



West Central Electric Cooperative

February 2020

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

# ElectricNews

## In with the old

WCE keeps the past in the present with refurbishing of original headquarters sign in a way that updates the look while honoring the retro design

### PAGE 2

Youth Tour essays are due soon, and scholarships will soon follow. Find all your important deadlines here.

### PAGES 4-5

Have a generator? Know the difference between a stand-by and a portable, and how to install and run them properly?

### PAGES 6-7

Details on each of WCE's three available scholarships: John & Kathryn English, West Central Electric and WCE/EDS.



# IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Students entering the

## 2020 Rural Electric Youth Tour contest

Essays must be turned in to the Higginsville office no later than 4:30 p.m. February 14, 2020.

Essays submitted via email must arrive no later than 4:30 p.m. Feb. 14, 2020.

Applications for the

## 2020 John & Kathryn English Memorial Scholarship

must be postmarked no later than March 6, 2020.

Applications submitted via email must arrive no later than 4:30 p.m. March 6, 2020.

Applications for the

## 2020 West Central Electric Cooperative Scholarship

must be postmarked no later than March 13, 2020.

Applications submitted via email must arrive no later than 4:30 p.m. March 13, 2020.

Applications for the

## 2020 West Central Electric Cooperative EDS Scholarship

must be postmarked no later than April 1, 2020.

Applications submitted via email must arrive no later than 4:30 p.m. April 1, 2020.

### West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.

#### Headquarters:

7867 S. Highway 13, P.O. Box 452, Higginsville, MO 64037  
816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803 • PAY BY PHONE: 1-855-874-5349

#### To report outages 24/7:

Call 816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803 • or report outages at  
[www.westcentralelectric.coop](http://www.westcentralelectric.coop) under "View & Report Outages"

#### District office:

506 N. Broadway, Oak Grove, MO 64075

#### Website:

[www.westcentralelectric.coop](http://www.westcentralelectric.coop)

#### General Manager:

Mike Gray

#### 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*

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

## Thanksgiving Day outage was fortunately short-lived

Just as many West Central Electric members were in the midst of Thanksgiving dinner preparations, the unthinkable happened -- the power went out for more than 2,200 members in the Johnson County area.

KCP&L (Evergy), which supplies the power to WCE substations in that area, had an issue with a transmission line resulting in a loss of power at the Knob Noster, Burtville and Montessrat substations.

"Fortunately, the outage only lasted a couple of hours, but that is a long time when you are in the middle of cooking Thanksgiving dinner," Operations Manager Randy Burkeybile said. "We called in all of our available employees to help answer phones on site so we could talk to members personally and reassure them that the issue was being taken care of."

Typically during outages, updates are posted on the WCE Facebook page to keep members abreast of the situation and any developments. On Thanksgiving Day, Facebook was down for a while and posts were unable to be made.

"It was kind of a double-whammy," Communications Specialist Heather Hoflander said. "Not only were we dealing with a holiday outage, but our main line of communicating with our members was down. We were also unable to get in contact with area radio stations to give updates, but fortunately we were finally able to get a couple of posts to go through on Facebook, and the outage was resolved pretty quickly."

WCE General Manager Mike Gray said he appreciated the patience and understanding from members during a less-than-ideal situation.

"Those who called in were pretty understanding despite the circumstances," he said.

**ON THE COVER:** The new, lighted sign at the headquarters office in Higginsville was recently refurbished. Neon was added to the sign to make it more visible at night.



## 2019 Member Appreciation Day winners:

### Willie Wiredhand Ornaments:

Melanie Davis, Mayview  
Tammy Strickler, Odessa

Marie Turner, Bates City  
Larry Fessler, Oak Grove

### \$25 Energy Certificates:

Jackie Johnson, Concordia  
Jerry Engelbrecht, Higginsville  
Carolyn Hutchko, Leeton  
Lena Sproat, Warrensburg

Kurt Buddemeyer, Wellington  
Dan Clark, Lone Jack  
J.C. Blackmore, Napoleon  
Ruth Webb, Odessa

(At left) A warm pair of pj's on a cold, windy day was just what Cayden Strickler, 7, of Odessa needed to enjoy a cookie by the Christmas tree on Member Appreciation Day Dec. 12. He visited the Higginsville location with his parents, West Central members John and Tammy Strickler.



In addition to the new sign in front of the headquarters building in Higginsville, The new mural in the meeting room debuted during the annual Member Appreciation Day in December. The wall features the cooperative mission statement, The 7 Cooperative Principles and the four Touchstone Energy key values as well as scenes from the life of co-op employees.



# Generator Safety

**D**uring a power outage, you may find yourself in the dark and unable to use your appliances for a period of time. A generator can provide temporary electricity that, depending on type, can power a few appliances or an entire building. While convenient during an outage, generators used improperly can also create safety hazards.

Before investing in a generator, think first about your electrical needs and usage. Know the difference between standby and portable generators:

Place the generator in an open, well-ventilated area away from the home or garage. Using your generator in a space that does not have adequate ventilation increases the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning (CO) from fumes. As an extra precaution, install CO detectors around the home and test them regularly. CO is odorless and colorless and can be deadly. Symptoms of CO poisoning include dizziness, nausea, and headaches. If you suspect a problem, seek fresh air immediately.

Before turning the generator on, make sure nothing is plugged in. Keep children and pets a safe distance from generators. After starting it, only plug appliances or those connected to heavy-duty extension cords directly into the generator. Never plug the generator into a wall outlet to avoid the risk of backfeed.

Carbon monoxide fumes are both colorless and odorless and may reach fatal levels within minutes if not detected.

When turning off your generator, take the time to do so safely. Unplug all appliances before turning off the power of the generator. In order to keep your generator in working order, you'll need to perform regular maintenance.



Portable Generator

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*Before investing in a generator, think first about your electrical needs and usage. Know the difference between standby and portable generators:*

”

**Standby Generator**



If installed and operated correctly, use of standby or portable electric generators poses little danger. Improper installation or use could be dangerous to you and threaten the lives of your family, friends, neighbors and electric utility crews trying to restore service.

**Standby generators** are wired directly into the home and can be sized to match the electrical demands of the home or building. A permanently installed standby generator must have an approved transfer safety switch to avoid feeding electricity back into the electrical system outdoors, creating what's known as "backfeed." Backfeed is dangerous for line workers as well as anyone who may be near downed power lines.

**Portable generators** do not permanently attach to the home, and can power only the appliances that are plugged into the generator, so consider essential electrical needs when choosing. To avoid backfeed into the utility electrical system, the portable generator should never be plugged directly into the home.

# ipsSCHOLARSHIPScholarshipsSCHOLARSHIPSc

## *2020 West Central Electric Cooperative Scholarship*

### **I. Amount of Scholarship**

This year, approximately 20 high school seniors will receive a \$600 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 13, 2020. 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](http://www.westcentralelectric.coop) under the heading "Youth Programs." Applications may be printed and mailed, or filled out on line and emailed. If you choose to email your application, please also either email your photo as a jpeg to [heather@wccecoop.com](mailto:heather@wccecoop.com) or mail a photograph along with your transcript. Applications submitted via email must arrive by 4:30 p.m. March 13, 2020.

### **VI. Winners' Notification**

Recipients of the scholarship will be notified by May 1, 2020 by mail.

## *2020 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**

A. The applicant will be selected without regard to sex, race, creed or color.

B. 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.

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

D. A minimum ACT score of 18 is required.

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

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

G. A high school transcript must accompany the application.

H. 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.

I. 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.

J. Finalists will be required to participate in an interview with the scholarship committee.

K. All scholarship applications MUST BE TYPED.

L. 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 March 6, 2020. 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](http://www.westcentralelectric.coop) under the heading "Youth Programs." Applications may be printed and mailed, or filled out on line and emailed. If you choose to email your application, please also either email your photo as a .jpeg to [heather@wccecoop.com](mailto:heather@wccecoop.com) or mail a photograph along with your transcript. Applications submitted via email must arrive by 4:30 p.m. March 6, 2020.

### **VII. Finalist Notification**

Interviews will be scheduled for the evening of Wednesday, April 15, 2020. **All students applying for this scholarship should tentatively plan for an interview on this date.** Those scheduled for interviews will be notified by Wednesday, March 25, 2020.

# ScholarshipsSCHOLARSHIPSScholarshipsSCHOLARSHIPS

## *2020 West Central Electric Cooperative Electrical Distribution Systems Scholarship*

### **I. General Description**

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

### **II. Eligibility Requirements**

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **III. Selection Criteria and Award of Scholarship**

A. To be considered, applicants must submit a complete application by the scholarship application deadline of April 1, 2020. The criteria used to evaluate applications for award will be based upon the following:

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

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

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

### **IV. Application**

Deadline for application to assure consideration for the next following academic year is April 1, 2020. Please submit the following to be considered:

▪ Letter of acceptance to an accredited institution and admittance to the school's EDS program.

▪ High school transcript, college transcript or official GED score report.

▪ Complete scholarship application, including personal goal statement.

▪ Two letters of character reference.

▪ Applications may be printed and mailed along with transcript or GED report and letters, or you may apply online at [www.westcentralelectric.coop](http://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, 2020. Please also either email your photo as a .jpg to [heather@wcecoop.com](mailto:heather@wcecoop.com) or mail a photograph along with your transcript and letters.

▪ Applications may be mailed to West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc., Attention: Heather Hoflander. P.O. Box 452, Higginsville, MO 64037.

### **V. Expectations of Scholarship Recipient**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **VI. Winners' Notification**

Recipients of the scholarship will be notified by May 1, 2020.

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



# FROM THE WCE BOARDROOM...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held Nov. 26, 2019

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, Clark Bredehoeft, Dale Jarman, Richard Strobel, Stan Rhodes, Sandra Streit and Jeremy Ahmann. Densil Allen, Jr. was absent. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray, general counsel Sheri Smiley and office staff of WCE.

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After discussion, the agenda was approved.

## APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The board approved its consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of Oct. 31, 2019; expenditures for the month of October 2019; new membership applications and membership terminations.

## APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following October 2019 reports were approved:

Financing and Treasurer's Report: Michael Newland presented the October 2019 Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement. He reviewed the Financial and Statistical Report with monthly and annual budget comparisons. He also gave the investment report. He presented and reviewed statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, cash flow management, and KWH sales and ratios.

Operations and Safety Report: Randy Burkeybile gave the operations report and discussed crew work and outages in November. He also gave the safety report and discussed safety meetings, crew visits, and travel which has occurred without incident.

Engineering Report: Dan Disberger gave the engineering report. He reported on new services, change services and gave a staking department and a right of way department report.

Member Services Report: Brent Schlotzhauer presented the member services report. He included a report on Operation Roundup, Youth Tour and CYCLE, and the 4-H banquet. He also reported one incident with meter tampering.

## NW REPORT

The next NW meeting is scheduled for December 18, 2019.



## LEGAL COUNSEL REPORT

Smiley gave the legal report.

## SERVICE RULES AND REGULATION 11.3

Gray presented proposed changes to the Service Rules and Regulation 11.3 based on discussions held at the last meeting. Gray's recommendation to amend the policy was accepted.

## MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray presented his monthly Manager's Report. Items of interest included a report on the meeting that the NW managers went to at Associated Electric. He reported that he will be working on revising the coop's drug policy. The board retreat will be held on Jan.27-28. He discussed phone calls that will be recorded and the holiday donation.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

## NEW BUSINESS

None.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

No executive session was called.

## MEETING ADJOURNED

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

## FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • October 2019

	This month	YTD 2019	YTD 2018
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>\$2,073,433</b>	<b>\$24,196,414</b>	<b>\$24,666,665</b>
Power Bill Expense	1,338,446	14,428,081	14,792,448
Operation & Maint. Expense	534,205	6,205,382	5,433,532
Depreciation Expense	188,544	1,842,699	1,775,203
Interest Expense	114,921	1,182,326	1,104,609
<b>Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)</b>	<b>2,176,116</b>	<b>23,658,488</b>	<b>23,105,792</b>
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	(102,683)	537,926	1,560,873
Other Margins	7,612	243,402	330,127
<b>TOTAL MARGINS</b>	<b>\$(95,071)</b>	<b>\$781,328</b>	<b>\$1,891,000</b>

