



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

West Central Electric Cooperative

May 2016

# ElectricNews

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

## It's Electrical Safety Month

It's May – and West Central Electric is celebrating National Electrical Safety Month. While safety for our members is top priority year-round, Electrical Safety Month is a time to acknowledge the importance of safety excellence. Awareness and education can save lives.

### 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.

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 acci-

dently

making contact with a power line or other electrical equipment can be dangerous and in some cases, even deadly.



**A STORIED CAREER...**And there were lots of stories to tell when WCE Serviceman Eric Kirchhoff officially entered retirement March 25 after a 36-year career at the cooperative that saw him performing nearly every duty a lineman could perform. (See page 4.)



Fahrmeier

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 English Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce this year's winner, Samuel Fahrmeier of Wellington, has all that and more.

Following an application and inter-

## Fahrmeier is 2016 English Scholar

Kappelman, Sions, Barnett, McVey, Limback, Rumsey and Sperry also receive funds

view process, Fahrmeier was named the 2016 John and Kathryn English Memorial Scholarship winner, and will receive a four-year, renewable scholarship worth a potential \$4,000.

Even with a packed schedule including a variety of school and community activities, as well as self-employment, Fahrmeier maintains excellent grades, and remains active in his 4-H club, regarding it as an important part of his life. While involved in 4-H, Fahrmeier has served as president of his club, was chosen to attend Missouri Agri-Business Academy as one of the top 30 sophomores in agriculture in the

state of Missouri, and has received the Danforth "I-Dare-You" Award.

"At Missouri Agri-Business Academy, I made many close friends and learned a great deal about the aspects of agriculture beyond production," he said. "These experiences expanded my view of agriculture."

Fahrmeier said the Danforth "I-Dare-You" Award is one of the highlights of his 4-H career.

"Only one person in our county receives this award each year, and it is also special because both my mother and father received this award when they were in 4-H," he said. "I was chal-

lenged by this book to be the best I can be and to serve others."

Fahrmeier is the son of Lynn and Donna Fahrmeier. He attends Wellington-Napoleon High School, and is a 10-year member of Napoleon Clover Leaf 4-H Club. He plans to attend the University of Missouri-Columbia to study plant sciences and crop management, and then return to the family farm.

The John & Kathryn English Memorial Scholarship was made possible by former West Central Electric Cooperative board member John

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Kappelman



Sions



Barnett



McVey



Limback



Rumsey



Sperry



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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

*Fahrmeier is 2016 English Scholar...*

## Kappelman, Sions, Barnett, McVey, Limback, Rumsey, Sperry also receive funds from trust

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English and his wife, Kathryn, who created the trust to assist graduating 4-H members with their educational expenses.

The committee also chose to award several one-time scholarships to seven outstanding applicants including a \$1,000 scholarship to Chantel Kappelman of Higginsville; a \$750 scholarship to Eric Sions of Odessa; a \$300 scholarship to Neal Barnett of Wellington, Dillon McVey of Alma and Kylie Limback of Waverly; and a \$250 scholarship to Taylor Rumsey of Higginsville and Sarah Sperry of Oak Grove.

**CHANTEL KAPPELMAN**

Kappelman has been involved with Hitt 4-H Club for 14 years as both a regular member and a Clover Kid. She will attend Northwest Missouri State University to study agriculture business and accounting.

Kappelman is known for raising rabbits, and has won Senior Rabbit Showmanship three times at the county fair. She was chosen as the Lafayette County 4-H queen at last year's fair.

She is the daughter of Bart and Annette Kappelman of Higginsville.

**ERIC SIONS**

Sions has been a member of 40-ville 4-H Club for nine years, and has served in various offices at both the club and county levels.

He was named a winner of the Danforth "I-Dare-You" Award, and participates in aerospace as well as serving as a junior leader and mentor for the project.

Sions is the son of Roy and Julie Sions of Odessa. He will attend Longview Community College and then transfer to Missouri S&T. He plans to study civil and mechanical engineering.

**NEAL BARNETT**

Barnett is a 10-year member of Napoleon Clover Leaf 4-H Club where he has excelled in his beef projects, winning awards such as Grand Champion Bred and Owned Steer and Outstanding Senior Beef Showman.

He is the son of James and Karla

Barnett of Wellington, and plans to attend Northwest State University to study agriculture business.

**DILLON MCVEY**

McVey is an 11-year member of Alma 4-H Club for which he has served as president for five years. He says he appreciates the leadership skills, public-speaking skills and responsibility he has learned from his years in 4-H.

McVey is the son of Dee McVey of Alma. He plans to attend College of the Ozarks or Northwest Missouri State University and study agronomy.

**KYLIE LIMBACK**

A nine-year member of Alma 4-H Club, Limback has spent many years raising and showing cattle. She has garnered several Grand Champion Carcass awards as well as Beef Showmanship.

Limback is the daughter of Kurt and Michelle Limback of Waverly. She will attend Central Methodist University and study pre-medicine.

**TAYLOR RUMSEY**

A 10-year member of Hazel Dell 4-H Club, Rumsey has held the office of vice president, and spent many hours performing community service with her club. She has also taken several projects to the Missouri State Fair.

Rumsey is the daughter of Dan and Stacey Rumsey of Higginsville. Her plans for college are to attend Central Methodist University and study business finance.

**SARAH SPERRY**

Sperry has been a member of the Young Sportsmen and Range Masters 4-H Club for nearly two years, and has served as vice president and secretary of the group. She has excelled in archery, and has qualified for the state shoot. She says one of her most important 4-H activities is her work with Harvesters. Sperry says 4-H is not just about winning awards, but also giving back to the community.

She is the daughter of Curtis and Sharon Sperry of Oak Grove. She will attend Graceland University and study biology and forensic science.

## 2016 West Central Electric Cooperative Nominating Committee

Following is a list of the members named to the 2016 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 12, 2016 to nominate individuals to be placed on the official ballot. Nominees will be voted on at the annual meeting Aug. 5, 2016 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

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*\*Terms will expire for District 1 Director Max Swisegood, District 2 Director Stan Rhodes and District 4 Director Sandra Streit. Members will elect ONE director each from District 1, District 2 and District 4.*

**District III**

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

Gary Bell  
1048 NE 121 Rd.  
Warrensburg, MO 64093  
660-747-6821

**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

## 2016 RURAL ELECTRIC



Youth Tour Winner

*Abby Bertz*



Youth Tour Winner

*Alli Bertz*



Youth Tour Winner

*Chance Riddle*

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

HIGGINSVILLE, Mo. – Three area high school students are preparing to pack their bags for a week in Washington, D.C.

Abby Bertz and Alli Bertz of Odessa High School and Chance Riddle of Warrensburg 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 2016 competition participated in the second round April 7 at West Central Electric Cooperative's headquarters in Higginsville where they delivered their essays during the oral competition. The top three winners received the trips to the National Rural Electric Youth Tour.

West Central's delegates, their teachers and families will be invited to participate in Family Capital Day June 10 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 90-plus-member delegation will travel to Washington, D.C. on June 11. 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 all approximately 1,500 delegates from 44 states, and a day on Capitol Hill where students can meet with their senators and representatives.

A total of 51 entries were received from six different schools.

## *Delegates get psyched for CYCLE!*

Local students Nathan Feldman, Trisha Everhart, and Tiffany Pence, all of Crest Ridge High School, Isabelle Drake of Santa Fe High School and Katie Haston of Lafayette County C-I High School, will attend the Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience in Jefferson City July 20-22.

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. Past speakers at CYCLE have included Darrell Scott, whose daughter, Rachel, was killed in the shootings at Columbine High School in 1999 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 Secretary Robert Simmons (back left), Board President Densil Allen, Jr. (front left) and Rep. Glen Kolkmeier (far right). Winners are: (l-r) Nathan Feldman, Katie Haston, Trisha Everhart, Isabelle Drake and Tiffany Pence.



From the Boardroom...

Regular February meeting of the Board of Directors held February 25, 2016

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After discussion, the agenda was approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The unapproved minutes of the regular meeting of the board of directors held Jan. 28, 2016, were approved.

REVIEW OF EXPENDITURES FOR JANUARY

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

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following January 2016 reports were approved: Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement including the Financial Statistical Report with month and budget comparisons and statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, and KWH sales; Treasurer's Report and the written monthly Construction, Retirement, Maintenance and Operations Report.

SAFETY REPORT

Gray presented the safety report for the month of January.

MEMBERSHIPS

The applications submitted for membership in the cooperative were accepted and approved. Directors reviewed a list of requests for termination of membership in the cooperative which, along with their requests that their billings be deducted from their deposits and the remainder, if any, be refunded to them, were accepted and approved.

AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft reported on his attendance at the AMEC meeting. Highlights of the meeting included action on initiative petitions and legislative activity.

NRECA INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM

Gray discussed the program and the board resolved to pay the salary of any linemen selected to the NRECA International program during the time they are participating in the program.

NRECA ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

Simmons, Bredehoeft, Strobel and Ahmann reported on their attendance at the NRECA annual meeting. Topics of interest included solar and distributed generation, education for board members, technology, rate design, industry trends, resolutions and the United States Supreme Court decision on CCP.

WRITE-OFFS

The board resolved to write off bad debt in the amount of \$33,217.75.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The board approved the Strategic Plan as presented.

THREE-PHASE RATES

The board approved proposed rate changes to three-phase rates effective May 1, 2016.

FACILITIES

Gray presented a new architect proposal for consideration.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray provided his Manager's Report for the month. He reported on the following: rate implementation and notice to members, upcoming events, information on large-use members, net metering and State Fair Foundation. Directors approved a \$500 donation to the State Fair Foundation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

MEETING ADJOURNED

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • January 2016			
	This month	YTD 2016	YTD 2015
Revenue	2,693,597	2,693,597	2,861,473
Power Bill Expense	1,657,441	1,657,441	1,481,930
Operation & Maint. Expense	201,450	201,450	203,138
Depreciation Expense	163,576	163,576	155,547
Interest Expense	89,175	89,175	109,073
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	2,111,642	2,111,642	1,949,688
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	329,205	329,205	647,218
Other Margins	12,093	12,093	5,010
TOTAL MARGINS	341,298	341,298	652,228

It's Electrical Safety Month

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- 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.

For more tips and information about electrical safety, visit [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org).

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.

Kirchhoff retires after 36-year lineman career

The lineman field was a much different world back in January 1980 when Eric Kirchhoff first went to work at West Central Electric Cooperative. Today's technology was unheard of, and most administrative duties from making an outage report to filling in a time sheet was all done by hand.

"When I was first hired, we had three bucket trucks so there was a lot more climbing," he said. "But a lot of that has changed now, and all for the better."

Many things changed over the years,

locates, outages, security light repairs, connecting and disconnecting services, collections and many other issues that came up with members on the eastern portion of WCE's service territory.

In many instances, Kirchhoff's knowledge was put to work for cooperative members across the country as he responded to the call for help during times of disaster. From ice storms in Iowa to hurricanes on the Gulf Coast, Kirchhoff was always willing to help out his fellow cooperative linemen and their members far and wide. He was part of crews that rotated in and out of Louisiana following Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The hurricane was the costliest natural disaster, as well as one of the five deadliest hurricanes in the history of the United States.

"It was amazing. I had never seen anything like that before," Kirchhoff said of the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. "There were homes that were supposed to be hurricane-proof that were nothing but the foundation.

"We were there for 11 days, and the hotel had no air conditioning or water for three days," he said.

Although good meals were catered in, much of the situation was less than ideal. Those there to help rebuild their fellow cooperatives shaved and brushed their teeth by flashlight at night and kept an eye out for snakes and gators by day.

"It was definitely not like anything I have ever been around before," he said.

Eric estimates he has worked with hundreds of linemen throughout the years, both as a volunteer traveling to help other cooperatives in times of disaster and here at home when West Central Electric was the one in trouble.

"I really appreciate all the guys I have worked with over the years – both employees here at our cooperative and other cooperatives that have come in to help us," he said. "So many of them, and they are all good guys."

While ending his career as a cooperative lineman, he will continue his career as a grandpa, enjoying his three grandchildren and preparing to welcome another this fall. Eric and his wife, Gail, have two sons and daughters-in-law.



Kirchhoff

but not Kirchhoff's unwavering dedication to the cooperative and its members. Kirchhoff started his career as an apprentice lineman, and achieved journeyman status on March 1, 1981. Throughout his career, he has performed every function a lineman could perform from cutting brush in the right-of-ways to working on both the underground and overhead construction crews.

The last few years for Kirchhoff were spent as a serviceman, taking care of