

February 2023



West Central Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Electric News

Appreciating our members all year long

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Check out the special
Co-op Connections
deals from this month's
featured businesses

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Member Appreciation
Day winners and a
special message to
our members

PAGE 7

Be aware of hidden
energy busters and
unmask phantom loads

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Students entering the

2023 Rural Electric Youth Tour contest

Essays must be turned in to the Higginsville office no later than 4:30 p.m. Feb. 10, 2023.

Essays submitted via email must arrive no later than 4:30 p.m. Feb. 10, 2023.

Applications for the

2023 John & Kathryn English Memorial Scholarship

must be postmarked no later than Feb. 17, 2023.

Applications submitted via email must arrive no later than 4:30 p.m. Feb. 17, 2023.

Applications for the

2023 West Central Electric Cooperative Scholarship

must be postmarked no later than March 10, 2023.

Applications submitted via email must arrive no later than 4:30 p.m. March 10, 2023.

Applications for the

2023 WCE Electrical Distributions Systems Scholarship

must be postmarked no later than April 1, 2023.

Applications submitted via email must arrive no later than 4:30 p.m. April 1, 2023.

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 under "View & Report Outages"

District office:

506 N. Broadway, Oak Grove, MO 64075

Website:

www.westcentralelectric.coop

General Manager:

Michael Newland

Board of Directors:

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Reminder to WCE members...

DOXO is NOT affiliated with West Central Electric

Some West Central Electric Cooperative members may have signed up for an account on a website called Doxo believing they were directly accessing their WCE billing account. Please note that Doxo is NOT affiliated with WCE in any way and is NOT A DIRECT PAYMENT PROCESSOR. Doxo is an unnecessary third party bill payment platform.

Not only does Doxo charge an additional processing fee that you would not otherwise have to pay, using their service also creates a risk that your payment is not passed through to WCE in time to avoid late fees or past due balances.

The best way to pay your bill is directly through the co-op by using the SmartHub app found on our website at www.westcentralelectric.coop, calling in a payment by phone at 855-874-5349, visiting our office in person or mailing your payment with the stub from your bill.

ON THE COVER: Elda and Norman Goetz of Higginsville visit WCE's headquarters office in Higginsville during the annual Member Appreciation Day in December. Members can register for free electricity credits and Christmas ornaments and get information on co-op programs available to them.

Employees are on the move as retirements loom closer

Scott Gard

District Operations Supervisor Scott Gard has been named the new operations manager based at the headquarters location in Higginsville, General Manager Michael Newland announced.

Gard will replace current Operations Manager Randy Burkeybile upon his retirement this spring.

Gard joined the cooperative in May 2000 as a summer intern and was hired later that year as an apprentice lineman. He earned journeyman status in November 2003.

In October 2020, he moved to Oak Grove as the district operations supervisor, a position he has held until accepting the operations manager role. Gard and his wife, Jenny, live in rural Higginsville with their two daughters, Taylor and Tyler.



Gard

Matt Schellman

Oak Grove Line Foreman Matt Schellman has accepted the position of district operations supervisor at the Oak Grove location, General Manager Michael Newland announced.

He will replace Scott Gard, who has been promoted to operations manager at the Headquarters office in Higginsville.

Schellman joined the cooperative in 2004 as a summer intern, and was hired in May 2005 as an apprentice lineman. He was transferred to the Oak Grove location in October 2008, and achieved journeyman status in May 2009. Schellman was named foreman in 2018, a position he has held until his promotion to district operations supervisor.

Schellman and his wife, Roxanne, live in Bates City with their children Daniel, Caroline, Matilda and Eleanor.



Schellman

What can your Co-op Connections card

get you at this month's
featured businesses?



10% off
**one dozen
roses for
Valentine's Day
2023**

**Pigeon's Nest • 1902 Main St., Higginsville, Mo.
660-584-2299 • www.pigeonsnestfloral.com**

**Offer good for Valentine's Day 2023 orders only
Must show Co-op Connections card or app*

10% off
your total bill



**Jamie's Place • 300 S. Market, Holden Mo.
816-732-4346 • www.jamiesplace.com**

Must show Co-op Connections card or app

*Install the app or visit www.connections.coop to find
participating businesses in your area and across the nation*

**Find the complete list of local deals on our website at
www.westcentralelectric.coop*

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2023 West Central Electric Cooperative Scholarship

I. Amount of Scholarship

This year, approximately 20 high school seniors meeting DESE graduation requirements will receive a \$800 West Central Electric Cooperative scholarship for use at any college, university, trade or technical school the fall semester after their senior year/high school graduation.

II. Selection Criteria

- A. The applicant will be selected without regard to sex, race, religion or color.
- B. The applicant's parent or legal guardian must be a current WCE member.
- C. A cumulative 3.0 or better grade point average is required.
- D. Students MUST provide an ACT score or equivalent college entrance exam score to apply.

E. A high school transcript must accompany the application. ****Applications received without transcripts WILL BE PENALIZED.**

F. The Scholarship Committee will consider financial need and special circumstances when selecting the winner of this scholarship. Please address financial need and any special circumstances when answering question # 7 on this application.

G. Please submit a recent photo along with your application. This photo will be used for press releases and for the WCE newsletter if you are selected a winner. If you submit your application online, please email a photo to heather@wccecoop.com.

H. All scholarship applications **MUST BE TYPED.**

I. High School counselor must sign your transcript. (Home school transcripts are accepted, but must be signed by the teacher.)

III. Restrictions

A. Children and grandchildren of current West Central employees and directors are not eligible to apply.

B. Four-year recipients of the John and Kathryn English Memorial Scholarship Trust will not be considered.

IV. Application Deadline

All applications **must be postmarked on or before March 10, 2023.** Send applications to: Heather Hoflander, West Central Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 452, Higginsville, MO 64037.

V. Online applications

Scholarship applications are available online at www.westcentralelectric.coop under the heading "Youth Programs." Applications may be printed and mailed, or filled out on line and emailed. If you choose to email your application, please also either email your photo as a jpeg to heather@wccecoop.com or mail a photograph along with your transcript. Applications submitted via email **must arrive by 4:30 p.m. March 10, 2023.**

VI. Winners' Notification

Recipients of the scholarship will be notified by **May 1, 2023** by mail.

2023 John & Kathryn English Memorial Scholarship

I. Background

The John & Kathryn English Memorial Scholarship Trust was created under the terms of the Last Will & Testament of Kathryn English. The purpose of this trust is to provide scholarship grants for high school seniors who meet DESE graduation requirements, and who are or were active 4-H members at the time of their high school graduation, and who desire to attend college the fall semester following their senior year/high school graduation to pursue a degree. John English, a former director of West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc., designated West Central's Board of Directors as Trustees of the Memorial Scholarship Trust.

II. Amount of Scholarship

The John & Kathryn English Memorial Scholarship Committee will award one \$1,000 scholarship (\$500 per semester) to a student beginning his/her freshman year in college. This student may reapply for additional funds for their next three years of study. Renewal requests will be filed in the spring and submitted with a transcript for the previous school year. Grants will be paid out by semester as long as the student remains enrolled full-time and meets academic requirements stated on the renewal application. The amount of these grants may vary due to availability of funds. The committee may decide to make one or more one-time scholarship awards based on merit.

III. Selection Criteria

- A. The applicant will be selected without regard to sex, race, religion or color.
- B. The applicant must attend a high school in West Central Electric's service area -- Lafayette, Johnson and eastern Jackson counties (including Oak Grove, Lone Jack and home school students) OR have a parent or legal guardian who is a current West Central Electric member. Districts NOT in the WCE service area (Sherwood, Grain Valley, Ft. Osage, etc.) may have students who qualify based on a parent or legal guardian being a current member of the cooperative.

C. A cumulative 3.0 or better grade point average is required.

D. Students MUST provide an ACT score or equivalent college entrance exam score to apply.

E. Participation in 4-H at the time of high school graduation is required.

F. Two reference letters are required. No letter may come from a relative, and one letter must be from an adult involved with 4-H (for example a project leader, a 4-H youth specialist, etc.)

G. Students must submit a copy of their completed Missouri Report Form (including required signatures) along with their application.

H. A high school transcript must accompany the application.

I. The Scholarship Committee will consider financial need and special circumstances when selecting the winner of this scholarship. Please address financial need and any special circumstances when answering question #4 on this application.

J. Please submit a recent photo along with your application. This photo will be used for press releases and for the WCE newsletter if you are selected a winner. If you submit your application online, please email a photo to heather@wccecoop.com.

K. Finalists will be required to participate in an interview with the scholarship committee. If applying, you should tentatively plan to be available that evening for interviews, should you be named a finalist.

L. All scholarship applications **MUST BE TYPED.**

M. High School counselor must sign your transcript. (Home school transcripts are accepted, but must be signed by the teacher.) ****Applications received without transcripts WILL BE PENALIZED.**

IV. Restrictions

Children and grandchildren of current WCE directors are not eligible to apply.

V. Application Deadline

All applications **must be postmarked on or before Feb. 17, 2023.** Send applications to Heather Hoflander, West Central Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 452, Higginsville, MO 64037.

VI. Online applications

Scholarship applications are available online at www.westcentralelectric.coop under the heading "Youth Programs." Applications may be printed and mailed, or filled out on line and emailed. If you choose to email your application, please also either email your photo as a jpeg to heather@wccecoop.com or mail a photograph along with your transcript. Applications submitted via email **must arrive by 4:30 p.m. on Feb. 17, 2023.**

VII. Finalist Notification

Interviews will be scheduled for the evening of **Wednesday, March 29, 2023.** All students applying for this scholarship should tentatively plan for an interview on this date. Those scheduled for interviews **will be notified by Friday, March 1, 2023.**

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2023 West Central Electric Cooperative Electrical Distribution Systems Scholarship

I. General Description

West Central Electric Cooperative, Higginsville, Missouri, will accept applications from students interested in pursuing a degree in Electrical Distribution Systems at an accredited institution in Missouri, Kansas or Iowa. This program provides for students a scholarship as well as on-the-job training. General provisions of the scholarship are as follows:

II. Eligibility Requirements

A. Applicant should reside in the West Central Electric Cooperative service area.

B. Applicant shall be expected to participate in an interview with the cooperative general manager and/or staff representatives in April of the application year.

C. Applicant should be a student in good academic standing with a minimum 2.5 high school cumulative GPA, or GED with 260 minimum score.

D. Applicant should be **admitted as a full-time student to the school of choice, and be accepted into that institution's Electrical Distribution Systems Program.**

E. Applicant should attend school commencing during the Fall semester immediately following receipt of the application.

F. Applicant is required to complete a summer internship at West Central Electric Cooperative.

III. Selection Criteria and Award of Scholarship

A. To be considered, applicants must submit a complete application by the **scholarship application deadline of April 1, 2023**. The criteria used to evaluate applications for award will be based upon the following:

- Academic achievement
- Civic involvement
- Leadership
- Ability to communicate clearly defined personal goals through personal goal statement (on application)
- Financial need
- Interview conducted by the general manager and/or cooperative staff

B. Selection Priority: This is a one-time annual scholarship awarded to full-time students attending an accredited EDS program. West Central Electric Cooperative will determine the number of awards based on need and the number of applicants as well as the availability of funds. In the event a student is unable to fulfill the requirement of full-time enrollment for the fall semester in the year the scholarship is awarded, the scholarship may be transferred to the next available alternate.

C. Scholarship Award: The scholarship provides up to \$5,000 annually to begin in the fall semester upon the student's verified enrollment. The scholarship may be used for the cost of tuition, fees, books, tools, and/or other costs associated with a student's education. The scholarship is renewable each semester if the recipient meets the continued expectations of the scholarship, up to \$10,000 maximum per recipient.

IV. Application

Deadline for application to assure consideration for the next following academic

year is **April 1, 2023**. Please submit the following to be considered:

- Letter of acceptance to an accredited institution and admittance to the school's EDS program.
- High school transcript, college transcript or official GED score report.
- Complete scholarship application, including personal goal statement.
- Two letters of character reference.
- Applications may be printed and mailed along with transcript or GED report and letters, or you may apply online at www.westcentralelectric.coop under the heading "Youth Programs." If you apply online, please mail your high school transcript or GED score report and your letters of reference. Applications submitted via email **must arrive by 4:30 p.m. April 1, 2023**. Please also either email your photo as a .jpg to heather@wcecoop.com or mail a photograph along with your transcript and letters.
- Applications may be mailed to West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc., Attention: Heather Hoflander. P.O. Box 452, Higginsville, MO 64037.

V. Expectations of Scholarship Recipient

A. Recipient must maintain 3.0 GPA per semester. There will be a one (1) semester probation should the student's grades fall below a 3.0 GPA. Failure to return to a 3.0 could mean loss of scholarship. Applicant will provide the cooperative with a transcript at the end of each semester.

B. Recipient must attend all classes and work as scheduled. Excessive school attendance absences may result in suspension or termination of the remainder of the scholarship benefits.

C. Recipient must comply with the institution's student policies and rules. Failure to abide by such policies and rules may result in suspension or termination of the remainder of the scholarship benefits.

D. Recipient must contractually agree to work at West Central Electric Cooperative for four years following completion of the degree. A copy of the employment contract is attached as Exhibit A. The receipt of this scholarship is expressly contingent upon the successful applicant executing said employment contract, Exhibit A. Failure to complete the contract would mean reimbursement of the scholarship based on incomplete term. Employment after graduation will be solely at the discretion of West Central Electric Cooperative management. The employment contract may be changed or terminated at any time due to employee misconduct or if a position is not available.

E. In the event the student initially awarded the scholarship is unable to fulfill the requirement of full-time enrollment for the fall semester, the scholarship may be awarded to the next available alternate.

F. Release of Information: In submitting the application, the applicant grants permission for the scholarship committee to review high school and college transcripts and to contact character references. Submission of the application also grants permission to promote and publicize the scholarship and recipient(s).

G. Recipient must submit an official transcript to West Central Electric Cooperative at the conclusion of each semester to verify eligibility and GPA.

VI. Winners' Notification

Recipients of the scholarship will be notified by **May 1, 2023**.

Scholarship applications are available from your high school counselor's office, online at www.westcentralelectric.coop or from West Central Electric Cooperative's Higginsville office. Call WCE at 1-800-491-3803 for more information.

We appreciate our members every day

Although West Central Electric's official "Member Appreciation Day" is held each year at Christmastime, we want you to know we appreciate you EVERY day.

We appreciate our members who participate in the Operation Roundup program, enabling us to help fund needed projects in our local communities. Grants are available four times a year, so let us know if you have a project that needs help with funding.

We appreciate the many acts of kindness from our members during periods of severe weather. From helping us pull out a stuck truck to dropping by with a hot cup of coffee for our linemen working in the elements, your acts do not go unnoticed.

We are thankful for your patience and kind words when we are restoring your power during challenging and sometimes dangerous situations.

To our members willing to serve on our nominating committee, board of directors and Roundup Board -- we appreciate your dedication to your cooperative and your communities.

Member Appreciation Day may officially come around only once a year, but rest assured, all of us at WCE appreciate you every day!

2022 Member Appreciation Day winners:

Willie Wiredhand Ornaments:

Johnna Martens, Higginsville
Brett Roepe, Concordia
Jenny Gaulter, Oak Grove
Robin McClain, Oak Grove

\$25 Energy Certificates:

Karen Matthews, Oak Grove
James & Deborah Davis, Odessa
Becky Hoeppner, Mayview
Jessie Towne, Odessa
John Oliva, Bates City
J.C. Blackmon, Napoleon
George Glecker, Odessa
Judi Cook, Sibley

A Storm is Always Ready

ARE YOU?



When Mother Nature threatens a severe storm, be ready by having an emergency kit on hand.

YOUR KIT SHOULD INCLUDE:



Bottles of water
Nonperishable food
Portable phone charger

Flashlights
Batteries
Can opener



First-aid supplies
Hand sanitizer
Prescriptions

Pain reliever
Warm clothing
Blankets



Battery-operated radio
Toys, books and games
Important documents

Money
Baby supplies
Pet supplies

Once your kit is assembled, check it a few times a year to make sure batteries are fresh and that no one has borrowed a necessary item.

Learn more at:

Safe
Electricity.org®

Phantoms unmasked

Hidden energy busters are in your electronics

All those electronic devices and appliances plugged into your home's outlets use electricity whether turned on or not. Known as "phantom load" electricity, it adds up. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates phantoms on average cost U.S. households an average of \$100 a year. Our current high inflation rates mean every penny saved counts, so start unplugging where it makes sense.

G.E. Miller at www.20somethingfinance.com/electrical points out that phantom load, vampire load, vampire power, standby power and electricity leaking are all one and the same. The site describes the energy your TV, VCR, DVD, CD players, computer, printer, microwave, phone and many other electronics use when turned off but plugged into a wall outlet. Here are some facts:

- Roughly 10 percent of your electric bill comes from appliances you have turned off
- The U.S. Department of Energy says on average, 75 percent of the electricity used to power home electronics is consumed while the products are turned off
- According to ENERGY STAR, electronics constitute about 14 percent or more of your home energy use in contrast to 5 percent 25 years ago
- TVs alone consume about 4 percent of residential electricity nationwide – the equivalent of all the electricity used by households in New York state, says ENERGY STAR

How do you know a phantom is in your house? Look no further than equipment or a charging device with a cube-shaped transformer on the end of its cord. Depending on the product, it's sipping or sucking electricity even when not in use. The best advice for ridding your house of phantoms is to:

Unplug – If you're not using it, and it's not essential to be connected to function (such as a clock), then pull the plug, and save energy.

Use power strips – Make it easy on yourself and consolidate plug-ins into a single power strip with an on/off switch. One switch to off prevents power from being used.

Buy efficient – When you're looking for new equipment, pay attention to energy-saving features. Buy ENERGY STAR-rated equipment, whose phantom use will be less.



FROM THE WCE BOARDROOM

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held Nov. 30, 2022

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, Nov. 30, 2022, 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, Dale Jarman, Robert Simmons, Sandra Streit, Jeremy Ahmann, Stan Rhodes and Colby Dowell. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray and CFO Michael Newland.

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 Oct. 27, 2022; expenditures for the month of October 2022; new membership applications and membership terminations.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following October 2022 reports were approved:

Financing and Treasurer's Report: Newland presented the October 2022 Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement. He reviewed the Financial and Statistical Report and Treasurer's Report with monthly and annual budget comparisons. He also gave the investment report. He presented and reviewed statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, cash flow management, and KWH sales and ratios. KRTA ratios were reviewed. Two certificate of deposits for scholarship funds are renewing. A motion was passed to renew one for one year and one for 30 months. The employee retention tax credit was discussed and will be considered again in July.

Operations and Safety Report: Burkeybile provided a written Operations Report and presented to the report to the board. His report included an update on crews, outages for the month, a mechanic's report, and updates on brush crews and right-of-way, as well as an update on the wire storage building. He also gave a new service report. He has received estimates of a new bucket from Altec.

Safety and Engineering Report: Pete Nelson provided a written Safety and Engineering Report. Safety meetings, crew visits, and an engineer/staking department report was given. He is currently reviewing line extension costs and updating policies.

Member Services Report: Brent Schlotzhauer provided a written Member Services Report. He reported on Operation Round Up. Member appreciation day is Dec. 14. Member Services representatives went to the local trunk or treats in October and served as a judge for the area FFA speech contest. Solar systems and rebates given were also reported on as well as chamber meetings attended. A discussion was held regarding a potential REDLG loan. More information will be brought back to the board next month.



AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft gave a report on the meeting he attended. He discussed

staff changes and solar web sites. The Linemen's Rodeo was reported on. Communication audits are being done. The new auditor was reported on. An update on the director's conference was given.

NW REPORT

No November meeting.

REVIEW AND APPROVE 2023 BOARD MEETING DATES

The following dates were set for 2023 regular board meetings:

Jan. 26, Feb. 22-23 (Board Retreat), March 23, April 27, May 25, June 22, July 27, Aug. 24, Sept. 28, Oct. 26, Nov. 30, Dec. 21.

LEGAL REPORT

Smiley presented a report on legal matters. The recent legalization of recreational marijuana was discussed. Smiley recommended revising the co-op's drug policy to comply with the new recreational marijuana law. A discussion was held regarding safety sensitive positions. A motion was passed to have a zero tolerance marijuana policy. A new policy will be brought back for review.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray presented the monthly Manager's Report. The NRECA conference was discussed. New staff was reported on and the accounting manager has been hired. A pick-up truck has an engine issue and needs to be replaced. A discussion was held on whether to repair or replace due to the age. A motion was passed to replace the pick-up truck. Retreat topics were discussed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session was called at 11:54 a.m. and adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED

With no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned.

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • October 2022

	This month	YTD 2022	YTD 2021
Revenue	\$2,183,734	\$27,342,459	\$25,577,735
Power Bill Expense	1,365,224	15,556,878	14,367,735
Operation & Maint. Expense	752,302	6,472,914	5,627,242
Depreciation Expense	217,312	2,122,471	2,021,079
Interest Expense	119,281	1,146,885	1,163,294
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	2,454,119	25,299,148	23,179,350
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	(270,385)	2,043,311	2,398,385
Other Margins	27,469	213,724	159,918
TOTAL MARGINS	\$(242,916)	\$2,257,035	\$2,558,303

