

An Equal Opportunity Provider & Employer

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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NEWS

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co-op news, energy tips, photos from co-op events and more!

Trustee Nominating Committees to Be Announced

The 2019 Western Cooperative Electric Association Annual Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 8, 2019.

Prior to the meeting, the Western trustees will appoint a nominating committee for each district. The committees will prepare a list of nominations for trustees in their respective districts who have terms expiring, and present these nominations for election by members prior to the annual meeting. Article IV, Section 4.06 of Western's bylaws states the following concerning nominations:

"At least seventy-five (75) days prior to the annual meeting, the President shall, with the approval of the Board of Trustees, appoint a nominating committee of three (3) members from each of said three (3) trustee districts, and each of said nominating committees shall nominate one or more Members from its respective district for each trustee to be elected from the district, and within fifty (50) days prior to the meeting said nominating committees shall report their nominations to the Secretary of the Cooperative who shall cause the list of nominees to be mailed to the members of the cooperative at the time the notice of annual meeting is mailed. Any fifteen (15) or more members of the cooperative, acting together, may make additional nominations in writing over their

signatures, in like manner showing clearly which committee-nominated candidate(s) are being opposed, not less than fifty (50) days

prior to the meeting, and the Secretary shall post such nominations at the same place where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted. The Secretary shall mail to the members with the notice of the meeting, or separately, but no less than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the meeting, a statement of the Trustees to be elected from specific Trustee districts, and the names and addresses of all nominees, showing separately those nominated by the committee and those nominated by petition, if any.

Positions up for election:

- ▶ **District 1:** Graham, Osborne, Rooks and Sheridan counties – **SUSAN ROHLEDER**
- ▶ **District 2:** Ellis, Lincoln, Russell and Trego counties – **FRANK JOY**
- ▶ **District 3:** Barton, Ellsworth, Gove, Ness and Rush counties – **CHARLES LUETTERS**

May 2019						
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	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Hobbs Serves 25 Years on Co-op Board



Terry Hobbs

TERRY HOBBS, vice president of Western Cooperative Electric's Board of Trustees, was recognized at the December 2018 board meeting for his 25 years of dedicated

service to Western and its members.

Being a trustee of Western Cooperative Electric not only requires a commitment of time, but also entails a tremendous amount of responsibility. Western's trustees establish the basic policies and long-range plans that serve as a guideline for management decisions, as well as act on a variety of matters affecting the cooperative's financial health.

Western congratulates Hobbs on achieving 25 years of service. We appreciate his hard work and dedication to serving the members and employees of our cooperative.

CRC to Handle After-Hours Payments

You may be familiar with Western's after-hours call center, CRC, for reporting outages and answering calls after the close of business. Now, you may make a payment to your electric bill with their representatives, just like with Western's staff.

"We recently implemented this service as another option for our members' convenience," said Christina Lowry, office manager. This complements the ebiz website access for making payments and offers our members another option.

Tip of the Month

LAUNDRY TIP: Dry towels and heavier cottons separately from lighter-weight clothing. You'll spend less time running the dryer for lighter-weight items, which saves energy.

Source: energy.gov

Peils' Dedication to Each Other Drives Commitment to Co-ops

Western Cooperative Electric employee, electric utility contractor, and a blind date. What do these all have in common? The answer: a lifelong commitment to the rural electric cooperative industry for **WILMA (FABRIZIUS) PEIL**.

In the earlier years of Western Cooperative Electric, the office was located on Main Street in WaKeeney with Fabrizious being an employee responsible for secretarial and billing duties.

"I also helped with the accounting of the material used for construction," Wilma said. "That meant I was in contact with the contractor employees as well, who were also hired by Western to build line."

During her employment, Wilma recalls being asked by a friend to double on a blind date, and she agreed. Wilma's date turned out to be **BRUCE PEIL**, employee of the contractor working for Western.

"After that date, the rest is history," Wilma chuckled.

After Bruce's two-year term with the U.S. Army, Bruce and Wilma were married with Bruce returning to the lineman vocation.

"We lived all over Kansas," Wilma stated. "Bruce would follow the job sites, and we would move our trailer house with us."

Bruce later become involved in safety training which led to the Manhattan Area Technical College's Electrical Power

& Distribution program, established in 1970. Bruce was their first instructor, starting in January of 1971.

"He had 18 students, no equipment, and a new curriculum his first year," said Wilma.

But with help from neighboring cooperatives for equipment, he made it through. Along with teaching, he required his students to commit to a summer internship program. He would make site visits and check on his students' progress."

After a 50-plus-year career, Bruce retired in 1993. "He loved teaching," Wilma said, while quickly adding, "He was also a committed family man as well."

A substation adjacent to the Manhattan Area Technical College was recently named after Bruce Peil and is on the site of the first Lineman's Rodeo, of which he was also instrumental in establishing.

A scholarship has been created at Manhattan Area Technical College in honor of Bruce. Currently, there is a two-year waiting list to enter the program.

So, this blind date, (a life-long committed spouse), enhanced the commitment for a lineman to fulfill his passion.



Bruce Peil

You're at the heart of everything we do.

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY
FROM OUR CO-OP FAMILY TO YOURS!

New Year Payment Resolution

Bringing in the new year can be a time to make a New Year's resolution. Resolve to simplify your bill paying process with Western Cooperative Electric.

Our first \$25 voucher winner for January is **JERRY MARSH** of Ellsworth.

To be eligible for the monthly prize of a \$25 voucher to a local business of your choice, sign up for automatic payment options, such as bank draft with checking/savings or recurring card (debit/credit) or enroll for e-business (ebiz) or go green by opting for paperless billing.

With paperless billing, you may opt in to receive text or email notifications to get your information.

Ebiz allows you to see your monthly bill, view daily electric usage, along with historical data, store a payment meth-

od, and make payments.

You can use ebiz to enroll yourself in automatic payments or contact us at 800-456-6720. No forms to complete, so signing up is fast, friendly and convenient.

Automatic payment guarantees on-time payments while maintaining an excellent payment history.

Already signed up for these payment options? Your name will also be included within the monthly drawings.

Thanks for considering these payment options. Enter today for a chance to win a prize in 2019!



Darryl Steckline Retires After 43 Years

On Jan. 2, 2019, Line Superintendent **DARRYL STECKLINE** retired from Western Cooperative after a career that spanned 43 years. Darryl began his career as a lineman and eventually transitioned to line superintendent.

He has weathered many storms and outages, traveled about the service territory staking hundreds of new meter sites, and worked on projects in an engineering capacity during his career.

Family, friends and colleagues gathered for a retirement party to celebrate Darryl's career with Western. His knowledge and work ethic will be missed by fellow employees.

Thank you, Darryl, for your dedication to the cooperative and the communities we serve. We wish him the very best in his retirement!

Brull Discusses the Importance of Co-ops



Paul Brull discusses the importance of youth to co-ops and the rural economy.

PAUL BRULL, Plainville, senior at TMP-Marian High School, made a presentation to the Western Board of Trustees on Dec. 20, 2018.

Brull represented Kansas on behalf of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth Leadership Council after attending the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., in 2018 sponsored by Western Cooperative Electric. Attending the board meeting fulfilled one of the requirements for attending the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour.

57% of Americans say that smart home technology products save them an average of 30 minutes per day.



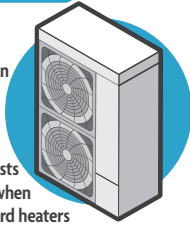
Information collected from National Council for Home Safety and Security

TYPES OF HEAT PUMPS

There are three main types of heat pump systems. Use the information below to determine the system that's best suited for your climate and home.

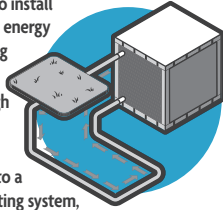
AIR-SOURCE HEAT PUMPS

- Most commonly used heat pumps
- Moves heat rather than converting it from a fuel like combustion heating systems do
- Can reduce heating costs by about 50 percent when compared to baseboard heaters or electric furnaces
- Newer, more efficient systems now offer legitimate space heating alternative in colder regions like the Northeast and Midwest. *Note: If temperatures in your area drop below 10 to 25 F, you will need an auxiliary heating system (depending on the size of the system).*



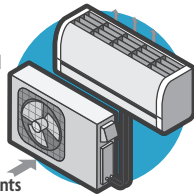
GEOHERMAL HEAT PUMPS

- More expensive to install but provide more energy savings for heating and cooling
- Move heat through pipes buried underground
- When compared to a conventional heating system, can reduce energy use by 25 to 50 percent
- Effective in extreme climates
- Not ideal for smaller lots and certain soil conditions



DUCTLESS MINI-SPLIT HEAT PUMPS

- Easier to install, quiet, small in size
- Flexible for heating and cooling individual rooms and smaller spaces
- No energy loss through ductwork, which accounts for more than 30 percent of a home's energy use for space heating/cooling.
- Installation can be pricey, but federal incentives may be available



Heat pump systems should be installed by a licensed professional. Contact Western Cooperative Electric for more information about options and potential incentives.

Sources: Dept. of Energy and Consumer Reports

Recognizing Employee Service

Each year Western recognizes employee anniversaries and their dedication to Western. In December 2018, the following employees were honored for their 2017 and 2018 tenure at Western:

2017

40 Years

- ▶ Gary Benisch, Line Foreman

20 years

- ▶ Kurtis Brock, Journeyman Lineman

10 years

- ▶ Shelli Nowlin, Customer Services
- ▶ Gene Hedding, Crew Foreman
- ▶ Johnny Howard, Journeyman Lineman
- ▶ Robert Zeman, Journeyman Lineman
- ▶ Dustin Wacker, Journeyman Lineman
- ▶ Stacey Malsam, Asst Manager/CFO
- ▶ Andrew Schultz, AMI/GIS Technician

5 years

- ▶ Aaron Frieb, Journeyman Lineman

2018

25 years

- ▶ Dave Conness, Purchasing

20 years

- ▶ Alfred Katt, Lineman,
- ▶ Jay Scott, Line Foreman

10 years

- ▶ Robert McCoy, AMI/GIS Technician
- ▶ Gary Yahnee, Journeyman Lineman
- ▶ Vivian Russ, Customer Services

5 years

- ▶ Lanette Steckline, Custodian
- ▶ Matthew Neff, Journeyman Lineman
- ▶ Seth Bittel, Journeyman Lineman
- ▶ Alan Austin, Journeyman Lineman

These individuals were recognized for their tenure not only to Western but as employees within the electric utility industry:

2017

15 years

- ▶ Tyler Renard, Journeyman Lineman

2018

40 years

- ▶ Greg Stahl, Journeyman Lineman

35 years

- ▶ Jerry Casey, Operations Field Supervisor

Western acknowledges the hard work and dedication of all employees.

Don't have a SmartThings Hub?

If you don't have a smart home command center, consider these ala carte options:

- ▶ **A SMART THERMOSTAT** – they learn your habits to keep your home comfortable and then do so in the most efficient way possible.
- ▶ **A MODERATELY PRICED SMART PLUG (AROUND \$40)** – turns your electronics on or off from anywhere using your phone or tablet.
- ▶ **SMART GARAGE DOOR OPENERS** – prevent thieves (and hot or cold air) from coming in your home if you forget to

close your garage door. You can check it and close it from your smartphone with the companion app.

- ▶ **WIRELESS LIGHT SWITCH AND DIMMERS WITH REMOTE CONTROL AND SCHEDULING** – some offer smart-home integration options so you can hook them up to Alexa, Google Assistant, Nest and other digital assistants.
- ▶ **MOTION SENSORS** – these shut off lights when there's inactivity in a room.
- ▶ **A SMART POWER STRIP** – monitors and turns off power to plugged-in items when not in use.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

LAUNDRY TIP: Dry towels and heavier cottons separately from lighter-weight clothing. You'll spend less time running the dryer for lighter-weight items, which saves energy.

