



West Central Electric Cooperative

August 2017

# ElectricNews

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



## Delegates return from D.C.

Stillwell, Fahrmeier, Aversman agree YT was 'trip of a lifetime'

Even before they split up at the end of their week-long adventure to our nation's capital, the 2017 Youth Tour delegates were already missing each other.

"Everybody on this trip was just so great," delegate Eilizabeth Fahrmeier remarked on the drive home.

"There were lots of tears the night before we left," delegate Caitlyn Aversman recalled. "The other delegates that I met on this trip really surprised me. They are the best friends that I have."

Youth from across the state gathered in

Jefferson City June 9 for a banquet and orientation before boarding a plane for Washington, D.C. Delegates saw sights that will change them forever, and made friends that will last a lifetime.

Youth Tour is open to all students who will be juniors during the 2017-18 school year who attend a school in the WCE service area or have parents or legal guardians who are current members of the cooperative. For more information on how you can become a delegate, contact WCE at 800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942.

## Don't landscape near cooperative equipment

They're big. They're often green. They generally sit on concrete, often within housing developments. Some folks don't like these "electrical boxes" (a common nickname for pad-mount transformers) and try to hide them with bushes, fences, or flower beds. But stay clear: even small additions around pad-mount transformers create hazards.

To improve aesthetics of new neighborhoods, developers often put in underground power lines. While this eliminates utility poles and overhead wires, it requires installing pad-mounted transformers in some front yards. Unfortunately some homeowners, concerned about curb appeal, attempt to screen pad-mount transformers from view—creating an unsafe situation for all concerned, including West Central Electric Cooperative lineworkers.

"We realize landscaping represents an investment of time and money," said Line Superintendent Randy Burkeybile. "We respect the effort and care our members invest in making their properties attractive. However, landscaping around electrical equipment interferes with our ability to deliver reliable power."

### NO LANDSCAPING ON OR AROUND PAD-MOUNT TRANSFORMERS

WCE requires a completely clear space in front of the lid (the side with the lock) of the pad-mount transformer. Linemen repair units while they are energized so homeowners don't experience an interruption in service. To ensure safety, they use an 8-foot fiberglass hot stick that requires at least 10 feet of "elbow room" in front of the access panel.

"In addition, when the cooperative performs routine maintenance on the units,

or when repairs are necessary, landscaping that interferes with workers' ability to access the transformer or complete required work may require removal," Burkeybile said.

"In some cases, consumers may leave the space in front of the transformer clear, but grow vegetation on the other three sides," he said. "This invites other problems. For example, plant roots can interfere with its operation. Overheating is another big concern that can cause service interruptions when air circulation is compromised."

Pad-mounted transformers surrounded by vegetation or a structure may overheat and cause service interruptions when the air circulation around them is compromised.

### DON'T PLANT IN RIGHT-OF-WAYS

Members should also be aware that plantings along rights-of-way—strips of land owned by a member on which the co-op places poles, wires, and other equipment like pad-mount transformers—could be damaged by co-op vehicles.

"Occasionally, we may need to repair a transformer, and eventually transformers and poles must be upgraded and replaced," Burkeybile said. "To perform this work, line trucks must be driven into the right-of-way and the transformer lifted out or the pole replaced. Although we try to minimize the impact, plants will be damaged if they're in the way."

The right-of-way area includes 15 feet on either side of the lines from ground to sky. Nothing should be planted within this area.

"Keep in mind that even if a tree or shrub is planted 15 feet from the lines, as



This gnome home looks cute, but it is actually very dangerous to plant or decorate on or around meters or pad-mount transformers. Cooperative access is compromised and plants or decorations on or close to the transformers can restrict air circulation and cause them to overheat.

it grows, it will encroach on that right-of-way space," he said.

### DON'T ATTACH THINGS TO POLES

"We also remind people not to attach signs, birdhouses, satellite dishes, basketball goals or anything to power

poles," he said. "This can also pose a hazard to linemen working on poles or the wires above."

### CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

Because underground service contin-

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# Missouri's Youth Tour delegation travels to D.C. on 'trip of a lifetime'

What makes electric cooperatives different from other utilities is that "giving something back to the community" is part of their business plan. Why do electric cooperatives bring high school students to Washington, D.C.? Because it is important to learn about the political process to interact with your government. Students walk away from this week a better leader and with a sense that they can make a difference.

"I have no idea how to start telling you what this opportunity and experience has meant to me," delegate Caitlyn Aversman said. "Thank you for sending me on Youth Tour. I will forever be grateful."

In June, Caitlyn, who will be a senior at Santa Fe High School this fall, joined fellow WCE delegates Hanna Stillwell of Warrensburg High School and Elizabeth Fahrmeier of Wellington-Napoleon High School, and more than 100 other youth from across Missouri on the national Rural Electric Youth Tour. The tour brought together more than 1,600 high school students from across the nation.

Time and again, delegates both past and present choose the same words to describe their experience, calling Youth Tour "the trip of a lifetime," and basking in the experiences and friendships they gained while in our nation's capital. "Going in, I didn't believe it when they said Youth Tour was 'the trip of a lifetime,' but by the end of the first day, I knew what they meant. Youth Tour was such a blessing, and truly is the trip of a lifetime. I wouldn't trade it for the world," Fahrmeier said.

More than 50,000 students from rural areas and small towns across America have participated in this unique program, with participants going on to become

doctors, teachers, aircraft designers and even top legislators in the U.S. Senate. Delegates also return with a new appreciation of America and her history.

"The places that I saw will be forever engraved in my memory," Aversman said.

"Seeing our nation's capital was breathtaking," Stillwell said.

WCE has sent 61 area students to our nation's capital since reestablishing the Youth Tour program at the cooperative in 1992.

WCE Youth Tour delegate Caitlyn Aversman (right) and new friend Lauren Harris of SeMaNo Electric Cooperative visit Mt. Vernon. Caitlyn said the best piece of advice she got before going on the trip was from 2016 WCE delegate and Missouri YLC representative Alli Bertz. "She said, 'Sit by someone new every day,'" Aversman said.



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**--Elizabeth Fahrmeier  
2017 Youth Tour Delegate**

WCE delegate Elizabeth Fahrmeier (center) and fellow delegates get last-minute instructions before heading to the airport for Youth Tour 2017.



Missouri's delegation at the White House.



WCE delegates Caitlyn Aversman and Hanna Stillwell (front row, far right) and their fellow Youth Tour delegates arrive at the airport.



**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](http://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

**West Central  
Electric  
Cooperative  
offices will  
be closed  
Monday,  
Sept. 4 in  
observance  
of Labor Day.  
Have a safe  
holiday!**

## **REMINDER TO OUR MEMBERS Regarding Capital Credits...**

• 2017 capital credits will appear as credits on your July billing statement.

• If a member has multiple accounts, the credits will be applied to the largest balance first (based on the previous month) then the next account until fully applied. If there are no current balances on the account, the credit will be applied to the primary account (that holds the main membership).

• If a member has multiple accounts, and would like the credit applied to a different account than the one determined by the cooperative, members may call the office and request a transfer to the account of their choice.

• Members who purchased electricity from the cooperative in 1997 or 1998 may receive capital credits. If you do not see a credit on your account, and feel you should have, you may contact Sandy Starke at 1-800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942.

• Inactive, non-members' checks will be mailed July 17, 2017.

## Don't landscape near cooperative equipment

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ues from the transformer to your home, you should never dig anywhere in your yard without first calling 811 to find out

where cables are buried.

If you have questions about landscaping near cooperative equipment and right-of-ways, contact WCE at 800-491-

3803 or 816-565-4942.

*Megan McKay-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.*

## Rural communities have a voice in Washington, cooperatives are looking out for their members

Given the incessant news out of Washington highlighting partisan bickering and gridlock in Congress, it can be hard to tell whether our elected leaders are listening and being responsive to the concerns of rural Americans. That's why America's electric cooperatives urged members to get out and vote in the last election and are now focused on advancing the interests of rural communities in our nation's capital. We've asked for a seat at the table—a request that's been met with some success.

Early this year, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), our national service organization in Washington, led a group of more than 40 organizations in sending a letter to President Trump asking him to make rural issues a top priority of his administration. "As you witnessed first-hand during the campaign, the issues facing rural America are no less significant than those facing urban parts of the country, but can be more easily overlooked because America's small towns and rural areas make up just 15 percent of the nation's population," the groups wrote.

To address this concern, the organizations urged the president to designate a senior member of the White House

staff to take point on rural issues or establish an office of rural policy within the Executive Office of the President. In response to this and other electric cooperative outreach efforts, the president in late April signed an executive order establishing an interagency Rural America Task Force to examine the issues facing rural America and identify actions needed to address them.

NRECA CEO Jim Matheson called the creation of the task force "a key step as we seek to develop rural communities economically. That includes implementing new energy technologies to meet tomorrow's energy needs, while also deploying broadband and other services to enhance daily lives throughout rural America."

Electric cooperatives also have been weighing in on another big topic in Washington: the need to improve the nation's aging infrastructure. Co-ops have told policymakers that they must look beyond merely repairing roads and bridges if a federal infrastructure initiative is going to meet the needs of rural communities. High on co-ops' list of priorities is closing the rural-urban digital divide by expanding rural access to high-speed Internet service, which Matheson calls "a key ingredient for a

healthy 21st century economy, particularly in rural areas."

Given this imperative, co-ops were very pleased when the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) appointed Matheson to serve on a newly created Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee. The mission of the panel, which held its inaugural meeting in April, is to advise and make recommendations to the FCC on how to accelerate the deployment of broadband by reducing and removing regulatory barriers to infrastructure investment. Matheson will work to ensure that rural needs are addressed.

This isn't to say that everything in Washington will go co-ops' way. The federal government is a massive bureaucracy with many interests vying for attention. But there's one thing you can count on: Electric cooperatives will fight to make their voices heard on Capitol Hill and within the many federal agencies that impact the quality of life in rural communities. They'll always strive to get a seat at the table.

*Dan Riedinger 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.*

## #cooprootsrundeep

*To honor the partnership between electric cooperatives and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, as well as to help celebrate their 75th anniversary, NRECA planted commemorative trees this summer at its Arlington, Va. headquarters and its Lincoln office. These trees are nourished by soil collected from the grounds of each of their member cooperatives.*

*Cooperatives were asked to provide a bag of soil and send it to NRECA headquarters for the project. WCE was proud to participate in this project to show that cooperative roots do run deep.*





# From the Boardroom...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held May 25, 2017

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

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After discussion, the agenda was approved.

### APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

### APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following April 2017 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, cash-flow management and KWH sales and the written monthly Construction, Retirement, Maintenance and Operations Report.

### SAFETY REPORT

Gray presented the monthly safety report.

### AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft reported on his attendance at the Executive Committee meeting of AMEC. Highlights included Amendment II lawsuit; AECL report given by David Tudor; Legislative Report given by Richard Moore; FEMA issues; Rural Missouri Update; training opportunities; new EPA administrator visit to Missouri; committee changes; lineman rodeo; award nominations; and AMEC financials.

### N.W. ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE, INC. REPORT

Gray and Swisegood reported their attendance at the recent board meeting and shared highlights including AECL update; software update proposal; REDLG loan; Brent Stewart legislative update; work at St. Joseph; renewables; managers meeting; territorial agreements; key account recognition discussion; Cleaver BBQ; political activities; financials; outage report; safety; and construction and operations.

### NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Battagler presented the report of the Nominating Committee.

### BYLAWS/POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Simmons gave the report of the Bylaw/Policy Committee. The committee presented recommendations for amendments to policies to be considered for approval at a later date. The Board discussed proposals.

### BYLAW AMENDMENT PROPOSAL

The board passed the following proposed bylaw change to be voted on at the Aug. 4, 2017 annual meeting: Article VII, Disposition of Revenues and Receipts, Section 1, paragraph 8, add the following sentence: "In addition, the Board of Directors may annually retire, on a similar discounted present value basis, the capital credit accounts of members who have disconnected from the service lines of the Cooperative, with unpaid accounts of any type . . ."

### OPERATION ROUND-UP

Because of time constraints, the Board decided to discuss Operation Roundup at the June board meeting.

### ANNUAL MEETING DISCUSSION

Gray discussed the annual meeting. Entertainment was discussed. The Board discussed the proposed bylaw amendment, meal options, and other details.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board entered into executive session, following which they returned to regular session.

### MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray presented his monthly Manager's Report. Items of interest included: update on improvements being made at headquarters; discussion regarding passing of former employee; and AECL Annual Meeting.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

### NEW BUSINESS

None.

### MEETING ADJOURNED

# Be efficient in the kitchen these last days of summer with some no bake recipes

Cooking in the summer can be unbearable, and the last thing you want to do on the hottest, most humid days is turn on the oven to make dinner. Your air conditioner works extra hard during summer months to keep your home cool, so why not give it a break with easy, efficient, no-bake recipes. The recipes below are meant to help you make a delicious meal for your family, without breaking a sweat!

### Tzatziki

This refreshing dip can be eaten with pita chips or veggies. You can also add it to some grilled chicken or veggies as a sauce, or even add it to a salad to make a creamy dressing! Here's the recipe:

### INGREDIENTS

2 cups (plus one tablespoon) 2 percent Greek yogurt  
1 cup cucumber grated  
1 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
3 cloves minced garlic  
3 tablespoons dill leaves (plus extra for garnish)  
Salt and pepper to taste

### DIRECTIONS

Add all the ingredients to a bowl, then stir gently to mix.

### Pita with Spiced Chickpea Salad and Whipped Feta

Spread the whipped feta into your pita, add the chickpea salad, and you have a delicious sandwich. Add grilled chicken or even a couple slices of smoked turkey or chicken breast for a heartier meal. Here's the recipe:

### INGREDIENTS

For the spiced chickpea salad:  
2 cans chickpeas  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
3 tablespoons lemon juice  
2 teaspoons cumin  
2 teaspoons dill  
2 teaspoons sumac  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon pepper  
1/2 teaspoon red chili flakes  
3 cloves garlic  
4 oz. cherry tomatoes  
1/2 cup chopped cucumber

1 small red onion finely diced  
1 tablespoon fresh dill  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro

### DIRECTIONS

Add chickpeas, olive oil, lemon juice and spices to a bowl, stir to combine. Allow the mixuttrue to sit for 15 minutes to one hour to let the flavors meld together.

Add the tomatoes, cucumber and onion. Add the fresh dill and cilantro, stir to combine.

### For the Whipped Feta:

6 oz. feta cheese  
2 oz. cream cheese  
1/4 cup olive oil  
Add feta and cream cheese to a blender, slowly drizzle the olive oil into the blender top until the mixture is creamy and smooth.

### Lemon Truffles

These quick and easy lemon truffles from Premeditated Leftovers is sure to satisfy any sweet tooth! Here's the recipe:

### INGREDIENTS

2 1/2 cups Lemon Cake mix  
8 tablespoons melted butter  
2 tablespoons lemon juice  
Zest of one large lemon

For Lemon Cake Mix:  
2 3/4 Cups cake flour  
1 3/4 cups fine white sugar  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
3/4 teaspoons salt  
Zest of two lemons

### DIRECTIONS

Combine the cake mix ingredient into a large bowl, stir gently to combine. Add the melted butter, lemon juice and lemon zest. Use your hands to combine until the flour is moist and flakey. Roll dough into two inch balls, roll in sugar and serve!

Remember, no-bake recipes are a great way to keep your kitchen cool during the summer and show off your culinary skills. These are just a few of my favorites, but you can find a wealth of no-bake recipes online. Stay cool, and happy cooking!



## UTILITY POLES ARE NOT BULLETIN BOARDS

Think before you post that sign!

Staples, nails and tacks used to hang signs and fliers create dangerous obstacles for electric lineworkers.

*Their jobs are dangerous enough – help us keep them safe!*



West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
A National Energy Cooperative

### FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • April 2016

	This month	YTD 2017	YTD 2016
Revenue	1,822,067	9,204,347	8,850,886
Power Bill Expense	1,180,381	5,398,154	5,542,237
Opertion & Maint. Expense	162,171	1,026,801	792,168
Depreciation Expense	172,077	683,718	658,252
Interest Expense	133,556	440,316	412,600
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	1,648,185	7,548,989	7,405,257
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	(131,697)	531,307	374,419
Other Margins	10,008	122,481	69,915
TOTAL MARGINS	(121,689)	653,788	444,334