



# ElectricNews

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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

## Biggest change for annual meeting is voting procedures

### Proxies are obsolete, mail-in voting debuts

Members wanting to participate in their cooperative's annual meeting but unable to attend will now have a new option for casting their vote for directors and any bylaw issues on the ballot

-- mail-in voting.

A ballot issue at last year's annual meeting, members approved the elimination of proxy voting and opted to instill procedures to allow members to vote by mail.

"We hope this will encourage participation from our younger members who may have been busy with family and children's obligations and unable to

attend the meeting," General Manager Mike Gray said.

Beginning with the May 31 billing cycle, a notice will be included in members' bills explaining the vote-by-mail process. Members will be required to submit a request for a voting packet either by calling the office or mailing in the form with their bill. The notice will have a perforated bottom that can

be completed and either mailed to the cooperative or delivered in person.

"Members who are able to attend the meeting may still vote in person at the meeting and do not have to submit a mail-in ballot," Gray said.

Questions on the mail-in voting procedures may be directed to Office Manager Sandy Starke at 800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942.

## Steffen will help light up Bolivia through NRECA co-op project

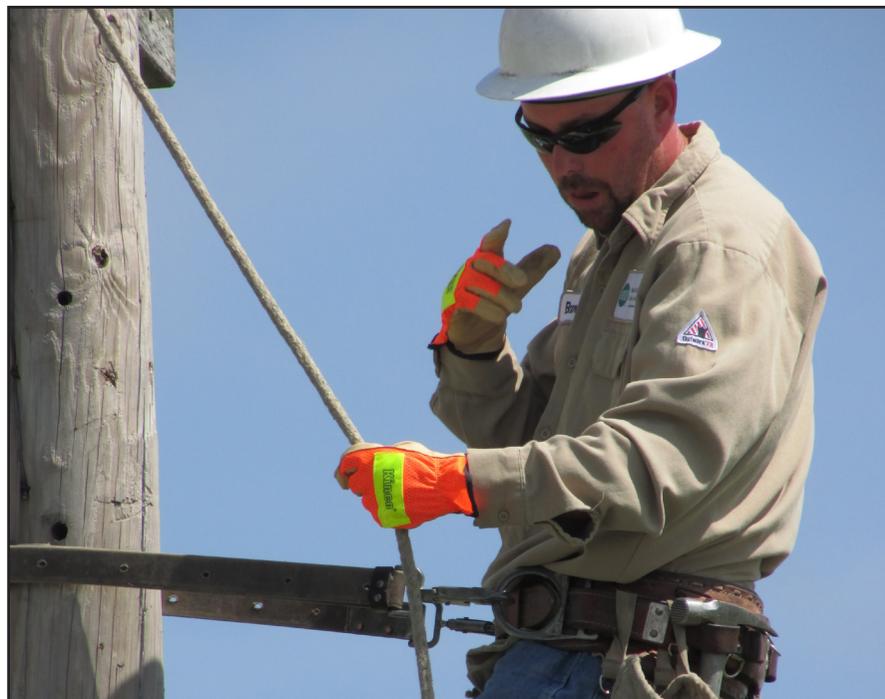
West Central Electric Cooperative lineman Brandon Steffen changes lives every day. He affects the lives of his boys, Jax and Mason. He affects the lives of cooperative members who have lost power in a storm. He affected the life of an elderly member who had just lost her husband and was badly in need of home repairs.

Thinking of others is just second nature for this dad, husband, lineman. So, it is only fitting that when the call came in for volunteers to help bring

electricity to some of the most remote areas of Bolivia that he would jump at the chance to go.

"I have always enjoyed traveling and seeing the cultures and lifestyles of other countries. Now that I'm a dad, it is important to me to teach my boys the value in helping others," he said. This is a way for me to give back, using the skills that I have learned on the job as a lineman."

Steffen will travel this summer with  
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Brandon Steffen (right photo) climbs a pole during a training session at West Central Electric headquarters in Higginsville. He will travel to Bolivia this summer.

## June is recalculation month for level pay accounts

### New amounts reflected on billing due in July

Members who are on the cooperative's Budget Billing Plan will see their bills recalculated with the billing period ending in June, according to West Central Electric Office Manager Sandy Starke.

"Those new amounts will be reflected on the billing that is due in July," she

said. "Those on Billing Cycle 2 will see their new amount in June."

#### Sign up for Budget Billing...

For West Central Electric Cooperative members who have service in their name and have lived there for one year or more, budget billing can help avoid the peak bills that come with winter heating or summer air conditioning. Here's how Budget Billing works:

- The total of electric usage over the last 12 months is calculated.
- That amount is divided by 12 months to find the average monthly bill with cushion for weather changes.
- The amount due for that amount of kilowatts is rounded, plus a daily service availability charge, and \$9.20 if a security light is at the location. This is the monthly budget amount to be billed.
- Each month a bill is mailed showing

actual usage compared to the estimate you pay.

- Your account is reviewed each year and if the energy consumption appears to differ significantly from the budgeted amount, the billing department may contact you to see if you would like to make an adjustment to your account.
- In June of each year, we true up and compare your actual consumption with

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## Attention WCE Members...

Your special Annual Meeting issue of *West Central Electric News* will be

**published in the July issue of Rural Missouri.**

This publication is your official notice of the meeting. It will contain information on the annual meeting scheduled for **Friday, August 5, 2016**, as well as board candidate profiles and other pertinent meeting information.

**Your official registration card will arrive along with the bill you receive at the end of June or the beginning of July (depending on your billing cycle).**

***This card must be brought to the annual meeting in order to register for prizes and vote in the board of directors election.***

**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](http://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

# Cooperative will return \$1.2 million to members

West Central Electric Cooperative will return \$1.2 million to its members in capital credits refunds in July, according to WCE Office Manager Sandy Starke.

A credit will be issued on the billing due in August for all active members. A check will be mailed to non-members the first part of July.

If you purchased electricity from the cooperative during the years **listed in the box to the right**, you should receive a check or credit. Checks will not be issued for amounts under \$5.00.

“If a member is on our level payment program, the credit will not affect their monthly amount due,” Starke said. “The credit will be applied to the balance on the account.

“If a member has multiple accounts, the credits will be applied based on the previous month’s bill; largest balance first, then the next until fully applied. If there are no current balances on the account, the credit will be applied to the primary account, the account that West Central has determined as holding the main membership,” she said.

If a member has multiple accounts, and would like the credit applied to a different account than the one determined by the cooperative, members may call the office and request a transfer to the account of their choice.

If you do not see a credit on your account, and feel you should have, you may contact Sandy Starke at 1-800-491-3803.

## \$1.2 million in Capital Credits will be refunded in 2016

This year, capital credits will appear as a credit to your electric account, and will be noted as such on your August billing.

Capital Credits being distributed this year include:

- ◆ 100% of all allocations for the year 1996
- ◆ 20% of all allocations for the year 1997

*If you were were a member of the cooperative during these years, you should receive a refund.*

Questions about this year’s capital credits distribution should be directed to Sandy Starke in the Higginsville office: 800-491-3803 pr 816-565-4942.

# Clean -- and affordable -- electricity

Climate change is back in the news. For years, Congress haggled over details of climate change legislation meant to curb carbon dioxide emissions from sources like cars, factories and power plants. The latest approach is for the Environmental Protection Agency to pass regulations limiting releases of carbon dioxide.

The inner-workings of this effort are complicated, but one thing comes through loud and clear: Trimming carbon dioxide emissions will be challenging and expensive.

Developing climate change policy will alter the way we think about electricity, plain and simple. Electric co-ops are working to make sure these new policies are fair to everyone, while minimizing the impact on your electric bill. And we’re already making investments in energy efficiency and renewable, “clean and green” generation as a part of these efforts.

Electric cooperatives are no strangers to renewable energy. Across the nation, co-ops are developing innovative ways to generate electricity from renewable sources, and developing technology to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from traditional fossil fuels like coal and natural gas.

One of the leaders in wind energy is Springfield, Mo.-based Associated Electric Cooperative, which provides wholesale power to 40 electric cooperatives in Missouri. Members of electric co-ops served by Associated Electric Cooperative are the beneficiaries of wind power generated by six wind farms located in Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma.

Two Missouri systems have community

solar projects completed or underway. These solar panel arrays let members who can’t afford to install their own panels support renewable energy.

In North Dakota, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, a wholesale power supplier to co-ops in nine states, plans to separate carbon dioxide gas from smokestack emissions at a coal-fired power plant, pump it into underground cavities, and in theory keep it there forever.

Wabash Valley Power Association, a wholesale power supplier for 28 electric co-ops in five states, including Perryville, Mo.-based Citizens Electric, converts coal into a clean-burning synthetic gas stripped of polluting sulfur compounds and mercury, which it then burns to generate electricity. Carbon dioxide emissions from the process are 20 percent lower than those produced by a traditional coal-fired power plant. Wabash Valley Electric also has 40 megawatts of wind power in its portfolio.

And renewable sources of power, which account for 11 percent of all co-op electricity, are as unique and varied as the co-ops using them. In the Southeast, biomass generation — using everything from peanut shells to chicken waste to make electricity — shows great potential. The Northwest remains awash in hydro and wave power; the Midwest boasts lots of wind; and the Southwest sees so few cloudy days that solar power works well.

Since 2009, electric cooperatives have tripled their renewable energy capacity, from 2.9 gigawatts in 2009 to 6.3 gigawatts in 2015. This capacity includes electricity generated from wind, solar, small hydro, biomass, landfill gas and

geothermal installations. In addition, electric cooperatives purchased nearly 10 gigawatts of renewable hydropower from federal facilities such as Table Rock and Bull Shoals dams.

Of course, the cheapest and cleanest power remains the power that’s never generated. As a result, energy efficiency education remains at the forefront of your electric cooperative’s efforts to help members control costs.

Associated Electric Cooperative’s “Take Control & Save” program has saved enough electricity to power 96,000 homes for a year over the life of the energy-saving appliances it has helped members purchase. Associated has helped members lower their electric bills by distributing 2.6 million compact fluorescent light bulbs, and providing rebate incentives for the purchase of 28,490 Energy Star-rated appliances, 18,285 high-efficiency water heaters and 11,849 heat pumps. It’s also funded 9,511 residential energy audits and given out 4,983 rebates to help members make weatherization improvements to their homes.

The vast majority of all electric co-ops, a full 92 percent, sponsor energy efficiency education programs, and 77 percent offer residential energy audits to their members.

Electric co-ops are hard at work keeping electricity reliable, safe and affordable—and we can produce it cleaner, too. But we need to make sure electric bills stay affordable.

Through the Cooperative Action Network grassroots campaign, you can join in a dialog on how your electric cooperative balances protecting the environ-

ment and keeping electricity affordable. Please join the conversation today by visiting [www.action.coop](http://www.action.coop).

The heat is on but before you crank up the air conditioner, think about ways to save money by reducing the time you run it. Here are some tips from the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Consumer Energy Center, Iowa Energy Center and U.S. Department of Energy for taking control of your cooling bill:

**Bump up the thermostat** – Every degree raised uses about 4 percent less energy. Start at 78 degrees. You’ll discover your comfort level may be a higher temperature than you thought, particularly if you add fans to the cooling mix.

**Turn down the AC** when you’re away – It’s a myth that to keep the house cool, you have to keep your air conditioner running full tilt while you’re at work. Turn up the temperature while you’re away, then adjust by a few degrees when you come home. A programmable thermostat can automate this process.

**Shut off unused rooms** – Don’t cool rooms you’re not using. If you have central air conditioning, close registers in those rooms. However, closing too many of them could affect the pressure in the system, so consult with an air conditioning professional before you shut off lots of space.

**Shade or improve windows** – Consider horizontal trellises for your east- and west-facing windows. Protect south-facing windows with deciduous trees or climbing foliage so you can take

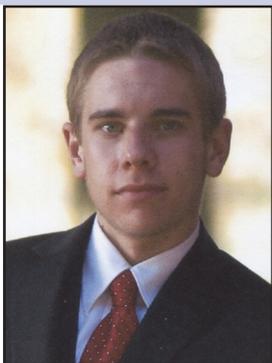
**Continued on page 4**

Odessa High School



Jacob Weber  
Daniel and Glenda Weber  
**Engineering**

Odessa High School



Eric Sions  
Roy and Julie Sions  
**Engineering**

Odessa High School



Morgan Williams  
Blaine and Mary Williams  
**Pharmacy**

Odessa High School



Hannah Williams  
Blaine and Mary Williams  
**Pharmacy**

Odessa High School



Colton Howard  
Jerry and Michelle Howard  
**Finance**

Concordia High School



Ellison Brunkhorst  
Norman and Kimberly Brunkhorst  
**Bio-Chemistry/Engineering**

Wellington-Napoleon High School



Jaime Ruskey  
Jeff and Stephanie Ruskey  
**Early Childhood Ed.**

Wellington-Napoleon High School



Neal Barnett  
James and Karla Barnett  
**Agri-Business**

Wellington-Napoleon High School



Brock Beckemeyer  
Jeff and Michelle Beckemeyer  
**Agriculture**

Warrensburg High School



Brittany Marr  
Steven and Wendy Marr  
**Secondary Education**

Lafayette Co. C-1 High School



Jessica Nolte  
Robert and Cheryl Nolte  
**Human Environmental Sci.**

Lafayette Co. C-1 High School



Taylor Rumsey  
Dan and Stacey Rumsey  
**Business Mgmt./Pre-law**

Lafayette Co. C-1 High School



Alexandria Fauss  
Ronnie and Shelly Fauss  
**Nursing**

Crest Ridge High School



Kaylee Schmidli  
Rick and Lisa Schmidli  
**Elementary Education**

Holden High School



Kyle Brandel  
Stanley Brandel, Jr. & Jacqueline Brandel  
**Civil Engineering**

Santa Fe High School



Courtney Bishop  
Robert and Kimberly Bishop  
**Psychology**

Santa Fe High School



Kylie Limback  
Kurt and Michelle Limback  
**Pre-medicine**

Oak Grove High School



Sarah Sperry  
Curtis and Shannon Sperry  
**Geology & Biochemistry**

Oak Grove High School



Christopher Macrander  
Kyle and Lori Macrander  
**Mechanical Engineering**

Chilhowee High School



Daphanie Parks  
Brad and Tamie McDonald  
**Paramedic**

## Congratulations

to the winners  
of the

# 2016 West Central Electric Cooperative Scholarship

Odessa High School

Photo not  
provided

Natalie Dyer  
Roger and Danette Dyer  
**Biology**

Crest Ridge High School

Photo not  
provided

Connor English  
Brandon and Jennifer English  
**Exercise & Movement Sci.**

Knob Noster High School

Photo not  
provided

Kyle Zimmerschied  
Brian and Charay Zimmerschied  
**Economics & Journalism**

# From the Boardroom...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held March 24, 2016

The meeting was called to order by President Densil Allen, Jr. Robert Simmons, Secretary of the Cooperative, caused the minutes of the meeting to be kept. The following Directors were present: Max Swisegood, Clark Bredehoeft, Dale Jarman, Richard Strobel, Sandra Streit, Jeremy Ahmann and Stan Rhodes. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray, and Administrative Assistant Kim Lewis.

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After discussion, the agenda was approved.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The unapproved minutes of the regular meeting of the board of directors held Feb. 25, 2016 were approved.

## REVIEW OF EXPENDITURES FOR FEBRUARY

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

## APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following February 2016 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 and the written monthly Construction, Retirement, Maintenance and Operations Report.

## SAFETY REPORT

Gray presented the monthly safety report.

## 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.

## AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft reported on his attendance at the AMEC meeting.

## N.W. ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE, INC. REPORT

Gray and Swisegood reported on their attendance at the N.W. meeting.

## SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Jarman and Simmons presented information from the scholarship committee and winners of the John & Kathryn English Memorial Scholarship.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

The board entered into executive session, and then returned to open session.

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Directors approved members of the Nominating Committee which will meet at 7 p.m., May 12 at the cooperative headquarters. Members of the committee are: Walter Hutcherson, Adam Heater, Dennis Knipmeyer, Paul Nolte, Gary Bell, Verna Jenkins, Jerry Phoenix and Tim Evert.

## ANNUAL MEETING DISCUSSION

Gray reviewed annual meeting details including mail-in ballot procedures. The board approved appointing the cooperative's attorney to handle the entire balloting procedure, including mailing and returning ballots. Ballots will be mailed on July 11, which is the same date as the mailing of the official notice of the annual meeting.

## CAPITAL CREDIT RETIREMENT

Capital credits approved to be retired include 100 percent of 1996 = \$906,772.44 and 20 percent of 1997 = \$315,882.72 for a total of \$1,222,655.16.

## N.W. ANNUAL MEETING CHAIRMAN AND ALTERNATE

Simmons was appointed as the cooperative's chairman with Swisegood as the alternate.

## MEMBER REQUEST FOR THREE-PHASE EXTENSION

The board approved allowing split payments for three-phase extensions, including one-half the payment due up front with the remainder to be paid within one year.

## FACILITIES

Directors listed their preferences for facilities options.

## MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray provided his Manager's Report for the month including new rates effective April 1, cost of service study conducted by CFC at no cost to the cooperative, crews setting poles at Oak Grove, Youth Tour and AECl Distribution Generation Committee meeting input.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

## NEW BUSINESS

None

## MEETING ADJOURNED

# Steffen will help light up Bolivia

## From page 1

other volunteers from Missouri and Oklahoma electric cooperatives to bring electricity to two villages, El Torito and Dos de Junio in northern Bolivia.

The men will build power lines

and wire houses through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Associations' International Program through a project called Energy Trails.

The International Program began in 1962 and has raised the standard of living for 110 million people overseas.

# Level pay is recalculated in June

## From page 1

what was paid. Your new 12-month average is determined and any credit or debit carry over is divided by the 12 and added or subtracted for that 12 month average to determine your next year's monthly amount.

To receive full benefit of participation in the Budget Billing program, you must make your monthly payment by the normal due date, maintain a good payment record with no return checks on your account and no more than one trip for collection. Failure to do so may result in removal from the

program and could result in a requirement to pay any balance due in full with the next regular monthly billing. For those members who are already on Budget Billing, your new amount will be re-calculated with the billing period ending in June and be reflected on the billing that is due in July. Those members on billing Cycle 2 will see their new amount in June.

To sign up for Budget Billing, or if you have any questions, please contact the billing department at 800-491-3803 or send an email to sharon@wcecoop.com.

# Clean and affordable electricity

## From page 2

advantage of the low-angle sun in the winter. New windows on those walls that get the most summer sun should have low-e glazings to block unwanted heat gain. Block heat with drapes and blinds inside and awnings and overhangs outside. Seal leaks in old windows with caulking. Remember, strategically placed trees, shrubs and vines, when combined with adequate attic insulation and attic ventilation, can cut energy use by one-third. Also shade your outdoor air conditioning unit with a screen or foliage to protect it from direct sunlight, or place it on the north side of your house. Don't block air flow, though, and remove leaves, twigs and grass cuttings that could block air.

**Open or shut windows appropriately** – According to the Iowa Energy Center, if you regularly use air conditioning, it's better to close windows when the humidity is high and not open them at all even when it cools down outside. On the other hand, when humidity is low, open those windows up when it's cool outside.

**Cool with fans and ventilation** – Circulating air with fans will help cool your house, reduce your air conditioning usage by as much as 30 percent and use very little energy doing it. You can lower the thermostat 4 degrees when using a ceiling fan, without discomfort. Adjust your fan so it turns counterclockwise and blows air downward. Even portable fans can make you feel 3 or 4 degrees cooler. House or attic fans can cool your entire house without central air conditioning. These fans suck air through the house, creating a strong draft in rooms where windows are open as it pulls cooler, outdoor air inside. However, if it's humid outside, don't use the house fan.

**Insulate and tighten your house** – Make checking insulation levels and air leaks between your living space and the attic your highest priority. According to the Missouri Depart-

ment of Natural Resources, the biggest sources of unwanted summer heat in homes are windows and walls (20 to 30 percent), internal gains from appliances and lights (15 to 25 percent) and through the roof (10 to 20 percent). In humid climates, damp outside air leaking into the house also can increase cooling load significantly.

**Get rid of inefficient appliances and wasteful energy uses** – Inefficient appliances emit a lot of heat. Old refrigerators are prime suspects. ENERGY STAR-rated refrigerators and other appliances may be as much as 50 percent more efficient than other models. Use energy-efficient light bulbs, and unplug electronic equipment not being used. Air-dry dishes and laundry, and wash only full loads of each. Use a microwave oven or cook outside. Lower the thermostat on your water heater; 120 degrees is comfortable for most uses. Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes. Finally plug electronic equipment into a power strip, and turn it off when not in use. Don't place lamps or TVs near the conditioner's thermostat; their heat may cause the conditioner to run longer.

**Go light outside** – Use light-colored or other cool roofing and siding products that can reduce your peak cooling demand by 10 to 15 percent.

**Change filters** – Every month or as needed. Dirt can affect air flow, which can make your unit work harder.

**Properly locate room conditioners** – Put a room air conditioner in a window or wall near the center of a room and on the shadiest part of the house; seal gaps between the unit and the window with foam weatherstripping.

**Seal ducts** – According to the Consumer Energy Center, leaking ductwork accounts for 25 percent of cooling costs in an average home, so repairing leaking ducts could save as much as 20 percent on cooling and heating costs.

## FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • February 2016

	This month	YTD 2016	YTD 2015
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>2,376,633</b>	<b>5,070,230</b>	<b>5,584,770</b>
Power Bill Expense	1,432,479	3,089,921	3,121,417
Operation & Maint. Expense	181,822	383,324	559,682
Depreciation Expense	164,099	327,676	312,549
Interest Expense	88,384	177,559	211,032
<b>Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)</b>	<b>1,866,784</b>	<b>3,978,480</b>	<b>4,204,680</b>
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	856,579	586,103	256,924
Other Margins	44,315	15,871	3,779
<b>TOTAL MARGINS</b>	<b>900,894</b>	<b>601,974</b>	<b>260,703</b>