



# Electric News

Special Annual Meeting Issue!

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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

## Business Meeting begins at 7 p.m.

West Central Electric Cooperative's 76th Annual Meeting Aug. 21, 2015  
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, watermelon, 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.

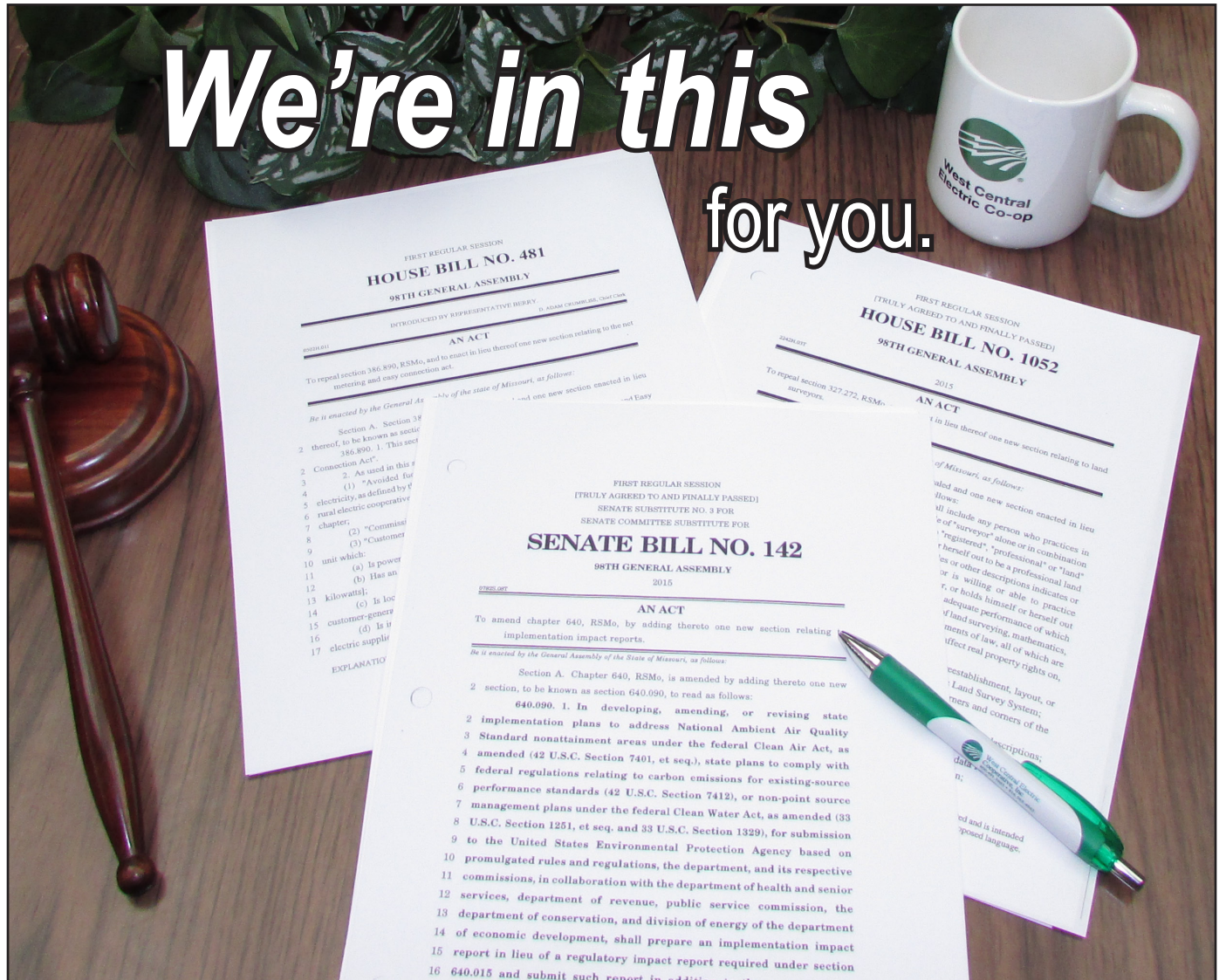
- ◆Britnee Morris, 2015 Youth Tour delegate to Washington, D.C.

### 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 an iPad mini 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 October)
  - ◆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 Johnson County Community
- Continued on page 7



# We're in this for you.

## Our members are our priority

West Central Electric Cooperative has a long-standing tradition of putting the best interests of our members first. With the recent deluge of government proposals, both at the state and national levels that could potentially affect you and your rates, our commitment to you is even stronger.

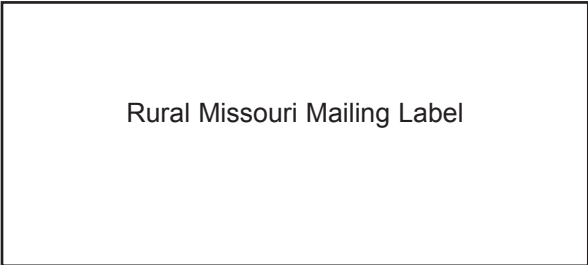
Your cooperative, along with electric cooperatives across the state and nation, has devoted a lot of time to keeping up with the issues and making sure your and our voices are heard by those who will eventually make those decisions. We visit legislators on your behalf. We coordinate grassroots efforts. We keep your image in the forefront to make sure our legislators know that their decisions affect real people, the lives of their families and the livelihood of their local communities.

In the past several months, we have tackled issues such as changes in net metering, land surveyors mandate and pole attachments -- all of which could affect our ability to provide you with safe, reli-

able and affordable electricity.

Over the past nearly two years, we have been involved on your behalf in one of our biggest campaigns to date -- the battle over EPA carbon regulations. Grassroots efforts have made an impact, but the battle is far from over.

As your electric cooperative, we pledge to continue to work with our state and national organizations to give you the best we have; to make sure your families are taken care of, and your homes remain safely, and affordably electrified. After all, **we're in this for you.**





**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, Jr. President  
Clark Bredehoeft, Vice-Pres.  
Dale Jarman, Treasurer  
Robert Simmons, Secretary  
Stan Rhodes, Asst. Sect.  
Max Swisegood, Director  
Richard Strobel, Director  
Sandra Streit, Director  
Jeremy Ahmann, 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. 21, 2015 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 \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

**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.

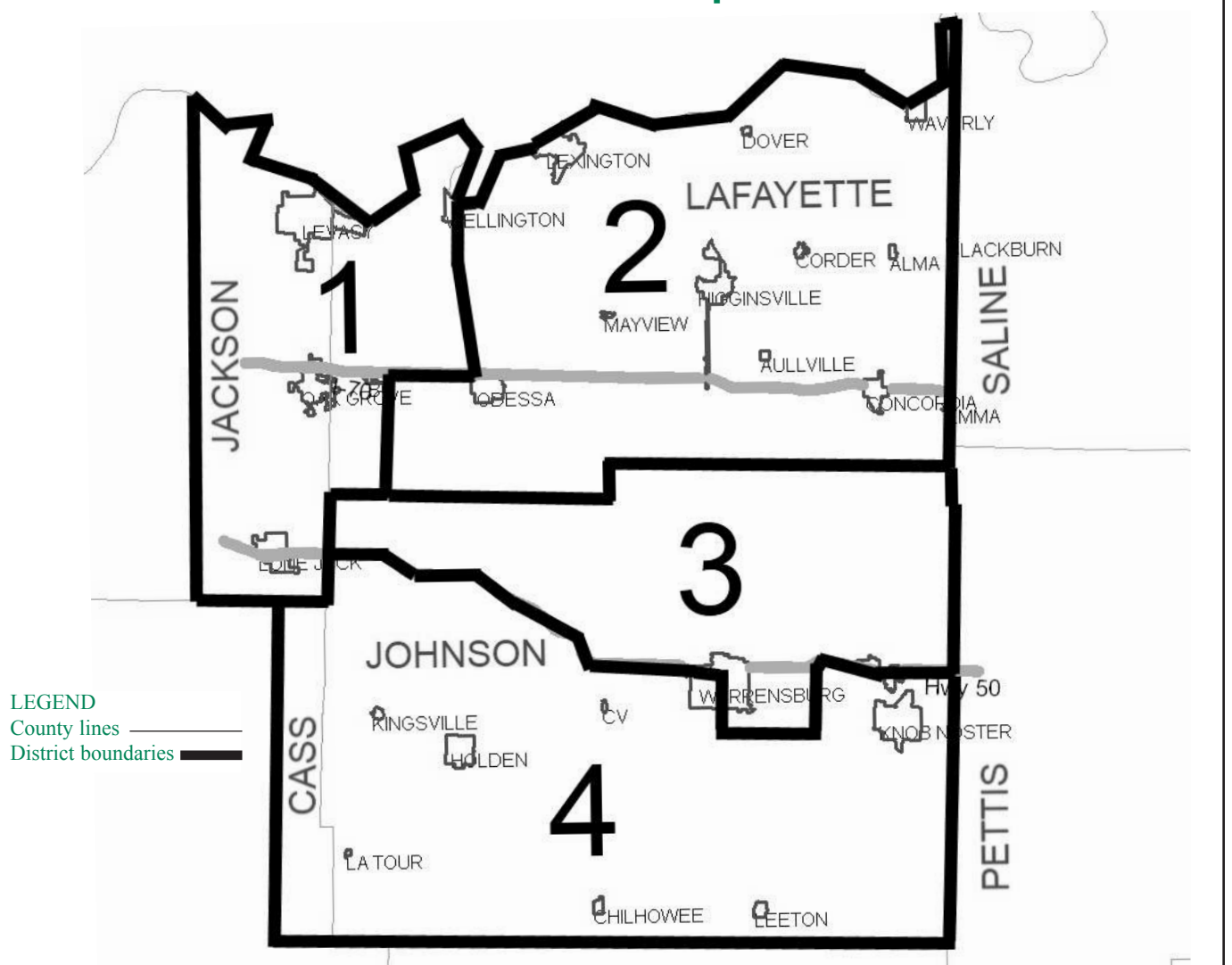
### West Central Electric Cooperative Board of Directors Election

The West Central Electric Board of Directors election will take place during the 76th annual meeting Aug. 21, 2015 at the University of Central Missouri Multipurpose Building in Warrensburg.

Members will vote for ONE director each in District 1, District 2 and District 4. Members will also consider two bylaw proposals. 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 2015 include District 1: Jeremy Ahmann; District 2: Clark Bredehoeft and District 4: Dale Jarman.

### District Map



## West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting of Members, August 1, 2014  
To be approved at August 21, 2015 Annual Meeting of Members

The 75th 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 1, 2014, pursuant to the bylaws of the Cooperative and notice to membership.

Registration began at 5:00 p.m. and a meal was served. Musical entertainment was provided by Dave Rest.

### BUSINESS MEETING

The business session was called to order by Densil Allen, Jr., President of the Cooperative, at 7:00 pm. Robert Simmons, Secretary of the Cooperative, caused the minutes of the meeting to be kept.

State Senator David Pearce led the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance and an audio presentation of the National Anthem. A prayer of invocation was offered by Director Richard Strobel.

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

The President called on Attorney Rod Widger to verify the presence of a quorum. Mr. Widger reported that the quorum formula required the presence of 160 members and that 753 members were registered at 6:30 p.m. It was therefore ordered that a quorum was established for the transaction of business.

President Allen presented the Agenda of the meeting. On motion made, seconded and passed, the Agenda was adopted as printed.

Secretary Simmons presented the Notice of Meeting and Proof of Mailing. On motion made, seconded and passed, the membership resolved to waive the reading of the Notice of Meeting and Proof of Mailing. He referred attention to the Minutes of the 2013 Annual Meeting printed in the July issue of West Central Electric News with the Notice of Meeting. On motion made, seconded and passed, the membership resolved to approve the 2013 Annual Meeting minutes as printed.

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Allen presented the President's Report recounting the business and activities of the Cooperative since the last annual meeting.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

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

### DIRECTOR ELECTION

President Allen called on Walter Hutcherson to present the report of the director Nominating Committee. Mr. Hutcherson affirmed that the committee nominated Robert Simmons, Richard Strobel, and Donna Matthews in District 3; and Densil Allen, Jr., from District 5.

Mr. Widger conducted the election of Directors. He noted that there were no nominations received by petition. He called for additional nominations from the floor for Districts 3 and 5. Nominations were ceased and each nominee was allowed the opportunity to make brief remarks to the membership. Mr. Widger noted that since there was a single candidate for District 5, it was appropriate to elect Mr. Allen by motion. On motion made, seconded and passed, the membership resolved to elect Densil Allen, Jr. for District 5. The membership was given instructions regarding marking their ballot choices for District 3.

### BYLAW VOTING

Mr. Widger introduced the 2014 member initiated Bylaw Amendment. On motion made and seconded, the amendment was placed before the membership for discussion and debate. Following debate, members were given instructions regarding voting and collection of ballots.

The members appointed as election judges were identified and called to collect and count director election and bylaw ballots.

### MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Mike Gray presented the Manager's Report updating the membership on operations, maintenance and system reliability improvements. He spoke of the challenges presented to the cost of wholesale energy proposed by progressively more stringent EPA regulations. He encouraged the membership to be active in the process of resisting unreasonable regulations.

### ADJOURNMENT

President Allen asked for any unfinished or new business. There was none. Steve Moore and employees conducted the drawing and distribution of attendance prizes. On motion made, seconded and passed, the membership meeting was adjourned.

### ELECTION RESULTS

Following adjournment, Mr. Widger returned to the podium to report the election results as follows: Director election District 3: Robert Simmons – 492 votes; Richard Strobel – 438 votes; and Donna Matthews – 411 votes. It was therefore declared that by motion and election Robert Simmons, Richard Strobel and Densil Allen, Jr. were each elected for a term of 3 years until their successors are elected and qualified. Bylaw Amendment 1 received 459 "yes" votes and 260 "no" votes. It was ordered that the Bylaw Amendment was passed to be effective immediately.

## 2015 Official Notice of Annual Meeting

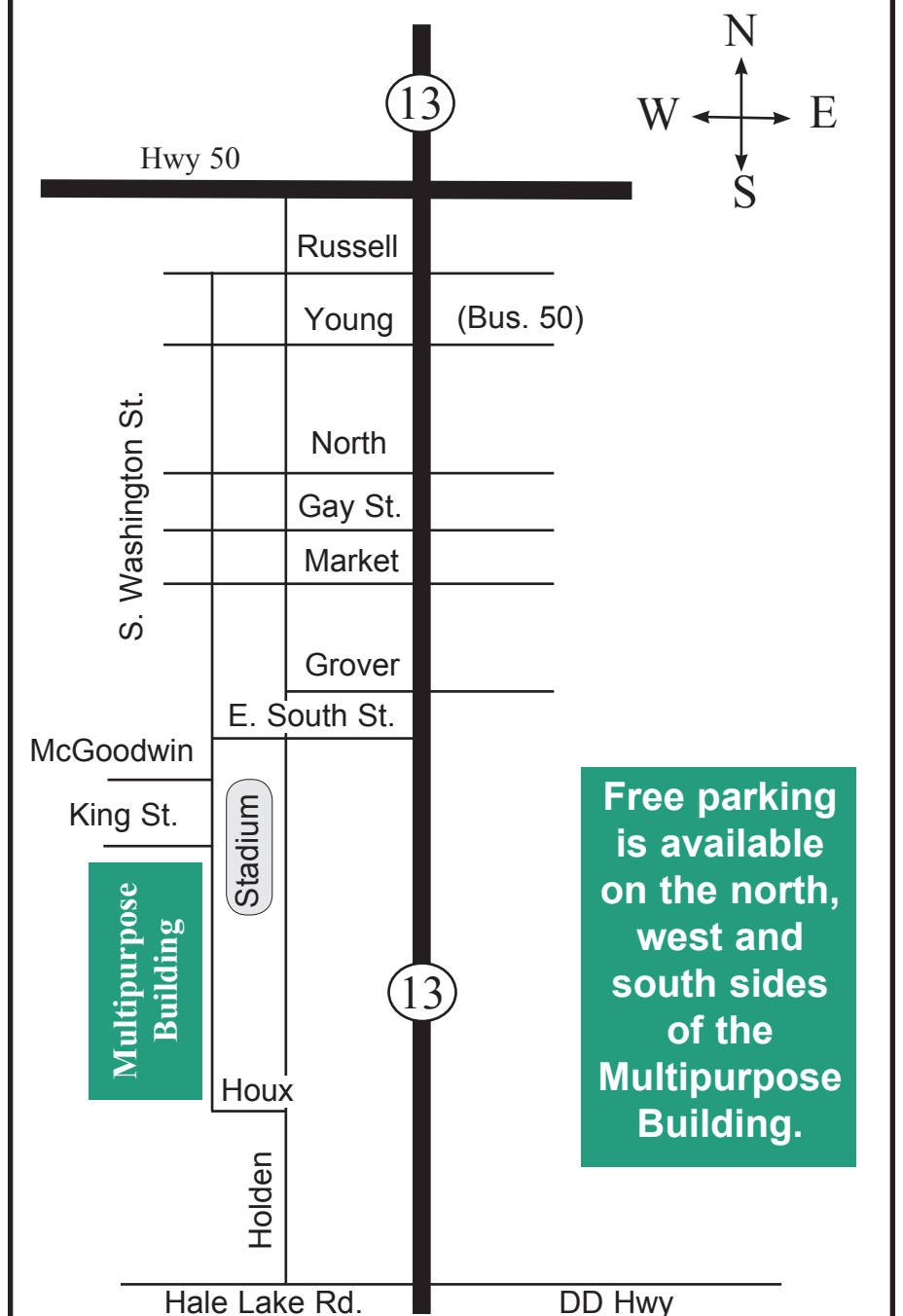
The 2015 Annual Meeting of members of West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be held: Friday, August 21, 2015 on the campus of the University of Central Missouri, Warrensburg

The meeting will feature:

1. The report of officers, directors and committees
2. The election of **ONE** director each from District 1, District 2 and District 4 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 1**  
Jeremy Ahmann, Odessa, Mo.
  - District 2**  
Clark Bredehoeft, Blackburn, Mo.
  - District 4**  
Dale Jarmar, Holden, Mo.  
Ralph Connell, Kingsville, 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, Secretary  
August 3, 2015

## Map to UCM Multipurpose Building





# West Central Electric Cooperative • 2015 Board of Directors Candidates

## Jeremy Ahmann, Odessa, Mo.

**Occupation:** Farmer; Lewis Hybrids Seed Dealer

**Family:** Wife, Rachel; Children, Abe (4), Emily (3) and Lauren (1)

**Community groups and organizations, church, etc. to which you belong:** St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Concordia Community Christian Center Youth Board, Wellington

**Why did you agree to run for re-election to the board of directors? What do you feel qualifies you to serve as a director of the cooperative?** I have enjoyed the past six

months and have learned a great deal from the other directors and staff at the cooperative. I also look forward to helping provide affordable

### District 1

and reliable power for our members. I thank the board for their confidence in appointing me to a board position, and hope that the members will feel that I'm qualified to continue to represent them and their interests.

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

In my next term, I hope to continue to learn more about the cooperative and get to know more of the dedicated staff members. I also want to work closely with the other board members and help continue to make the best short- and long-term decisions for the cooperative and our members.

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

I believe one of the biggest issues facing the cooperative is the constantly changing regulations related to power generation. Providing reliable and reasonably priced

power for our members in the midst of these changing regulations continues to be one of the cooperative's biggest challenges. One way that this challenge can be overcome is exploring the use of renewable energy resources to determine if these options are feasible for the cooperative and its members.

**Additional comments:** None given.



Jeremy Ahmann  
Odessa, Mo.

## Clark Bredehoeft, Blackburn, Mo.

**Occupation:** Farmer

**Family:** Wife, Holly; Children, Tyler, Jordan and Sydney

**Community groups and organizations, church, etc. to which you belong:** Trinity Lutheran Church – presently Building & Maintenance treasurer, Farm Bureau, MU Alumni Association, American Soybean Association, Corn Growers Association,

Board of Directors for AMEC – Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives

**Why did you agree to run for re-election to the board of directors? What do you feel qualifies you to serve as a director of the cooperative?** Being on the board of directors is something I have enjoyed and I am willing to devote the time needed to help maintain and promote the business

### District 2

of West Central Electric. Because electricity is a valuable input in my agricultural business, it has always been my desire to help WCE keep costs down and provide the best service possible. My years of service and education while on the board of directors has qualified me to make the decision in the greatest interest of all members. It is important to elect directors who look out for all members, not just the ones who live in their neighborhood.

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

My goals for the next three years are to provide leadership to maintain the quality of service with the lowest cost possible for our members.

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

EPA and governmental regulations are always issues that face electric cooperatives. AMEC's staff do a great job of keeping tabs on these issues. We as members

can help by keeping our senators and representatives informed on these important issues. Also, the issue of Solar Energy has come into effect the last several years. Your board is watching this issue closely and is prepared to make decisions to what extent we need to become involved in this alternative form of energy.

**Additional comments:** It has been a privilege to serve on the cooperative's board of directors and I would appreciate your support for re-election.



Clark Bredehoeft  
Blackburn, Mo.

# Bring the family to Annual Meeting!

(Because there's stuff for the kids, too!)



Register to win cool prizes, like a BIKE!

Free stuff for every kid who visits the Kids' Area!



Like to swim? You can do that, too!

Meet Rural Missouri's Buddy Bear!





# West Central Electric Cooperative • 2015 Board of Directors Candidates

## Dale Jarman, Holden, Mo.

**Occupation:** Farmer

**Family:** My wife, Georgia, and I have two sons, Seth and Nathan.

**Community groups and organizations, church, etc. to which you belong:** I am a member of the First United Methodist Church at Holden,

### District 4

and I serve on the Finance Committee for the church. In addition, I am a member of the Holden Optimist Club, and a member, treasurer and trustee of the Blackwater Cemetery Association. I serve on the West Central Electric Scholarship Committee and the John and Kathryn English Scholarship Committee as well. I have served previously on the Holden School Board and the Johnson County Extension Council.

**Why did you agree to run for re-election to the board of directors? What do you feel qualifies you to serve as a director of the cooperative?** My family have been West Central co-op members since service became available to

us at our farm near 50 and 131 highways. I am aware of the original mission this co-op held to serve the rural population that the private utility companies found too unprofitable to serve. Co-ops are responsible to the members they serve; and not to profit outside investors. My commitment as a director is to stay true to this mission of service in order to meet the needs of all of our members.

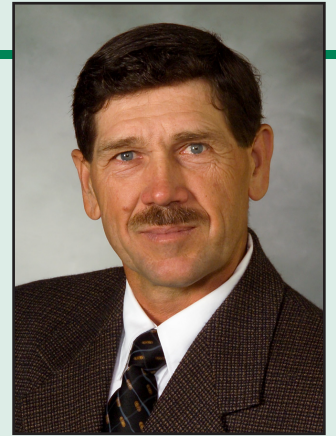
#### What are your goals for your next three-year term?

Our first goal is to work to provide quality service at affordable rates. One way of accomplishing this goal is to move some of our personnel closer to where our members live. This would improve service and reduce travel expenses. Currently 2/3 of our members live south of 50 Highway and west of 131 Highway. The 30% of our members south of 50 Highway are a considerable distance from any of our service locations.

**In your opinion, what is the biggest issue facing electric cooperatives today, and how do you plan to address that issue?** Quality service and low rates are at the core of what we do. We need to be vigilant in monitoring our service

and the cost of service. Things that can affect rates are: regulations on burning coal, reliability of supply and cost of coal, rail transportation costs, and cost and supply of natural gas. As solar and wind become more competitive, we may need to look into storage of electricity in order to use these sources of energy that are intermittent in their availability.

**Additional comments:** I have learned a great deal about our co-op over the past few years. I believe I am 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.

## Ralph Connell, Kingsville, Mo.

**Occupation:** Engineer/project manager consultant

**Family:** Wife, Roberta; Children, Robert, Devin and Kelli; Grandchild, Ian

**Community groups and organizations, church, etc. to which you belong:** American Society of Mechanical Engineers, The Welding Institute

### District 4

**Why did you agree to run for election to the board of directors? What do you feel qualifies you to serve as a director of the cooperative?** I am at a point in my career where I am able to

fully participate in the cooperative board of directors activities. With my 30+ years of working power plants and electric utilities, I thought I might be able to add some value.

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

To participate in the decision-making process that provides guidance and direction to the cooperative to ensure continued reliable and affordable operations.

**In your opinion, what is the biggest issue facing electric cooperatives today, and how do you plan to address that issue?** Government over-regulation of the utilities and the fuel supplies that increases the price of electricity to all consumers. When overly-burdensome regulations are being

considered for utilities that ultimately result in added costs to the consumer without an offsetting benefit, the cooperative must ensure that the repercussions and impacts of the regulations are fully addressed to the legislatures.

**Additional comments:** None given.



Ralph Connell  
Kingsville, Mo.

# We're in this for you.



West Central Electric  
Cooperative, Inc  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

# And for her.

## ● PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGES ●

The Board of Directors recommends the following amendments to the bylaws of West Central Electric Cooperative in order to modernize the voting procedures of the cooperative and to make board eligibility more inclusive.

Language that is proposed to be deleted ~~has a line through it~~ and language proposed to be added is highlighted in **green color**. The following proposed changes will appear on ballots to be voted on at the August 21, 2015 Annual Meeting of Members.

### Proposition A

#### Article I Membership

##### Section 3. Joint Membership

A husband and wife may apply for a joint membership and, subject to their compliance with the requirements set forth in Section 1 of this Article, may be accepted for such membership. The term "member" as used in these bylaws, shall be deemed to include a husband and wife holding a joint membership and any provisions relating to the rights and liabilities of membership shall apply equally with respect to the holders of a joint membership. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the effect of the hereinafter specified action by or in respect to the holders of a joint membership shall be as follows:

(a) The presence at a meeting of either or both shall be regarded as the presence of one member and shall have the effect of ~~revoking a proxy executed by either or both and of~~ constituting a joint waiver of notice of the meeting;

(b) The vote of either separately or both jointly shall constitute one joint vote;

~~(c) A proxy executed by either or both shall constitute a joint proxy.~~

(c) A waiver of notice signed by either or both shall constitute a joint waiver;

(d) Notice to either shall constitute notice to both;

(e) Expulsion of either shall terminate the joint membership;

(f) Withdrawal of either shall terminate the joint membership;

(g) Either but not both may be elected or appointed as an officer or director, provided that both meet the qualifications for such office.

#### Article III Meetings of Members

##### Section 5. Voting

Each member shall be entitled to only one vote upon each matter submitted to a vote at a meeting of the members. All questions shall be decided by a vote of a majority of the members voting thereon in person, **in addition to those voting** ~~or by proxy~~; **by any other lawful means established by resolution of the Board of Directors of the Cooperative at least sixty (60) days prior to the date of said meeting and specified in the notice of the meeting**, except as otherwise provided by law, the Articles of Incorporation or these bylaws.

##### Section 6. Proxies

**Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.** 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 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 as 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.~~

#### Article IV Directors

##### Section 4. Nominations

It shall be the duty of the board of directors to appoint, ~~not less than thirty days nor more than one hundred twenty days before the date of a meeting of the members at which directors are to be elected~~, a committee on nominations consisting of not less than five nor more than eleven members who shall be selected from different sections so as to insure equitable representation. No member of the board of directors may serve on such committee. The committee, keeping in mind the principle of geographical representation, shall prepare and post at the principal office of the Cooperative at least **twenty seventy-five (75) days** before the meeting a list of nominations for directors which, at the option of the committee, may include more than one nominee for each position that is to be elected. Any fifteen or more members acting together may make other nominations by petition not less than **fifteen sixty (60) days** prior to the meeting and the Secretary shall post such nominations at the same place where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted. The Secretary shall mail with the notice of the meeting ~~or separately, but at least seven days before the date of the meeting~~, a statement of the number of directors to be elected and the names and addresses of the candidates, ~~specifying separately the nominations made by the committee on nominations and also the nominations made by petition, if any. The chairman shall invite additional nominations from the floor and nominations shall not be closed until at least one minute has passed during which no additional nomination has been made. No member may nominate more than one candidate.~~

### Proposition B

#### Article IV Directors

##### Section 3. Qualifications

No person shall 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 bona fide resident in the area served or to be served by the cooperative; or

(b) Is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative, or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or plumbing appliances, fixtures or supplies to the members of the

Cooperative; or

~~(c) Is the incumbent of or candidate for an elective public office in connection with which a salary or compensation in excess of one hundred dollars per annum is paid; or~~

(d) Has been an employee of the cooperative within the last three (3) years.

Upon establishment of the fact that a director is holding office in violation of any of the foregoing provisions, the board of directors shall remove such director from office.

Nothing contained in this section shall affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the board of directors.





## From the Manager...

# We always have our members' best interests at heart

It's that time of year again – annual meeting time! On behalf of West Central Electric Cooperative's employees and board of directors, we'd like to personally invite you to join us on Friday, August 21 at the University of Central Missouri Multipurpose Building. We look forward to gathering with you, members of the co-op community, to catch up, hear what you have to say and enjoy some good food and fellowship.

This event is not only a chance to visit

with members of our co-op community, it's also a great opportunity to learn about programs offered by West Central Electric and get to know your co-op staff. Our annual meeting makes it possible for us to gather feedback from you by providing a forum where you can let us know how we can better serve you and your family.

This is an occasion to discuss and learn more about the issues affecting our local communities. It's also an opportunity for you to exercise one of the greatest benefits of being a member of an electric co-op, by voting for your representatives on the board of directors and the bylaw

amendments up for consideration.

West Central Electric is not owned by far-away investors, and it is not run by an appointed board of directors. We are run by a democratically-elected board of directors – a board who is given the privilege to serve because of your vote. Our directors are members of your community. They are concerned with the issues you face every day because they face them too.

A democratic and open election is one of the many elements that make our electric cooperative stand out from other utilities. Having a voice in who makes the major decisions that directly affect your life

and your family is a right we all share as Americans. We all vote for our state and federal Congressional representatives, but not every American has the right to vote for those who will represent community interests within their electric utility. You have that right, so why not exercise it?

Rest assured, no matter what happens, we remain dedicated to providing you with safe, reliable and affordable electric service, but we encourage you to take part in helping us improve how we deliver that service. So make it a point to join us on Friday, Aug. 21 at our annual meeting. We promise we will make it worth your while!

### 2015 Nominating Committee



#### NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETS...

The West Central Electric Cooperative Nominating Committee met in May to nominate candidates for the 2015 Board of Directors election. The committee consists of the following active WCE members: Front row, (l-r): Tim Evert, Sarah Willard, Jerry Phoenix and Adam Heater. Back row (l-r): Gary Bell, Dennis Knipmeyer, Dana Sander, Verna Jenkins and Walter Hutcherson.

### West Central Electric Cooperative's 76th Annual Meeting Aug. 21, 2015

From page 1

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. 21 in Warrensburg!

## 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.



# Supporting our youngest members is important to us

At West Central Electric Cooperative, we talk a lot about the services we provide to you, our members—home energy audits, convenient billing options, and fun events like our annual meeting and other activities. But many of our value-added benefits are directed at a younger audience: children.

It's important that we support our young-

youngsters will one day become community and possibly co-op leaders.

For high school seniors, we offer college scholarships Area students are eligible for three different scholarships through WCE -- The John & Kathryn English Memorial Scholarship is available to high school seniors who are active members of 4-H at the time of their graduation. The West



CYCLE delegates spend an afternoon at the Missouri State Capitol Building.

est members, not only to enrich their lives, but also to instill in them the importance of cooperative membership. After all, these

Central Electric Cooperative Scholarship is available to students whose parents or legal guardians are current members



Providing electrical safety and electricity programs at area elementary schools is one way the cooperative supports the youth in our local communities.

of the cooperative. The WCE/State Technical College Electrical Distributions Scholarship offers a two-year program, paid internship and job opportunities to students interested in the lineman field.

High school juniors have the opportunity to attend the annual Rural Electric Youth Tour, where we send at least three students each year to Washington, D.C. on a weeklong educational excursion every June. WCE is also involved in the statewide Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience (CYCLE) held in Jefferson City each July.

And for children of all ages, we provide

safety demonstrations. Just this year, hundreds of students learned about electrical safety through WCE safety programs and also how electricity is produced through the program "How Does Electricity Happen?" We also support local organizations, schools and community events with sponsorships like youth rodeos, Project Graduation activities and county 4-H and FFA fairs.

Outreach with youth and improving the quality of life in the communities we serve is just one more way West Central Electric looks out for you.

## Voluntary and Open Membership...

# Why this principle still applies to electric cooperatives

When electric co-op members look at the seven co-op principles, many may question if they really live up to the first principle: Voluntary & Open Membership. It is a fair question. There is a two-part answer.

First, it is important to remember that when West Central Electric was first being formed back in 1939, every potential member had the option to refuse service. While it may be hard to believe today, there are numerous stories from electric co-ops throughout the country where the farmer said, "No thanks. We are doing fine with kerosene." Of course over time they changed their minds and eventually became members of the co-op.

Due to the incredible cost of offering electric service, the vast majority of people and businesses only have one choice if they want to connect to "the grid" and receive electricity. While that may change in the future due to rooftop solar or other generation sources, the best option for most people for safe, reliable and affordable power is from your electric co-op.

Today, electric co-ops focus on the second part of the principle, "Open Membership." All residents and business-

es in the service territory of West Central Electric are welcome to receive power. Co-ops continually strive to ensure that your membership has value to you not just through the service of electricity but by being an active part of our community.

Co-ops offer and welcome your participation in the governance of the organization through a democratically-elected board of directors. As a locally owned and controlled utility, co-ops are in a better position to understand the needs of its members and can be quicker to react to help ensure the membership receives the best service possible.

Members are welcome to suggest improvements to the co-op's operations and, unlike large investor-owned utilities often with millions of customers, you can be assured your ideas will actually be read by a real person in real time.

All co-ops, whether it is your credit union, farm co-op, telephone co-op or any other of the 29,000 co-ops that exist in the U.S. today, live by these seven co-op principles:

1. Voluntary and Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Members' Economic Participation

4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training and Information
6. Cooperation among Cooperatives
7. Concern for Community

By using all of these principles integrated together, West Central Electric is able to serve your needs every day.



WCE members attend and participate in their annual membership meeting.



