



NINNESCAH RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

# Watts Ahead

## Ninnescah Rural Electric Co-op, Inc.

### Board of Trustees

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### Staff

**Teresa Miller**  
General Manager

**Robert Lamatsch**  
Manager of Operations

### In Case of an Outage

If your electricity is off for more than a few minutes, please call 800-828-5538. The office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday–Friday. After hours, calls will be answered by dispatch and forwarded to our on-call personnel.

## FROM THE MANAGER Get Involved!

### Join us at the annual meeting

One of my favorite events is coming up on March 21, 2023, when Ninnescah Rural Electric will host our annual meeting for you, the members we proudly serve. I always look forward to this event because it's a great opportunity for me and our employees to talk with our members and hear what's on their minds.

We hope you'll join us for the annual meeting, which will take place at the Pratt Municipal Building, 117 W. Third St., Pratt. We thank you in advance for getting involved because your participation means so much to us.

During the annual meeting, we'll share a few brief business updates on the financial reports, recent projects and a power supply update. We'll also have a meal catered by The Fence Post and prizes for some lucky members in attendance.

Spending time with you and hearing your take on our community's energy future is so important to us. In fact, it's essential because everything we do is shaped by the members of our community. As I'm sure you know, the energy industry is in the midst of massive change. Consumer needs and changing technology impact nearly every aspect of how we manage and deliver energy to local homes, schools and businesses.

As we navigate major changes in the coming years, we need to hear from you and your neighbors to inform our planning as we strive to meet the long-term needs of all Ninnescah members.

#### YOU HAVE A SAY.

You may be wondering if your opinion really makes a difference, and yes, it does! Gaining guidance and perspective from our members and board

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ANNUAL MEETING

The 2023 annual meeting will be held at March 21, 2023 at the Pratt Municipal Building starting at 6 p.m. We hope you plan on attending the annual meeting and take part in the business of the cooperative.

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## Get Involved!

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helps set priorities for the co-op and guide future decisions. Annual meeting is also a time for members to vote on the co-op's board of trustees. You will receive your mail-in ballot in the annual meeting notification packet and results will be announced at the meeting.

Our board of directors is comprised of nine members who live and work right here in our local service area, so they are in the best position to know where community investments are most needed. And by the way, we hope you'll consider running for the board in the future — we're always looking for folks who care about our community who would be willing to serve.

Your electric bill is an investment in our community.

This local input means those closest to the community know its needs and priorities and help direct where the co-op's dollars are spent. Every year, we invest funds to make updates to our local system, which helps maintain reliability and grid resilience. Think of it this way: every time you pay your electric bill, you're investing in your community because the money we take in stays here in the local community. By making these investments in our local system, we can ensure you have reliable power for everyday life.

Most consumers likely don't equate active involvement in their electric company with helping their community. But Ninnescah is not an ordinary utility company. We're a co-op, and our business model is meant to serve the members and the community in which it operates.

Our core purpose and mission are to provide safe, reliable and affordable power. But as a co-op, we're also motivated by service to our community, rather than profits. We hope you'll exercise the benefits of your co-op membership and **JOIN US FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING ON MARCH 21, 2023.** We look forward to seeing you!

# Ninnescah Offers 4 SCHOLARSHIPS

Ninnescah Electric's Board of Trustees is awarding four \$1,000 scholarships in 2023 for high school juniors or seniors whose parents or guardians receive electric service from Ninnescah.

To apply, please complete the application below and return to Ninnescah Rural Electric Cooperative, 275 N.E. 20th St., P.O. Box 967, Pratt, KS 67124. Applications are due in Ninnescah's office by **MONDAY, JAN. 30, 2023.**

Applicant Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Year in School \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Names \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I agree that all information supplied in this application is accurate and true.

### APPLICANT SIGNATURE

I hereby grant permission for \_\_\_\_\_  
to enter the 2023 Ninnescah Electric Cooperative, Inc. scholarship competition.

### SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

# Kansas Profile – Now That’s Rural:

## Kansas Lange, Two Little Goats BY RON WILSON

Two little goats. That doesn’t sound like a lot, but perhaps it could be the beginning of an entrepreneurial career.

Today we’ll meet a young rural-preneur who is using her two little goats to learn the principles of entrepreneurship for the future.

**KANSAS LANGE** is a teenager who won her county’s Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge in spring 2022. Kansas and her family live in Garfield, in Pawnee County.

Her father is Charles Lange, a K-State grad and public health veterinarian in Dodge City. While inspecting the packing plant in Dodge, Dr. Lange met one of the workers, Sabrina, who is originally from New Mexico. They married, moved to Garfield, and now have two daughters and a son.

Kansas is the younger daughter. “My grandfather suggested they name me Kansas because that is where they met,” Kansas said.

Kansas became very active in 4-H. “I’m homeschooled, so this is my creative outlet and my opportunity to meet people in the community,” Kansas said.

In addition to showing multiple species of livestock, she enrolled in such projects as shooting sports, woodworking, clothing and textiles, and foods and nutrition.

Kyle Grant is the K-State Research and Extension 4-H agent in Pawnee County. “Kansas has excelled in our Pawnee County shooting sports program,” Grant said. “She also excels at livestock judging, meats judging and skillathon, where she earned the opportunity to go to the national contest in Louisville, Kentucky. She is a good role model for Pawnee County 4-H’ers.”

Kansas learned about the Pawnee County Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge, sponsored by NetWork Kansas. YEC is a sequence of community-based entrepreneurship competitions for students in grades 6-12, culminating in a state championship. Students present their conceptual or business ideas to judges and compete against others in their age division locally. The top contestants advance to the state finals, held in April at K-State in partnership with the College of Business’ Center for Entrepreneurship and the Kansas Masons.

Erik Pedersen is president and COO of NetWork Kansas. “When you walk into one of these events at a middle school or high school, you see a

student standing there with a tabletop display that they’ve created,” he said. “They’re dressed up and talking to a group of adult judges; they’re shaking hands, they’re making eye contact, they’re answering questions about their project or business idea. The life skills that they’re gaining will put them miles ahead of their peers.”

Kansas thought about what project she might enter in this competition. As a teenager, she was experiencing acne on her skin and looking for better skin treatments. “I found a lot of articles that said that goat milk soap could help,” she said. No big city stores carried such products nearby, but she could raise dairy goats and make soap of her own.

Kansas got two Nigerian Dwarf dairy goats that she milked twice daily, did the research and developed a process for producing scented goat milk soap. It worked so well that she wanted to share the products with others and started selling the product locally. She named her business Two Little Goats.

“My mom has a degree in business, so she could help with the business side, and my dad helped with the science and biology,” Kansas said.

She entered her project in the Pawnee County Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge. In 2022, she took first place and advanced to state. At the Kansas Department of Agriculture’s 2022 Ag Growth Summit, Kansas spoke about her project at the entrepreneurship breakout session.

“I especially enjoyed doing the research and thinking on my feet when the judges ask questions,” she said.

She’s a remarkable young woman from the rural community of Garfield, population 151 people. Now, that’s rural.

How do we as a state develop and encourage the next generation of entrepreneurs? The Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge is a great step in the right direction. We commend Kansas Lange and all those involved with YEC for making a difference with their ideas and business development.

A big career in business just might begin with two little goats.



Kansas Lange

**RON WILSON is the director of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development at Kansas State University**

# Nomination Committee Selected

At the regularly scheduled board meeting held on Nov. 22, 2022, the Ninnescah Rural Electric Cooperative's Board of Trustees selected a nominating committee. Those appointed were:

- ▶ **JACK DEVINEY** – Attica
- ▶ **WILBUR K. WOOD** – Haviland
- ▶ **MARVIN JANTZ** – Haviland
- ▶ **KEN W. LEWTON** – Coats
- ▶ **STEVE MOORE** – Stafford
- ▶ **MORGAN J. TRINKLE** – Preston
- ▶ **JAY A. DERLEY** – Lewis
- ▶ **JON M. MCCLURE** – Stafford
- ▶ **TERAH LAMBERT** – Sun City

The nominating committee will meet at Ninnescah's office on **FRIDAY, FEB. 3, 2023, AT 1:30 P.M.** to select members of the cooperative to run for office. These nominees will be voted on by mail-in ballot prior to the annual meeting.

If anyone wishes to place a member's name into nomination (husband or wife if signed jointly), please contact any nominating committee member before the nominating committee meeting in February. The committee shall prepare and post at the office of the cooperative at least 25 days prior to the annual meeting a list of nominations for trustee. Any 15 or more members may make other nominations in writing over their signature not less than 20 days prior to the meeting and the secretary shall post the same at the same place where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted.

## Heating Equipment Leading Cause of Fire

Heating equipment, such as space heaters, kerosene heaters, fireplaces and wood-burning stoves, is a leading cause of fires in U.S. homes, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). The term "homes" includes one-and two-family homes (including manufactured homes), apartments, townhouses and other multi-family dwellings.

During a recent four-year period, local fire departments responded to an estimated average of 48,530 fires involving heating equipment each year. The fires resulted in 500 civilian (non-first responder) deaths, 1,350 civilian injuries and \$1.1 billion in direct property damage, according to NFPA's Home Heating Fires report published in 2021.

### In Addition:

- ▶ Heating equipment caused one in seven home fires and 19% of home fire deaths.
- ▶ Most home heating fire deaths (81%) included stationary or portable space heaters.
- ▶ More than half of the home heating fire deaths were caused by placing heating equipment too close to things that can burn, such as furniture, clothing, mattresses or bedding.
- ▶ Nearly half (48%) of all home heating fires occurred in the time frame of December, January and February.
- ▶ Failure to clean equipment, such as chimney flues, accounted for a quarter of all heating equipment fires. In addition, approximately two in five home heating equipment fires involved

items that ran on what is considered solid fuel, such as wood-burning or pellet stoves or wood-burning fireplaces. However, electric-powered heating devices were responsible for the largest share of losses, accounting for more than half of the fatalities, three in five injuries and two-fifths of the property damage.

### Follow These Safety Tips to Use Space Heaters Safely:

1. Read all instructions and use space heaters only as recommended.
  2. Do not leave space heaters unattended.
  3. Plug them directly into an outlet; most power strips and extension cords are not equipped to handle the energy spikes caused by space heaters cycling on and off.
  4. Unplug any other items from the outlet you are using and try to use a dedicated circuit to avoid overload.
  5. Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
  6. Turn the heaters off before you leave the room or go to sleep.
  7. Do not use heaters that are in disrepair or have frayed cords or damaged plugs.
  8. Place them on flat, level surfaces and never on furniture, counters or carpet, which can overheat.
  9. Unplug and put space heaters away (out of the reach of children) when not in use.
- Use space heaters with care. For additional safety tips, visit [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org).

## Welcome New Members

Robert D &/or Rhonda S Gabriel –  
*Medicine Lodge*  
Austin Jost – *Harper*  
Medicine Valley Properties LLC –  
*Medicine Lodge*

Ronald D &/or Trudy K Shank – *Greensburg*  
Chadd &/or Denise Yost – *Greensburg*  
D H Kuhn – *Greensburg*  
Kendal D &/or Lorena L Lothman – *Haviland*  
R S Goetz – *Zenda*