



West Central Electric Cooperative

September 2019

# ElectricNews

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

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

## Allen stresses co-ops' drive to be different during annual meeting president's message

In his traditional message to the members gathered at West Central Electric Cooperative's annual meeting, WCE Board President Densil Allen, Jr. stressed cooperatives' quest to be different as one of the driving factors in keeping the business strong.

"How many companies can you think of that have merged, sold



Densil Allen, Jr.

out or just plain folded up over the years?" Allen asked members "I'll bet you can name several just in the few minutes I am speaking. But one company you are familiar with has been around for 80 years and still going strong. Your electric cooperative, and electric cooperatives across the nation are viable and strong for a variety of reasons that can all be summed up in one description – Deliberately Different."

Allen went on to describe how cooperatives make it their mission to support causes and issues that are important to members as well as working with community groups and organizations to make life better for local citizens.

"From elementary school safety programs to supporting our local senior centers, we want to make sure that we have something to offer every person of every age group, education level and socioeconomic status," Allen said. "We want our local senior citizens to have that warm meal and human connection when they are homebound, so we help provide meals

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**Electra makes her debut...**Member Services manager Brent Schlotzhauer answers questions from members regarding the cooperative's new electric vehicle, "Electra," a 2019 Chevy Bolt, during the 80th annual meeting Friday, Aug. 2 in Warrensburg. Electra drew crowds of curious members throughout the evening.

## Members participate in Annual Meeting

With no director races or bylaw amendments on the ballot, the Aug. 2, 2019 annual meeting was short and sweet with a total of 775 registered members and more than 1,300 in attendance.

### Director Election

All three directors with terms expiring ran unopposed for re-election, and were elected by acclamation. District 1 Director Max Swisegood, District 2 Director Stan Rhodes and District

4 Director Sandra Streit will all serve three-year terms.

### Other Meeting Highlights

Other highlights of the meeting included a presentation by Abby Fowler of Warrensburg High School. Fowler attended the 2019 Rural Electric Youth Tour as a representative of WCE.

In her essay titled, "Electric Superhero," Fowler described meeting a little girl dressed as Spiderman.

"I remember that encounter extraordinarily well. You see, I have always loved superhero films," she said. "These movies are celebrations of individuality, of the unique stories of a special hero, but they are also wonderful demonstrations of camaraderie and teamwork. The characters in these films help serve as encouragement and inspiration for the youth of America to not only be loyal and strong to themselves,

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After months of renovation, the Oak Grove office is back open. There are still a few things to wrap up, but the office is officially open for business.



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**District office:**  
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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

## Allen tells members cooperative intends to remain different

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and support fundraising efforts when our local senior centers come calling. We spend a lot of time educating not only our youngest citizens about how to stay safe around electricity, but also showing our older kids and those in the work force the dangers of electricity and what to do in situations involving things like downed power lines.”

Allen said contributing to the quality of education our local citizens have access to is important to the cooperative, which offers several scholarships for graduating seniors, and opportunities like Energy in Today’s Classroom for area teachers.

“Sending area high school students on the Rural Electric Youth Tour and to the Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience is a great way for us to help the young people of our communities broaden their horizons

and experiences beyond their small, rural towns. We want to equip these future leaders to be able to make good

Community Action Agency in purchasing school supplies each year to ease the burden on parents trying to provide

“How many of those businesses you were thinking of earlier have ever offered to give you their profits? I am guessing none...but that’s because we are different.”

--Densil Allen Jr., WCE Board President

decisions when the fate of our local communities is resting on their shoulders,” he said.

Making sure our members have the resources they need just to get through everyday life is another area Allen said the cooperative can lend its support.

“We assist Missouri Valley

everything their child needs to get a good start to the school year. We organized Operation Round Up so we can all work together to help supply local food pantries, boost local utility assistance funds and get projects to benefit local communities off the ground,” Allen said. “We want our children to

grow up in as healthy of a world as possible, and we want their parents to be able to afford to afford them the basics of a life with electricity. Therefore we support a diverse power portfolio that includes reliable, affordable clean coal as well as wind, hydro and solar power. We support the efforts of our power supplier, Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc., to take care of our land, our water supply, and even our osprey and monarch butterflies.

He also described safety and efficiency programs as well as returning profits to the members in the form of capital credits.

“How many of those businesses you were thinking of earlier have ever offered to give you their profits? I am guessing none...but that’s because we are different. Deliberately so. That’s how we have been for 80 years, and that is how we intend to stay,” he said.



Chelsea Rucker (left, pictured with her sister, Tera) was the winner of the girls’ bike and helmet.



Gavin Ellison was drawn as the winner of the boys’ bike and helmet.

## Incumbents re-elected, Allen will stay on as board president

Three incumbents were elected to serve for an additional three years during the business meeting at the 79th WCE Annual Meeting Aug. 3 in Warrensburg.

District 1 Director Max Swisegood, District 2 Director Stan Rhodes and District 4 Director Sandra Streit all ran unopposed and were elected by acclamation. During their re-organizational meeting, all officers retained their positions as voted on by the board. Densil Allen, Jr. of

Warrensburg will remain as president; Clark Bredehoeft of Blackburn, will remain as vice president; Dale Jarman of Holden will remain as treasurer Robert Simmons of Warrensburg will remain as secretary and Stan Rhodes of Corder will remain as assistant secretary.



Allen



Directors re-elected for a three-year term include (l-r) Max Swisegood, District 1; Stan Rhodes, District 2 and Sandra Streit, District 4.



# Gray delivers state of the co-op address at annual meeting

General Manager Mike Gray delivered good news all around during his state of the cooperative address at the Aug. 2 annual meeting.

He shared details from operations, maintenance and system improvements, finances and the projected stability of electrical generation in the near future. He also mentioned lack of need for a rate increase this year.

"I am happy to report that after compiling the budget for 2019, there was no reason to increase rates this year. Looking ahead into 2020 it looks like our wholesale power cost will be stable. My hope is we will be able to maintain current rates for a while longer. Revenues are down so far in 2019 compared to 2018 but I expected they would be since 2018 was a record-setting year," he said.

He said cooperative officials would continue to look out for members' best interest in keeping electricity safe, reliable and affordable.

"Our state and national organizations will continue to lobby our elected officials to keep electric rates as affordable as we can while also being good stewards of the environment," he said. "Associated Electric, our wholesale power supplier, continues to use a diverse mix of generating resources: coal, natural gas, wind and hydro. They all play a part in the electricity you receive. In 2018, the mix was 63 percent coal, 19 percent natural gas, 12 percent wind and 6 percent

hydro."

Gray also mentioned progress on maintenance and system improvements.

"Projects that contractors are currently working on include a couple of single-phase to three-phase line conversions. They just recently completed one in southwestern Johnson county from 2 highway going south along ZZ highway for about 1.5 miles and are currently working on another one southwest of Kingsville along SW 2001 Rd.," he said.

Gray said both of these projects are part of the construction work plan and are being done due to increased load in those areas over the years.

Gray reported WCE added 169 new services in 2018, and that growth remains steady. At the end of 2018, the cooperative had 16,329 services in place

with an average of 14,037 of those connected each month.

He also mentioned setting a peak demand in January of 80,450kWh, (about 2 percent under last year's peak), and the paying back of \$1,499,973 in capital credits as well as details of the Jan. 11, 2019 winter storm that left 3,000 without power and caused significant damage to the system.

"I am happy to report that West Central is in good shape physically and financially," he concluded.

"I am happy to report that after compiling the budget for 2019, there was no reason to increase rates this year. ... My hope is we will be able to maintain current rates for awhile longer."

--Mike Gray, General Manager



WCE General Manager Mike Gray reports on the state of the cooperative.

## Members participate in Annual Meeting

From page 1

but also to the people of their community."

She went on to describe how cooperatives are locally-owned businesses that strive to be reliable and responsive



Fowler

to the needs of local citizens and their children, and are perfect examples of modern superheroes.

"Co-ops work to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity for over 19 million American homes and businesses," she said. "One co-op, West Central Electric, formed in 1939 to supply electricity to rural Missouri when the other utilities at the time simply would not -- very reminiscent of the friendly, neighborhood Spiderman, who defends New York from threats other superheroes deem unworthy of their

time."

She went on to describe the "heroes" of West Central Electric who provide for those in need and continue to uphold the standards of a cooperative throughout all their endeavors.

"They do not have super strength, alien abilities, unbeatable super speed, or invincibility -- at least I do not think they do -- but they have more than earned themselves the moniker of modern day superheroes," she said. "Now all they need, in my humble opinion, are some red-and-blue leotards."

Members also heard an address on the state of the cooperative from General Manager Mike Gray, and a report from WCE Board President Densil Allen Jr. (Both reports were printed in their entirety in the evening's program, and separate stories summarizing their remarks are printed in this issue.)

In addition to the business meeting, members were able to visit informational booths by vendors such as Missouri One Call, Johnson County Community Health and the Johnson County Master Gardeners, who also provided two plants to be given away with the evening's prize drawings. WCE linemen gave live demonstrations on electrical safety and how power outages are located and repaired, and members could see the cooperative's new electric vehicle, Electra, up close.

Board members of the WCE Operation Round Up Foundation were on hand to give members more information on the program and show members how the funds collected in the past



WCE Lineman Johnathon Sullins shows annual meeting goers the dangers of getting too close to a downed power line using the cooperative's educational Power Town display.

year have been used to support various community programs throughout the service area.

Upon arrival, members were registered for prizes, including a free month

of electricity (won by Charles and Brenda Blattel of Holden) and several energy certificates as well as other prizes. The childrens' grand prizes were bicycles and helmets.





WCE board member Dale Jarman presents the evening's grand prize, a free month of electricity, to Charles and Brenda Blattel.



Director Max Swisegood presents the winner of the 40" Vizio television, Lark Holsey, with her prize.



Colby Davidson, 6, of Holden, gets his ticket in for the kids' drawing prizes at annual meeting.



Youth Tour delegates participating in their cooperative's annual meeting are Rylie Othic (left) and Maddi Schuette, who played Buddy Bear.



WCE Round Up Foundation President Dennis Knipmeyer shows member Suzanne Bendorg of Warrensburg the organizations Round Up has assisted in its first year.

2019 Annual Meeting Prize Winners	
<b>Grand Prize Free Month Electricity</b> Charles & Brenda Blattel	<b>KIDS--Grand Prize Bike &amp; Helmet</b> Gavin Eliison Chelsea Rucker
<b>TV (NW Electric)</b> Lark Holsey	<b>Wireless Headphones</b> Issac Yates Reese Counts
<b>\$100 Energy Certificates</b> Douglas & Rebecca Christianson Donald Manary	<b>Stuffed Buddy Bear</b> Eli Beissenherz Addison Counts
<b>\$50 Energy Certificates</b> Warren & Marsha Stowell Harold & Linda Reidler Milton & Judy Swainston Denis Lewis	<b>Plants (Jonnnson Co. Master Gardners)</b> Glynn & Larry Opfer Shawn Long
<b>\$25 Energy Certificates</b> Howard & Donna Evans Ronald & Delores Vivian Gary & Phyllis Freeman Jerry & Mona Parrott	<b>\$25 Energy Certificates</b> Thomas Burnfin Janis Miller Robert & Elsie Portell Billy Johnson



# From the Boardroom...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held June 27, 2019

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, Stan Rhodes, Jeremy Ahmann and Sandra Streit. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray, general counsel Lori Battern and WCE office staff.

## 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 May 23, 2019; expenditures for the month of May 2019; new membership applications; membership terminations and the treasurer's report.

## APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following May 2019 reports were approved:

**Financing and Treasurer's Report:** Michael Newland presented the May 2019 Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement. He reviewed the Financial Statistical Report with monthly and annual budget comparisons and gave the investment report. He presented and reviewed statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, cash flow management, and KWH sales. He discussed line-loss calculations and sales comparisons year-to-date. He also provided the Treasurer's report as well as reporting on the CFC One Card to replace the American Express card. He discussed the audit of West Central with Jackson Thornton for 2018. Discussion was had on retaining a company for the 2019 audit. Rates will be presented at the next board meeting.

**Operations and Safety Report:** Randy Burkeybile gave the operations and safety report. He discussed crew work and outages in May and in Levasy. He gave the construction retirement, maintenance and operations report and reported on new services built. He also gave the safety report including safety meetings, crew visits, workplace culture survey for employees, and the Federated audit.

**Engineering Report:** Dan Disberger gave the engineering report. He reported on new services, change services, storm restorations, solar installments, testing of the WCE systems, outages, and inspections. He reported on right of way crews. He gave a staking report.

**Member Services Report:** Brent Schlotzhauer presented the member services report. He included a report on Operation Round Up and gave a report on the Youth Tour Program and attendance at training seminars and Summer Bash. He gave a net metering report and reported on the rebates given. He also gave an update on the meeting with the Kansas City Area Development Council and the Teacher Education Program Workshop.

## AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft gave the AMEC report from the June meeting. The Resolutions Committee report was discussed.

## AMEC BOARD MEMBER, VOTING REPRESENTATIVE AND ALTERNATE

Bredehoeft was appointed as the AMEC board member voting representative with Gray as the alternate. Bredehoeft was appointed as the NRECA director election voting delegate with Gray as the alternate.

## NW REPORT

Swisegood presented the NW report for June. He discussed outages, the solar and wind report and margins and expenses.

## AECI ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

Simmons reported on the AECI Annual Meeting. Discussions were had on the speakers and panels presented.

## ANNUAL MEETING DISCUSSION

Gray led the discussion on the current meeting plans. A discussion was held on the official notice, registration, and ballots. Discussion was had regarding a possible survey to give to the members.

## MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray presented his monthly Manager's Report. Items of interest included changes to the building and updates on costs. Discussion was had on budget to complete the project on the building.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

## NEW BUSINESS

None.

## MEETING ADJOURNED

The meeting was adjourned.

## FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • May 2019

	This month	YTD 2019	YTD 2018
Revenue	\$1,915,515	\$12,829,655	\$12,955,278
Power Bill Expense	1,266,195	7,546,273	7,619,829
Opertion & Maint. Expense	559,661	3,105,593	2,513,043
Depreciation Expense	183,755	908,613	882,653
Interest Expense	117,913	589,865	522,432
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	2,127,524	12,150,344	11,537,957
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	(212,009)	679,311	1,417,321
Other Margins	15,666	135,173	76,689
TOTAL MARGINS	\$(196,343)	\$814,484	\$1,494,010



(Top photo) Mike Shaw with CMO Solar was one of several vendors at the annual meeting available to speak with members about products and services available in their area, as was (center photo) LifeFlight Eagle and the Missouri Secretary of State's Office, Securities Division.







# Students are challenged to become greater leaders

For three days in July, Jefferson City was home to some of the best and brightest students Missouri has to offer. The event was the Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience sponsored by the Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives, and it was attended by high school juniors and seniors from across the state chosen to represent their local cooperatives.

The goal of CYCLE is to be a leadership development stepping stone for youth. By cooperatives getting involved in helping develop their leadership

potential, the hope is for delegates go back to their communities, continue to learn from local leaders, educators and co-op staff so when they get into positions of leadership later in life, they remember the cooperatives' way of thinking.

Delegates participate in leadership activities, cooperative education and hands-on government. Delegates secure a spot at this award-winning youth conference through their participation in the Rural Electric Youth Tour and CYCLE essay contest.



WCE CYCLE delegates (l-r) Joshua Cymer, Warrensburg High School; Lucas Coulter, Chilhowee High School and Gus Cooper, Crest Ridge High School, visit the Missouri State Capitol Building during CYCLE.



WCE delegate Joshua Cymer (right) discusses strategy with some of his teammates during one of the conference's team challenges.



Lucas Coulter makes the symbolic walk through a portion of the Berlin Wall during the CYCLE delegates' visit to Fulton's Winston Churchill Museum.

From the introductory "Can You Find Me?" game, students are energized and off and running from daybreak until lights out, forging friendships and discovering more about themselves.

While the conference is short, CYCLE is jam-packed with activity from the team-building exercise "Build a Cooperative" game, to a visit to Fulton and the Winston Churchill Museum, as well as a segment when the teams perform a TV public service announcement based on something they've read in that day's newspaper.

Delegates also spend an afternoon at the Capitol Building where they have the opportunity to sit at the desks on the floor of the House of Representatives and debate a bill they've written with their CYCLE peers.

"I thought it was a great experience, and I met a lot of new friends," Coulter

said. "We did a lot of things that I probably wouldn't have ever done, and those are experiences I will always remember."

Motivational sessions with guest speakers include the Rachel's Challenge group, which shows students how they can start a chain reaction of compassion in their own communities. In the Rachel's Challenge presentation, they hear about Rachel Scott, the first person killed in the Columbine High School shooting in 1999, and how she stood up and made a difference in the lives of others in just a few short years. This year's delegates were privileged to hear from Rachel's uncle, Larry Scott.

For more information about the 2018 Youth Tour and CYCLE contest, contact Heather Hoflander at 800-491-3803 or [heather@wcecoop.com](mailto:heather@wcecoop.com).



(Above) Gus Cooper and his teammates participate in a PSA activity during CYCLE.

(Left photo) Some CYCLE delegates including WCE delegate Lucas Coulter were lucky enough to catch a quick visit from Gov. Mike Parson during their afternoon at the Capitol Building.



## Operation Round Up continues to fund projects...



(Top left) Members of the West Central Electric Round Up Foundation presents a check for \$4,530 to Concordia Senior Citizens, Inc. (L-r) Janice Blackburn, Concordia Senior Center Building Board secretary; Joe Blackburn, senior center building board; Carol Tharp, senior center coordinator; Larry Schnakenberg, senior center board; Sally Davidson, Round Up Board; Vernon Ohrenberg, senior center board president; Margie Storck, Round Up board; Oral Glasco, Round Up Board; Phyllis Hemme, senior center volunteer; Judy Latty, senior center cook and Steve Steen, senior center volunteer. (On scaffolding: Kellen Fiene and Gavin Ohrenberg, who are assisting with the ceiling tile replacement part of the project.)

(Top right) Round Up Foundation President Dennis Knipmeyer presents a check for \$2,500 to Chris Barfrede and Devin Graf, Trinity Lutheran School Board of Education members, to assist with school security upgrades. (L-r) Barfrede, Knipmeyer, Graf, and Round Up Board members Sally Davidson and Margie Storck.



(Bottom left) Round Up Foundation President Dennis Knipmeyer presents a check for \$2,500 to Dana Duncan, treasurer of Partners for Odessa Parks and Recreation to help purchase basketball goals. Front row (l-r) Debbie Stevens, secretary of Partners for Odessa Parks and Recreation, Duncan, Knipmeyer, Round Up board members Sally Davidson and Donna Matthews. Back row (l-r) Round Up Board members Margie Storck and Randy Dowell, Odessa Parks and Recreation Director Lindsey Adams, Round Up Board member Oral Glasco and Partners for Odessa Parks and Recreation member Beth Fox.

## WCE Life Support Equipment list will be updated

In an effort to better serve its members, West Central Electric Cooperative updates the Life Support Equipment List each year.

"Although we add new entries to the Life Support Equipment List as members call and request to be placed on the list, we seldom get members calling to let us know they need to be removed," Communications Specialist Heather Hoflander said. "In an effort to keep the list as up-to-date as possible, we create a new list every year."

Members are asked to fill out the following form, and mail it to West Central Electric NO LATER THAN Sept. 30, 2019 to ensure their

name appears on the new list.

The Life Support Equipment List is used by cooperative personnel in the event of a planned outage, for example, during extensive repairs or maintenance.

**If your name needs to remain on the WCE Life Support Equipment List, You MUST fill out the following form and mail it to West Central Electric Cooperative before September 30, 2019, or your name will be removed from the current list.**

The list is not used as a priority list to get service turned back on in the event of an outage.

"The reason this is not a priority service list is because in the event of an outage, repairs have to be made in a certain order," Line Superintendent Randy

Burkeybile said. "It does no good to go out and repair an individual service when the main line is down. Until the main line is repaired, there won't be any power to the individual line."

Members requesting their name be placed on the Life Support Equipment List should mail the following form to the Higginsville office. If you or a family member is on oxygen, please let us know how

many hours of back-up you have available.

Please keep in mind that if we do not hear from you by Sept. 30, 2019, your name will be removed from the current Life Support Equipment List.

### ***Request for 2019-20 Life Support Equipment List inclusion***

(Please fill out all information completely.)

Name to appear on list: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on WCE account: \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Location Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Life support equipment requiring electricity to operate: \_\_\_\_\_

If on oxygen, how many hours back-up? \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill out all information completely and mail to Heather Hoflander, West Central Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 452, Higginsville, MO 64037.