

West Central Electric Cooperative's 75th Annual Meeting Aug. 1, 2014
UCM Multipurpose Building, Warrensburg, MO.

5:00 p.m.

- Registration begins. All registered members will receive a \$25 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.

6:50 p.m.

- Molly Bertz, 2014 Youth Tour delegate to Washington, D.C.

7:00 p.m.

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

Also...

- Drawings for prizes, including **28" Vizio LED Smart TV w/WiFi** donated by NW Electric Power Cooperative and several \$75 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

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Business Meeting begins at 7 p.m.



Early office employees at West Central Electric included (l-r) Celia Knipmeyer, Betty Rinne, Ida Held, Ruth Vorwerk, Jane Blevins Bear, Edna Jeter and Eva Whitaker. In the foreground is one of the new, modern, electric washing machines displayed in the office.

Members First. From Day One.

THE FIRST LINES

Celia Knipmeyer remembers Day One.

A freshman in high school in Higginsville, Mo., she remembers the day she and her twin sister watched their parents light up the room on what is known in the cooperative world as, "The day the lights came on."

It was March 1941, and Celia's family was one of the first in the service area to have their home electrified.

"I remember my sister and I, we had Aladdin lamps, coal oil lamps, a rail lamp, and I remember I said, 'Oh, Mother! We can see all over the room!'" she said.

The times were changing.

"It was quite interesting. It was a wonderful time for the farmers. We found out there would be so many farmers without electricity because KCPL either couldn't or wouldn't serve because it wasn't cost-effective," Celia said. "My dad had the foresight to have the house wired for electricity. It had been built in 1923."

She remembers the lines being built and how she loved the way the room lit up in the dark.

"We have a long lane, so they didn't come around the road (when constructing the lines). They came through the field because it was much shorter to string the lines there than down the road," she said. "I just remember having that light all over the room and that refrigerator. We really appreciated that refrigerator because my dad always had to haul ice from town for the ice box. We also had an electric radio. Before we had a Silvertone battery radio."

THINGS TAKE OFF

Although she was still living at home when the first lines

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Headquarters:

7867 S. Highway 13, P.O. Box 452
Higginsville, MO 64037
816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803

District office:

506 N. Broadway
Oak Grove, MO 64075

PAY BY PHONE: 1-855-874-5349

Website:

www.westcentralelectric.coop

24-Hour Number:

1-800-491-3803

General Manager:

Mike Gray

*This institution is an equal
opportunity provider and employer.*

Board of Directors:

Densil Allen, President
Clark Bredehoeft, Vice-Pres.
Paul Nolte, Treasurer
Robert Simmons, Secretary
Stan Rhodes, Asst. Sect.
Dale Jarman, Director
Max Swisegood, Director
Richard Strobel, Director
Sandra Streit, 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. 1, 2014 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 _____, 2014.

This Version Not Valid Proxy-May Not Be Used

Witness sign here

Signature of member giving proxy

PRINTED name 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.

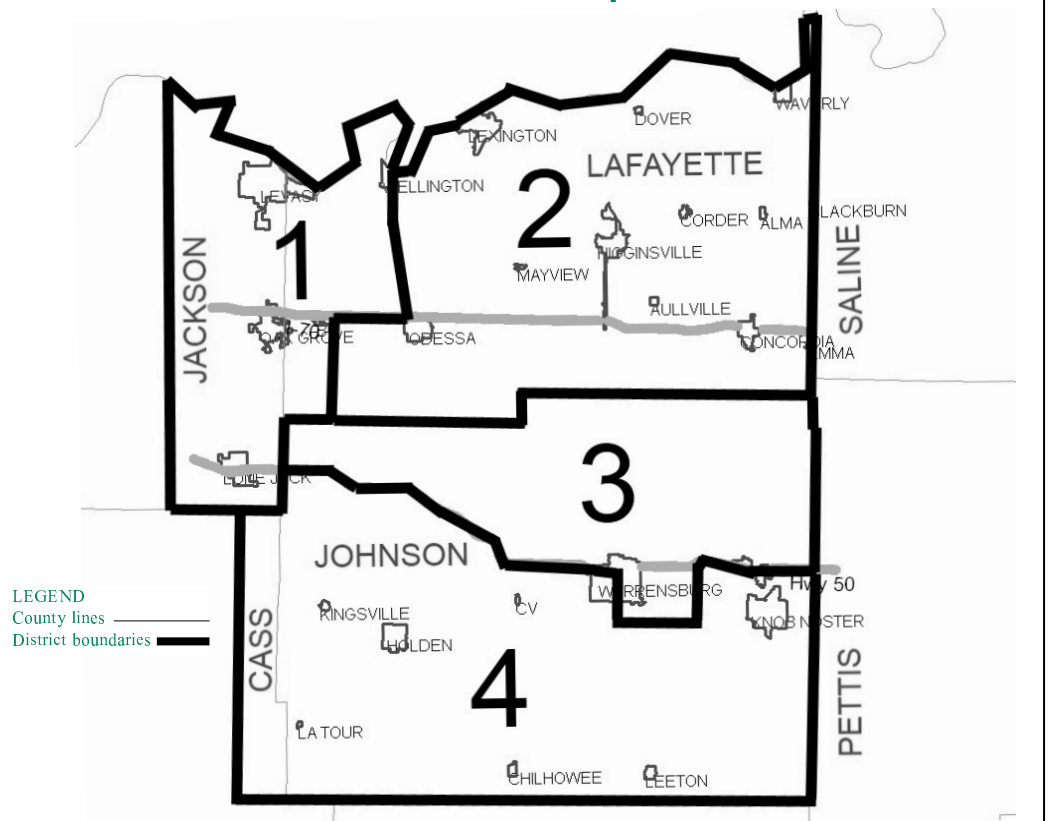
West Central Electric Cooperative Board of Directors Election

The West Central Electric Board of Directors election will take place during the 75th annual meeting Aug. 1, 2014 at the University of Central Missouri Multipurpose Building in Warrensburg.

Members will vote for TWO directors in District 3 and ONE director in the At-Large District. 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 2014 include District 3: Robert Simmons, Richard Strobel and Densil Allen

District Map



● PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGE ●

Proposed Bylaw Amendment 1

The agenda of the 2014 Annual Meeting of Members includes action on a proposal to amend the residency qualification of directors. The present language of *Article IV, Directors, Section 3, Qualifications* provides that "No person should be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold any position of trust in the cooperative who:

(a) is not a member and bonafide resident in the area served or to be served by the cooperative."

The revision of subparagraph (a) would read as follows:

(a) is not a member who continuously uses cooperative energy and service at his/her permanent primary place of residence."

This proposal will be voted on after discussion in the course of the meeting. The board of directors takes no position on the merit of the proposal.

2014 Nominating Committee



NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETS...The West Central Electric Cooperative Nominating Committee met in May to nominate candidates for the 2014 Board of Directors election. The committee consists of the following active WCE members: Front row, (l-r): Tim Evert, Sarah Willard, Dennis Knipmeyer and Dana Sander. Back row (l-r) Gary Bell, Jerry Phoenix, Walter Hutcherson and Ellis Dieckhoff.

West Central Electric Cooperative's 75th Annual Meeting Aug. 1, 2014

From page 1

- ♦Historic photo display featuring images from throughout the cooperative's 75-year history
 - ♦Sign up to join your cooperative in fighting to keep your electric rates affordable by asking the EPA to take a common-sense approach when considering regulations that affect power plants. Get information on the issue and add your name to the growing list of more than 500,000 electric consumers who have already sent emails to the EPA. Fill out a card at the meeting, or sign up at www.action.coop.
 - ♦Blood pressure screenings from Johnson County Community Health Services
 - ♦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. 1 in Warrensburg!

2014 Official Notice of Annual Meeting

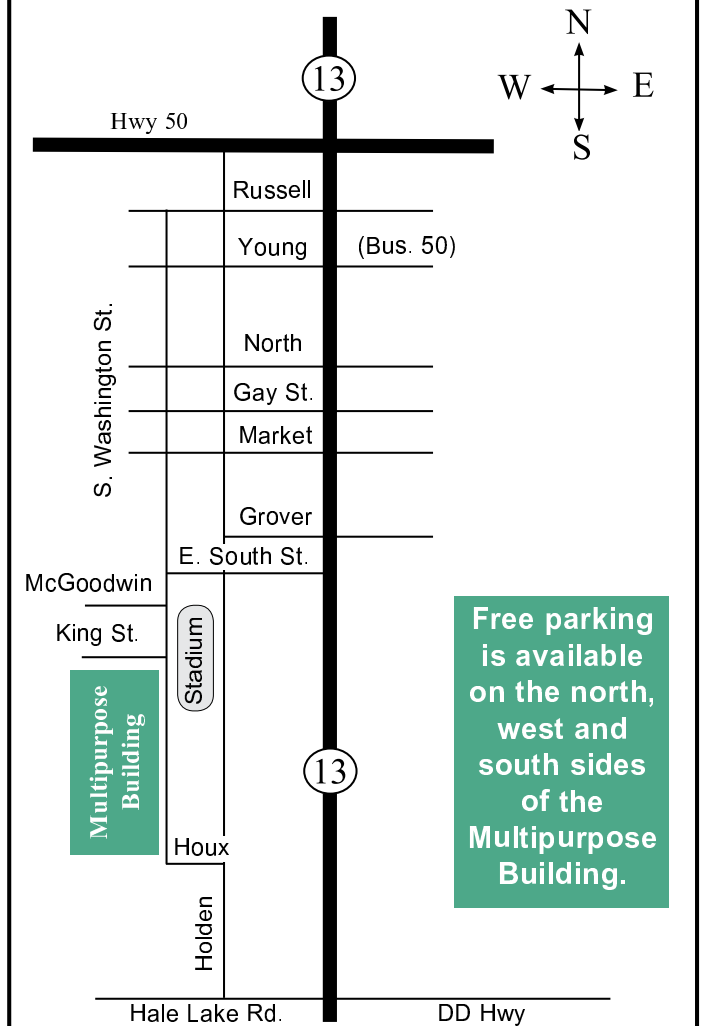
The 2014 Annual Meeting of members of West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be held: Friday, August 1, 2014 on the campus of the University of Central Missouri, Warrensburg

The meeting will feature:

1. The report of officers, directors and committees
2. The election of **TWO** directors from District 3, and **ONE** director from the At-Large District 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 3**
 - Robert Simmons, Warrensburg, Mo.
 - Richard Stobel, Concordia, Mo.
 - Donna Matthews, Warrensburg, Mo.
 - At-Large District**
 - Densil Allen, Knob Noster, Mo.
3. The voting on revisions to cooperative bylaws.
4. Such other business as may properly come before the meeting or any adjournment thereon.

Robert Simmons, Secretary
July 14, 2014

Map to UCM Multipurpose Building



West Central Electric Cooperative • 2014 Board of Directors Candidates

Robert Simmons, Warrensburg, Mo.

Occupation: Banker

Family: Wife, Georgia; daughters Rachel and Brooke.

Community groups and organizations, church, etc. to which you belong: Mount Tabor United Methodist Church, Missouri Valley Community Action Agency Chairman, Archer Oddfellows Lodge in Higginsville, Mid-Missouri Tractor Club, Tri-County Foundation in Concordia

District 3

Why did you agree to run for re-election to the board of directors? I feel West Central Electric

offers affordable electricity and excellent service. I feel the employees do an excellent job taking care of the members and keeping the lights on. It is a privilege to serve on the board of directors.

What are your goals for your next three-year term? Trying to keep the cost of electric service to the members as inexpensive as possible, and trying to develop more efficient ways for the cooperative to operate.

In your opinion, what is the biggest issue facing electric cooperatives today, and how do you plan to address that issue? The biggest issue I feel facing cooperatives today is the regulations that are being imposed by the federal government that affect the

cost of power to the consumer. I feel it is important to work together with other cooperatives to deal with this issue.

Additional comments: I have enjoyed serving on the board of directors these past years, and would like to continue to do so.



Robert Simmons
Warrensburg, Mo.

Richard Strobel, Concordia, Mo.

Occupation: Farmer

Family: Wife, Linda; children Amanda, Christina & David; grandsons, Tyler, 10, and Tanner, 2; granddaughter, Olivia, 2.

Community groups and organizations, church, etc. to which you belong: Member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church; 10-year member of Transportation Advisory Council which works with MoDot for future planning; Member of the Missouri Cattlemen's Association, American Legion Post 258; Member and past commander of VFW

District 3

Post 5649. One of my passions is my duty as commander of the Concordia Veterans Honor Guard through which we show honor to deceased veterans at their funerals and on national holidays. I have been the commander for the past 13 years, and one of the most gratifying experiences is to fold and present the flag to the grateful families and fire a 21-gun salute.

Why did you agree to run for re-election to the

board of directors? I have very much enjoyed my first three years as a board member of WCE. Working for the membership to improve their service has given me a great deal of pride. There will be very much work to do in the near future with possible EPA regulations of generating power plants.

What are your goals for your next three-year term? I would like to see the board become more united and work together for the good of the entire membership. I intend to have as much input into decision-making as possible. I further believe the health and safety of our linemen should be our greatest concern. I have said before, our linemen are our greatest asset. Our outside workers only number 21, yet after a storm many of you have witnessed their amazing success.

In your opinion, what is the biggest issue facing electric cooperatives today, and how do you plan to address that issue? When I was elected to this board three years ago, I never heard the mass media talking about environmental regulations being imposed on coal-fired electric generating plants. Today, the media is talking about the imposing regulations taking place

and the huge increase in electric rates that will be a result of these EPA rulings. Today's power plants are emitting very little or small amounts of emissions compared to the power plants of the past, however EPA's regulations are so high they are unachievable. These issues can and are being dealt with by grassroots efforts. Also, I have spoken with my political representatives and if enough noise is made, it can be very powerful.

Additional comments: I have always believed most members are happy if they turn on their light switch and the lights come on and stay on. Electricity is safe, affordable with rates under 10 cents per kilowatt, and reliable with brush removed from most all power lines.



Richard Strobel
Concordia, Mo.

Donna Matthews, Warrensburg, Mo.

Occupation: Retired as a rural mail carrier. Currently rent my farm to my sons, but remain involved with day-to-day operations.

Family: Husband deceased; son Troy and wife Gale, grandson Sam; son Tony and wife Stephanie, grandsons Ethan and Avery.

Community groups and organizations, church, etc. to which you belong: At the present time, I have chosen to be involved with the care of my ill and aging parents, and be

District 3

an active participant in the lives of my grandsons. This window of opportunity grows smaller each day, and I am committed to family values.

Why did you agree to run for election to the board of directors? For the past nearly three years, I have been encouraged to run by WCE members. I have the time to be involved, post 19 years of experience and

training, and a desire to serve the members of my district. I am an NRECA credentialed director, earned during my past experience. I always tried to evaluate decisions from the perspective of the member, from that of the co-op and the board and how that decision would affect each of them.

What are your goals for your three-year term? My goal is to be knowledgeable about how political issues will affect our members and relay that information to them. They also need to know how to be conservative consumers and need the opportunity to be more involved in grassroots efforts that have proved to be valuable in the past.

In your opinion, what is the biggest issue facing electric cooperatives today, and how do you plan to address that issue? Environmental issues which drive up our wholesale cost are my biggest concern. Again, those grassroots movements need to be achieved as opportunities present themselves. Keeping costs affordable to limited income consumers will always

be a challenge. The co-op needs to stay financially sound, but control operating costs.

Additional comments: WCE is a multi-million dollar business and needs to be maintained as such. The integrity of the business is sometimes as strong as its weakest employee. Strong community involvement is essential, especially the many ways in which the youth are supported. They are an integral element of our future locally and nationally, and need positive influence. I've always been proud of the many ways WCE contributed to the youth in our area.



Donna Matthews
Warrensburg, Mo.

West Central Electric Cooperative • 2014 Board of Directors Candidates

Densil Allen, Jr., Knob Noster, Mo.

Occupation: Currently own a commercial cow/calf operation

Family: Wife, Cyndi; son Shawn Allen and wife Bess, grandchildren Harper and Boone Allen; daughter Angie Allen Ruddock and husband Wade, grandchildren Reagan and Kate Ruddock; daughter Emma Allen.

At-Large District

Community groups and organizations, church, etc. to which you belong: Attend Windsor Assembly of God church; member of Missouri Cattlemen Association; board member of First Central Bank, Warrensburg; member of Advisory Board of Warrensburg FFA, past president of Missouri Auctioneer Association.

Why did you agree to run for re-election to the board of directors? I have enjoyed serving the members of West Central Electric for the past three years. I would like to use the knowledge I have gained by attending director workshops and conferences to help our cooperative better serve its members.

What are your goals for your next three-year term? To work with the other board members to provide our members of West Central Electric with a reliable and affordable source of electric power.

In your opinion, what is the biggest issue facing electric cooperatives today, and how do you plan to address that issue? One of the biggest issues facing electric cooperatives is the restrictions being proposed for our coal-burning generation plants. It is important that we keep coal as one of our sources to generate electricity. While we do use alternative sources

to supplement our power supply, we can't depend on these sources to supply our total needs. It is important that we keep our members informed of any pending legislation that would adversely affect our power supply and possibly result in increased power cost to our members.

Additional comments: I look forward to having the opportunity to continue serving the members of our cooperative.



Densil Allen, Jr.
Knob Noster, Mo.

West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Minutes of the 2013 Annual Meeting of Members, August 2, 2013

To be approved at August 1, 2014 Annual Meeting of Members

The 74th Annual Meeting of Members of West Central Missouri 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 2, 2013, pursuant to the bylaws of the Cooperative and previous resolution of the Board of Directors.

Registration began at 5 p.m. and a dinner was served. Nora Faris, a 2013 Youth Tour Delegate to Washington, D.C., gave a brief speech and report about her experience in Washington, D.C.

BUSINESS MEETING

The business meeting was called to order by Clark Bredehoeft, President of the Cooperative, at 7 pm. Robert Simmons, Secretary of the Cooperative, caused the minutes of the meeting to be kept.

Nora Faris to lead the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance and an audio presentation of the National Anthem. A prayer of invocation was offered by board member Richard Strobel.

President Bredehoeft 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 138 members and that 711 members had registered for the meeting, and therefore a quorum was established for the transaction of business.

Attorney Krohn 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 amended, with the addition of a vote on the bylaw amendments. 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 2012 Annual Meeting of Members, held on August 3, 2012, 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

Mr. Bredehoeft presented the President's Report. He noted it is a different world today than it was in 1939, but one thing that has remained constant throughout the past 74 years -- your cooperative's commitment to making a better life for members. He noted to date the cooperative has sent 71 students on the Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., and 21 to Jefferson City for the Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience put on by the Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives. President Bredehoeft reported that a total of \$21.9 million has been returned to members in capital credits. He noted throughout the years and through these efforts, the cooperative has done its part to improve the everyday life of its members.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Paul Nolte presented Treasurer's Report. He directed members' attention to the financial information contained in the meeting program that was taken from the Cooperative's 2012 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 for districts 1 and 2. After wait-

ing the required time, the nominations were declared ceased without objection. The membership was given instructions regarding marking and collecting ballots. Given the fact that there were no nominations from the floor as to District 1 or District 2, Mr. Krohn explained that there could be a suspension of the rules since there was no contest, and that those candidates could be elected by motion. Upon motion made, seconded and passed, Max Swisegood from District 1 and Stan Rhodes from District 2 were elected pursuant to said motion.

Mr. Krohn opened up nominations for District 4. After waiting the required time, the nominations were declared ceased without objection. The membership was given instructions regarding marking and collecting ballots.

Attorney Krohn explained the bylaw balloting issues. Members were allowed time to speak only in favor of or in opposition to the proposal. President Bredehoeft started discussion for the Board of Directors since the motion for the bylaw amendment came from the board. Following debate, 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 reported on operations, maintenance and system upgrades to improve the system this past year. He noted new services built and reported that growth is steady in the service area. He hopes the cost of power increases for the cooperative will be small enough that the West Central can absorb it without having to raise its rates to the members, but the Cooperative will have a better idea of where it stands by the end of the year. He encouraged members to use the web-

site to report outages and for them to check the Cooperative's Facebook page for the latest news. He spoke of government regulations and how they affect the members. He noted the Cooperative system is in good shape and continues to fight legislation and regulations that could have a negative impact on rates. He thanked the employees for another outstanding year.

Steve Moore and other employees conducted drawings for attendance prizes.

ADJOURNMENT

The President then asked for any unfinished or new business. There upon, motion was made, seconded and passed, that a bylaw amendment be put on the ballot for the 2014 members' meeting to change Article IV, Section 3(a) to delete "a bona fide resident in area served or to be served by the Cooperative" and replace it with language that requires the Cooperative's Directors to live on the West Central Electric Cooperative lines and "to have continuous Cooperative energy and service at their primary place of residence."

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 Amendment No. 1 (Article IV, Directors, Section 3) - 444 "yes" votes; 138 "no" votes. It was declared that the Amendment was therefore adopted. Bylaw Amendment No. 2 (Article IV, Directors, Section 4(a)) - 154 "yes" votes; 431 "no" votes. It was declared that the Amendment was therefore defeated. Director election; Sandra Streit - 332; Darlene Buckstead - 238. It was therefore certified that Sandra Streit was elected for a term of three years until her successor is duly elected and qualified.



From the Manager... Liberty and a better life for all

Every July, we take time to reflect on our country's history and remember how the actions of a few helped shape the way we live today. I think back on the rich history of the electric cooperative movement and how a small group of determined individuals were able to improve their quality of life and the quality of life for all those who would come after them.

Every day, West Central Electric members and employees pay homage to the legacy of our cooperative founders. And, because we are a part of an elec-

tric cooperative, we know we have the power to impact our present and shape the future, just like those who came before us.

Through grassroots advocacy efforts, we help influence policy decisions that will affect our communities now and for years to come. We are the catalyst for change in our communities. We leverage our collective power to get things done. Even now the cooperative voice is being heard as we join together to ask the EPA to take a common-sense approach to regulations that would drive up electric rates. We work together, partnering with other co-ops, local businesses and community organizers to achieve economic development goals. Creating better opportunities and

increasing the quality of life for our families and communities — just as our founding co-op members did.

We understand that the decisions we make today could greatly affect how future generations live, so we invest in energy-efficiency programs that protect our future generations while still providing high-quality, affordable electric power.

Cooperatives are helping to build the next generation of leadership through our Youth Tour program, sending high school students to Washington, D.C. to meet with law makers and get an up-close view of how our government functions. Youth Tour participants leave our nation's capital feeling energized. It inspires them to make a difference in

their communities and gives them a new perspective. Youth Tour provides young people from our communities with an opportunity they may otherwise have never known.

All of these things, plus so much more, are what make-up the cooperative difference. This month, as we think about the future of electric cooperatives and how we will continue to shape our country and our society, West Central remembers what it took to bring power to our communities and let the determination of those who came before us, guide us.

We have always been rooted in putting our members first -- from day one. And, that is what we will continue to do.

History repeats itself...

Handly Schoolhouse a wealth of history

There's a lot of history in the Handly Schoolhouse. The original burned in the early 1930s. It was rebuilt, and then closed in the early 1950s when the rural schools in the area consolidated. It saw Robert Littlejohn attend as an elementary student, and graduate the 8th grade there in 1949.

For awhile, it housed a community center, and then sat empty for several years with broken windows and rain blowing in. It rests today, on that same spot where it was rebuilt, just steps away from the first foundation still visible in the grass; the original chalkboard on the south wall and the wood stove in the back. The same line of windows that allowed light to stream in on the students' desks still bathe the large room in sunlight. Only today, as Robert Littlejohn stands on the concrete steps leading up to the doorway of the school entrance, it makes new history.

"We fixed it up and moved in in the 1970s," Robert said.

The school has quite a past, said Robert, a history buff with a keen knowledge of what went on around Lafayette County in the mid-1900s.

"Some of the students who went to Handly School were descendants

of Jefferson Davis," he said. "There were also some who were descendants of the man who held Robert E. Lee's horse while he surrendered at Appomattox."

His love of history translates into his stories about the old schoolhouse and what life was like during a seemingly simpler time. Robert and his wife, Marilyn, still have the farm where he grew up on Borland Rd. near Concordia.

"Handly school was one of two schools I went to," he said. "It was on one side of the farm and Elm Grove was on the other. Because of the decline in the number of children born during the Great Depression, Handly was short on students, and wasn't open all the time."

The students in the west part of the district went to Elm Grove and those on the east side went to Mock

School.

"The farmhouses got electricity first, but the schools had nothing but kerosene lamps until later," he said. "Schools were designed with the windows on the left so light came over the kids' left shoulders.

That helped the teachers get everyone to write right-handed. The blackboard was always on the side of the school that let the windows on the left light it up."

Robert remembers the change from kerosene lanterns to electricity on "the day the lights came on," and being one of the first families to be electrified.

"I was about five or six when the electricity first came. Our nearest neighbor was Palmore Greer, who did a lot of the ground work for the cooperative and was one of the main organizers," he said. "As a kid, I remember him and

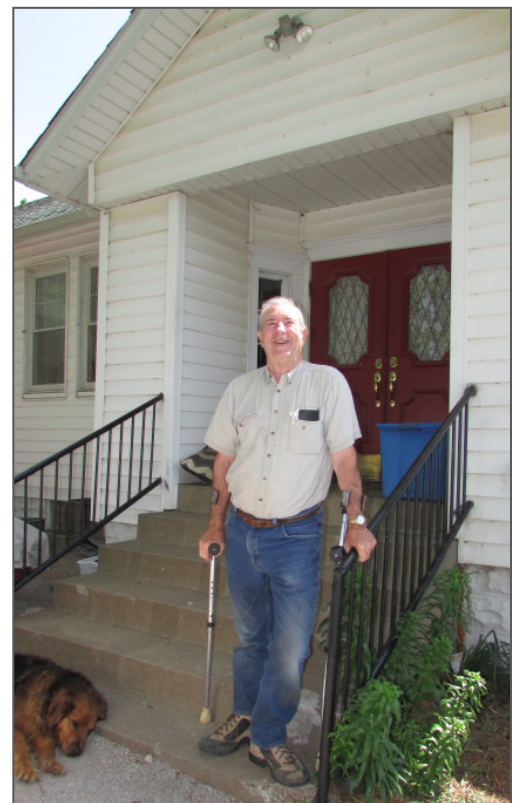
my dad talking about that we had to get a three-phase line out there."

Some neighbors had wind chargers, similar to windmills, Robert said. A few, like his parents, had a

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Handly Schoolhouse in the 1970s before Littlejohn renovated it into a residence.



Like he did so many times years ago, Robert Littlejohn stands on the steps of the former Handly Schoolhouse, which is now his residence -- complete with the same chalkboard he used as a boy in school.

Members First. From Day One.

From page 1

were strung, which, incidentally, her brother, Randall, helped build, she was grown by the time the cooperative really took off.

After leaving home at age 18 to work as a secretary in Kansas City, she returned in November 1946 to work at West Central Electric.

"I took Wilma Hoefer's place. She was expecting at the time," she said. "I took care of the membership applications. If they owned the farm, they paid \$5 for membership. If they were renting, they paid an \$11.50 membership deposit. The reason was sometime around March 1, we would have a lot of turnover, and sometimes they would leave owing bills. I know a few of them questioned that, but usually they were very nice."

Celia worked for manager Samuel Greer in the cooperative's first office in downtown Higginsville at 1902 Main Street.

"We were very busy, and so crowded at the RE office that we had to push machines out of the way to get the file drawers open," she said.

"First, Mr. Greer's office was in the front part when he was manager so that when people came in they could see him," she said. "They always wanted to talk to Mr. Greer about any little problem they had, even if it was

billing, so he moved his desk to the back room."

One of the biggest changes Celia recalls is the acquiring of two-way radios which completely changed communications.

"Then we could call the men in the trucks," she said. "It was a big help. I remember in one of the newsletters we had a picture of Pete Saird in his truck with the new two-way radio. It really changed things a lot because our lines, as you know, go to Grain Valley, past Warrensburg and Kingsville and pretty far out."

Things were bustling at the cooperative during those early years, and Celia recalled a few trips around the service area to collect applications.

"I remember one time Ralston Young, Mr. Greer and I drove to Kingsville to get applications from the farmers because there were so many wanting to sign up at that time," she said.

TRAGEDY

Tragedy struck the cooperative in 1950 when their beloved manager, Samuel Greer died.

"They were building lines, and he passed away in March," Celia remembered. "It was just nine months before I left to go to college."

"That was quite a shock to all of us," she said, recalling the day well.



Celia Knipmeyer recalls stories about the early days of the cooperative.

"Nolan Helm was an engineer who would come occasionally, and one day I was sitting at my desk there in the back and he came in and said, 'Mr. Greer is sitting down by a tree in the back.' I said, 'He is? That's strange.' Well, he had a heart attack."

Celia said at the time they didn't realize it had been that serious.

"They took him to Lexington and then I got word that he had passed away. It was just a shock," she said, shaking her head at the memory. "I couldn't believe it. I had been his secretary for 3 1/2 years. Mrs. Greer was at the beauty shop and we called her when he was taken to the hospital, and Ralston Young and I went over to the house to get some things for him."

Following the death of Samuel Greer, Ralston Young became the new manager. At that time, there were just over 3,600 members and just over 1,500 miles of line.

"He was nice to work with," Celia said. "I already knew him so that made it nice. He was our easement man."

THE EARLY ONES

Today, Celia recounts her time as a WCE employee, her fellow employees and the early board members with fondness and a realization that she was living what would be important history.

"It was quite a time," she said.

"I have memories of John English, he was on the board, and he was such a nice man. 'Hoppy' (Oral Hopkins) was in charge of materials; Johnny Johnson worked with materials; J.W. White (Virginia Branson's father) Pete Saird, and Mr. Jordan (father of Bonnie Jarvis) were linemen," she said.

"Another person in the office was Maurice Helliker. He was a lineman and when I was there he would go in and inspect houses," she said. "He filled out inspector reports and we always knew we would get a nicely-written report when Maurice did it."

THE FUTURE

Many events have taken place, and many employees have come and gone. Many of them are immortalized in the historical photos kept at the cooperative, and in the minds of those, like Celia Knipmeyer, who were there and can still remember the stories.

A strong past rooted in putting members first has ensured the success of West Central Electric Cooperative for 75 years. As the times continue to change and cooperatives deal with new regulations, the economy and many other issues that affect rural electric providers, members can rest assured that WCE directors and employees will continue to look out for our members' needs -- just as we have from day one.



Pete Saird shows off his new two-way radio, one of the most helpful advances Celia says she witnessed while working for the cooperative.

Handly Schoolhouse a wealth of history

From page 6

Delco gasoline-powered generator. "It was in the basement of the house. It generated enough for a radio and a couple of lights, but not enough for a fridge," he said. "The house was already wired for the Delco generator, so we didn't have to wire when the electricity came. "When it came, our first major purchase was a fridge and freezer. With the electric fridge and freezer,

we could have cold food and freeze our own ice," he said. "We could also have lights in the barn. In those days, all farmers had a few milk cows, and pretty much, the farms were self-sustaining."

With electricity on the farm, life got easier.

"We were one of the few that got electricity before the war," he said. "After that, everything pretty much stopped for a while."

With the nation engaged in World War II, industry geared to the production of materials for national defense, and materials for system expansion was unavailable. Electric appliances were just as difficult to obtain. At that time, June 1941, there were 88 cooperative members.

Following the war, production flourished, and by 1950, WCE was serving 3,614 members through 1,530 miles of line.

Through it all, Handly Schoolhouse stood, waiting for its eventual fate. That history came full circle more than 20 years later when a former student named Robert Littlejohn transformed the little rural schoolhouse into his home. He enters the double doors, just as he did as a boy, into a room with character unmatched, where memories abound -- and this time, with the glow of an electric light.

From the Boardroom...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held April 24, 2014

The meeting was called to order by President Densil Allen. Robert Simmons, Secretary of the Cooperative, caused the minutes of the meeting to be kept. The following Directors were present: Max Swisegood, Clark Bredehoeft, Paul Nolte, Dale Jarman, Richard Strobel, Densil Allen, Robert Simmons, Sandra Streit and Stan Rhodes. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray, Adm. Asst. and Benefits Admin Kim Lewis and cooperative attorney Matt Krohn.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After discussion, the agenda was approved with the addition of a Scholarship Committee report.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The unapproved minutes of the regular meeting of the board of directors held March 27, 2014 were approved.

REVIEW OF EXPENDITURES FOR MARCH

An itemized list of expenditures for March was presented to the board, and the payment of the bills was ratified.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following March 2014 reports were approved: Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement including the Financial Statistical Report with month and budget comparisons and statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, and KWH sales; treasurer's report; construction, retirement, maintenance and operations report. Gray also reported on pole change-outs, pole inspections and maintenance.

SAFETY REPORT

Gray reported no lost time accidents during the month of March.

MEMBERSHIPS

The applications submitted for membership in the cooperative were accepted and approved. Directors reviewed a list of requests for termination of membership in the cooperative which, along with their requests that their billings be deducted from their deposits and the remainder, if any, be refunded to them, were accepted and approved.

N.W. ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE, INC. REPORT

Gray and Swisegood reported their attendance at the recent board meeting and shared highlights of the meeting.

AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft reported on his attendance at the AMEC meeting and provided a legislative report. He also reported about Youth Tour.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

The board approved the committee's recommendation of awarding 24 \$600 scholarships.

ANNUAL MEETING DISCUSSION

Gray opened the discussion about the 2014 annual meeting. A menu of hamburgers, hot dogs, pasta salad, chips, cookies tea and lemonade at \$9.95 per person was approved. Directors also approved giving \$25 energy certificates to registered memberships in attendance. A discussion about hiring an outside company to handle voting was tabled until the retreat. The board approved a notice concerning the bylaw amendment proposal to go in the notice of annual meeting requiring directors to continuously use cooperative energy and service at their permanent primary place of residence.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Directors approved the 2014 Nominating Committee to meet May 14.

FFA REQUEST

Gray reported on a request by the Holden FFA which was approved by the board.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray provided his Manager's Report for the month. He reported on the following: 1) follow-up on management appraisal; 2) follow-up on board evaluation; 3) directors' survey; 4) Youth Tour; 5) Linn Tech scholarship; and 5A) Holden FFA Club proposal.

EXECUTIVE SESSION AND ADJOURNMENT

The board entered into executive session, following which they reconvened.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

MEETING ADJOURNED

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • April 2014

	This month	YTD 2014	YTD 2013
Revenue	1,866,316	10,254,328	9,504,402
Power Bill Expense	1,150,171	5,768,986	5,488,037
Operation & Maint. Expense	488,497	1,865,352	1,914,360
Depreciation Expense	151,682	604,324	587,762
Interest Expense	106,703	393,246	416,855
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	1,897,053	8,631,908	8,407,014
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	-30,737	1,622,420	1,097,388
Other Margins	13,254	70,071	106,364
TOTAL MARGINS	-17,483	1,692,491	1,203,752

Beck joins brush crew, two hired for summer

Three area residents will be joining West Central Electric, according to General Manager Mike Gray.

Nathan Johnson, Adam Beck and Tim Lewis reported to work at the end of May in various capacities.

Beck has been hired full-time to work with the cooperative's brush crew. A Higginsville native, Beck said he is looking forward to learning new skills and "working with some great people at this reputable company."

Beck and his fiancée, Kari Borgstadt, will welcome a daughter in August.

Johnson, recipient of the West Central Electric Cooperative and Linn State Technical College Electrical Distributions Systems Scholarship, has joined WCE as a line work intern. Johnson, a 2014 graduate of Odessa High School, will study in the EDS program this fall, with a career goal of becoming a journeyman lineman.

"I am looking forward to learning the basics of the lineman field and furthering my understanding of what the job consists of," he said.

Johnson is the son of Dawna and Eric Johnson of Odessa.

Lewis, also a Higginsville native, will work in maintenance for the summer.

He is the son of Kim and David Lewis, and says he looks forward to learning how the cooperative functions and meeting and working with the employees.



BECK



JOHNSON



LEWIS