

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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**WESTERN
COOPERATIVE
ELECTRIC**

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NEWS

FROM THE MANAGER

Concern for Community



Darrin Lynch

The final jeopardy category is “Cooperative Principles.” The contestants have made final wagers and the answer is, “begin with the end in mind.” After the

30-second iconic music pause, the correct question is shown, and reads “The seventh or final cooperative principle, Concern for Community.”

Concern for the community is the reason why Western Cooperative Electric was founded. The people in our parents, grandparents or great-grandparents generations came together using the cooperative business model as their guide. It was their concern for our community—to bring safe, reliable and affordable electric power to our region—that defined

Western’s purpose.

The following explanation is provided with Cooperative Principle 7: While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of communities through policies and programs accepted by the members.

It is in that spirit that we continue today to offer economic development loans, ground source heat pump rebates, along with numerous payment options; automatic bank draft, payment by phone, and payment on line. Budget billing is also offered for level payments.

In addition to providing electric service, Western gives back to communities through programs such as cash scholarships; all-expense-paid trips for high school juniors; safety demonstrations; and sponsorships for school activities such as small scale electric car construction, just to

name a few.

For cooperatives, these are easy decisions to make. Unlike investor-owned businesses where the owners and employees can be far removed from the users of the service, in the cooperative business, the owners and users are the same people—you!

This is why we call you a member and encourage you to actively engage with us. The health and long-term sustainability of our community depends on all of us demonstrating our mutual concern for our community.

While it has been 70 years since we began offering electricity, our concern for our community has never wavered. We will continue to work for the sustainable development of our communities of which we live and serve. We welcome your input as we work to meet your needs for the next 70 years and beyond.

Join us for Annual Meeting May 13!

We hope to see you at the Western Cooperative Electric Annual Meeting on May 13, 2015, at the cooperative office in WaKeeney. Lunch will be served at 12 p.m. and the meeting will follow at 1 p.m.

We hope to see you there!

May 2015						
S	M	T	W	U	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30

2015 Youth Winners Announced

Western Cooperative Electric's annual youth contest was held Sunday, March 1. The contest winners were selected based on a combination of an interview, quiz, and essay. Each contestant was given an interview by a

judging panel consisting of Anna Foley, Norton; Steve Hausler, Ellis; and Darrin Lynch, WaKeeney.

In addition to their interviews, each contestant took a quiz about electric cooperatives on the local, state and national level. Each contestant also wrote a one-page essay on the topic of *Something I am Passionate About*.

The top five youth in this year's contest, in order are:

- ▶ **FAITH TUTTLE**, Wheatland High School, daughter of Leon and Donna Tuttle;
- ▶ **L.T. COBURN**, Quinter High School, son of Lance and Rhonda Coburn;
- ▶ **SCOTT RING**, Hays High School, son of Bill Ring and Denise Ring;
- ▶ **DEAN MASTERS**, Natoma High School, son of Delwin and Corinne Masters; and
- ▶ **SKYLAR GOTTSCHALK**, Ellis High School, daughter of Loran and Tammy Gottschalk.

Scholarships were awarded along with trips to Washington, D.C., and Steamboat Springs, CO. The contestants chose from the available prizes according to placing.

Tuttle and Coburn will join 35 Kansas youth and travel to Washington, D.C., June 11-18. They will join about 1,600 other youth experiencing our country's government in action. They will visit their legislators and sites of historical significance.

Ring and Masters will join approximately 100 youth from a four-state area participating in the Cooperative Youth



L.T. Coburn
DC Winner



Skylar Gottschalk
Scholarship Winner



Dean Masters
Camp Winner



Scott Ring
Camp Winner



Faith Tuttle
DC Winner

Leadership Camp near Steamboat Springs, CO, July 11-17. During their stay, the youth will become acquainted with energy challenges and tour one of the largest electrical generating plants in the Rockies.

Along with the trips, each winner will receive a \$250 scholarship. These scholarships will be sent directly to the college of their choice upon enrollment.

Gottschalk will receive the \$250 Darrell Brown Memorial scholarship.

The alternates in this year's competition are **MARIAH BRUNGARDT**, Trego Community High School, daughter of Darrin and Michelle Brungardt; and **BRANDON KINGSLEY**, Ellis High School, son of Chris and Michele Kingsley.

Western extends congratulations to the winners and thanks all contestants for participating.



Is Your Electric Bill Too Low?

While reviewing your monthly electric bill, have you ever made these statements? “What?” This can’t be right! There is no way this amount is correct! There must be something wrong with that meter! This amount should be considerably higher. I know I have used more electricity than this. With all the value I received from my electrical usage I should be paying a lot more!”

No? Quite the opposite?

Prior to the monthly bill review, we usually have an idea how much electricity we have used for the previous billing period. Or, do we?

Different items can affect electrical usage; to name a few: temperature, holiday events, or adding an electrical appliance. When electric load is added to our electric meter, do we really know what additional load is needed or to be used, or do we hope for the best until we receive the first electric bill?

Electric usage is usually dispensed for comfort, convenience, entertainment or to reduce work load. When we receive our electric bill is there any consideration to any of these benefits or is it just the bottom line that matters?

History has shown that over half of an electric bill is due to heating and cooling. It would seem that the higher bills are because we want relief from these extremes for comfort and convenience. Throw in entertainment and, all add costs to the monthly bill.

Comfort

Comfort is sometimes defined as a condition of ease or well-being. We all have individual comfort zones and a desire to reach that point of well-being. During the months that our utility bills are higher we find

the outside temperatures are the furthest from our comfort zone or the thermostat setting. To achieve those thermostat settings, the heating (including electric portable heaters) or the cooling system, sometimes has to “work” especially hard and long to reach that desired thermostat setting. As the outside temperature becomes further away from the inside thermostat setting that “work” results in a higher cost. That desired comfort zone is not only during our waking hours; even while we sleep.

Convenience

If we are away from home, we usually don’t change the comfort zone (thermostat setting) because upon returning, we yearn to be immediately in our comfort zone. While not at home the “work” is still being performed, at a cost, maintaining the thermostat temperature whatever the outside temperature. Another convenience sometimes taken for granted is the refrigerator, “working” 24/7.

Entertainment

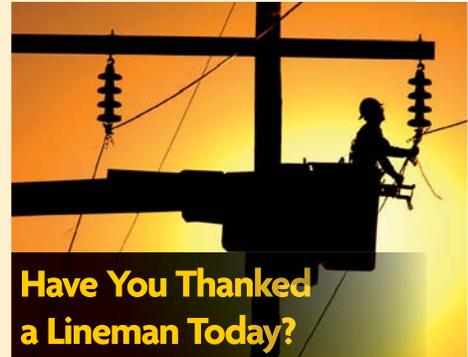
It is quite common for households today to have more than one television set, maybe including a sound system with an additional DVD player and video game player.

Electricity

What a friend to have available 24/7, night or day, whatever the temperature. This friend provides comfort, convenience, entertainment, and reduces work load without complaint or voice of concern. Consider this friend, and what all it provides for you, when looking at the total dollar amount.

You might then be more apt to say, “After all that I have received, my electricity bill really is affordable.”

Celebrate National Lineman Appreciation Day on April 13



STEVEN HAUSLER

Have You Thanked a Lineman Today?

America’s electric cooperatives have designated April 13 as National Lineman Appreciation Day. Western Cooperative Electric will honor the hard working men who often work in challenging conditions to keep the lights on.

The full text of the resolution, which the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Board adopted, follows: “Whereas linemen leave their families and put their lives on the line every day to keep the power on; Whereas linemen work 365 days a year under dangerous conditions to build, maintain and repair the electric infrastructure; Whereas linemen are the first responders of the electric cooperative family, getting power back on and making things safe for all after storms and accidents; and Whereas there would be no electric cooperatives without the brave men and women who comprise our corps of linemen; Therefore be it resolved that NRECA recognize the Second Monday of April of each year as National Lineman Appreciation Day and make available to electric cooperatives, materials and support to recognize the contributions of these valuable men and women to America’s Electric Cooperatives.”

To honor the linemen that work hard to keep your lights on, and to help celebrate National Lineman Appreciation Day, Western invites members to take a moment to thank a lineman for all the work they do.

WE KEEP THEM UP HERE FOR A REASON.

STAY CLEAR OF DOWNED POWER LINES.

Helping members use electricity safely, that's the power of your co-op membership.
Learn more from the experts themselves at TogetherWeSave.com.



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