



# ElectricNews

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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

## Electrical Safety Month is a good time to review rules

Although electric utilities around the country stress safety all year long, it is during Electrical Safety Month in May that we can highlight the awareness that safety practices should be followed all year long.

Awareness and education can save lives, and WCE values being able to send employees to talk safety with people of all ages from preschool to adults through the many safety programs we administer. (Call 800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942 to schedule a presentation.)

### OUTLET OVERLOAD!

Every year, U.S. fire departments respond to an estimated 25,900 home electrical fires. These fires cause an estimated 280 deaths, 1,125 injuries and \$1.1 billion in property loss.

Thirty-nine percent of home electrical fires involve outlets and receptacles, and other electrical wiring.

To ensure safety, you should only use about 80 percent of the available current for each electrical outlet in your home.

Continued on page 3



**ELECTRIC SAFETY REFRESHER COURSE...**West Central Electric Cooperative Line Superintendent Randy Burkeybile (left) and Engineering Manager Dan Disberger (right) talk electrical safety with members of the Higginsville Fire Protection District. Topics discussed were meter base types, how to contact WCE through various means, how to identify pole locations, pole tags, etc., and what to do in the event power lines fall on a vehicle. The course was a refresher for many, but new to some of the district's newest volunteers.



Bertz

When the English family founded the John & Kathryn English Memorial Scholarship, they were looking for an active 4-Her who is not only a good student, but also "displays character, works diligently and faithfully, and is an active and good citizen and constructive member of society." The WCE Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce this year's winner is Alli Bertz of Odessa High School.

Following an application and interview process, Bertz was named the 2017 John and Kathryn English

## Bertz wins 2017 English Scholarship

Bertz, Bell, Oelrich, Kuecker and Tye also awarded memorial funds

Memorial Scholarship winner, and will receive a four-year, renewable scholarship worth a potential \$4,000.

Bertz is not only active in 4-H, but in her school and local community, as well. She currently serves on the Area VI FFA officer team, as an OHS class officer, and participates in organizations such as Lafayette County Cattlemen's Association, Missouri Junior Cattlemen's Association, Missouri Pork Association and Fellowship of Christian Athletes. She is an OHS track and field and cross country team member, and also the school concert choir. Bertz says she enjoys her wide variety of activities that make her who she is.

"For me, activities aren't simply something to fill my time. To me, these activities have everything to do with who I am as a person, community member and student," she said. "From 4-H and FFA to sports and performing arts, my involvement has benefitted me in my growth as a leader and servant in my community."

Bertz was a 2016 delegate on the Rural Electric Youth Tour, and was

chosen from more than 100 students to serve as Missouri's representative on the NRECA Youth Leadership Council.

"I am so grateful for the opportunities being the YLC representative for Missouri has brought me," Bertz told the scholarship committee during her interview.

She is a 10-year member of 40-ville 4-H Club, and plans to attend Kansas State University to study agriculture communications and food science. She is the daughter of Greg and Kim Bertz of Mayview.

Three students were awarded a \$1,000 one-time award from the John & Kathryn English Memorial

Scholarship Trust.

Abby Bertz, Corbin Bell and Abby Oelrich will receive a \$1,000 one-time award, and Kaylee Kuecker and Bethany Tye will receive a \$750 one-time award.

### Abby Bertz Odessa High School

Bertz is a 10-year member of 40-ville 4-H Club, and plans to attend the University of Missouri-Columbia to study Agriculture Economics and Spanish. She is the daughter of Greg and Kim Bertz of Mayview.

Continued on page 4



Bertz



Bell



Oelrich



Kuecker



Tye

**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

# Rinne, Schloman end their careers at WCE



Rinne

**Sharon Rinne**  
*Billing Supervisor*

The world was a bit slower in pace back in 1981 when Sharon accepted a position at West Central Electric Cooperative as a cashier/receptionist. Her first day on the job was Oct. 13, and she was the first person members would see when they walked in the door.

Sharon also handled employee insurance and material billing during her early years at the cooperative, but as positions changed and older employees retired, Sharon began to work with billing and became the cooperative's billing supervisor in August 2003, a position she would hold until her retirement.

As the times changed, so did technology. Billing processes went through several changes, and daily operations went from strictly by hand to completely computerized.

"I would say the technology was the biggest change," she said. "Before, everything was manual and we did everything on paper. We wrote in journals, and now most things are paperless."

During her time at WCE, Sharon has seen many employees retire, and has, herself, worked for seven different managers. Sharon said she will miss the people she works with as well as the members she has gotten to know over

the years.

"It will be different, because you spend so many hours of the day with the people you work with," she said. "But, I will enjoy getting to spend more time traveling and with the grandkids, family and friends."



Schloman

**Wes Schloman**  
*Operations Clerk*

Wes Schloman began working at West Central Electric Cooperative as a part-time meter reader in 1981. In 1988, his position was made full-time.

Wes continued to read meters for the cooperative rain or shine. During this time, technology used for reading meters improved, and soon meter readers could read from their vehicles. As technology continued to improve, there soon was no need for the actual meter readers, as that task could be done remotely from the office. So, in 2011, Wes assumed the title Operations Clerk.

In this new role, he was responsible for many things from inspecting meters to maintenance around the building. He has served as a flagger on the job site, and at one point in his career, he gave electrical safety presentations to elementary school children. One of his favorite roles was working the children's area at annual meetings.

**Continued on page 3**

## 2017 West Central Electric Cooperative Nominating Committee

Following is a list of the members named to the 2017 West Central Electric Cooperative Nominating Committee. If you are interested in serving on West Central Electric Cooperative's board of directors, contact any of the committee members in your district listed below. The committee will convene on Thursday, May 11, 2017 to nominate individuals to be placed on the official ballot. Nominees will be voted on at the annual meeting Aug. 4, 2017 in Warrensburg.

**District I**

Walter Hutcherson  
39607 E. Fricke Rd.  
Oak Grove, MO 64075  
816-520-7759

Adam Heater  
8968 Powell Rd.  
Odessa, MO 64076  
816-529-6594

**District II**  
Dennis Knipmeyer  
17905 Long Grove Rd.  
Higginsville, MO 64037  
660-584-2741

Paul Nolte  
711 W. 35th St.  
Higginsville, MO 64037  
660-909-7285

**District V**  
Tim Evert  
274 NW 800 Rd.  
Warrensburg, MO 64093  
660-909-2024

\*\*\*

*\*Terms will expire for District 3 Directors Richard Strobel and Robert Simmons, and District 5 Director Densil Allen, Jr. Members will elect TWO directors from District 3 and ONE director from District 5.*

**District III**

Sara Willard  
491 NW 900 Rd.  
Warrensburg, MO 64093  
660-747-7469

Jeremy Sanders  
613 NE 1001 Rd.  
Holden, MO 64040  
660-909-3165

**District IV**  
Verna Jenkins  
1151 SW 1050 Rd.  
Holden, MO 64040  
816-732-6946

Jerry Phoenix  
707 NW 100 Rd.  
Centerview, MO 64019  
660-656-9527

### Board of Directors 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 who continuously uses cooperative energy and service at his/her permanent, primary place or residence; or
- (B) is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or business selling electric energy 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) Has been an employee of the cooperative within the last three (3) years.

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.

# Youth Tour

## 2017 RURAL ELECTRIC



**YOUTH TOUR WINNER**  
*Hanna Stillwell*



**YOUTH TOUR WINNER**  
*Caitlyn Aversman*



**YOUTH TOUR WINNER**  
*Elizabeth Fahrmeier*

## Area students prepare for the 'trip of a lifetime'

HIGGINSVILLE, Mo. – Three area high school students are preparing to pack their bags for a week in Washington, D.C. Hanna Stillwell of Warresburg High School, Caitlyn Aversman of Santa Fe High School and Elizabeth Fahrmeier of Wellington-Napoleon High School were named winners of the annual Rural Electric Youth Tour competition sponsored by West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. They will receive an all-expense-paid trip to the nation's capital June 10-16 for the National Rural Electric Youth Tour.

Finalists in the 2017 competition delivered their essays during the oral competition at West Central Electric Cooperative's headquarters in Higginsville April 6. The top three were named winners.

West Central's delegates, their teachers and families will be invited to participate in Family Capital Day June 9 in Jefferson City where they will receive a private tour of the State Capitol Building, the Missouri State Archives, and the Supreme Court. Following a banquet and orientation in Jefferson City that evening, Missouri's 100-plus-member delegation will travel to Washington, D.C. on June 10. While there, delegates will visit, among other places, the Washington Monument, and the Jefferson, Lincoln, Roosevelt, Vietnam Wall and Korean War memorials. They will get the opportunity to witness the Changing of the Guard Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery, take an evening dance cruise on the Potomac River, and tour the Smithsonian Museums.

Also on the agenda is Youth Day which is attended by more than 1,500 delegates from 44 states, and a day on Capitol Hill where students can meet with their senators and representatives.

## Delegates get psyched for CYCLE

Local students Alice Evans of Holden High School, Zach Toole of Chilhowee High School, Brenna Schmidli of Crest Ridge High School and Jessica Paxton of Warresburg High School, will represent WCE at the Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience (CYCLE) July 12-14 in Jefferson City.

CYCLE, which is coordinated by the Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives, has been recognized as the top cooperative youth conference in the nation. During the conference, students will spend a day at the Missouri State Capitol Building, learn about cooperatives, participate in leadership and team-building activities, and hear top-notch speakers.

Participants will also have the chance to write their own bill and debate that bill on the floor of the Missouri House of Representatives.

Past speakers at CYCLE have included Darrell Scott, whose daughter, Rachel, was killed in the shootings at Columbine High School in 1999 and Grant Baldwin and Mike Schlappi, wheelchair basketball world champion and paralympic medalist whose message is "If you can't stand up -- stand out." Students will also have the opportunity to write and debate their own bills on the floor of the Missouri House of Representatives.



**CYCLE WINNERS...**These students will represent West Central Electric at the Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience in July. They are congratulated by WCE Board President Densil Allen, Jr. (far left) and Rep. Glen Kolkmeyer (far right). Winners are: (l-r) Alice Evans, Brenna Schmidli, Zach Toole and Jessica Paxton.

## Schloman, Rinne end WCE careers

**From page 1**

"I like the camaraderie (at WCE)," he said. "I like that we all work together. We all have different jobs, but we all have the same goal," he said of his co-workers and the atmosphere at the cooperative. "It's been something that I have really enjoyed about working here."

Wes said he looks forward to slowing down a bit in retirement and not having to feel rushed.

"We rush through things and don't take time to enjoy what we are doing in life," he said.

His plans for retirement include spending more time with his grandchildren, more time with his float club, and hiking the Appalachian Trail.

## May is Electrical Safety Month

**From page 1**

Are you overloading outlets? Use this formula to find out:

wattage/volts=amps

Example:

Let's say you are using 2,000 watts of power (for one outlet). Divide the watts by the volts in your home (typically 120), and you come up with 16.6 amps of current being used. With a 20 amp electrical outlet, you are using about 80 percent of the available current.

### **DON'T TOY WITH YOUR SAFETY!**

When you are playing outdoors, keep a safe distance from power lines, substations and other equipment your electric co-op uses to send electricity to your home.

Flying remote controlled toys are a great way to have fun, but accidentally making contact with a power line or other electrical equipment can be dangerous and in some cases, even deadly.

- Never fly kites, or remote controlled toys near power lines.
- Stay away from power lines, meters, transformers and electrical boxes.
- Never climb trees near power lines.
- If you get something stuck in a power line, call your electric co-op.
- Never touch or go near a downed power line.

### **STAY AWAY FROM DOWNED POWER LINES!**

This is the time of year when when spring storms can topple power poles and lines. Never assume that just because the power is off in your home that the power is also off to the downed line outside your home.

Never touch a downed power line or try to move it using a stick or pole. Instead, contact your power company or emergency services.

Remember, you don't have to touch a downed line to get a shock, so don't go near it.

Being aware of the dangers of electricity will help you make it a safe spring!

# From the Boardroom...

Regular February meeting of the Board of Directors (postponed until March 3, 2017 because of NRECA national meeting.)

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, General Counsel Shawn Battagler and Executive Secretary and Administrative Assistant Kim Lewis.

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After discussion, the agenda was approved.

## APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The board approved its consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of January 27, 2017, expenditures for the month of January 2017; new membership applications; membership terminations and the treasurer's report.

## APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following January 2017 reports were approved: Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement including the Financial Statistical Report with monthly and annual budget comparisons and statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, cash-flow management and KWH sales; Treasurer's Report and the written monthly Construction, Retirement, Maintenance and Operations Report.

## SAFETY REPORT

Gray presented the safety report for the month of February. Gray informed the board of the Berry Consulting contract renewal and fee adjustment.

## AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft and Gray reported on their attendance at the AMEC meeting. Highlights of the meeting included AECL update, FEMA issues, legislative issues, legislative conference, Amendment 2 litigation, public relations update, NRECA update, hiring of Richard Moore, mutual aid and the retirement of Gene Dorrel.

## NW ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE, INC. REPORT

Gray and Swisegood reported their attendance and discussed highlights including AECL update, financials, outage report, safety, bylaw discussion and fiber to WCE headquarters project

## NW VOTING DELEGATE

Simmons was appointed as the NW voting delegate and Dale Jarman was appointed as the alternate.

## NRECA ANNUAL MEETING

Directors reported on their attendance at the NRECA annual meeting. Items of interest included strategic planning, succession planning, political developments, member communications, industry developments, recognition of JoAnn Emerson, rate issues and technology.

## WRITE-OFFS

The board approved write-offs through Dec. 31, 2014.

## POLICY REVIEW

The board reviewed and approved policies and changes suggested by the Policy Committee.

## MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray provided his Manager's Report for the month. He reported on the following: payment facilities changes in Warrensburg, Youth Tour update, request to promote a local charity, discussion regarding Operation Round-Up, audit and the passing of an employee.

## PAYMENT FACILITIES

The board approved maintaining a physical payment location at Quarry City Savings and Loan.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

## NEW BUSINESS

The board discussed the potential need to change meeting dates in the coming months, but no action was taken.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

The board entered into executive session.

## MEETING ADJOURNED

Following the executive session, the meeting was adjourned.

## FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • January 2017

	This month	YTD 2017	YTD 2016
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>2,813,423</b>	<b>2,813,423</b>	<b>26,165,722</b>
Power Bill Expense	1,602,258	1,602,258	16,285,078
Operation & Maint. Expense	220,368	220,368	2,909,045
Depreciation Expense	170,184	170,184	1,919,268
Interest Expense	105,871	105,871	1,195,535
<b>Total cost of Srv. (Total Expense)</b>	<b>2,098,681</b>	<b>2,098,681</b>	<b>22,308,926</b>
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	438,740	438,740	329,179
Other Margins	22,180	22,180	12,093
<b>TOTAL MARGINS</b>	<b>460,920</b>	<b>460,920</b>	<b>341,272</b>

## New Payment Drop in Warrensburg

Effective May 1, 2017, payments will be accepted at

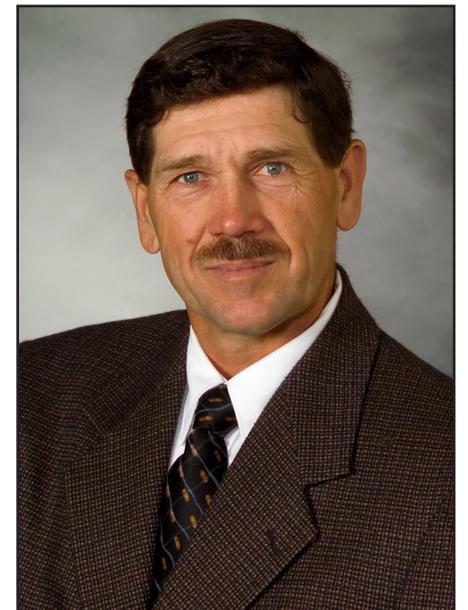
Quarry City Savings and Loan  
713 PCA Rd.  
Warrensburg, Mo.

	<u>Lobby Hours:</u>	<u>Drive-up Hours:</u>
Monday-Friday	9 a.m. - 4 p.m.	8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Saturday	8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.	8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.

\*Dropbox available 24/7



Tim Bowler



Dale Jarman

## Bowler, Jarman mark milestone years of service to cooperative

Two individuals will mark milestone years of service to West Central Electric Cooperative in 2017.

Employee Tim Bowler, who serves as the cooperative's Information Technology manager, has been with the cooper-

ative for 15 years.

Director and current Board Treasurer Dale Jarman will mark 20 years as a board member. He was elected to the board in 1997, and also serves on the cooperative's scholarship committees.

## Bertz is English Scholar

### Bertz, Bell, Oelrich, Kuecker and Tye also awarded memorial funds

From page 1

#### Corbin Bell

#### Lafayette County C-I HS

Bell is an 11-year member of Hazel Dell 4-H Club, and will attend the University of Central Missouri where he will major in agriculture business. He is the son of Steve and Kim Bell of Higginsville.

#### Abby Oelrich

#### Lafayette County C-I HS

Oelrich has been a member of Hazel

Dell 4-H Club for 10 years. Her plans are to attend Northwest Missouri State University to study agriculture journalism and communications. She is the daughter of Bill and Paula Oelrich of Higginsville.

#### Kylee Kuecker

#### Santa Fe High School

Kuecker is a 10-year member of Lucky Leaf 4-H Club. She plans to attend the University of Central Missouri where she will study to become an athletic trainer. She is the daughter of Craig and Susanne Kuecker of Blackburn.

#### Bethany Tye

#### Lexington High School

Tye has been a member of Fairview 4-H Club for 10 years, and will attend Missouri Valley College to study veterinary medicine. She is the daughter of John and Alana Tye of Lexington.