

August 2024



West Central Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative 

Electric News

Youth Tour delegates take on D.C.

PAGES 4-5

RoundUp board mourns the loss of original member Scott Stewart

PAGE 2

Help us let the EPA know that reliability is not negotiable

PAGE 3

Meter tampering is illegal and not worth the risk

PAGE 6

National Electric Safety Code addresses grain bin clearances

PAGE 7



Missouri electric cooperatives offer scholarships up for grabs at State Fair

The state's electric cooperatives have once again banded together to provide four \$500 scholarships to members visiting the Missouri Electric Cooperatives building during the Missouri State Fair.

Co-op members may fill out an application in the building any time during the fair, August 10-20. Applicants must complete an application form and return to the Missouri Electric Cooperative building during the fair. Recipients must show a letter of acceptance from a college, university and/or vocational, technical school.

West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Headquarters:

7867 S. Highway 13, P.O. Box 452, Higginsville, MO 64037
816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803 • PAY BY PHONE: 1-855-874-5349

To report outages 24/7:

Call 816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803 • or report outages at www.westcentralelectric.coop under "Report Outage"

District office:

506 N. Broadway, Oak Grove, MO 64075

Website:

www.westcentralelectric.coop

General Manager:

Michael Newland

Board of Directors:

Densil Allen Jr., *President*; Clark Bredehoeft, *Vice-President*; Dale Jarman, *Treasurer*; Robert Simmons, *Secretary*; Stan Rhodes, *Asst. Secretary*; Richard Strobel, *Director*; Jeremy Ahmann, *Director*; Colby Dowell, *Director*; Elizabeth Houtsma, *Director*

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

ON THE COVER: WCE Youth Tour delegate Jonathan Henry boards the bus on his way to what has been described by Youth Tour alumni as the "trip of a lifetime."

RoundUp board mourns the loss of member Scott Stewart

Stewart was a past foundation president

The West Central Electric RoundUp Foundation Board was saddened to learn of the death of original board member and past president Scott Stewart of Holden on May 7, 2024.

Stewart was one of the original members of the foundation, set up in 2017, as a way for cooperative members to participate in helping better their local communities. From 2018 until his resignation in 2023, Stewart and his fellow board members met quarterly to consider grant applications and award money to organizations in the WCE service area to complete community projects.

Stewart is survived by his wife, Stephanie, daughters Shelby McDonald (Coty) and Sydnie Stewart (Jackson), grandchildren Loretta and Winnona McDonald, mother Marlene Stewart and many other family members.

Stewart was 62.



Stewart

ANNUAL MEETING WILL BE HELD FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 2024

at the Jerry M. Hughes Athletic Center (formerly the Multipurpose Building) on the campus of the University of Central Missouri Friday, Aug. 2. Registration begins and the meal is served at 5 p.m. The business meeting begins at 7 p.m.

Don't forget to bring your annual meeting registration card. **This card was mailed along with your most recent electric bill and must be brought to the annual meeting in order to register for prizes, vote in the election for your directors and vote on bylaw amendments**

ANNUAL MEETING COVERAGE PUBLISHES IN OCTOBER

Because of printing deadlines, coverage of the 2024 Annual Membership Meeting will be published in the October issue of Electric News. For election results, check the WCE Facebook page following the meeting.

Help protect reliable and affordable electricity in Missouri

Use your voice to let the EPA know reliability is not negotiable

The future of reliable and affordable electricity is at risk. On April 25, 2024, the EPA released its long-anticipated final rules aimed at existing coal and new natural gas power plants. In a nutshell, this rule will shut down the very power plants in rural Missouri that provide your homes and businesses with electricity. It will also make it difficult and expensive to build new generation to replace these closed plants.

EPA wants electricity production to become a carbon-free power sector by 2035. In Missouri, our electricity is generated by a host of different sources. This mix of coal, natural gas, wind and hydro all play a role in working together to keep your lights on every time you flip that switch.



We have watched other states shut down coal and natural gas plants without having an alternative and reliable baseload of electricity. As you can imagine, when the sun isn't shining and the wind isn't blowing, their electricity isn't flowing.

The nation's grid watchdog, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), recently forecasted that over the next five years, all or parts of 19 states are at high risk of rolling blackouts during normal



conditions. The EPA's final rule will only make energy reliability worse, not better.

Congress needs to know this and help keep Missouri's lights on. The White House has the power to stop this rule, but we need your help! Visit 4energyreliability.com to send a letter to your representatives in Washington, D.C., asking them to stop the EPA from harming your family and community.



#NoThanksEPA

Youth Tour

is trip of a lifetime for local students

What makes electric cooperatives different from other utilities is that giving something back to the community is part of their business plan. Why do electric cooperatives bring high school students to Washington, D.C.? Because it is important to learn about the political process and to interact with your government. Students walk away from this week a better leader and with a sense that they can make a difference.

In June, Saul Logan, Jonathan Henry and Kayley Marten, joined 100 other youth from across Missouri on the National Rural Electric Youth Tour where they were able to take in all our nation's capital has to offer and witness government at work on Capitol Hill.

Time and again, delegates both past and present choose the same words to describe their experience, calling Youth Tour "the trip of a lifetime," and basking in the experiences and friendships they gained while in our nation's capital.

"Meeting people from all over the world was the best part of the trip. We made memories that will last a lifetime," Marten said. "Walking around the national mall, surrounded by monuments, felt like being in the heart of America. The trip wasn't just educational; it was inspiring. I came back home with a new perspective and so many amazing memories and friends that I will cherish forever."

More than 56,000 students from rural areas and small towns across America have participated in this unique program, with participants going on to become doctors, teachers, aircraft designers, law enforcement officers and even top legislators in the U.S. Senate. Delegates also return with a new appreciation of America and her history.

"The most notable thing about this trip was seeing the kiddish joy that I felt was lacking from me and the world," Henry said, describing the interactions between new friends on the Youth Tour. "I saw the joy of ambition reignited into each and every delegate. People talking about their dreams and actually making plans. To me, just observing and being reminded what pure joy is has made me a stronger, more joyous man. Now I'll promise to carry the tradition of smiling more, laughing more, and sharing my joy with the world."

WCE has sent 78 area students to our nation's capital since reestablishing the Youth Tour program at the cooperative in 1992.



Kayley Marten and fellow delegates show their Missouri spirit during NRECA's Youth Day event.

"Walking around the National Mall, surrounded by monuments, felt like being in the heart of America. The trip wasn't just educational; it was inspiring. I came back home with a new perspective and so many amazing memories and friends that I will cherish forever."

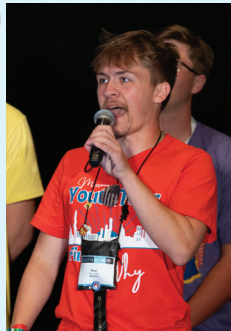
**--KAYLEY MARTEN
2024 YouthTour Delegate**

Logan is named Missouri's 2024-25 YLC representative

WCE Youth Tour delegate Saul Logan of Warrensburg, was named Missouri's new National Youth Leadership Council representative during the Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. in June.

Logan, who was interviewed along with five other finalists from Missouri, was awarded the job for the coming year, and will serve as a cooperative youth ambassador while building leadership and public speaking skills and enhancing knowledge of the energy industry and the cooperative business model.

In addition to speaking at their state and local cooperative annual meetings, the 44-member YLC will attend the NRECA annual meeting in March 2025, and will have hands-on experience with virtually every facet of the meeting, including the resolutions process and helping our members communicate with their legislators.



WCE Youth Tour delegates (l-r) Saul Logan, Kayley Marten and Jonathan Henry visit the U.S. Capitol Building on a hot, windy day.

“Being voted as the (youth) representative for an entire state is so surreal. It is such an honor to say that I am the YLC representative for Missouri, and I will do everything in my power to be a good leader for Missouri.”

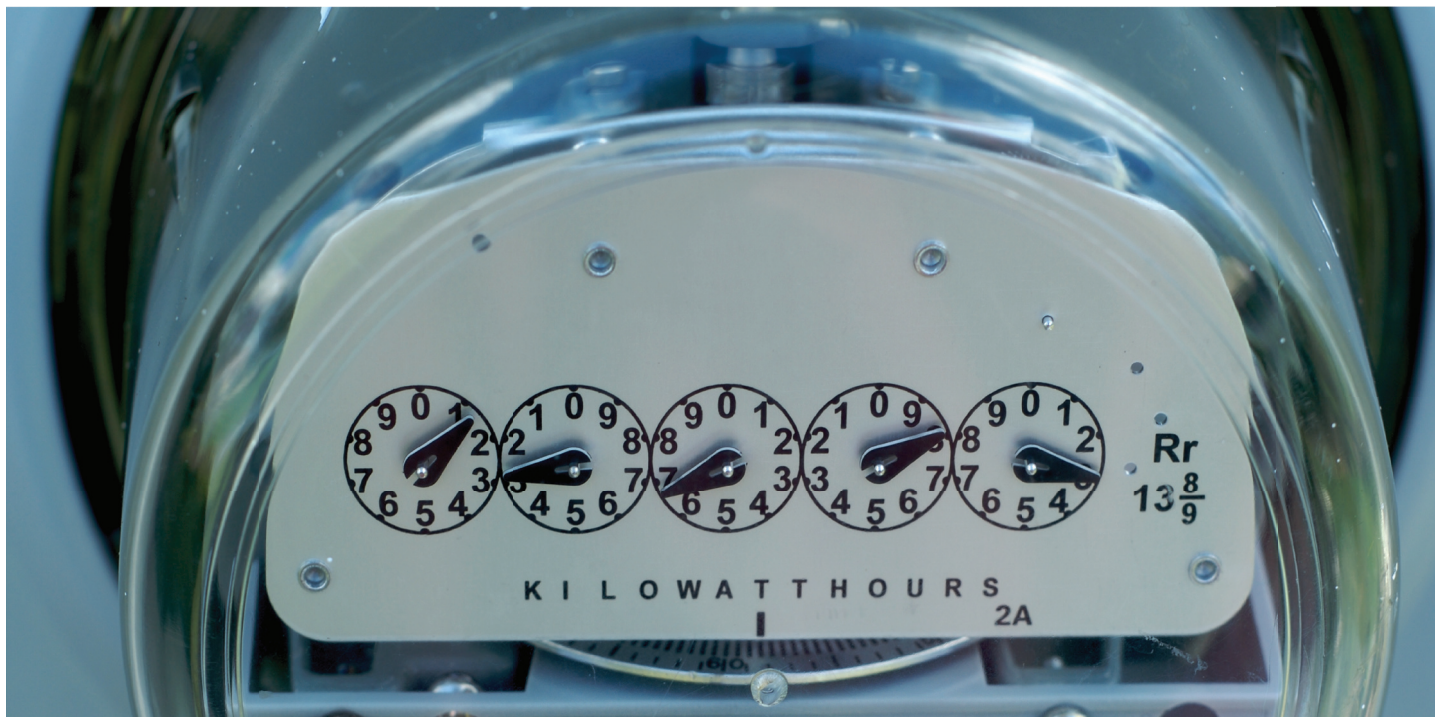
**--SAUL LOGAN
2024 YouthTour Delegate and
Missouri YLC representative**



(Above) WCE delegates Saul Logan (left) and Jonathan Henry (right) spend the morning touring D.C. memorials with new friends. (Below) Saul Logan reacts to being announced Missouri's YLC representative.



METER TAMPERING IS NOT WORTH IT



For your safety, never try to tamper with or pull (remove) a meter.

Illegally accessing a meter can result in an arc flash bright enough to cause blindness and powerful enough to launch fragments of red-hot, shrapnel-like debris, according to the Cooperative Research Network.

Only electric utility crews can properly and safely disconnect a meter. They are trained in safe and proper disconnection techniques and wear protective clothing and gear.



A FEW METER FACTS

- Tampering with a meter is illegal in most states.
- Meters should only be installed, maintained or removed by electric utility crews.
- Accessing the backside of a meter could generate high voltage.
- Serious injury or death from electrocution, explosion or fire is often a result of meter tampering.
- Electricity should always be connected or disconnected using a transfer switch or dedicated disconnection point.
- There is no guarantee that a structure will be deenergized by pulling a meter.

For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Have a college student?

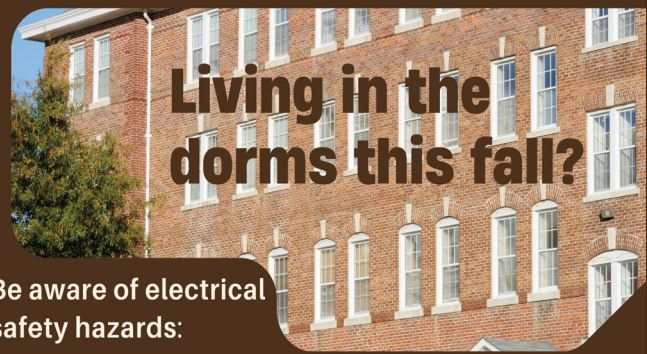
Make them aware of electrical safety hazards

It's the time of year when college campuses are preparing for students moving all of their worldly possessions into their home away from home - the dorm! While this is an exciting time for the students, it can be a nerve-racking time for parents. Safe Electricity reminds parents and students to keep electrical safety in mind.

Overloading outlets and plugging in too many appliances can be a safety hazard. Students should also ensure outlets around sinks are equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) before use. If they are not, contact the resident assistant, campus housing staff, or landlord. Remember to unplug small appliances when not in use and all electronics when away for extended periods.

In addition, students should check with the university's housing department on their specific housing laws. Many colleges across the U.S. ban cooking appliances from on-campus housing, including hot plates, coffee makers, and microwaves. Many of these institutions provide a designated area for the use of these products.

For more information on dorm safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Living in the dorms this fall?

Be aware of electrical safety hazards:

- Don't overload outlets, extension cords, or power strips.
- Use power strips with over current protectors. This will shut off the power if there is too much power being drawn.
- Only purchase and use electrical products tested for safety. Some common approved safety labels include UL, CSA, and MET.
- Keep all electrical appliances and cords safely away from bedding, curtains, papers, and other flammable material.

Grain Bin Clearances

To stay safe, many farming tasks require looking up and around for power lines: when operating large equipment with antennas or when using long implements, for example.

Another safety issue farmers should keep in mind related to power lines is grain bin location. The National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) addresses grain bins and their proximity to power lines with very specific requirements. The code does so to decrease the chances of farming equipment and machinery coming in contact with a live electrical line and because utility lines have clearance requirements.

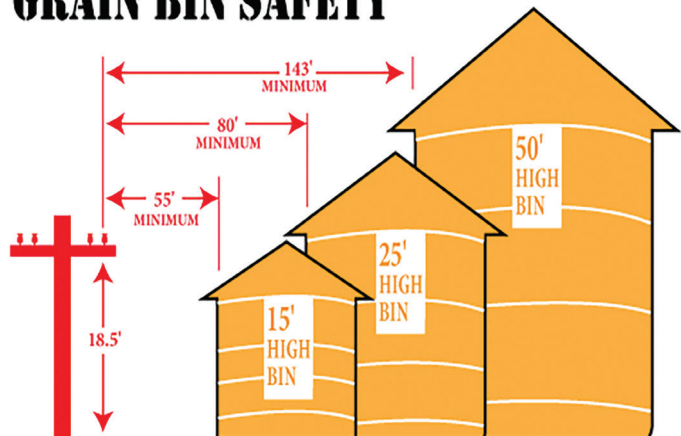
If you are planning on building a new grain bin or remodeling around an area that already has one, contact West Central Electric Cooperative at 800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942. We can help with specific code requirements. The taller a grain bin, the farther it must be placed from a power line. Not only is placing a grain bin too close to a power line extremely dangerous, it will most likely need to be relocated due to one or more code violations, and usually at the owner's expense.

Remember, calling us before installing a new grain bin or making changes around an existing one is free. Moving one is costly, it interrupts your farming schedule and is just an all-around hassle. The NESC specifies both horizontal and vertical distance requirements so don't leave a bin's location to chance.

For example, a grain bin that is 30 feet high must be at least 93 feet from a power line, and all bins must have an 18-foot minimum vertical clearance from the highest point of the bin's filling port. There are also distance requirements for non-loading sides of bins. In addition, changes to the ground (landscaping, filling) and drainage work can affect clearance heights.

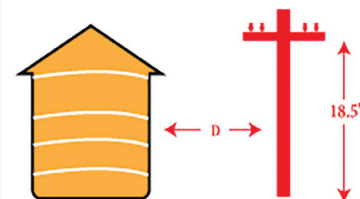
Even if you are not getting a new grain bin or making changes around an existing one, remember to always maintain adequate clearance when using a portable auger, conveyor or elevator to fill you grain bin or when moving machinery or farming equipment anywhere on your farm.

GRAIN BIN SAFETY



DANGER: HIGH VOLTAGE!
FOLLOW FARM SAFETY RULES AROUND POWER LINES

Height of grain storage structure	D=Minimum distance from line to bin wall*
15 ft.	55 ft.
20 ft.	68 ft.
25 ft.	80 ft.
30 ft.	93 ft.
35 ft.	104 ft.
40 ft.	118 ft.
50 ft.	143 ft.
60 ft.	168 ft.
70 ft.	193 ft.
80 ft.	218 ft.



*Based on a typical power line having a vertical clearance of 18.5 feet above the ground and a supply line phase to ground voltage of no more than 0V to 22KV; National Electrical Safety Code



FROM THE WCE BOARDROOM

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held May 30, 2024

A meeting of the board of directors of West Central Electric Cooperative was held at the office of the Cooperative, in Higginsville, Missouri, at 9 a.m. on Thursday, May 30, 2024, pursuant to the bylaws of the cooperative and previous resolution of the board of directors. The meeting was called to order by President Densil Allen Jr. Cooperative Attorney Sheri Smiley caused the minutes of the meeting to be kept. The following directors were present: Allen, Robert Simmons, Clark Bredehoeft, Stan Rhodes, Dale Jarman, Richard Strobel, Colby Dowell, Jeremy Ahmann and Elizabeth Houtsma. The board members present constituted a quorum of the members of the board. Also present at the meeting was Michael Newland, General Manager.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

AUDIT

Kevin Kelso, CPA, presented the 2023 Audit. He reviewed the audit process and reported the internal control structure was good, no instances of fraud were found, and all laws and regulations are in compliance. He reported all debt covenants were being met and no adjustments were made so an unmodified audit opinion was given. He reviewed margins, expenses, sales, fleet, income, capital credits, depreciation, debt, equity and the pension plan. The board entered into executive session at 10:11 a.m. and the meeting reconvened at 10:28 a.m. The audit was accepted.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The board approved its consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of April 25, 2024; expenditures for the month of April 2024; new membership applications and membership terminations.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following April reports were approved:

Financing and Treasurer's Report: Accounting Manager Rebecca Hoeflicker presented the April 2024 Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement. She reviewed the Financial and Statistical Report and Treasurer's Report with monthly and annual budget comparisons; gave the investment report; presented and reviewed statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, cash flow management, and KWH sales and ratios and reported on the timing of expenses, and the RUS loan draw that was taken.

Operations Report: Operations Manager Scott Gard provided an oral report to supplement his written Operations Report. He reported on crews and pole inspections that are starting; gave an update on staffing and the education crews had received during the month; reported on outages and causes for the month; gave a machine and fleet report and reported on brush crews and right-of-way work being done.

Safety and Engineering Report: Engineering Manager Pete Nelson provided an oral report to supplement his written Safety and Engineering Report. As of April 30, 2024, employees have worked 545 days without a lost-time accident. Co-op employees drove a total of 45,210 miles as of the end of April without a serious accident. The SCADA system was reported on. He reported on safety meetings, crew visits and training. An engineering/staking report was given.

Member Services Report: Brent Schlotzhauer provided an oral report to supplement his written Member Services Report. His report included RoundUp enrollment and RoundUp updates. Scholarship certificates are being given to students who received scholarships. School demonstrations and chamber meetings attended were reported. Incentive rebates, the annual meeting and the front window were also reported on. Two teachers have applied for the statewide Energy in Today's Classroom program.

ANNUAL MEETING DISCUSSION

Newland and Administrative Assistant Kim Lewis led a discussion on the annual meeting. Scholarship students were discussed. The board consensus was that they will continue to be invited to attend the annual meeting. Meal options with pricing were



discussed. The board consensus was to offer the same meal as the prior year with an extra dessert.

APPOINT AMEC ANNUAL MEETING VOTING DELEGATE

Bredehoeft was appointed the voting delegate and Simmons was named as the alternate.

APPOINT AMEC BOARD MEMBER AND ALTERNATE

Bredehoeft was appointed as the AMEC board member and Newland was named as the alternate.

AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft reported that the AMEC board meeting would be held the next week.

NW ELECTRIC REPORT

Newland and Simmons reported on the May NW Board meeting. They reported on work being done and the audit that was presented.

AECI ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

Directors who attended the meeting reported on the speakers.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Smiley reported the Nominating Committee met May 16, 2024 and nominated Bredehoeft, Jarman and Ahmann to be on the 2024 ballot. No petitions have been received. A discussion was held regarding whether or not to list the uncontested races on the ballot with the proposed bylaw change. The board consensus was to only have the bylaw changes on the ballot this year.

DISCUSS BYLAW AMENDMENTS

Smiley led the discussion on the proposed bylaw amendments from the committee. A motion passed to present the proposed bylaw amendments to the membership for vote.

FIDUCIARY DUTY POLICY EXECUTION OF POLICY

Smiley presented the policy on fiduciary duty for signature that had been approved last month. The Board reviewed and signed the policy.

LEGAL REPORT

Smiley gave a legal report.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Newland presented the monthly Manager's Report. He reported that CFC will do a rate study. AMEC provided information on the current EPA lawsuit for members.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session was called at 11:45 a.m. and adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned.

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • April 2024

	This month	YTD 2024	YTD 2023
Revenue	\$2,597,446	\$12,004,338	\$11,685,995
Power Bill Expense	1,678,007	7,086,581	6,289,511
Operation & Maintenance Expense	697,221	2,646,405	2,285,713
Depreciation Expense	208,854	832,150	885,386
Interest Expense	130,818	512,514	482,811
Total Cost of Service (Total Expense)	2,714,900	11,077,650	9,943,421
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	(117,454)	926,688	1,742,574
Other Margins	28,280	105,523	94,801
TOTAL MARGINS	\$(89,174)	\$1,032,211	\$1,837,375

