

January 2024



West Central Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



# Electric News

## Happy New Year!

Sandra Streit resigns  
board position prior  
to out-of-state move  
PAGE 2

WCE welcomes new  
hires in safety and on  
the lines  
PAGE 3

We are looking for our  
2024 Youth Tour and  
CYCLE delegates! It  
could be YOU!  
PAGES 4- 5

Critical Connection:  
follow the process on  
how electricity gets



## Statement of Nondiscrimination

West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provides that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefit of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is Michael Newland, general manager. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint with this organization; or the USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.



**West Central Electric  
Cooperative, Inc.**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

*West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

## District 4 director Sandra Streit resigns board position

District 4 Director Sandra Streit announced in October that she would be resigning her seat on the West Central Electric Board of Directors due to moving her place of residence off cooperative lines. Streit's husband, Marshall, accepted a job out of state.

Streit served as a director for 10 years, first being elected in 2013. She was re-elected by cooperative members to three additional terms, the last at the 2022 annual meeting.

The open director position was advertised for several months, with applications being accepted through Jan. 5. (Due to publication deadlines, the position was not able to be advertised in the West Central Electric News newsletter.)

Interested candidates will be interviewed by the current board of directors, and a replacement will be appointed to serve out the remainder of Streit's term, which ends in August 2025.



**Streit**

### West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.

#### Headquarters:

7867 S. Highway 13, P.O. Box 452, Higginsville, MO 64037  
816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803 • PAY BY PHONE: 1-855-874-5349

#### To report outages 24/7:

Call 816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803 • or report outages at [www.westcentralelectric.coop](http://www.westcentralelectric.coop) under "View & Report Outages"

#### District office:

506 N. Broadway, Oak Grove, MO 64075

#### Website:

[www.westcentralelectric.coop](http://www.westcentralelectric.coop)

#### General Manager:

Michael Newland

#### Board of Directors:

Densil Allen, Jr. *President*; Clark Bredehoeft, *Vice-Pres.*; Dale Jarman, *Treasurer*; Robert Simmons, *Secretary*; Stan Rhodes, *Asst. Sect.*; Richard Strobel, *Director*; Director; Jeremy Ahmann, *Director*; Colby Dowell, *Director*

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

## THE VALUE OF ELECTRICITY

The cost of every day items has gone up dramatically over the years.

Electricity being the exception.

POWERING YOUR DAY AND LIFE

THAT'S THE VALUE OF ELECTRICITY



Your source of power. And information.



# Even with rising costs, electricity remains a good value for members

There are many factors that impact your energy bills, including energy use, fuel costs, weather and equipment costs. You may not be able to control the weather or the changing costs of fuel, but you can control your energy use, which will help you save on your electric bill.

As the costs of fuels used to generate electricity go up, overall costs increase. Increases in the cost of equipment and materials needed to maintain your electric system also affect overall costs. Extreme temperatures, both hot and cold, have an impact on power costs by increasing demand.

Obviously, the more electricity you use, the higher your energy bill will be. West Central Electric can help you to use energy more efficiently so you use less and pay less. These can vary from no-cost practices like lowering the temperature on your water heater to low-cost measures such as caulking and weather-stripping. WCE also provides rebates for installing energy-efficient equipment.

"Being a part of the three-tiered electric cooperative system ensures you are getting the best value for your electricity dollar," West Central Electric General Manager Michael Newland said. "Our power supplier, Associated Electric Cooperative, uses a mix of generating resources and technologies to make sure electricity is delivered to WCE and its members at the lowest cost possible."

AECI also uses the lowest-cost resources and power plants first -- typically hydropower when it is available, then coal, natural gas and wind. Once the member load is served, any excess power that is generated is sold to help offset member costs.

"Even though costs have increased across the board on everything from food to fuel to necessities and extras, the electricity you receive from your cooperative remains a good value because of the forethought and planning by cooperative directors and managers at all levels -- generation, transmission and distribution," Newland said.

## Net Metering & Interconnection Act

West Central Electric Cooperative has a net metering agreement for interconnection of a distributed generation source.

Our policy, agreement and application now reflect the new standards set by the Net Metering and Easy Connection Act as of January 1, 2008.

For more information, contact our Higginsville office at 800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942.



## New Hires

**Position:** Safety and Compliance Inspector

**Hometown:** Sweet Springs, Mo.

*"I am excited to get real experience in my degree close to home."*



Jacob Schowengerdt

**Position:** Apprentice Lineman

**Hometown:** Chillicothe, Mo.

*"I am looking forward to being a part of a great company and serving its members."*



Austin Hatfield

**Position:** Apprentice Lineman

**Hometown:** Welch, Okla.

*"I am looking forward to perfecting my craft and being a part of a family company."*



Garret Nair



West Central Electric Cooperative's

# Youth Tour & CYCLE



# 2024!



What do the schools in West Central Electric Cooperative's service area have in common? They have sent some of the best and brightest to both our nation's and state's capitals for the Rural Electric Youth Tour and the Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience. If you are a high school junior this year, YOU could be a part of that, too!

## What is Youth Tour?

The annual contest for high school juniors is sponsored by West Central Electric Cooperative, which sends delegates on a six-day trip to Washington, D.C. to learn about our nation's history and government while experiencing our nation's capital firsthand. Electric Cooperatives throughout the country sponsor delegates on the trip which includes students from Alaska to Wyoming and in between. Cooperatives from the state of Missouri will send more than 100 delegates. This year, WCE will send **AT LEAST THREE DELEGATES**, and, depending on the number of entries received, as many as five delegates to Washington, D.C.

## When is it?

This year's Youth Tour for Missouri will be **June 14-20, 2024**. Missouri delegates will meet in Jefferson City on June 14 for a reception and orientation before traveling by plane to Washington, D.C. June 15. Delegates and their families will also have the opportunity to participate in Family Capital Day sponsored by West Central Electric, and spend the day in Jefferson City on their own mini-Youth Tour.



WCE's 2023 Youth Tour delegates, along with other delegates in their Congressional district, visited with Congressman Mark Alford while in Washington, D.C.



## What will we do?

While in Washington, D.C., delegates will have the opportunity to meet with their senators and representatives. In the past, we will visit historic memorials such as the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Iwo Jima and Vietnam memorials. Favorite Washington, D.C. landmarks are on the agenda, including Mt. Vernon, the Smithsonian museums, Ford's Theatre, the Washington Monument and Arlington National Cemetery. Delegates will enjoy a moonlight cruise on the Potomac River and a MLB game or play at the Kennedy Center. The Rural Electric Youth Tour provides a chance for high school juniors to learn about government, our nation's capital and electric cooperatives, as well as rural electrification and the impact it has had on our nation's development.

## What is CYCLE?

CYCLE is the Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience which is scheduled for July 16-19 in Jefferson City. WCE will send **FIVE DELEGATES** to this conference sponsored by the Association of Missouri Electric

*For more information on both of these programs, contact your high school English teacher, FFA advisor, or Heather Hoflander at West Central Electric Cooperative in Higginsville at 1-800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942, or [heather@wcecoop.com](mailto:heather@wcecoop.com).*

Cooperatives. They will join more than 100 other delegates from across the state. Students will hear amazing speakers, participate in team-building and leadership activities, and get a chance to author, present and debate their own bill on the floor of the Missouri House of Representatives. **NEW THIS YEAR** -- CYCLE has been extended one day, and students will travel to St. Louis for the day.



WCE's CYCLE delegates spent some time at the Missouri State Capitol Building debating a mock bill and touring the historical building.

## Contest Details:

The contest is open to high school juniors who attend a school in the West Central Electric service area, or whose parents or legal guardians are current members of WCE

## How do I enter?

Submit a 600-word, typed essay on the following topic:

***"Without rural electric cooperatives, life would be..."***

Students will discuss how life in rural areas might be different without the services provided by electric cooperatives like West Central Electric.

## For more information:

Visit [westcentralelectric.coop](http://westcentralelectric.coop) and click on "Youth Programs" then "Youth Tour & CYCLE" to download the information packet.

**DEADLINE: 4:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 9. 2024**





**LEARNING THE ROPES...**West Central Electric Operations Manager Scott Gard gives Santa Fe High School senior Landon Hostetter, some basics of pole-climbing. Landon, participated in his school's job-shadowing day, and is interested in a career as an electric lineman.

## To report an outage...

### Online:

Members may report power outages online at [www.westcentralelectric.coop](http://www.westcentralelectric.coop). Click on the tab at the top titled "Report Outage" and enter your account number or phone number; or on the SmartHub app.

### By phone:

You may also call to report outages by phone. Call 1-800-491-3803 -- 24 hrs. a day, or Higginsville at 816-565-4942.

*\*During heavy outages, we will be busy, so please keep trying if you get a busy signal.*

### Before calling, have you:

- 1) Checked your fuses or multibreakers?
- 2) Checked with your neighbors to see if they are out of electricity?

### When calling, have this information ready:

A) Your name, or the name your service is under;

B) Your account number (look on your latest bill to find it.) or your map location number. (This is the number the co-op uses to locate where you live. It was given to you when you signed up for membership.) Please keep both numbers by your phone for quicker service.

### Tracking Outages

Outage information may be tracked on our website, and periodic updates will be posted on our facebook page. PLEASE DO NOT REPORT OUTAGES ON THE FACEBOOK PAGE as they have a good chance of getting missed. If you have internet service, go to the website to report instead.

# Horses gallop and so can power lines

How can galloping lines impact power transmission and distribution?

Galloping power lines are typically caused when ice and high winds occur at the same time. Freezing rain creates icicles and odd-shaped ice formations on power lines and conductors. The ice buildup changes how wind and air impact the now misshapen, ice-covered line. This change in airflow can cause the power line to start to bounce.

Once the lines get going, they can bounce and buck enough to hit another line, damage themselves enough to cause a power outage or even fall to the ground.

There is not much a power company can do to alleviate galloping



lines since the wild motion is caused by Mother Nature. To help prevent this, many power lines have special mechanisms, such as twisted wire or round or angular pieces of metal, attached to the line. While they can help, sometimes they are no match for severe ice and whipping wind.

Aside from ice storms, year-round storms can cause damaging winds, which can knock down power lines and blow trees and limbs onto power lines. Keep the following safety tips in mind:

- When you see power lines on the ground, stay away, warn others to stay away and contact the electric utility or 911. Lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be live.

- Any utility wire, including telephone or cable lines that are sagging or down, could be in contact with an energized power line, also making it dangerous. Do not try to guess the types of lines —stay away from all lines.

- Be alert to the possibility that tree limbs or debris may hide electrical hazards. Downed power lines can energize objects around them, such as chain-link fences and metal culverts.

- Keep in mind that a dead line could become energized during power restoration efforts or improper use of generators.

- Never drive over a downed line. It could start a chain reaction and cause additional poles or other equipment to collapse.

- If you are in a car that has contacted or is near a downed power line, stay in your vehicle. Wait until the utility crew has arrived and deenergized the line. Warn others not to approach the car.

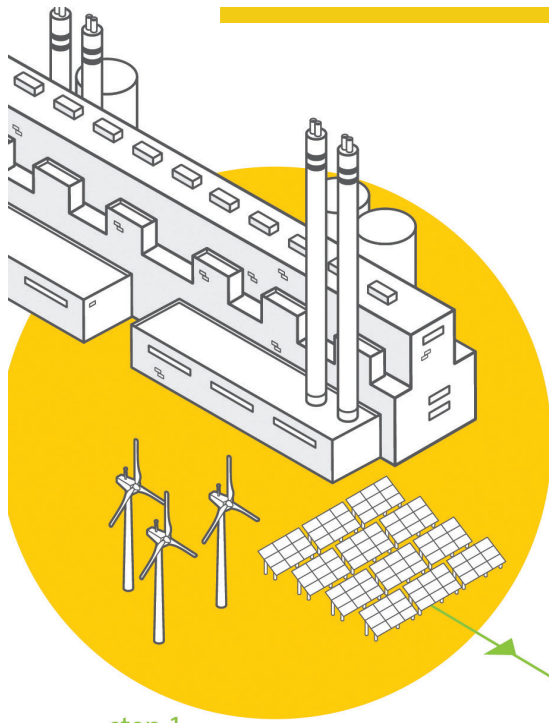
- Only exit a vehicle near or on downed lines if there is a fire. If this happens, cross your arms over your chest and make a solid jump out and away from the car with both feet together. Then hop or shuffle away at least 50 feet or more while continuing to keep both feet together.

*For more electrical safety information, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org)*



# CRITICAL CONNECTIONS: HOW ELECTRICITY GETS TO YOU

The electric grid is considered one of the most complex machines in the world, delivering the electricity we need for everyday life.

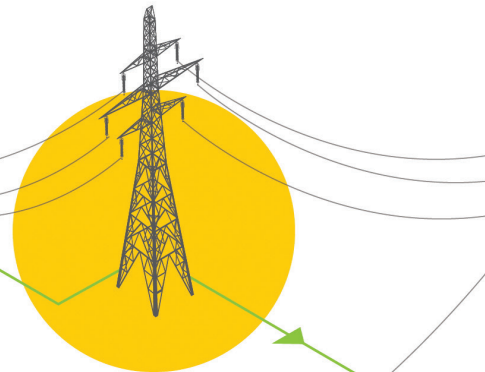


## step 1 GENERATION

Power plants generate electricity using a variety of energy sources, like solar, natural gas, hydro power, coal and wind energy.

## step 2 STEP-UP TRANSFORMER

A step-up transformer increases the voltage to push the electricity over long distances.



## step 3 TRANSMISSION LINES

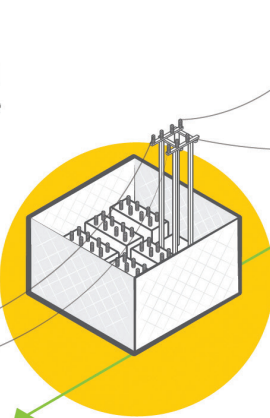
High-voltage electricity travels over long distances through these lines.

## step 5 DISTRIBUTION SUBSTATION

These substations lower the voltage again so the electricity is ready to travel on distribution lines.

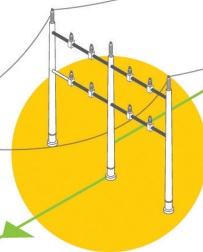
## step 6 DISTRIBUTION LINES

Lower-voltage electricity travels through distribution lines, like the ones you typically see on the side of the road.



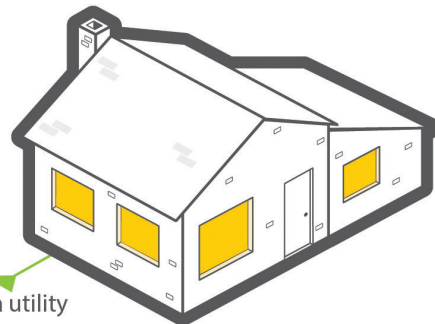
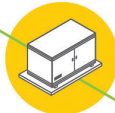
## step 4 TRANSMISSION SUBSTATION

Voltage is lowered at a transmission substation so electricity can travel across the local distribution system.



## step 7 FINAL STOP

A transformer located on the ground or a utility pole reduces the voltage a final time, then electricity is sent inside your home, school or business.





# FROM THE WCE BOARDROOM

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held Oct. 26, 2023

A meeting of the board of directors of West Central Electric Cooperative was held at the offices of the Cooperative, in Higginsville, Missouri, at 10 a.m. on Thursday, Oct. 26, 2023, pursuant to the bylaws of the cooperative and previous resolution of the board of directors. The meeting was called to order by President Densil Allen Jr. Attorney Sheri Smiley caused the minutes of the meeting to be kept. The following directors were present: Clark Bredehoeft, Richard Strobel, Stan Rhodes, Dale Jarman, Robert Simmons, Sandra Streit, Jeremy Ahmann and Colby Dowell. Also present were General Manager Michael Newland, and attorney Sheri Smiley.

## RESIGNATION

Sandra Streit tendered her resignation as she has moved to another state. The board thanked her for her years of service. She then left the meeting.

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After discussion, the agenda was approved as presented.

## APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The board approved its consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of Sept. 28, 2023; expenditures for the month of September 2023; new membership applications and membership terminations.

## APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following September reports were approved:

**Financing and Treasurer's Report:** Rebecca Hoefflicker presented the September 2023 Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement. She reviewed the Financial and Statistical Report and Treasurer's Report with monthly and annual budget comparisons. She also gave the investment report. She presented and reviewed statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, cash flow management, and KWH sales and ratios. The RUS loan, right-of-way invoices, material invoices, equity and estate payment checks were discussed. CFC repricing was approved as well as the fees for RoundUp Review and Form 990 preparation.

## Operations Report

Scott Gard provided an oral report to supplement his written Operations Report. He reported on crews. There were no major outages to report. Mechanic work and fleet were reported on as well as schools attended. Brush crews and right-of-way were reported on. Bids continue to come in and are being reviewed.

**Safety and Engineering Report:** Pete Nelson provided an oral report to supplement his written Safety and Engineering Report. Three crew visits were done. New loads were discussed. Safety meetings were reported on. An energy/staking department report was given. Hours worked without a lost-time accident and hours driven in September were reported on.

**Member Services Report:** Brent Schlotzhauer provided a report to supplement his written Member Services Report. His report included RoundUp enrollment and RoundUp updates. A social media campaign was reported on. Net metering and rebates were reported on. The statewide member satisfaction survey was discussed. He reported on chamber meetings attended.



## AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft gave a summary of the executive meeting held Oct. 3 that he attended. He reported on the guest speaker of the social media provider for AMEC. He gave department reports and discussed legislative issues.

## AMEC ANNUAL MEETING

The directors who attended the annual meeting gave an update on the speakers. They reported that Mike Gray had received the A.C. Burrows award.

## ROUND UP FOUNDATION REPORT

A report was given and the minutes from the Oct. 9 meeting were reviewed. A discussion was held on replacing Streit on the foundation board. Colby Dowell was named the replacement.

## N.W. ELECTRIC REPORT

Newland and Simmons reported on the October NW meeting. They reported on the budget, the property for Lone Jack and staffing.

## NRECA REGION 8-10 REPORT

Simmons provided an update.

## TRAVEL TIME

The Policy Committee will review Policy 2.6 regarding travel time.

## LEGAL REPORT

Smiley presented a report on legal matters. She discussed the Franchise Agreement with the City of Lone Jack which was approved. A discussion was held on how notice, applications and interviews would be conducted for the replacement of the board seat vacated by Streit.

## MANAGER'S REPORT

Newland presented the monthly Manager's Report. The Lafayette County 4-H banquet was discussed. Safety at the front office was discussed and bids have been received. The board voted to increase the budget to increase security measures.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

## NEW BUSINESS

None.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session was called at 11:50 a.m. and adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

## ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned.

## FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • September 2023

|   | This month         | YTD 2023            | YTD 2022            |
|---|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Revenue</b>                                | <b>\$2,672,606</b> | <b>\$25,062,960</b> | <b>\$25,158,724</b> |
| Power Bill Expense                            | 1,555,245          | 14,397,114          | 14,191,654          |
| Operation & Maint. Expense                    | 561,959            | 5,818,192           | 5,720,612           |
| Depreciation Expense                          | 226,474            | 2,009,147           | 1,905,159           |
| Interest Expense                              | 124,179            | 1,101,053           | 1,027,604           |
| <b>Total cost of Service (Total Expenses)</b> | <b>2,467,857</b>   | <b>23,325,506</b>   | <b>22,845,029</b>   |
| Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)     | 204,749            | 1,737,454           | 2,313,695           |
| Other Margins                                 | 73,000             | 319,541             | 186,255             |
| <b>TOTAL MARGINS</b>                          | <b>\$277,749</b>   | <b>\$2,056,995</b>  | <b>\$2,499,950</b>  |

