our wholesale bill due to our member's interconnected solar is the amount of energy purchased. Energy is the least expensive part of our electric wholesale costs, but members are paid a 150% premium for that energy.

The greatest payback members have is from the energy they consume from their solar array themselves, because it reduces the amount of energy purchased from Ark Valley. Another important component that is critical to reduce the payback period is the positioning of the solar arrays. In order to maximize solar production, they need to be positioned to optimize the late afternoon to early evening hours of sunlight.

By producing solar power, most members are looking for ways to save money, and others are interested in going green. Whatever the reason is for considering solar energy, we want to make sure you will know what to expect from the cooperative.



Peak Alert For Irrigators



The peak period will start June 1st during the hours of 2:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. daily, excluding July 4th, Labor Day and weekends.

A test of the communication software used to send the alert messages will take place toward the end of May. If it is not sent to your preferred contact and/or method, please call 620-662-6661 to update your information.

You are welcome to call the office if you would like to have the load control equipment signal at your irrigation system tested while you are at the system.

Holiday Office Closing

In observance of Memorial Day, we will be closed on Monday, May 30th. Have a fun and *safe* Holiday!



Drawing Winner

MARY BIEBERLE is the winner of our \$25.00 readership drawing.

Mary, to claim your prize, please contact Ark Valley by May 31, 2022 & give us the account number from your electric bill.



Mother's are a gift from heaven... she is there to take care of the smallest of things and spread happiness and love in our lives. Have a wonderful Mother's Day!

The Ark Valley Electric Cooperative Association, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or e-mail at program.intake@usda.gov.