

Country News



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- Ben Orrell**, member services representative
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Touchstone Energy®

We Welcome Yet Another New Employee to K.C. Electric

BY TIMOTHY POWER, GENERAL MANAGER

With the windy spring we have been experiencing this year, we have seen some spotty outages on our system. I thought I would take a moment to explain how we handle outages.

When an outage occurs, our first priority is the main distribution line from the substation. Once that is up and running, we focus on the lines that bring power to the greatest number of members. Finally, we repair lines to individual homes.

Our goal is to minimize possible outages by keeping our system in good working condition. But even the best system can't handle what Mother Nature has in store sometimes. When the power goes out, please know that we are restoring service as quickly and efficiently as possible, with safety our number one concern.

In late May we hired our newest office manager and chief financial officer. His name is Chance R. Briscoe and he started at K.C. Electric Association, Inc., on May 24. He comes to K.C. Electric having served the last seven years in the electric cooperative industry. Previously he worked as a commercial credit analyst for a bank and a business manager for a company that sold pollution control equipment to the foundry industry.

He started in cooperatives as an office manager for an electric cooperative in South Dakota, then moved to Missouri where he served as the chief financial officer of an electric cooperative.

For the last year and a half he was the territory manager for a billing and accounting software provider that supplied software to electric cooperatives across the country. His territory was the



Chance Briscoe is the new office manager and chief financial officer.

upper Midwest where he called on customers to help them utilize software more effectively in their organization, and, in the case of problems, he acted as a customer advocate for those utilities back to the home office in Atlanta, Georgia.

Chance is married with three children. His oldest son is currently in Army Reserve basic training and will return to Missouri in the fall to attend Northwest Missouri State University. After tying up loose ends in Missouri, his wife, Diana, will be moving to the area with their daughter, who just finished her freshman year of high school, and their youngest son, who completed seventh grade.

They are excited to begin exploring Colorado as Chance's wife is an amateur photography enthusiast and their youngest son wants to try snowboarding.

Chance looks forward to meeting with as many of you as possible and thanks those of you who have already expressed your kind welcome to Colorado and K.C. Electric.

Bob Coulson: Living the Good Life

BY BEN ORRELL, MEMBER SERVICES REPRESENTATIVE

This may be the toughest piece I have ever written. Why? Well, I am trying to write about a guy who is a professional writer. Just a little pressure here. If there is any saving grace for this endeavor, it is that we both love the same thing: Life. Bob Coulson grew up in the '30s, watched his parents lose their place near Arriba and then lost his father in 1940. He learned early that life is too short not to have fun. He never slowed down.



Bob is named after his maternal grandfather, who brought the original Angus cattle breeding stock to this area in 1906 and was one of the founders of the National Western Stock Show. He is proud of his roots here.

He left the plains in 1937, when the family lost the farm, and moved to Den-

humorous account of his navy experiences. It is titled *LST: Laughing, Seasick and Terrified*. That book was used to create a documentary called "LST 1063." (Myles Smith, 432100001)

Following the war, Bob returned to Colorado and went to work for the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. He was pretty happy there and felt he was set for life but met a fellow worker whom he described as a sweet young thing. Her name

was Bettie. Bob asked her to marry him, and she said she would never marry a guy who had no more gumption than to work as a clerk for the railroad. Well, she was the real deal so he left and went to California. He took a job with an export packing firm and shortly the company realized he had talent in another area. The firm made him a salesman.

40. Bob did a good job balancing work and four children and then became reacquainted with a lady who worked as a bookkeeper for a Ford dealer in north Denver. Her name was Shirley, and she had lost her husband in the war. She had a great job, went to Hawaii on vacations and was living the good life. Bob, salesman that he is, convinced her to leave all that behind, marry him and come to Phoenix to help him raise four kids. The two have been inseparable ever since.

Bob said he "sort of semiretired" in 1982 and moved back to a ranch east of Arriba. As you might imagine, he didn't like the retired life and became bored. He bought a food distribution business called Eats, Treats n Stuff and sold between Bennett and Burlington. He was 60 years old by then, so he decided on another career change. He became an insurance agent for Bankers Life and Casualty of Chicago for 10 years. Bob and Shirley moved to Phoenix next to be close to the kids but ended up managing an RV park. After that they bought an RV and traveled for 10 years, but even then they were working because they were producing and marketing brochures for RV parks.

When Bob and Shirley came back to Arriba in 2004, they bought a piece of property so they could park their RV. The property had an old building on it that needed to come down. It didn't. Instead, he repaired it and made it into a place where he could keep his mementoes. That display expanded and became the Arriba Museum. The museum is a tiny 100-year-old home in the northeast corner of Arriba's city park and is full of local history. It is open Memorial Day to Labor Day, Mondays through Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays, 2 to 5 p.m.

So far in Bob's life he has authored five books and narrated one DVD, which documents Arriba's first 50 years. His list of memberships in business, fraternal and civic organizations are too numerous to mention. However locally these are far too important to ignore: president of the Arriba Lions Club, secretary/treasurer of Lions Club Interna- [continued on page 7]

Bob asked her to marry, him and she said she would never marry a guy who had no more gumption than to work as a clerk for the railroad.

ver. His dad bought a truck and delivered coal for a living until he was killed in a truck crash in 1940. Things were different then, and there was no social network to fall back on. The family had to split up, and Bob went to work for Dale Saffer's aunt, who owned the Burge Hotel in Holyoke, Colorado. He worked for room and board and graduated from high school there.

To say that Bob's life accelerated from then on would be an understatement. World War II found him in the Pacific as a petty officer on an LST (an LST is an amphibious landing craft). That experience eventually launched his writing career. While in the Navy, he kept a journal that he used in later years to write a

Bob's salesmanship skills worked in another area as well, and he returned to Colorado long enough to marry that sweet young thing. They lived in California until their first child was born, and then Bettie became homesick and they returned to Colorado. I asked him if he hated to give up his job, and his eyes sparkled. "I have always loved change," he said. "I can document 43 different careers so far in my life. Sometimes I drove a Cadillac and sometimes we were not so fortunate and I sold things to get by, but it was always exciting and fun."

The couple ended up in Phoenix with their four children (three boys and one girl) and life was good, until Bettie became ill and died in 1968 at the age of



Know What's Below: Always Call Before You Dig

Whether it's a deck addition or a landscaping masterpiece, outdoor improvement plans are always part of every summer.

But if your planned projects include digging, like planting a tree or bringing in a backhoe for trench work, you'll have to wait a few more days so the job can be done safely. Underground utilities, such as buried gas, water and electric lines, can be a shovel thrust away from turning a summer project into a disaster.

To find out where utility lines run on your property, dial 8-1-1 from anywhere in the country a few days prior to digging. Your call will be routed to a local "one call" center. Tell the operator where you're planning to dig and what type of work you will be doing, and affected local utilities will be notified.

In a few days, a locator will arrive to designate the approximate location of any underground lines, pipes and cables with flags or marking paint so you'll know what's below. Then the safe digging can begin. (WIN John Buol, 1103970000)



Although many home owners tackling do-it-yourself digging projects are aware of "Call Before You Dig" services, the majority don't take advantage of the service. A national survey showed that only 33 percent of home owners called to have their lines marked before starting digging projects, according to the Common Ground Alliance, a federally mandated group of underground utility and damage prevention industry professionals.

Although light gardening typically doesn't call for deep digging, other seemingly simple tasks, like planting shrubs or installing a new mailbox post, can damage utility lines. A severed line can disrupt service to more than one property, harm diggers and potentially result in fines and repair costs.

Never assume the location or depth of underground utility lines. There's no need: The 8-1-1 service is free, prevents the inconvenience of having utilities interrupted and can help you avoid serious injury. For more information about local services, visit www.call811.com.

Bob Coulson

[continued from page 6] tional District 6 Colorado, founding member of the Eastern Colorado Preservation Society, president of Lincoln County Historical Society, fourth degree knight of the Knights of Columbus and founder of the Arriba Museum.

After a delightful hour and a half interview with Bob, he and I walked down the hall, and to my surprise his wife Shirley was waiting. She, too, is full of fire and love of life and we all visited for another 30 minutes. Shirley kept thinking of more things that she wanted Bob to tell me. She confessed that being a city girl, she didn't know the difference between a cow and a bull when she met Bob. No amount of writing could begin to tell the story of these two people. I took 15 pages of notes, and we only scratched

the surface. He did give me a link to a website that has archived a radio interview he did with Ryan Warner, host of "Colorado Matters." Go to www.cpr.org and scroll down to "Colorado Matters." Click on that and then at the top of the page in "search" type in "growing up in the Great Depression." What comes up is a fascinating walk through history.

On the day of the interview, Bob and Shirley had just come back from Phoenix, where they watched two granddaughters graduate from college. Because of airline delays, they didn't get home from the airport until 3:30 in the morning. Bob was nonetheless still on top of his game.

Did I mention that Bob is now 85 years of age? Of course not. It isn't relevant. (Jerry Jenkins, 303955000)

CLAIM YOUR CREDIT

Each month, K.C. Electric offers consumers a chance to earn a \$5 credit on their next electric bill. If you recognize your 10-digit account number in this magazine, call 719-743-2431 and ask for your credit. It couldn't be easier.

In May the following called to claim his savings: James McKean.

Get acquainted with your account number, read your *Colorado Country Life* and pick up the phone. That's all the energy you'll need to claim your energy bucks.

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

RENEWABLE ENERGY

If you have ever wondered about the cost effectiveness of installing your own solar or wind generator, here is a great website for you to try. Go to www.nrel.gov and search under IMBY. NREL is the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and IMBY stands for "in my backyard." NREL has a wealth of information there that is free for the taking. Give it a try.

IRRIGATION METER READING

Irrigation meters will be read on:

July 1, August 2 and 31, September 29-30



To Papa

The following poem was written by Bob Coulson's mother's youngest sister around 1922. Jessie Lucore was born on a cattle ranch north of Arriba. She lived there until she married Ralph Switzer. Soon after they moved to Modesto, California. (Kenny Mills, 202400002)

Dear Daddy, I'm in California – and feeling most awful strange.
I'm full of uneasy emotions – like a motherless calf on the range.

To tell you the truth, dear Daddy – your girl's most decidedly blue,
while thinking about the ranch – the horses, and of you.

I wonder whatever brought us – to this state of merciless heat,
where months – not a sprinkle of rain – to settle the dust in the street.

I long for the roar of the thunder – to see the bright lightning flash,
to have rain pour in torrents – with plenty of vigor and dash.

I long for snowstorms in winter – the wind piling drifts deep and high,
and for miles of snow-covered prairie – beneath a frosty, starlit sky.

For here in the months of winter – are days of unending fog,
and the cold rain, drizzling for days, – would freeze the hair off a dog.

I long for the wide open ranges – with horses and cattle galore,
for here there's a herd of two milk cows – enclosed in a lot two by four.

I'd like a good breakfast of beefsteak – home-cooked chicken would do,
for here – it's pears, peaches and berries – figs, grapes and apricot stew.

Some day, when our toils are over – and we're gathered at home up above,
I hope 'twill be like Colorado – the dear old state that I love.

*Poem by Jessica Lucore Switzer
Arriba High School graduate of 1917*

SEEK SHELTER WHEN YOU HEAR THUNDER

According to the National Weather Service, lightning kills an average of 62 people each year in the United States. In 2008, 27 people died from a "bolt out of the blue." The majority of these fatalities occurred outside, but caution must be taken indoors as well.

Follow the tips below to keep you and your family safe from lightning this summer:

- Seek shelter immediately if you hear thunder; lightning is not far away.
- Find shelter in a substantial building or

in a fully enclosed vehicle with the windows rolled up. (Bill Grimes, 1107840000)

- Do not seek shelter under trees, in picnic or rain structures or in open-frame vehicles. Avoid objects like electric wires or metal fences.
- If you cannot find shelter in a building or closed-frame vehicle, keep your feet together and crouch on the ground using the "lightning crouch:" keep feet together, squat low, tuck head and cover ears.

YOUR NEIGHBOR'S KITCHEN

Artichoke Snack Cups

1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1 cup mayonnaise
1/2 teaspoon onion powder
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
1 (14 ounce) can water-packed artichoke hearts, drained and chopped
1 (12 ounce) package of wonton wrappers
nonstick cooking spray

In a small mixing bowl, combine the Parmesan cheese, mayonnaise, onion powder and garlic powder. Stir in the mozzarella cheese and artichokes and set mixture aside.

Coat one side of each wonton wrapper with a nonstick cooking spray. Press greased side down into miniature muffin cup pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 5 minutes until edges are lightly browned.

Fill each cup with 1 tablespoon of the artichoke mixture. Bake for 5-6 minutes until golden brown.

May be served warm or at room temperature.

DOROTHY OSBORNE, HUGO

Zucchini Side Dish

1 small zucchini, cubed
1 small onion, sliced
1 tomato, quartered
1 beef bouillon cube
1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning (dry)
1-1/2 cups water

Bring all ingredients to a boil then lower to simmer. Cook for 15 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Serves 2.

CLARA MEYER, BETHUNE