

## **Transcript of Power Chat In the Electric Lounge**

### **Season 1 – Episode 3 “Concern for Community for Community – the Heart of Who We Are”**

**December 11, 2025**

00:00 – 00:23

**Narrator:** Power chat in the Electric Lounge is powered by SECO Energy, an electric distribution cooperative serving over 260,000 members across parts of seven Central Florida counties. For more information about us, visit [Secoenergy.com](https://secoenergy.com).

00:24 – 01:23

**Curtis Wynn, SECO Energy Chief Executive Officer:** Well, welcome back to Power Chat in the Electric Lounge, the podcast where we plug you into the people, the purpose and power behind your electric cooperative. I'm CEO Curtis Wynn, and today's episode is all about one of our guiding cooperative principles, Concern for Community. At SECO Energy we believe that powering homes also means empowering lives. Whether through the SECO Foundation, our round-up program, Toys for Tots drives, or United Way giving, the community is truly at the heart of who we are.

Today, I am joined by some remarkable guests who help bring that commitment to life. I am so happy to welcome Sarah Meyer, our SECO Energy Foundation Board President. What a job. And thank you so much for joining us here in the lounge today.

01:24 – 01:32 00

**Sara Meyer, SECO Energy Foundation President:** Oh, thank you so much. It's a privilege to be here. And I absolutely love talking about what the Foundation is doing to make a difference in our local communities.

01:33 – 02:06

**Curtis Wynn:** So, in your role as chair of that board, president of that board, you lead an awesome group of individuals, SECO members from every district that we, that we serve. And all of you, each of you bring something, you bring something unique to the table, you know, about what's happening in the community. And you use that, that knowledge to help us make good decisions around the funds that you're responsible for. Tell us a little bit about the mission and how you're driving the mission for the SECO Energy Foundation.

02:07 – 02:46

**Sara Meyer:** What's been so incredible on the board is that there's nine districts represented, so nine individuals and each of us get to represent our district and know the need within that area. And then bring it all together during our board meetings to talk about what's going on in our local communities as we're reaching out to all different nonprofits and, really getting to see that change and fulfill, fulfill the SECO Energy mission to make a difference. Really tangibly living there, it's a unique process for the board that we get to be involved in that way.

02:47 – 03:15

**Curtis Wynn:** Nice, I love this, you know; it's empowered by people, real people. It's driven by our employees helping support those foundation board members who are giving up their time, and we're just having our members to be a part of this rounding up on their electric bill.

Now, I know you've got a number of favorite projects but just tell us about one or maybe two that really stick out for you in terms of the work that you've already been able to do with the foundation.

03:16 – 04:20

**Sara Meyer:** So, we'll be here all day because there's some incredible nonprofits. The SECO Energy Foundation has awarded over one million dollars; over 80 nonprofits have been supported through this mission. And so many of them are fantastic. One of them, I just think is so near and dear to my heart, is called LovExtension.

And they provide services for low-income seniors and families. Mainly one of the reasons we really just genuinely, fell in love with this nonprofit was because they care so deeply and they're so unique in how they do things, such as they'll sit down in a companionship conversation and ask, what are your dietary restrictions? So, there's a lot of dignity and value in that. And people are actually given food they can actually eat. That's rare, you know, in the environment that we're in. And so, that really stood out to us at the foundation, and we were very happy to award them some funding and see their growth.

04:21 – 04:37

**Curtis Wynn:** Wow. You just described exactly what concern for the community looks like on a whole different level. I just want to tell you how much I thank you for. And the foundation board for all the work that you're doing to make a difference in our community. We really appreciate you.

04:38 – 04:39

**Sara Meyer Oswalt:** Thank you so much. We appreciate you.

04:40 – 04:50

**Curtis Wynn:** Thank you. Next, I'm joined by one of our members, Kristan Hayes. Kristan, how are you? Thanks for being here. And thanks for joining us here in the lounge. Welcome.

04:51- 04:54

**Kristan Hayes, SECO Energy Member:** I'm good. Thank you for having me. I'm excited to be here.

04:55 – 05:31

**Curtis Wynn:** Well, good. So, just for those who don't know about how the Foundation is funded and how it works, it's real simple. We ask our members to round up their electric bill to the nearest dollar. And that small change goes into the Foundation, goes directly into the foundation where we use those funds to fund projects like the one in which you just heard about. So, what does that mean to you as a volunteer who's a part of the roundup program?

05:32 – 05:45

**Kristan Hayes:** It's the simplicity, really. Every month. That's something you don't even have to think of. You guys do all the hard work and everybody that does their small part has a big impact.

05:45 – 05:48

**Curtis Wynn:** What does it really mean to you to be a part of this program?

05:49 – 06:28

**Kristan Hayes:** Well, growing up in the community, I've been here my entire life. We have seen it come from a very small town, and as we continue to grow and add new members to our society, if we all do our small part, we make a big difference.

And so, for \$6 average a year, for me to do my part and the other thousands of people to do theirs, we can keep our community safe. We support local youth programs. We can give back to the schools. And there's really the simplicity of it. You're not even thinking about it. It's just being rounded up on your bill to the next dollar.

06:29 – 06:38

**Curtis Wynn:** Wow, wow. And that's beautiful. Is small change turning into large change, big change in our community. Just awesome.

06:38 – 06:40

**Kristan Hayes:** It's that good deed we can do every month.

06:41 – 06:53

**Curtis Wynn:** It is a good deed. Kristan, thank you for being a participant in the program and for just being willing to support others. With that little difference that you talked about. Thank you so much.

06:53 – 06:56

**Kristan Hayes:** Thank you for having me. Glad I can do my part.

06:57 – 07:15

**Curtis Wynn:** Another group that shows incredible concern for our community is our employees. And each year they rally behind programs like Toys for Tots and the United Way campaign. Joining me now is Terri O'Neal, who leads up these programs for SECO Energy. Terri, welcome to the lounge.

07:16 – 07:18

**Terri O'Neal, SECO Energy Community and Government Affairs Consultant:** Thank you for having me. I'm excited to share what we've been up to this year.

07:19 – 07:30

**Curtis Wynn:** What good one of the ones that and let's start out with Toys for Tots. That's a big one. I really, really love seeing that come together. And I love to see the, the excitement around that. So, tell us a little bit about the Toys for Tots program.

Well good, one of the ones that lets start out with is Toys for Tots. That's a big one that I really love to see coming together, and I love to see the excitement around that, so tell us a little bit about that program.

07:31 – 08:00

**Terri O'Neal:** It's a highlight of the year for the employees, our members, employees and Board of Trustees give for this initiative. SECO works with the local Marines to make sure that children are able to have toys on Christmas morning who may otherwise not have any toys. Our lobbies fill up with all the toys, games, dolls, bikes so that the children will have something to open up on Christmas morning.

08:01 – 08:29

**Curtis Wynn:** Yeah. You know, I love to see the lobbies fill up, but I wish I could see the smiles on the faces of those kids when they unexpectedly get those toys that are coming. Coming from all of the givers, the employees and everyone who decides to give and the Trustees. So, that's awesome. There's another one. There's another program that you help us with, and you head up, and that is the United Way campaign. Tell us about the United Way campaign and what that means to our employees and what how that participation looks.

08:30 – 08:59

**Terri O'Neal:** Absolutely. So this year, SECO employees were able to donate or contribute over sixty thousand dollars to ten different organizations in the United Way, all located in their communities. Employees know that the funds that they're contributing go to the people in their neighborhoods, for food, housing, education. And I really appreciate that it's helping local people.

Absolutely, so this year SECO's employees were able to donate or contribute over \$60,000 to ten different organizations in United Way all located in their communities. Employees know that the funds they are contributing go to the people in their neighborhoods for food, housing, education, and they really appreciate that it's helping local people.

09:00 – 09:17

**Curtis Wynn:** Wow. Yeah. We have employees who have done this year, after year, after year, and it really is exciting, sixty thousand dollars that is going to go back into our communities. Terri, thank you so much for helping SECO and our employees and our trustees lead these very impactful programs. We really appreciate what you're doing.

09:18 – 09:23

**Terri O'Neal:** Thank you. We are proud to serve our members and our community every single day.

09:24 – 09:52

**Curtis Wynn:** You're much, much appreciated. Thank you, Terri.

Today's conversation really highlights what concern for community means here at SECO. Community, it's not just something we talk about; it's something we live. From the SECO Community Foundation's grants, to our round up members, to our employees spreading joy

through Toys for Tots and United Way. We're all connected through service, compassion, and community spirit.

09:53 – 10:13

**Curtis Wynn:** If you'd like to learn more about the SECO Energy Foundation, visit [SECOFoundation.org](http://SECOFoundation.org) or stop by one of our offices.

I'm CEO Curtis Wynn and this has been Power Chat In the Electric Lounge. Thanks for tuning in. Together we're keeping the lights on and our community shining bright.