



Kansas Association of Retired School Personnel

Volume 56, Issue 4

The Meadowlark

April 2021

LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Meadowlark received the following information about a volunteer opportunity. You might check it out in your area.

The Citizen's Review Board (CRB) is looking for volunteers to hear cases involving children in the court system. CRB is a community panel of trained volunteers who hear child abuse and neglect or truancy cases and make recommendations to move the case forward. Once a month, the CRB volunteers review documentation from providers before hearing directly from parents, service providers, and others in the case to determine the resources and actions needed for the family. CRB volunteers spend around 4-8 hours a month reviewing information and holding meetings. You can make real life changes for children who need it most. To lend your expertise working with children and families to help them succeed, please contact your local CRB program:

Emporia area: debradickerhoof@hotmail.com

Newton area: kellyz@9thcasa.org

Lawrence area: hkrase@douglascountyks.org

Topeka area: meegan.shuler@shawneecocasa.org

Larned and Russell area: renemeyers@hotmail.com

Hutchinson area: cmvohinc@gmail.com

Salina area: toddheitschmidt@saline.org

EARTH DAY, EVERY DAY

Elrea Mullen, KARSP President

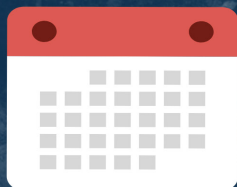
"YOU HAD A GOOD CHILDHOOD IF YOU GREW UP PLAYING IN THE CREEK!" Would you take your precious children or grandchildren to the creek to play these days and have a picnic after playing in that water? Knowing about pollution, what might be in that stream, you are saying, "NO WAY!"

LIKE ALL OF OUR LOCAL UNITS planned and some completed in 2020, we must continue to teach and act on the goals of EARTH DAY, APRIL 22, now and forever. SADLY, our present dilemma continues to be "POLLUTION." CLEANING the planet is a must-do! A no-brainer! Planting trees helps provide oxygen and clean the air. It is so easy and fun to select a tree, plant and care for that one tree ON and AFTER EVERY EARTH DAY. Plant a tree for and with each grandchild. Take your kids with you. They will LOVE the outdoor adventure and learn SO much from seeing you care for the Earth. They will understand EARTH CARE by doing that.

***ASK NOT WHAT YOUR ENVIRONMENT CAN DO FOR YOU; ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR ENVIRONMENT. JFK, little change by me.

"LEAVE NO TRACE" other than footprints.

SAVE THE DATE!



2021 KARSP CONVENTION

September 29-October 1, 2021
Junction City, Kansas

WIND ENERGY

Elrea Mullen

KARSP President



So what is this about
CLIMATE
WARMING???????

IT IS A SCIENTIFIC FACT from the worldwide records being kept for decades. Pollution from nonrenewable resource emissions IS one of the main reasons that the sun's radiation, Albedo, cannot escape the earth's dirty atmosphere. NONRENEWABLE EARTH RESOURCES were wonderful during the days of the last century. They have served their purposes well. We daily use hundreds of by-products from oil, SO maybe it should be reserved for those uses. (Examples: Plastics, bubble gum, CD players, faucet washers, dyes, footballs and helmets, roofing, candles, guitar strings, soft contact lens, telephones, etc.). However, there are renewable resources of power being used for more than 30-40 years. Some wind power was used as far back as 1898. Natural "RENEWABLE" resources include the sun/solar energy, waterfalls power, and wind power, which are now being harnessed and used across planet Earth.

***** Isn't it amazing that we can USE resources and yet still keep them!!!

Like many new inventions, wind power and those amazing large wind mills/turbines are not well understood by many. (The agricultural subsidies are determined by the amount of acreage used and the amount of income from that acreage in previous years.) I hope that you will thoroughly enjoy this small peek into wind turbines construction and processes, and then be so enthused that you will further search out wind turbines. There are tons of very interesting info on GOOGLE!!!!

*The Meadowlark is an official publication of the
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Learn About Your KARSP Endorsed Benefits at:

www.myAMBAbenefits.info/karsp

You can also call our benefits provider at:

800.258.7041



Kell Smalley, District Manager of Kansas, Kansas City
(913) 912-2157

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New memberships and renewals are \$15.00 per year.
If you have a change of address, please contact us by mail,
phone, or email.

KARSP

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or visit us at www.karsp.org



STRENGTH IN UNITY

A video of the construction of a wind turbine is fascinating. The base of the average wind turbine is 1.5m to 3.5m into the ground, and 15m diameter. Would be much deeper for those hundreds that are built in the oceans - not all are coastal. The normal height is about that of a 32-story building from the top blade's tip to the ground. There are ladders throughout the tower with connected slab/ floors along the ladders in the tower. Huge cranes take 3 days to be assembled on site. Those crane drivers are specially trained to move cranes inches per minute and skillfully place each heavy, cement, circular sections on top of the previous one. Workers help guide the final placement as there are big spikes that are released from the new section which fit precisely into holes of the previous section. Workers then use large screws to secure that new section to the previous one. Sections are smaller in diameter as they build toward the top of the tower. (A LOT more goes into the construction).

It is easy to understand that wind turbines use the wind to turn the propeller-like blades around a rotor, which spins a generator and creates electricity. Of course, motion is the requirement to produce kinetic energy. There are motors that can control those gigantic rotor blades in order to properly harness the wind during that energy making process and slow or stop them in turbulent weather for their protection. Average rotor blades measure 120 feet long. They are very light weight when compared to the tower and base, made of cement. A form of fiberglass is the main material of the blades. They are built to respond like the wings of an airplane to create lift and drag for proper wind speed. The rotors connect to the generator directly or to gears within the nacelles/motor box at the top. Some of those are large enough that a helicopter could land there. (There is lots more information about this process and about the large windmills' parts and energy creation, if you care to search it out.)

And of course, like most inventions there are drawbacks. Germany has been using wind

power for at least 20 years longer than most. A problem developed when the 20-plus-year-old blades needed to be replaced. What could they do with those big, old blades? Certainly not put them in a landfill! VEOLIA, manager of waste and hazardous waste of our planet, is helping research and produce ways of reusing the material of which the rotor blades are made. One way to reuse/recycle it is to saw (with newly created saws) that very strong, yet light weight, glass fiber material into small pieces and crush it down to be used by the cement industry instead of fuel oil. (*****Imagine the thousands of jobs that have been created for a proper work force in Veolia companies worldwide. Plus, there are thousands of jobs due to building wind turbines. Those workers are tested every 6 months to see if they are able to continue working at those heights and in those enclosures).

****We have learned that there is NO throwing something away. It will still be in our ground where our food must grow, and/or in our air which we must breathe, thus that "thrown away trash" will come back into our body causing major health issues to humans, animals and plants.

*****THE USA has recently rejoined the Paris Climate Accord. For EARTH DAY 2021, President Biden and John Kerry, Biden's Climate Envoy, are helping organize and host a Leaders Climate Summit to continue the clean environment resolution in ways to help combat climatic warming . THIS EVENT WILL TAKE PLACE on "EARTH DAY," APRIL 22, this year!!!!

Listen and search for information regarding *our CLEANER ENVIRONMENT*. (See the *Green EARTH DAY BOX* within this Meadowlark.)

* * * *LEARN BECAUSE IT IS JUST SO DARN INTERESTING!* * * * .

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

CONTINUED FROM THE MARCH MEADOWLARK

19. Under the combined efforts of KARSP and KCPR, there have been some successes. We were able in 2008 and 2009 to secure a one-time \$300 bonus. Beginning in 2019 for the first time in 25 years, the State contributed the Actuarial Determined Amount of contribution.
20. We have also moved the Legislature to the position of “We know you retirees need and deserve a raise, but we can’t afford to give you one.” This is a significant improvement when you consider that we first heard the excuse, “KPERS does not have a COLA”!
21. We have also helped stave off a Brownback and Kelly attempt to re-amortize the KPERS Unfunded Actuarial Liability.
22. Prior to 2011 we had secured a COLA for new hires, but with the Depression of 2008 and the convening of the “KPERS Commission” by Governor Brownback, we lost that much needed benefit. This also led to the instituting of Tier III and the increased employee contribution rate from 4% to 6%.
23. By reading the KCPR UPDATE and The Meadowlark, members of KARSP can keep up with events of concern to KPERS members, KPERS retirees, and KPERS Beneficiaries.
24. Two other sources are important to note. KNEA’s publication, *Under the Dome*, and the KCPR website, which is www.ksretirees.org.
25. Throughout this entire time there has been much excitement, tension, and some humor. One of the memorable events happened in the heat of the debate as to whether to change KPERS to a 401k type of plan. One of our favorite (not) advisors, not a Legislator, who shall remain nameless, was known for crazy testimony. It has been generally agreed by folks on “both sides of the aisle” that if he were unable to spin the facts, he would just make “stuff” up. We have always been convinced that he thought Ron and I were some of the retirees from Olathe who were receiving the highest retirement benefit. Olathe was always mentioned in his testimony. On one day he was particularly

full of “malarkey” and when the committee was adjourned, I was so angry at his lies that I attempted to confront him. He obviously knew what he had said was not true because he had to run to get away from me. By the time I was able to get to the corridor, he was gone!! I cannot remember whether it was the same day, but in the height of Capitol renovation, he had intended to take the steps to the first floor. They had been available when the committee started, and by the time it was over, the steps had been closed. He refused to get on the elevator with Ron and I until a female Capitol employee entered the elevator. At that time, he entered and started an intense conversation with her. I always “claim” that he did not wish to get on the elevator alone with Coach Ron!!

26. We must not forget the contributions early on of Gary Price and Duane Anstine, who also served on the KPERS board and contributed to its emergence.

KPERS BOARD ELECTION

Remember to vote for the KPERS board education member. The KARSP board supports Ernie Claudel. Let your voice be heard. Place your vote April 1-30.

Voting Options

Online

Login to your online account at member.kpers.org and click the election logo. If you don’t already have an account, please contact our InfoLine at 1-888-275-5737 to gain access to enroll as a new user.

By Phone

Call the KPERS InfoLine at 1-888-275-5737 to request a phone voting PIN and the toll-free election phone number.

Cast a Paper Ballot

Call the KPERS InfoLine at 1-888-275-5737 to request a paper ballot. You must request a paper ballot by April 16, 2021 to be eligible. Completed ballots must be postmarked by April 30, 2021 to be valid.