



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

West Central Electric News

Special Annual Meeting Issue!

July 2012



West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. ~ Serving our members' needs since 1939

**West Central Electric
Cooperative's 73rd Annual
Meeting Aug. 3, 2012**
UCM Multipurpose Building,
Warrensburg, MO.

5:00 p.m.

- Registration begins. All registered members will receive a \$35 energy credit. Must be present to receive.
- Join us for a fun, old-fashioned co-op barbecue of hamburgers, hot dogs, pasta salad, chips and cookies, tea & lemonade! Meals will be served to the first 1,300 members and guests in attendance.
- Informational booths and displays open at east end of Multi.
- Piano music by David Rest

6:50 p.m.

- Hali Mieser, 2012 Youth Tour delegate to Washington, D.C.

7:00 p.m.

- Business Meeting -- approval of minutes (*page 3 of this issue*), reports of business, election of directors and consideration of bylaw change (*profiles on pages 4-5, bylaw language on page 6.*)

Also...

- Drawings for prizes, including a **32" Magnavox LCD television** donated by NW Electric Power Cooperative and several \$25 and \$50 energy certificates
- Drawing for grand-prize: **one month FREE electricity!** (*Residential account only, applies to the bill due in September*)
- Drawings for kids' prizes including a **girl's bike** and a **boy's bike with helmets**
- Kids' Safety Area with giveaways, safety demonstrations, and Rural Missouri's Buddy Bear -- Bring your camera to take pictures with Buddy!
- Swimming for the kids 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Multipurpose Building indoor pool
- Blood pressure screenings from

Continued on page 7

Business Meeting begins at 7 p.m.



COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES...The second of the seven cooperative principles says that cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions; cooperative members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote). Here, a member exercises that right at the 2011 Annual Meeting of Members.

Building a Better World:

2012 is the International Year of Cooperatives

You might be surprised by the number of co-ops around you. Co-ops have been formed to sell produce and electricity, offer financial and banking services, provide housing and health care, and much more.

So where did the bright idea for co-ops come from? It's a matter of principles (seven, to be exact). The modern movement traces its roots to a store started by weavers in the town of Rochdale (pronounced Rotch-dale) in northern England in 1844. The group was guided by a set of principles drawn up by one of its members, Charles Howarth. When introduced into the U.S. by the National Grange in 1874, these "Rochdale Principles" fueled a cooperative explosion.

Although stated in many ways, the Rochdale Principles require that a cooperative must be open for anyone to join. Every member retains one voice, one vote. Electric co-ops hold member business meetings annually, allowing members to elect fellow consumers to guide the co-op and have a say in how their utility is run.

There also have to be real member benefits. For example, members of electric co-ops often get money back (called capital credits or patronage refunds) when the co-op's in good financial shape. More than \$9.5 billion has been returned to members by electric co-ops since 1988—nothing to sneeze at.

Education remains another big focus. Electric co-ops

provide safety information in schools, share ideas on how to make your home more energy efficient to keep electric bills affordable, and make sure elected officials and opinion leaders know about the co-op business model. Because there is strength in numbers, co-ops tend to stick together when tackling regional and national issues.

Perhaps most important of all, co-ops are independent and community-focused, not tied to the purse strings of far-flung investors. Co-ops help drive local economic development, fund scholarships, support local charities, and work to make life better in the areas they serve—the heart of the cooperative difference.

Learn more about cooperatives and the principles that define them at www.go.coop.

(RM mailing label)

Headquarters:
7867 S. Highway 13, P.O. Box 452
Higginsville, MO 64037
1-660-584-2131 or 1-800-491-3803

District office:
506 N. Broadway
Oak Grove, MO 64075
1-816-625-8211

Website:
www.WestCentralElectric.coop

24-Hour Number:
1-800-491-3803

General Manager:
Mike Gray

Board of Directors:
Clark Bredehoeft, President
Ron Steelman, Vice-Pres.
Paul Nolte, Treasurer
Robert Simmons, Secretary
Stan Rhodes, Asst. Sect.
Dale Jarman, Director
Max Swisegood, Director
Densil Allen, Director
Richard Strobel, Director

Official Proxy

I, the undersigned, a member of West Central Electric Cooperative, hereby appoint:

_____, who is a member of the cooperative, or an adult relative living in the same household, my proxy vote in my name and stead at the Aug. 3, 2012 annual meeting of the members of the cooperative. I have carefully considered the business which to my knowledge is to be acted upon, and have decided to give my proxy to the person named above who has agreed to vote this proxy on all matters as he/she honestly believes I would vote if I were present. I hereby verify and confirm my proxy's vote in my stead.

Witness by hand this _____ day of _____, 2012.

This Version Not Valid Proxy-May Not Be Used

Witness sign here

Signature of member giving proxy

Instructions for voting a proxy

If you are asked by a fellow cooperative member to vote in their place by proxy at the annual meeting, please take note of the following bylaw regarding proxy votes:

West Central Electric Cooperative Bylaws

Section 6. Proxies

A member may vote by proxy executed in writing by the member. Such proxy shall be filed with the secretary before or at the time of the meeting. No proxy shall be valid after sixty (60) days from the date of its execution. No proxy shall be valid unless it shall designate the particular meeting at which it is to be voted and no proxy shall be voted at any meeting other than the one so designated or any adjournment of such meeting. A member may give his proxy only to another member or to an adult relative living in the same home with such member, and no person may hold more than two proxies at any meeting. The presence of a member at any meeting shall revoke a proxy theretofore executed by him and such member shall be entitled to vote at such meeting in the same manner and with the same effect as if he had not executed a proxy.

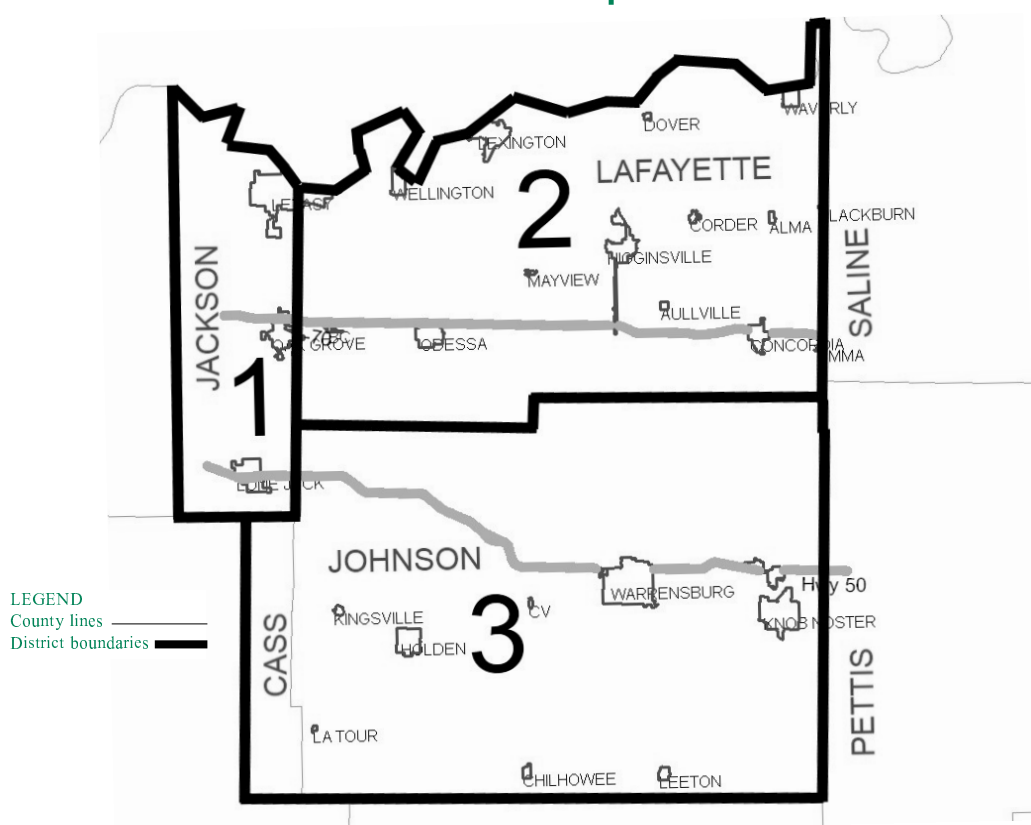
West Central Electric Cooperative Board of Directors Election

The West Central Electric Board of Directors election will take place during the 73rd annual meeting Aug. 3, 2012 at the University of Central Missouri Multipurpose Building in Warrensburg.

Members will vote for two directors in District 2 and one director in District 3. Members will receive a ballot upon registering at the annual meeting. Any person who is not a member of the cooperative cannot vote. A member's spouse cannot register and vote in his or her stead unless the spouse is named as a joint member. However, a spouse may vote in the member's stead by presenting a legally-executed proxy at the annual meeting registration table. A member may vote two proxies. A proxy form is printed at the top of this page.

Directors with terms expiring in 2012 include District 2: Clark Bredehoeft and Paul Nolte and District 3: Dale Jarman.

District Map



West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Minutes of the 2011 Annual Meeting of Members, August 5, 2011
To be approved at August 3, 2012 Annual Meeting of Members

The 72nd Annual Meeting of Members of West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as "Cooperative"), was held at the Multipurpose Building on the campus of the University of Central Missouri, Warrensburg, Johnson County, state of Missouri, on Friday, August 5, 2011, pursuant to the bylaws of the Cooperative and previous resolution by the Board of Directors.

Registration began at 5 p.m. A dinner was served and pre-meeting musical entertainment was provided by David Rest. Dakota Ross, a 2011 Youth Tour delegate to Washington, D.C., gave a brief speech and report about his experience in Washington, D.C.

The business meeting was called to order by Donna Matthews, President of the Cooperative. At 7 p.m. Robert Simmons, Secretary of the Cooperative, caused the minutes of the meeting to be kept.

The President called on Kaylee Herring and Courtney Welch to lead the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance and a video presentation of the National Anthem. A prayer of invocation was offered by Assistant Operations Clerk, Wes Schloman.

President Matthews introduced special guests in attendance at the meeting and the Board of Directors.

Attorney Matt Krohn was called upon to verify the presence of a quorum. Mr. Krohn noted that the quorum formula required the presence of 331 members and that 605 members had registered for the meeting, and therefore a quorum was established for the transaction of business.

President Matthews presented and explained the Agenda and Order of Business to come before the meeting. On motion made, seconded and passed, the Agenda was accepted as presented. Secretary Simmons presented the Notice of Meeting and Affidavit verifying mailing of the Notice to each member. He then directed membership attention to the Unapproved Minutes of the 2010 Annual Meeting of Members, held on August 6, 2010, that were printed with the Notice of Meeting. On motion made, seconded and passed, the reading of minutes was waived and the minutes were approved as printed.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ms. Matthews presented the President's Report. She reported actions taken to reduce expenses including the application of capital credit distributions to member power bills. She spoke of changes to add convenience to the payment of bills. She explained the scope and funding of the Cooperative's scholarship program and its support for local students. She introduced two apprentice linemen who graduated from the lineman program at Linn State Technical College with the benefit of cooperative

scholarships. She asked the membership to favorably consider adoption of bylaw changes presented to the meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Paul Nolte presented Treasurer's Report. He directed member attention to the financial information contained in the meeting program that was taken from the Cooperative's 2010 Audit. On motion made, seconded and passed, the membership resolved to approve the Treasurer's Report.

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

Walter Hutcherson presented the report of the Nominating Committee.

Mr. Krohn conducted the election of Directors. He noted that there were no nominations received by petition. He then called for nominations from the floor. After waiting the required time, the nominations were declared ceased without objection. The membership was given instructions regarding marking and collecting ballots.

BYLAW ELECTION

Mr. Krohn answered questions regarding the proposed Bylaw Amendments. Members were given instructions regarding voting and collection of Bylaw Amendment ballots.

The appointed election judges collected ballots and retired to a counting room.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Mike Gray presented the Manager's Report. He spoke of the slow growth of the Cooperative in comparison to prior years. He spoke of maintenance and line conversion projects designed to improve system reliability. He noted that 2010 was a year of solid financial performance and that 2011 expenses are in line with budget. He committed that the Cooperative continues to look for ways to improve its efficiency. He spoke of issues of general interest affecting the electric industry.

Mr. Steve Moore and other employees conducted drawings for attendance prizes.

ADJOURNMENT

The President then asked for any unfinished or new business. There being none, on motion made, seconded and passed, the business meeting was adjourned.

ELECTION RESULTS

Following the adjournment, Mr. Krohn returned to the podium to report the election results as follows: Bylaw Amendments - 435 "yes" votes; 123 "no" votes. It was declared that the Amendments were therefore adopted. Directors - Robert Simmons, 411 votes; Donna Matthews, 371 votes; Densil Allen, 399 votes; and Richard Strobel, 378 votes. It was therefore certified that Robert Simmons, Densil Allen, and Richard Strobel were each elected for a term of three years until their successors are elected and qualified.

2012 Official Notice of Annual Meeting

The 2012 Annual Meeting of members of West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be held: Friday, August 3, 2012 on the campus of the University of Central Missouri, Warrensburg

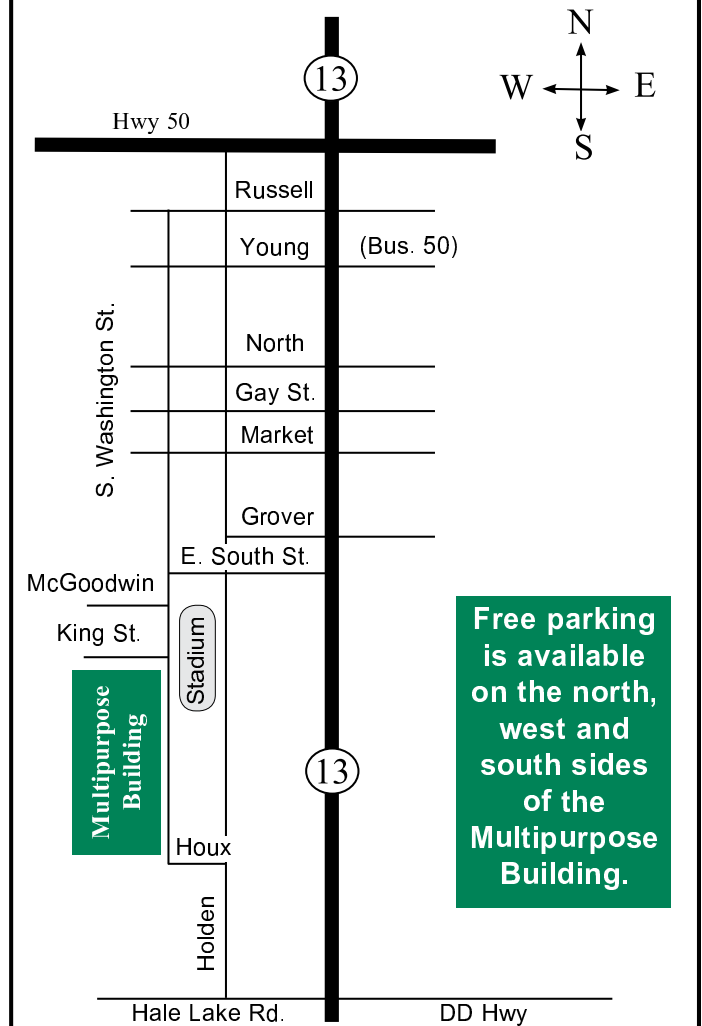
The meeting will feature:

1. The report of officers, directors and committees
2. The election of two directors from District 2 and one director from District 3 to serve until the third succeeding annual meeting of the members, or until their successors have been elected and shall have qualified. The following members have been nominated for directors:
 - District 2**
Paul Nolte, Higginsville, Mo.
Clark Bredehoeft, Blackburn, Mo.
James Martin, Eates City
 - District 3**
Dale Jarman, Holden, Mo.
John Staples, Warrensburg, Mo.
3. The voting on revisions to cooperative bylaws
4. Such other business as may properly come before the meeting or any adjournment thereof.

Robert Simmons
Robert Simmons, Secretary
July 16, 2012

seal

Map to UCM Multipurpose Building



West Central Electric Cooperative • 2012 Board of Directors Candidates

Paul Nolte, Higginsville, Mo.

Occupation: Farmer and Co-owner of Midwest Farm Services, a crop insurance and grain marketing business.

Family: My wife Barb and I have been married 30 years. We are the parents of our son Bryan and his wife Melissa, our daughter Erin and her husband Corey, and our daughter Emily.

District 2

Community groups and organizations, church, etc. to which you belong: Member of Salem UCC, District Administrator for the Northwest Missouri District of Little League Baseball

Why did you agree to run for re-election to the board of directors? West Central Electric is a great business that fills a real need for its member owners, and I want to continue to be a part of the organization. I believe in the cooperative system, and that it is

the best model to provide members with a dependable source of electricity at the lowest price. I hope to use my previous experience as a board member to continue to lead West Central Electric in that direction.

What are your goals for your next three-year term? My goal for the next three years is the same as it has been for my 21 years of service on this Board: For West Central Electric to provide the best possible electric service to its members at the lowest possible price.

In your opinion, what is the biggest issue facing electric cooperatives today, and how do you plan to address that issue? I believe the biggest issue facing electric cooperatives today is how to contain costs and continue to provide a dependable source of electricity to our members at a reasonable rate. Rising wholesale power rates and distribution costs coupled with stagnant growth makes that goal a challenge. How West Central Electric identifies and deals with those issues will determine our long term success. My goal as a director is to make sure we never lose sight of

that issue, and we always strive to meet our goal of being a dependable, low cost provider of electricity to our members.

Additional comments: I believe the job of a Director is to represent all members of West Central Electric. Even though Directors are elected by districts, I believe our task is to represent what we believe is the best interest of all members, regardless of their location. A Cooperative is defined as a group working together for a common benefit. My goal as a Director is to work for all the members to accomplish our goal of providing a dependable source of electricity at a reasonable cost.



Paul Nolten
Higginsville, Mo.

Clark Bredehoeft, Blackburn, Mo.

Occupation: Farmer

Family: My wife, Holly, and I have been married for 24 years. We have lived on the family century farm since 1990. We have two sons, Tyler and Jordan, and one daughter Sydney.

Please list community groups and organizations, church, etc. to which you belong: Trinity Lutheran Church, Alma; MU Alumni Association; Missouri Soybean Association; Farm Bureau; Corn Growers Association; Director for the Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives

District 2

Why did you agree to run for election to the board

of directors? West Central was founded by a group of local farmers who saw the need to bring electricity to rural areas. As an active farmer, I am concerned about the cost and reliability of our electric service. As a board member, I will strive to keep West Central a viable company for generations to come.

What are your goals for your next three-year term? To provide leadership so that West Central may provide its members the best possible service while keeping rates as low as possible.

In your opinion, what is the biggest issue facing electric cooperatives today, and how do you plan to address that issue? I believe governmental and environmental regulations are the biggest issue facing electric cooperatives today. We, as local cooperatives, need to keep our government leaders as informed as

possible so they may make decisions that will benefit not only the cooperatives, but our nation as well.

Additional comments: As a board member, I represent the entire membership and make decisions that will benefit all members. I appreciate the opportunity to serve on the board of directors, and look forward to representing the membership the next three years.



Clark Bredehoeft
Blackburn, Mo.

Jim Martin, Bates City, Mo.

Occupation: I am a retired Information Technology (IT) Systems Engineer from Honeywell Federal Manufacturing and Technologies. Since retirement, I have worked as a substitute teacher in the Oak Grove R-6 School District and currently work part-time in the Computer Technology Department for the Odessa R-7 School District

District 2

Family: My wife, Bonnie, is currently employed as an Emergency Response Planner for the Mid America Regional Council (MARC). We also have three grown children (two sons and a daughter), and two grandchildren.

Please list community groups and organizations, church, etc. to which you belong: I am a member of Blue Springs Christian Church and play guitar in their praise band.

Why did you agree to run for election to the board of directors? After working in the IT field for over 30 years, I enjoy taking on new challenges. I met one of the current directors and thought it sounded like an opportunity where I could utilize the experience I have in technology and project management and also learn something new.

What are your goals for your first three-year term?

- Get oriented, learn the basics of the West Central Board's business processes and tasks
- Earn the respect and trust of current directors and members
- Be a productive member of the Board of Directors

In your opinion, what is the biggest issue facing electric cooperatives today and how do you plan to address that issue? Given the uncertainties in the energy industry, the biggest issue is managing the price and service level provided by West Central to

its customers, both now and into the future. I plan to address this issue by always looking to increase the value to the customer by working to increase the business efficiency and making business decisions based on an accurate cost/benefit analysis.

Additional comments: Education:

- Bachelor of Science in Computer Information Systems from Missouri State University (1978)
- Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Rockhurst University (1999)



Jim Martin
Bates City, Mo.

West Central Electric Cooperative • 2012 Board of Directors Candidates

Dale Jarman, Holden, Mo.

Occupation: Farming

Family: I am married to Georgia and we have two sons: Seth and Nathan

Please list community groups and organizations, church, etc. to which you belong: I am a member of the First United Methodist Church of Holden and

I have served as building chairman. I also have served as Johnson

County Extension Council President and as a member of the Holden RIII Board of Education. I serve on the West Central Electric Scholarship Committee and as a Trustee for the Blackwater Cemetery Association.

Why did you agree to run for re-election? My family has been co-op members since service became available to us in our area near 50 and 131 Highways north of Holden. I am aware of the original mission this co-op held to serve rural populations that the private utility companies found too unprofitable to serve. Co-ops are responsible to the members they serve and not to investor's profits. My commitment as a direc-

tor is to stay true to this mission of service in order to meet the needs of all of our members.

What are your goals for your next three-year term?

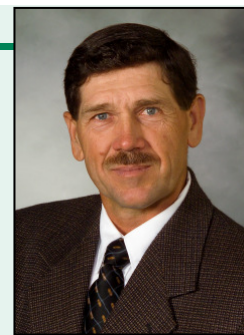
Provide quality service to all and to maintain affordable rates. To be an advocate for co-op members in our under-represented areas. Two thirds of our members live south of 50 Highway or west of 131 Highway. Currently of the nine West-Central directors, there is only one other director besides myself living in these areas, and he lives west of 131 Highway. The vast area south of 50 Highway, from 131 Highway to 13 Highway is represented by me. This is of concern to me.

In your opinion, what is the biggest issue facing electric cooperatives today, and how do you plan to address that issue?

Our primary challenge is to maintain reasonable rates, which are dictated by increased demand for electricity, fuel costs, and government regulations. Board members must be well informed, up-to-date and able to implement changes in a timely manner in order to minimize economic hardship. We can increase efficiency of operation by hav-

ing personnel closer to where our members live. We have increased the number of employees at the Oak Grove office to help on the west side, however, we still have over 30% of our members living south of 50 Highway that are a considerable distance from our service center. I would like to see us move some personnel closer to that area to improve service to that area. This would not only provide faster service, but would also reduce time and travel costs.

Additional comments: I have learned a great deal about our co-op these last few years. I believe that I'm in a position to help maintain a strong co-op that continues to meet our members' needs. I would appreciate your support in this election.



Dale Jarman
Holden, Mo.

John Staples, Warrensburg, Mo.

Occupation: Facilities Engineering Manager with over 24 years experience in manufacturing & manufacturing management.

Family: Married for 24+ years to Kay who has raised two beautiful children. Children – Son who is a junior attending the University of Missouri – Science

& Technology – Rolla, MO dual majoring in Aerospace &

Mechanical Engineering. Daughter who is a 2012 graduate of Warrensburg High School now enrolled at State Fair Community College with plans on majoring in Education

Please list community groups and organizations, church, etc. to which you belong: Sedalia Industrial Energy Users Association – ('10-present)
Hays High Industrial Technology Association – Hays, KS ('04-'08)
Local Emergency Planning Commission (LEPC) – Hays, KS ('04-'08)

Technical utility advisory board to City Superintendant – Shelbina, MO (mid 90's)
Mississippi Natural Gas Association – late 80's

Why did you agree to run for election to the board of directors?

Having recently relocated to Warrensburg, MO and wanting to get involved in the community, I would not only be allowed to serve the community, but the region in a role that allows for a positive impact and utilizes my experience.

What are your goals for your first three-year term?

Be fiscally responsible to its members by maintaining and strengthening our electric cooperative, both internally and externally with other cooperatives, while adhering to the ever increasing regulatory and financial constraints impacting all of us.

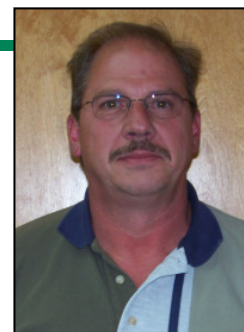
In your opinion, what is the biggest issue facing electric cooperatives today, and how do you plan to address that issue?

Hold the rising electric costs while being fiscally

responsible to West Central Electric Cooperative members. During these tough economic times of ever increasing regulatory constraints, we need to continue to be financially strong, while improving and providing reliable service.

Additional comments:

With my years of experience in manufacturing management, I have been responsible for many projects being held to tight timelines and budgets. Additionally, I have been responsible to establishing, implementing, and adhering to annual operating budgets.



John Staples
Warrensburg, Mo.



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Your local electric co-op.
Yeah, some things
are just that good.



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BALLOT ISSUE

By member petition initiative, the following issue will appear on the ballot to be voted on at the August 3, 2012 Annual Meeting of Members

PETITION

WEST CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. PATRONS

In order to ensure a more equitable representation of directors on the West Central Electric Cooperative Incorporated Board of Directors, we, the undersigned (signatures omitted due to space limitations), in accordance with the West Central Electric Cooperative Incorporated operating policy 2.11 propose the following by-law amendment be voted upon at the 2012 Annual Meeting of the West Central Electric Co-Operative Incorporated:

Article IV, Directors, Section 4a. of the by-laws of the West Central Electric Cooperative shall be deleted and replaced with the following:

Article IV Directors

Section 4a. Geographic Representation Required:

The territory in which the Cooperative supplies electrical energy to its members shall be divided into geographical districts for the purpose of equitably distributing the Cooperative's directors over the district in which its members reside. The district together with the number of directors who shall represent the respective districts, are as follows:

District Number 1 – Two directors. District Number One shall consist of all that part of the Cooperative's territory lying within the County of Jackson in the State of Missouri, and that part of the Cooperative's territory lying within Lafayette County west of Z Highway, and that part of the Cooperative's territory lying north of Interstate 70 which is west of Highway 131.

District Number 2 – Two Directors. District Number Two shall consist of all that part of the Cooperative's territory lying within the County of Lafayette, except that part in District One, but shall include all of that part of Cooperative's territory

lying within the County of Saline in the State of Missouri.

District Number 3 – Two Directors. District Number Three shall consist of all that part of the Cooperative's territory lying within the County of Johnson in the State of Missouri, lying north of Highway 50, and all that part of the Cooperative's territory lying within Township 46 north, Range 25 west lying south of Highway 50, and all that part of the Cooperative's territory lying within the County of Pettis in the State of Missouri.

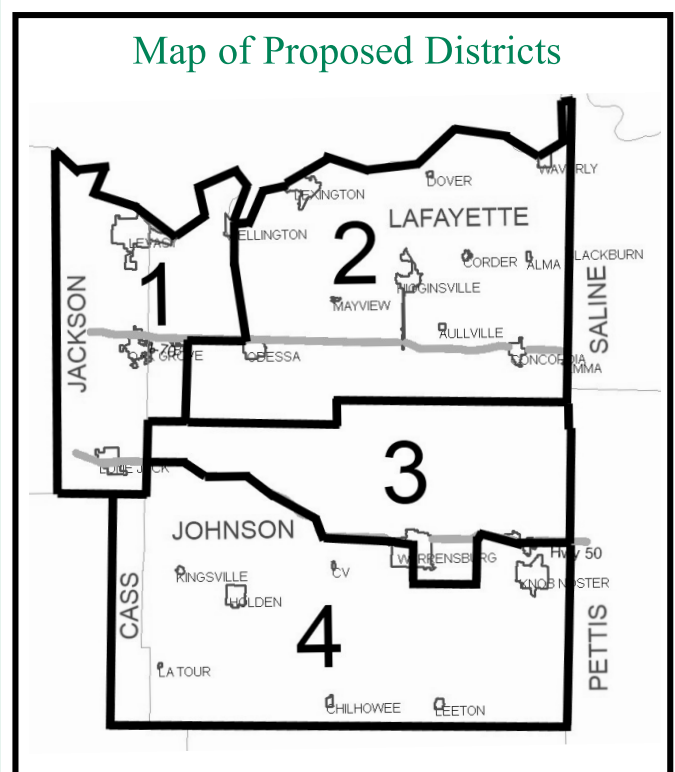
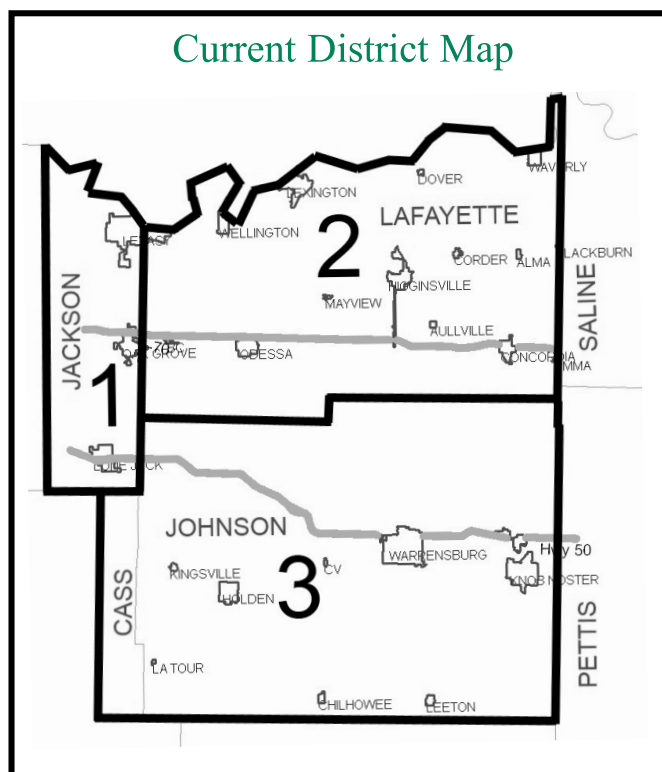
District Number 4 – Two Directors. District Number Four shall consist of all that part of the Cooperative's territory lying within the County of Cass, in the State of Missouri, and all that part of the Cooperative's territory lying within the County of Johnson, in the State of Missouri, excluding the territory of District Three.

District 5, At-Large District – One Director. The At-Large District shall consist of all the Cooperative's territory in the State of Missouri.

The nominations of directors, appointment of directors, and election of directors shall be made in compliance with the provisions set forth herein; with the qualifications of a director in this regard being determined by his residency within the above described geographic districts. The provisions set forth in this section are in addition to and supplement other qualifications which exist or may exist pertinent to the position of Director.

Upon passage of the by-law provision, the new districts will be implemented according to the following time line:

Election Year 2013	1 Director Each	Districts One, Two & Four
Election Year 2014	2 Directors	District Three
	1 Director	District Five
Election Year 2015	1 Director Each	Districts One, Two & Four



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2012 Nominating Committee



NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETS...

The West Central Electric Cooperative Nominating Committee met in May to nominate candidates for the 2012 Board of Directors election. The committee consists of the following active WCE members: Front row, (l-r): Jerry Phoenix, Sarah Willard, Dana Sander and Ellis Dieckhoff. Back row (l-r) Robert Sander, Walter Hutcherson, Gary Bell and Eric Johnson.

West Central Electric Cooperative's 73rd Annual Meeting Aug. 3, 2012

From page 1

Johnson County Community Health Services

- ♦Bucket truck rides (weather permitting)
- ♦Meet the WCE linemen and learn more about what they do.
- ♦Glaucoma & macular degeneration screenings by the Missouri Lions Foundation
- ♦West Central Services booth -- where you can get more information about the Exede satellite service provided by your electric cooperative
- ♦Take Control and Save booth. This cooperative energy-efficiency program can show you how to make the most of your energy dollars by taking control of your electricity use.

See you Aug. 3 in Warrensburg!



From the Manager...

Cooperatives really do build a better world

As we prepare for our 73rd Annual Meeting of Members, we are reminded that our cooperative is here today because we believe in the benefits of a community working together.

We know we're stronger and can accomplish more when we're united—that's what makes our country great. When we cooperate with each other—pool our resources and focus on a goal—we can do ANYTHING.

Together, through co-ops like West Central Electric, we really do help build a better world.

Electric cooperatives are different from other businesses you deal with, and we're not alone. There are 29,200 co-ops of all kinds across America, and more than 1 billion co-op members around the world. We all share a common set of principles and values, including self-help and one of the most important -- democracy.

Co-ops take many forms, from farmers banding together to get a fair price on supplies to credit unions delivering low fees and reasonable rates. The business model works for dairy farmers and small business owners, financial institutions, grocery stores, and electric companies. Co-ops form to fill a community need, giving a voice to folks that profit-driven businesses often overlook.

Electric cooperatives may only serve 12 percent of American consumers, but our lines cover 75 percent of this great nation. By banding together, we deliver power to 42 million Americans in 47 states.

Our history demonstrates how we can build a better world together. Just 73 years ago, nearly 90 percent of our rural ancestors were living in the dark—forced to rely on iceboxes or spring

houses to cool food, kerosene lamps for lighting, wood stoves for cooking, and fetching water from wells. The reason: the big investor-owned utilities had decided there was no profit to be made extending power lines into the countryside to hook up farms and small towns.

That's where the co-op business model came into play.

No one else was up to the challenge, but West Central Electric's founding members—folks like you and me—took it on, tackling the feat of bringing power and hope to rural America by forming electric cooperatives.

Several years ago, when our members wanted and needed high-speed internet service, but dial-up was all that was available to them, the electric cooperatives responded. We formed West Central Services, a subsidiary of the cooperative, to provide high-speed internet service for our members. With the newest satellite upgrades, we can now offer our members internet service with speeds as fast as DSL.

This year, 2012, has been declared the International Year of Cooperatives. It's a chance for us to celebrate our legacy of innovation and to remind us of what's important in business—putting people first.

Co-ops exist to meet the needs of our members. Period. That's why you take the time to attend your annual meeting. You know that as a member of West Central Electric Cooperative, you set our priorities and elect leaders from among your ranks to lead the co-op on our board of directors. And after this year's annual meeting comes to a close, the individuals you have elected will work hard to make our community stronger and sustainable.

One key to our community's strength lies within the opportunities our children have to succeed. That's why we support the Rural Electric Youth Tour. In June,

we sent four high school seniors-to-be to our nation's capital to learn about leadership, teamwork, electric co-ops, and the ideals on which our nation was founded. Just this spring, we awarded 30 scholarships totalling \$17,050 to send local students to college, continuing our commitment to support our community's our future leaders.

Our employees are also committed to helping our community thrive. After all, they live here too! They give many hours of their time to benefit our communities like working with 4-H and FFA groups and serving on economic development committees within our local area.

Because we put people first, our rates are set simply to cover the cost of doing business, NOT to generate profits for distant stockholders. In fact, you get the credit when our revenues exceed costs. I'm proud to report that in 2012 we'll allocate \$970,000 to our members in the form of capital credits which will be applied to your electric accounts this month. These retirements can add up.

Capital credits and our support for the community are just two more ways that electric cooperatives are building a better world.

During the International Year of Cooperatives 2012 we also want to celebrate our legacy of innovation.

Co-ops adapt quickly to change, and we work together—cooperatively—to find solutions to improve service for you, our members. That's the power of cooperation.

Innovation takes many forms, from energy efficiency and renewable energy efforts to transforming the electric grid. Each innovative step forward builds a better community for all of us!

Our energy efficiency programs help you manage your energy use. In 2009 we joined Touchstone Energy Cooperatives across the nation to debut

a new website, TogetherWeSave.com. Whether you're sealing your air ducts, replacing old appliances, or improving your home's insulation, it's amazing to watch how the little changes can add up to big savings on your electric bill. Co-op members have found ways to save more than \$32 million dollars using this valuable tool. We also offer home energy audits to make sure you're getting the best value out of the energy you use every month.

Deploying state-of-the-art solutions like our advanced metering system, which allows us to read your meter from the office, give you detailed breakdowns of your usage, and pin-point outages, helps save time and money. Not only does new technology helps us keep your electric bills affordable, but it also reduces our environmental impact.

Finally, we're meeting your power needs with a diverse fuel mix, including renewable energy. Eleven percent of cooperative power comes from renewable resources like hydropower, wind, and biomass. That's compared to 9 percent for the nation's entire electric utility sector.

Electric co-ops are using energy efficiency programs, a smarter grid, and renewable energy investments to build a better world.

Cooperatives put people first. We are innovative. We are leaders in the utility business. And around the world, co-ops form a global network of independent, local businesses owned by those they serve.

So join me in celebrating the International Year of Cooperatives and the impact co-ops make on our lives. By uniting neighbors and friends to meet common needs, cooperative enterprises build a better world.

I hope to see you in August at our 73rd Annual Meeting of Members.

West Central Electric
is proud to feature...



...the music of
Dave Rest

For your listening pleasure, West Central Electric Cooperative is pleased to announce that Dave Rest will again be providing the music during dinner and prior to the start of the business meeting.

Dave, a retired major from the United States Air Force, has provided more than 60 years of wonderful music. He was born in 1940 and raised in Chicago for the first 24 years of his life. He took piano lessons for 8 years before quitting in 8th grade.

At 14, he once played with the Chicago Symphony Choir. During his college days, he could be found playing piano on the Southside at various restaurants. In 1964, he joined the Air Force, married his longtime sweetheart Barbara, an R.N., and off they went to Japan for 3 1/2 years. Two sons were born there, and then it was off to Whiteman Air Force Base as a missile launch officer for five years. They were blessed with a daughter in 1971. California, Guam and England were next, then back to WAFB in 1983.

Dave played piano at Remington's at the Adam's Mark Hotel for more than 20 years, as well as April's Oak Barn, Jacks on South Highway 13, and the Las sous Terre, or the Italian Garden. He volunteers for many civic fund raisers, the Veterans Home, Country Club Care Center, John Knox, and more. He has lived in Warrensburg for more than 25 years.

Did you know you can shop co-op right here at home?

West Central Electric is one of more than 900 electric cooperatives in America. But we're just one type of cooperative—more than 29,200 operate in our country, including a large segment of the agriculture industry. From dairy to oranges, and almonds to cotton, our nation's farmers know the value of the cooperative business model.

The next time you're at the grocery store, see how many items you can purchase that were produced by a co-op.

Starting in the produce section, pick up some Ocean Spray cranberries or Sunkist oranges, tangerines, grapes, or grapefruit.

Cruise on over to the refrigerated cases and take a look at the eggs—95 percent of America's eggs are produced and marketed by co-ops. Then pick up some Florida Natural orange juice, Land O'Lakes butter, Cabot or Tillamook Cheese, and Organic Valley milk. Need a warm drink? Try Equal Exchange coffee, tea, and hot chocolate.

Finally, drop some Blue Diamond almonds in your cart—a perfect pick-me-up for that 3 p.m. slump.

Now that you've finished your grocery shopping, make your way to Ace Hardware or True Value to get supplies for your weekend projects. Or go to the

mall to replace your old, falling-apart blue jeans with a new pair from GAP, Banana Republic, or Guess—all three get their cotton from Plains Cotton Growers Cooperative's Denimatrix. But before you do that, head to your credit union—another cooperative—to make a deposit to cover all your purchases.

The cooperative business model promotes self-sustainment and local economic growth. Support our nation's cooperatives, and local co-ops as we work together to build a better world.

Find a co-op near you at www.go.coop.

The Seven Co-op Principles...

Cooperatives around the world generally operate according to the same core principles and values, adopted by the International Cooperative Alliance in 1995. The International Cooperative Alliance is a global membership association of co-ops and co-op support organizations. Cooperatives trace the roots of these principles to the first modern cooperative founded in Rochdale, England in 1844.

1. Voluntary and Open Membership

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all people able to use its services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2. Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members—those who buy the goods or use the services of the cooperative—who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions.

3. Members' Economic Participation

Members contribute equally to, and democratically control, the capital of the cooperative. This benefits members in proportion to the business they conduct with the cooperative rather than on the capital invested.

4. Autonomy and Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If the co-op enters into agreements with other organizations or raises capital from external sources, it is done so based on terms that ensure democratic control by the members and maintains the cooperative's autonomy.

5. Education, Training and Information

Cooperatives provide education and training for members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperative. Members also inform the general public about the nature and benefits of cooperatives.

6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7. Concern for Community

While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of communities through policies and programs accepted by the members.