



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

West Central Electric Cooperative

February 2016

ElectricNews

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

Ackermann relives Honor Flight and time spent with co-op Youth Tour delegates in D.C.

In the early morning darkness, a bus pulled away and headed out of Sedalia, bound for Kansas City International Airport. This bus carried precious cargo -- 40 United States veterans excited and anxious to be a part of the Show-Me Honor Flight #17.

"It was incredible," WCE member Richard Ackermann, of Concordia, said of the June 2015 trip.



Ackermann

Upon arrival in Baltimore, the veterans were given a hero's welcome including water cannons, members of the military and a choir.

"They had one person from every branch of the service to greet us," Ackermann said.

"And when we came into the lobby, there were about 300 people cheering us on."

Ackermann, who spent six years in a Naval attack bomber squadron and served in Viet Nam, said he was touched by the entire experience. Perhaps the most touching, however, was his visit to The Wall.

"My guardian (Honor Flight members who are in a wheelchair are assigned their own host for the day) said I should look up some of my buddies I lost in Viet Nam," Ackermann said. "Well, it is really hard to do that because your mind just puts that out because they're gone, but he convinced me to go and look at the directory."

"We found two of them -- Nichols and Abernathy. He took out his phone and copied where they were on the wall. He pushed me over to Nichols, and it brought back a lot of memories. It was kind of tough," he said. "Then we went on down and found Abernathy, and I lost it; absolutely lost it. He said, 'That's all right. That's why we are here; to say goodbye and remember.'"

Ackermann said as he stared at the bottom of the wall and his comrade's

name, he felt an arm on his shoulder.

"This lady came up behind me and she put her arm on

"This lady came up behind me and she put her arm on my shoulder and said, 'I lost a son there, too,' and of course I was crying and turned around, and she was Vietnamese. And that's all she said."

--Richard Ackerman

my shoulder and said, 'I lost a son there, too,' and of course I was crying and turned around, and she was Vietnamese. And that's all she said," he recalled. "I had a different understanding then. They were fighting for their country as we were fighting for ours, and they didn't want to be at war any more than we did, but when their government says, 'go,'



WITH HONOR...Members of the Show-Me Honor Flight #17, including WCE member and Viet Nam veteran Richard Ackerman, visit the Washington, D.C. war memorials.



A CHANCE MEETING...Richard Ackermann, WCE member from Concordia, spent some time during his Honor Flight trip to Washington, D.C. visiting with Youth Tour delegates he met at the World War II Memorial. Ackerman said he was thoroughly impressed with the youth and their respect for the veterans.

you go. And it helped me heal some; my anger against the Vietnamese."

Ackermann said after that, he could look at The Wall no longer.

"We had to get out of there," he said.

As they moved on to the other memorials in the area, a chance meeting with some outstanding cooperative youth made what Ackermann called an impression that he will long remember.

"We saw the Youth Tour kids at the World War II Memorial. So many of the them came up

and thanked us for serving and giving so much," he said. "It was heartwarming to know that teenagers cared so much. They all came up and the guys were all giving me handshakes and the girls were all giving me hugs and I think I spent 20-30 minutes just saying hello to them. They gave me hat pins and stickers that said their state on it. It was phenomenal."

After a long, hard day, the Honor Flight members were ready to head for

home. They returned to KCI around 11 p.m. and boarded their bus for Sedalia. The surprises weren't over, however.

"When we got to I-70 and 65 Highway, it was almost 1 a.m. and we were met by about 50 motorcycles including police and sheriff's department," he said. "They escorted us to Sedalia where there were people lined up and down Ohio Street at 1 a.m., elbow to elbow. It was absolutely

beautiful."

Ackermann said he believes every veteran should be able to see the memorials in Washington,

D.C. and is thankful to the Honor Flight program.

"It was incredible," he said. "The friendships you make with the others that went is just like you have another family. It was lightning to the heart."

For more information on the Show-Me Honor Flight program, contact Pam Burlingame at 816-352-0344 or pam-bb@hotmail.com, or Charlie Guthrie at 660-631-9355.

"So many of the kids came up and thanked us for serving and giving so much. It was heartwarming to know that teenagers cared so much."

--Richard Ackerman on a chance meeting with Rural Electric Youth Tour delegates in Washington, D.C.

2016 WCEC and State Technical College Electrical Distribution Systems Scholarship

I. General Description

West Central Electric Cooperative, Higginsville, Missouri, will accept applications from students interested in pursuing an Associate of Applied Science degree in Electrical Distribution Systems at Linn State Technical College, Linn, Missouri. This program provides for students a two-year scholarship in a quality college training program, a two-year college degree, and on-the-job training. General provisions of the scholarship are as follows:

II. Eligibility Requirements

- Applicant should reside in the West Central Electric Cooperative service area.
- Applicant shall be expected to participate in an interview with the cooperative general manager and/or staff representatives in April of the application year.
- Applicant should be a student in good academic standing with a minimum 2.5 high school cumulative GPA, or GED with 260 minimum score.
- Applicant should be admitted as a full-time student to State Technical College, and be accepted into the State Technical College Electrical Distribution Systems Program.
- Applicant should attend Linn State Technical College commencing during the Fall semester immediately following receipt of the application.
- Applicant is required to complete a summer internship at West Central Electric Cooperative the summer semester between the first and second years of the academic program.

III. Selection Criteria and Award of Scholarship

A. To be considered, applicants must forward a complete application by the scholarship application deadline of April 1, 2016. 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 State Technical College. 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 \$2,400 annually; \$1,200 is applied to recipient's account at State Technical College 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 \$4,800 maximum per recipient.

IV. Application

Deadline for application to assure consideration for the next following academic year is April 1, 2016. Please submit the following to be considered:

- State Technical College letter of acceptance
- 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, 2016. 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

- 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.
- 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.
- Recipient must comply with State Technical College'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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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).
- 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, 2016.

2016 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 graduates who are or were active 4-H members at the time of their high school graduation and who desire to attend college 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 at least one \$1,000 scholarship (\$500 per semester) to a student beginning his/her freshman year in college. This student may reapply for additional grants for their next three years of study. The amount of these grants will 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

- The applicant will be selected without regard to sex, race, creed or color.
- The applicant must attend a high school in West Central Electric's service area, or have a parent or legal guardian who is a current West Central Electric member.
- A cumulative 3.0 or better grade point average is required.
- A minimum ACT score of 18 is required.
- Participation in 4-H at the time of high school graduation is required.
- 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, a county livestock specialist etc.)
- A high school transcript must accompany the application.
- 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 # 5 on this application.
- 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. Winners who have not included a photo with their application will appear as "photo not available" in all publicity materials.
- Finalists will be required to participate in an interview with the scholarship committee.
- All scholarship applications MUST BE TYPED.
- 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.

M. All of the above requirements, except item I, must be met for an application to be considered

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. 19, 2016. Send applications to Heather Hoflander, West Central Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 452, Higginsville, MO 64037.

VI. On-line applications

Scholarship applications are available on line 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@wcecoop.com or mail a photograph along with your transcript. Applications submitted via email must arrive by 4:30 p.m. Feb. 19, 2016.

VII. Finalist Notification

Interviews will be scheduled for the evening of Wednesday, March 16, 2016. All students applying for this scholarship should tentatively plan for an interview on this date. Those scheduled for interviews will be notified by Monday, March 7, 2016 by both phone and mail.

2016 West Central Electric Cooperative Scholarship

I. Amount of Scholarship

This year, up to 20 high school seniors will receive a \$500 West Central Electric Cooperative scholarship for use at any college, university, trade or technical school.

II. Selection Criteria

A. The applicant will be selected without regard to sex, race, creed 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. A minimum ACT score of 18 is required.

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. Winners who have not included a photo with their application will appear as "photo not available" in all publicity materials.

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.)

J. All of the above requirements, except item G, must be met for the application to be considered

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 18, 2016.

Send applications to: Heather Hoflander, West Central Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 452, Higginsville, MO 64037.

V. On-line applications

Scholarship applications are available on line 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@wcecoop.com or mail a photograph along with your transcript. Applications submitted via email must arrive by 4:30 p.m. March 18, 2015.

VI. Winners' Notification

Recipients of the scholarship will be notified by May 1, 2016 by mail.

Scholarship money is available to area high school seniors

Each year, West Central Electric Cooperative makes an investment in the future of our communities by awarding thousands of dollars in scholarships to area high school graduating seniors.

Three different scholarships are available through WCE; the West Central Electric Cooperative Scholarship, the John & Kathryn English Memorial Scholarship and the West Central Electric Cooperative and State Technical College Electrical Distributions Systems Scholarship.

The **John and Kathryn English Memorial Scholarship** Trust is a renewable scholarship given to seniors active in 4-H. Scholarship amounts depend on the current status of the trust fund.

The **West Central Electric Scholarship** is a one-time award given to graduating seniors each year. The number of scholarships awarded depends on the availability of funds. WCE will award up to twenty \$500 scholarships each year.

The **West Central Electric Cooperative and State Technical College Electrical Distribution Systems Scholarship Program** provides a two-year college scholarship to a student interested in pursuing an Associate of Applied Science degree in Electrical Distribution Systems at State Technical College, Linn, Missouri. This scholarship provides for students a quality college training program, a two-year college degree, and on-the-job training.

Details on all three scholarship programs can be found in this newsletter or online at www.westcentralelectric.coop. Applications are available online, at either of WCE's two offices, from area high school counselors, or at the Jackson, Johnson and Lafayette county University Outreach and Extension Centers.

For more information on West Central Electric Cooperative's scholarship programs, contact WCE at 800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942.

Scholarship applications are available
from the following places:

- ◆at your high school counselor's office,
- ◆online at www.westcentralelectric.coop,
- ◆from West Central Electric Cooperative's Higginsville office or Oak Grove office.

Call WCE at 1-800-491-3803
for more information.

IMPORTANT
DEADLINES

Students entering the

2016 Rural Electric Youth Tour contest

Essays must be turned in to the Higginsville office no later than 4:30 p.m. February 12, 2016.

Essays submitted via email must arrive no later than 4:30 p.m. Feb. 12, 2016.

Applications for the

2016 John & Kathryn English Memorial Scholarship

must be postmarked no later than Feb. 19, 2016.

Applications submitted via email must arrive no later than 4:30 p.m. Feb. 19, 2016.

Applications for the

2016 West Central Electric Cooperative Scholarship

must be postmarked no later than March 18, 2016.

Applications submitted via email must arrive no later than 4:30 p.m. March 18, 2016.

Applications for the

2016 WCE and LSTC Electrical Distributions System Scholarship

Must be postmarked no later than April 1, 2016.

Applications submitted via email must arrive no later than 4:30 p.m. April 1, 2016.

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

From the Boardroom...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held November 24, 2015

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: Densil Allen, Jr., Max Swisegood, Clark Bredehoeft, Dale Jarman, Richard Strobel, Robert Simmons, Sandra Streit and Jeremy Ahmann. Absent was Stan Rhodes. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray and Shawn Battagler, general counsel.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After discussion, the agenda was approved as amended.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The unapproved minutes of the regular meeting of the board of directors held Oct. 29, 2015 were approved.

REVIEW OF EXPENDITURES FOR OCTOBER

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

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following October 2015 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; the written monthly Construction, Retirement, Maintenance and Operations Report.

SAFETY REPORT

Gray reported no lost-time accidents during the month.

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.

RESOLUTION AMENDING NRECA 401(k) PENSION PLAN

The board adopted a resolution amending the NRECA 401(k) plan.

N.W. ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE, INC. REPORT

Swisegood and Gray reported their attendance at the NW board meeting and highlights including policy review, AMEC teachers' education, AECL CEO search, fuel prices, NW manager's update at AECL, rate discussions and a long-range forecast.

AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft reported his attendance at the AMEC meeting and highlights including: CEO report on the status of Joann Emerson, NRECA update, political activities in Jefferson City, online statewide outage map, personnel changes, Rural Missouri activities and the AMEC annual meeting.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray reported on the security upgrades at the Oak Grove office, a change in the bill drop location at F&C Bank, Cooperative Building Solutions discussions, planned meetings and presentation to the board, and a discussion regarding policies on using contractors. He also presneted a request for a contribution to NRECA. A donation of \$250 to NRECA International was approved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Directors discussed board retreat topics.

NEW BUSINESS

Directors discussed a proposed form of manager's contract.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Directors met in executive session and returned to the regular meeting at the conclusion. Following the executive session, it was reported that the manager is directed to implement adjustments to the expenditures affecting payroll consistent with proposed recommendations.

MEETING ADJOURNED

FINANCIAL REPORT • *Statement of Operations* • October 2015

	This month	YTD 2015	YTD 2014
Revenue	1,686,500	21,195,131	21,816,763
Power Bill Expense	1,194,673	13,528,148	13,097,058
Opertion & Maint. Expense	101,687	2,295,352	2,114,401
Depreciation Expense	161,908	1,593,757	1,525,759
Interest Expense	<u>159,629</u>	<u>1,086,084</u>	<u>1,123,710</u>
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	1,617,897	18,503,341	17,860,928
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	(252,904)	21,536	1,299,425
Other Margins	<u>4,073</u>	<u>139,649</u>	<u>113,887</u>
TOTAL MARGINS	(248,831)	161,185	1,413,312

2015 Member Appreciation Day winners:

\$25 Energy Certificates

Robin Scott, Oak Grove	David Kesinger, Warrensburg
Mary Herman, Oak Grove	William Limback, Concordia
Martha Hill, Bates City	Joyce Heide, Warrensburg
Sam Poindexter, Bates City	Jerry Bryant, Concordia

Willie Wiredhand Ornaments

Dean Evatt, Napoleon	Dean Evatt, Napoleon
Wendell Specker, Odessa	Wendell Specker, Odessa
Norman Goetz, Warrensburg	Norman Goetz, Warrensburg
William Vance, Knob Noster	William Vance, Knob Noster

Why keep power lines in harm's way?

High winds and icy conditions can cause tree limbs to fall on power lines, triggering outages. Although West Central Electric linemen are on call around the clock and respond quickly to problems, some folks ask a simple question: Why keep power lines in harm's way?

There are two ways electricity can be delivered to a home: through overhead or underground power lines. Although underground lines may seem attractive during storms since the lines are not exposed to extreme weather, the technology doesn't always make sense for electric cooperatives focused on affordability. In some states, for example, installing power lines underground costs double the amount per foot compared to overhead.

Most underground lines nationally are found in subdivisions where developers request and pay for the option for aesthetic reasons or to comply with local statutes. A high concentration of homes in these areas helps spread out the expense. But the bulk of the nation's cooperative energy (including that provided to subdivisions) continues to be delivered via overhead lines—16 percent of the 2.5 million miles of distribution lines owned and maintained by electric co-ops across the nation are found underground. Cooperatives are not-for-profit, selecting distribution methods with two goals in mind: keeping electricity affordable and reliable for consumers.

There are pros and cons to both forms of power distribution. For instance, underground facilities are more reliable during storms and generally require less right-of-way maintenance because there are no trees, brush, and other vegetation to clear away.

However, faults in underground power lines are not easy to track down and fix. Studies comparing the increased cost of underground lines against their benefits showed underground savings did not outweigh the heavy initial cost of installation.

"If a tree falls on a line, you can normally drive down the line, see the problem, and get to work restoring power," said Operations Manager Randy Burkeybile. "The same holds for repairing broken insulators and crossarms—if you see it, you can fix it. But underground lines are tough to troubleshoot. You can't find a problem with your eyes — you have to search harder for it, tracking it down based on where the power flow stops. Then a line crew has to dig a hole to reach the spot before repairs can be made."

For most cooperative consumers, affordable overhead lines will remain the norm, at least for now.

Source: NRECA, Hi-Line Engineering, Flint Energies, Maquoketa Valley Rural Electric Cooperative

Megan McKoy-Noe writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.