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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC NEWS

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Tom Ruth

General Manager

Contact Us

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Board Elections Approaching

The elections for your democratically elected representation on the Western Cooperative Electric board of trustees is quickly approaching, and your vote does matter.

Why does your vote matter? Because the reliable and affordable electric service you receive should not be taken for granted. The board represents the members of your district, setting electric rates and policy, approving the budget, and hiring the general manager. As a customer of Western, you are a member and have a voice through your votes and through your elected representative. Western's territory is divided into three districts. Each district has three elected trustees who serve three-year terms. Your current cooperative board members whose terms are expiring are:

▶ DISTRICT 1

TERRY HOBBS

Graham, Osborne, Rooks and Sheridan counties

▶ DISTRICT 2

RICHARD SCHAUS

Ellis, Lincoln, Russell and Trego counties

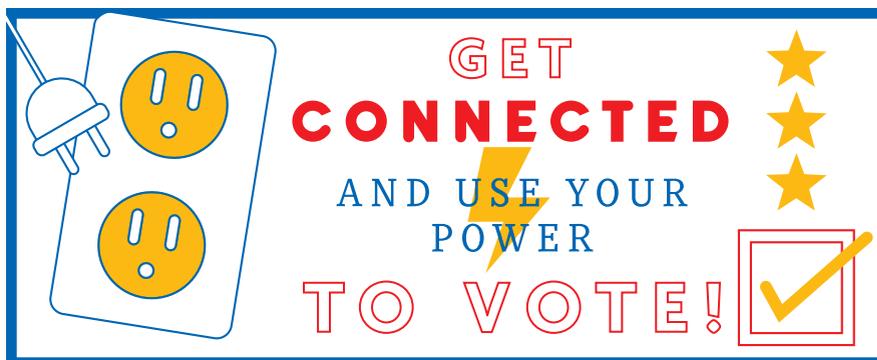
▶ DISTRICT 3

DALE WEINHOLD

Gove, Ness, Rush, Barton and Ellsworth counties

You will receive a mail ballot in April to cast your vote after the nominations for trustees are reported to Western on or after March 24 by the nominating committee. Our annual meeting is scheduled for May 13 in WaKeeney. Get connected and use your power to vote!

More information about the voting process and the requirements of a trustee can be found in the bylaws under Article IV: Trustees. The bylaws are online under "Co-op Bylaws" at www.westerncoop.com.



GET
CONNECTED
AND USE YOUR
POWER
TO VOTE!

Celebrating 75 YEARS



Lacking the benefits of electricity, a group of farmers got together to form a cooperative so all the area farms could receive electric service. As a result of their efforts, Western Cooperative Electric Association was incorporated under the laws of the state of Kansas in May 1945.

The months following incorporation were spent soliciting members, applying for REA loan money, obtaining right-of-way, staking lines, and ordering materials. Construction didn't begin until March 11, 1947.

Progress was slow due to material and labor shortages, but on Dec. 22, 1947,

the long-awaited moment arrived. Western's president, Irving Walker, turned on the electricity in the garage at the Frank Landauer farm near Ellis. The first lightbulb glowed in testimony of our members' willingness and determination to help themselves. Later, Mr. Walker recalled he had to stand on a half-bushel bucket to reach the pull-chain light fixture.

About 30 families on Western's lines were able to enjoy electricity for the first time by Christmas 1947. Western's incorporators and original trustees were:

- ▶ **FRED J. HAMBURG**, Ellis
- ▶ **ALVIN L. SALEEN**, Ogallah

- ▶ **IRVING WALKER**, WaKeeney
- ▶ **W. D. IKENBERRY**, Quinter
- ▶ **MELVIN REINECKER**, Quinter
- ▶ **L. R. MILLER**, Quinter
- ▶ **C. W. KRAUS**, Hays
- ▶ **ED J. NIERNBERGER**, Ellis
- ▶ **WARD SULLIVAN**, Hays

We're thankful for their dedication to bringing light to our rural homes and communities.

Memories from the Past

1950

With electricity new to the farm, it changed the way women were working. We believe this photo was taken in November of 1950 and is Mrs. Andrew Jensen baking a pie in her new electric stove on a farm in Hays.



1960

During a 1960s Western Cooperative Electric annual meeting in WaKeeney, a little girl reaches for a raffle ticket.



TO THE MEMBERS OF THE WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

Notice of Board Meeting

The Board of Trustees of The Western Cooperative Electric Association, Inc. will meet to discuss and vote upon a proposal to implement a recreational lighting class rate. The meeting is at **10:30 A.M. ON THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2020**, at the cooperative's main office, 635 S. 13th St, WaKeeney, KS 67672.

The proposal is to create a tariff and separate rate class for tax-supported public school and municipal organization accounts. The proposed customer charge is \$40 for single-phase and \$45 for multi-phase accounts with a 13 cents per kWh charge with no demand charges. This rate is applicable to services reaching a demand greater than 20 kW three times during a 12-month period.

This meeting is open to any member who wishes to attend. Members have the right under K.S.A. 66-104d(g) to request Kansas Corporation Commission review of any rate change.

Any member with questions may contact the cooperative office during business hours at 785-743-5561.



These lights are an example of a recreational lighting structure under the newly proposed rate class.

1969

Cooperative linemen gather for a few days of training in April 1969. At this training, they learned how to install powerlines underground.



1989

At the December 1989 Christmas party, board president Larry Evans (left) and board member Richard Schaus (middle left) presented five-year service awards to Western linemen Dennis Deines (right) and Kelly Owens (middle right). Dennis has recently retired, finishing his career as the manager of member services, and Kelly is still working with the linemen as a crew foreman.



Do You Have Unclaimed Capital Credits?

Western Cooperative has unclaimed capital credits. We issued checks to the last known address and have been unsuccessful reaching those listed below. If you are on the list or an heir to a deceased member, please contact us at 800-456-6720. Having your previous addresses will be helpful. A full list of names can be found on our website, www.westerncoop.com. Go to My Account, Capital Credits and click on the view list of members in blue.

ALLEN VICKI	CHARLES HAROLD	FRIED SIAH SOLOMON	IRVIN STANLEY	MAI, DONALD
AMOCO PIPELINE UZKMR09ELL	CHOITZ R D	GALVAN HECTOR	IRVIN VIRGINIA	MARTIN MARCUS
BAALMAN RODNEY	COBERLY ANDREA	GORDON DAVID	JAMISON ROSETTA	MASSIER EDWARD
BAALMAN RODNEY C	COBERLY, ANDREA	GORDON WAYNE	JENSEN, GOLDIE	MAST DOLORES
BEAMER LESA	CUMMINGS RON	GOTTSCHALK LORAN & TAMMY	JOHNSON BRENT	MCCANN MARY
BILLINGER LYDIA	CURTIS REX	GRAVES DRILLING CO	JOHNSON LARRY (DECEASED)	MILLER PATRICK
BILLIPS TRUST DON	DARNELL SHANE	GRAVES DRILLING CO INC	JOHNSON-DECEASED LARRY	MILLER PATRICK JR
BIRD GARY	DEGES RICHARD	HAFFNER THERESA	JORDAN RANDALL W	MINIUM VUEL V (PETE)
BODINE LAWRENCE	DENNING EVELYN C	HALLWOOD PETROLEUM	KANACO INC OF KS	MINIUM VUEL V(PETE)
BODINE, LAWRENCE E	DESIEN CHARLOTTE	HARDING DERRICK	KANSAS PETROLEUM INC	MOORE DICK A ESTATE
BORGER CHELLI	DESSEL CRAIG	HASELHORST KATHLEEN	KELLER FRED	NEXTEL COMMUNICA- TIONS INC
BOSCHOWITZKI ROMA I ESTATE	EDGEComb RYAN	HASELHORST KATHLEEN L	KELLER JOCELYN	NORRIS RALPH & LORNA
BOSQUEZ DEBRA	EMIG WALTER	HAYNIE MICHAEL	KIMBREL JIM	PALMER JENNIFER
BOYER CLAYTON E	ENRIGHT GAS & OIL INC	HEARTLAND ALFALFA	KIMBREL, JIM	PATTERSON CHARLES M
BRANUM TRAVIS	EVANS THERESA	HEMPLER DENNIS	KINDERKNECHT NORMAN	PHILIP MILDRED L
BRASSFIELD ALLEN R	EWING JOHN	HENNING TAMMY L	KINDERKNECHT, NORMAN	PINNEY CARL
BROPHY CARRIE SOLOMON	FAHEY EUGENE	HERRERA JOEVA	KINGERY, JOHN	PIVONKA JOHN W
BROWN ENTERPRISES	FLORA BILLIE	HIGDON LORALYNN	KOBLER HELEN	PRATOR TERESA
CARL BOXBERGER OIL INC	FORAN-DECEASED, RICHARD	HOCKERSMITH CHARLES	KOEBEL KEVIN	PREWO ROSE
CARPENTER JAMES	FOWLER BILL	HOFFMAN PETROLEUM INC	KOEBEL, KEVIN	PREWO, ROSE
		HOLZMEISTER RAY	KOHL ALVIN	RAUCH IRENE
			KRHUT ALMA-DECEASED	REBARCHEK WAYNE
			LASITER ALAN	REINERT CHARLES L
			LITSON MAXINE FES #1	ROBERTS DOUGLAS
			LUEA RONALD	ROBERTS DOUGLAS W
			LUEA RONALD L	ROBERTSON WAYNE
			LYND GEORGINE	ROSE DONNELL
			MAI DONALD	RUPP MITCH

New Year, New Rates

The board of trustees voted on Dec. 19, 2019 to approve the new electricity rates to take affect in 2020. If you have questions about the new rates or about your bill, visit our website at www.westerncoop.com or call the office at 785-743-5561 during regular business hours.

Working on the LINE

DALTON HENSLEY (far left) spoke to the Ellis High School senior class about his experience after graduating from EHS in 2017. Dalton was an intern for Western for a summer as a high schooler, then went to school at Pratt Community College and became a full-time employee of Western. **BRADY BITTEL** (third from left) is a 1989 EHS alum and longtime employee of Western. Thank you Ellis High School for letting us speak to your senior class.

