



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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# WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC **NEWS**

## WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC, INC.

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Nick Zerr**  
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**Marvin Keller**  
Trustee

**Susan Rohleder**  
Trustee

**Dale Weinhold**  
Trustee

### GENERAL MANAGER

**Tom Ruth**  
General Manager

### CONTACT US

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## LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

Be sure to LIKE us on Facebook! Just go to [www.facebook.com/WesternCoopElectric](https://www.facebook.com/WesternCoopElectric) to find co-op news, energy tips, photos from co-op events and more!

## FROM THE MANAGER

# A Year of Celebrations and Commitment

## Western Cooperative Electric's 2023 wrap-up

Happy New Year from all of us at Western Cooperative Electric! As we bid farewell to 2023 and embrace the promise of a new year, we reflect on the remarkable journey we've shared together.

This past year, our social media channels became a vibrant hub of activity, allowing us to connect with you in meaningful ways. We celebrated retirements, welcomed new team members, highlighted exciting youth opportunities, and, most importantly, showcased what is at the heart of our cooperative — our members. Your stories and contributions have been the heartbeat of our community, and we are grateful for the opportunity to share in your joys and milestones.

Throughout the challenges and triumphs, Western Cooperative Electric remained steadfast in our mission to provide you with safe, affordable and reliable power. Your trust and partnership inspire us daily, driving our commitment to serve you with unwavering dedication.

As we stand on the threshold of a

new year, filled with hope and joy, we look forward to continuing our journey together. Your support motivates us to innovate and improve, ensuring that we meet and exceed your expectations in the years to come.

We invite you to follow us on social media to stay informed and engaged. There, you'll find valuable information on outage notifications, electrical safety tips, updates on youth opportunities, and a glimpse into the everyday happenings at your electric cooperative.

Thank you for being an integral part of the Western Cooperative Electric family. Here's to a bright and prosperous 2024, filled with shared successes and a strengthened sense of community.

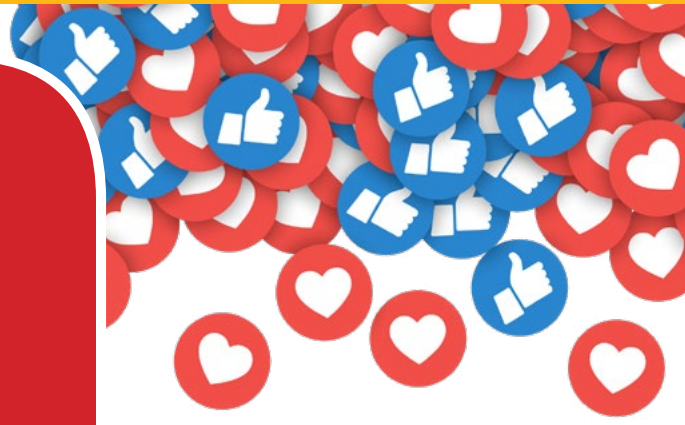
Wishing you a Happy New Year!



Tom Ruth

Sincerely,  
**TOM RUTH**  
GENERAL MANAGER  
WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC

# TOP 10



## Social Media Posts of the Year

As we begin 2024, our electric cooperative expresses sincere appreciation for your continued support. Together, we've energized communities and celebrated milestones.

Reflecting on the top 10 social media posts of 2023, we're reminded of the power of connection.

Wishing you a joyful holiday season and a new year filled with prosperity. Thank you for being the spark in our cooperative family.

Western employees collected 1,043 items/ dollars for local food banks before the busy Holiday Season!!! #PowerThePantry #ConcernForCommunity



Western Cooperative Electric Assn., Inc. May 11  
That's a wrap for the 78th Annual Meeting!!! Thank you to all of the members who attended. If you weren't able to make it in person, watch the recorded live stream of the Annual Meeting at <https://www.westerncoop.com/annual-meeting-live-stream-0> #powerandpeople



Western Cooperative Electric Assn., Inc. is with Barb for Kansas and Ken For Kansas. January 24  
Under the dome.. Yesterday, Western trustees and staff met with law makers in Topeka. Working closely with our representatives ensures a sound energy policy for our members and Kansas. #CoopsVote



Western Cooperative Electric Assn., Inc. May 22  
Congrats to Austin and Jaiden for being selected to represent Western Co-op in Washington, D.C.!!! Read more at <https://www.westerncoop.com/carroll-and-pfannenstiel...>



## Happy New Year!

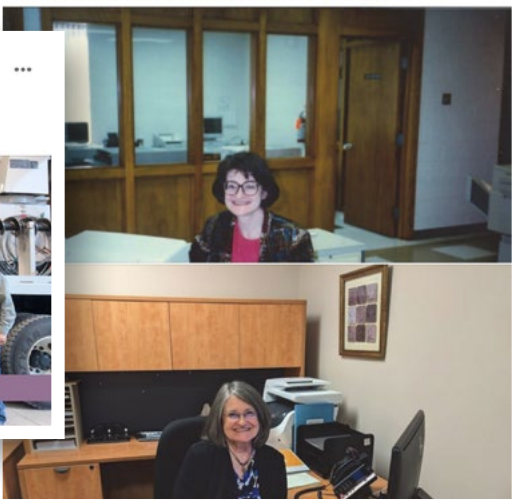




Western Cooperative Electric Assn., Inc. April 1  
No Facility We appreciate Line Foreman Aaron Friebe's 10 years of dedicated service to the Western Cooperative member!! #ServiceWardSaturday



Western Cooperative Electric Assn., Inc. March 31  
Today, we wished Tonya the best in her retirement after 27 years with Western Co-op!! Thank you for your years of dedication to our members!! #powerandpeople



Western Cooperative Electric Assn., Inc. April 10  
Thank you, Olmitz Linemen!!! #ThankALineworker #thankalineman



Western Cooperative Electric Assn., Inc. June 22  
Thank you, Trooper Tod KHP Hays, Kansas for presenting on active shooter training during Western's monthly safety meeting.



Western Cooperative Electric Assn., Inc. November 15 at 3:37 PM  
We had the opportunity to do an electrical safety demonstration and training for Ellis County first responders yesterday. #staysafe



Western Cooperative Electric Assn., Inc. July 7  
Cooperation among Cooperatives! Crews from Sunflower Electric Power Corporation and Western Cooperative Electric Assn., Inc. exchange handshakes after working together today, July 7, 2023, to perform repairs to the Ellis Substation #cooperativeprinciples #CooperationAmongCooperatives



## Keller Earns Director Gold

**MARVIN KELLER** Western Cooperative Electric trustee has attained his Director Gold credential from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

To earn this credential, Keller completed a core set of five courses followed by a variety of elective courses in topics ranging from finance to technology. To maintain the Director Gold credential, Keller has also committed to continuing his education throughout his service on the board by earning three continuing education credits over two years.

Today's electric utility environment

imposes new demands on electric cooperative directors, such as knowledge of changes in the electric utility business, new governance skills, and a working knowledge of cooperative principles. Western Cooperative Electric is committed to working with Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. and NRECA to sharpen this director credential program to benefit our electric cooperative consumer-owners.



Marvin Keller

## INTERESTED IN SERVING AS A WESTERN TRUSTEE?

Those members who meet the qualifications have the right to seek election to the board of trustees. Western will hold elections for trustees prior to Western Cooperative's 79th Annual Meeting on May 8, 2024.

While serving on a board is certainly not for everyone, it is healthy for any co-op to have an engaged membership with members interested in serving in a leadership role. At Western Co-op, we are governed by a board of nine trustees elected by the membership to provide strategic guidance and ensure we continue to serve the member's interests.

To run for a trustee position, candidates:

- ▶ Must be a member of Western Cooperative Electric.
- ▶ Cannot be employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the cooperative.
- ▶ Cannot be a current employee or have been employed by the cooperative within the last five years.
- ▶ Must be a bona fide resident within Western's service territory.

If you are interested in running for a board of trustee seat, visit [www.westerncoop.com](http://www.westerncoop.com), contact a Nominating Committee member in your corresponding district, call the WCE office at 785-743-5561, or stop by Western's office to pick up the member petition form.

**Nominations must be submitted by March 1.**

## HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS: NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR YOUTH TRIPS!



All-expenses-paid leadership trips to Washington, D.C., and Steamboat Springs, Colorado, are available for high school juniors whose parents or guardians are members of Western Cooperative Electric.

The top four students will have the opportunity to attend Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., or the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp near Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

**CONTESTANTS MUST COMPLETE THE APPLICATION BY JAN. 10, 2024.** Upon receipt of the application, contestants will be mailed an entry packet.

Finalists are scored and selected based on a short essay, an open-book quiz, and a remote interview. The student with the top scores gets the first selection of trips.

Interviews will be conducted in mid-February. Apply now at [www.westerncoop.com/youth-tour](http://www.westerncoop.com/youth-tour) before it's too late.