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Western Recovers from Recent Ice Storm



Western's Ellsworth line crew worked tirelessly to restore power to members. At the peak of the storm Western had as many as 3,000 members without power and 40 power poles down.

December 10, 2007, brought flashbacks for Western's linemen from the ice storm of December 2006. As mist and rain continued into the morning hours of December 11, ice accumulated on trees and electric lines.

Hundreds of phone calls reporting outages were received and documented. The most damage occurred in the eastern portion of Western's service territory, due to ice accumulation.

The restoration process was extremely slow as temperatures remained below the freezing point.

"We would make one step forward, and two steps back," said Darryl Steckline, Western's line superintendent. "With the heavy ice on the lines and downed tree branches, we just couldn't make any headway."

As temperatures rose, so did outages. As the ice fell off power lines, the

lines would begin to move or "gallop". This movement created stress, causing some of the lines to break.

"This has been a trying time for us," said Al Stefek, Ellsworth Line Foreman. "We are just as happy as our members when we see lights coming on."

At the peak of the storm, Western had as many as 3,000 members without power and 40 power poles down.

"Rebuilding will be a long process, but we will move forward," said David Schneider, Western's General Manager. "I am extremely proud of all our employees. Their cooperative spirit and dedication, along with patient and understanding cooperative members working together helped us make it through another ice storm."



Power lines coated in ice continued to cause outages up to a week after the storm.

Attention High School Juniors: Win A FREE Trip and Scholarship!

Students will travel to Washington, D.C., or to Steamboat Springs, CO, ALL At Our Expense!

Again this year, Western Cooperative Electric will offer its youth program for eligible high school juniors.

High school juniors are eligible to enter this contest if a parent or guardian is a member of Western Cooperative Electric.

Due to our additional service area, Western has added an additional trip this year as well as giving a \$250 scholarship with each trip. A \$400 scholarship is also being offered this year as a memorial by the family of Board Trustee, Darrell J. Brown.

The all-expense-paid trips consist of sending two students to the Washington, D.C., Youth Tour and two students to Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, CO. The dates for this year's Washington, D.C., trip are June 12-19, 2008, and the dates for the Steamboat Springs, CO, trip are July 12-18, 2008.

The competition will consist of submitting an application and

resume, taking an open book quiz, and writing a short essay on a topic to be announced. Based on these items, finalists will be selected for interviews and prize distribution at a time and place to be determined.

Since Western first sponsored the rural electric youth program in 1964, we have selected students and financed trips to Washington, D.C., for 51 high school juniors. Western has also sent two winners each year to the Colorado Camp for the last 32 years.

Approximately 20 Kansas students join the group of about 1,500 winners taking the youth tour to the nation's capital each year. The tour includes many places of historical interest and seeing our nation's government in action. The 2002 Kansas participants even had the opportunity to meet President Bush on the White House lawn.

Approximately 75 youth from a four-state area attend the Colorado Leadership Camp. A model cooperative is formed, field trips

are taken, and students participate in other fun-filled events.

Last year, Western sponsored the trip to Washington, D.C., for Brittany Leathers, Quinter. She is the daughter of Laura and Tony Herl.

The Colorado participants sponsored by Western in 2007 were Kyle Kennedy, son of Keith and Patricia Kennedy, Hoxie; and Brooke Evans, daughter of Brent and Leann Evans, Gove.

Last year's scholarship winners were Rebecca Benoit, Damar, daughter of Tom and Donna Benoit; Ryan Bittel, Ellis, son of Gene Bittel and Susan Nickerson; and Katelyn Keller, Ellis, daughter of Danny Keller and Kelley Keller.

To enter the contest, eligible students are urged to complete the entry coupon below, and return it to Western's office by January 31, 2008. Then watch the mail for your entry packet (coupon may be reproduced).

Youth Tour Contest Coupon

For an eligible high school junior to enter the competition, the cooperative office should receive this coupon by January 31, 2008. Mail or bring to: Western Cooperative Electric Association, Inc. 635 S. 13th St., P.O. Box 278, WaKeeney, KS 67672.

Name of Applicant _____

Address _____ Town _____ Zip _____

Birth Date _____ Year in School _____

Name of Parents or Guardian _____ Electric Account Number _____

Parents' Phone Number _____ School _____

I agree that all information supplied in this application is accurate and true. _____

(Signature of Applicant)

I hereby grant permission for _____ to enter the 2008 Youth Tour competition sponsored by

Western Cooperative Electric, Inc. _____

(Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian)