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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

P.O. Box 278, WaKeeney, KS 67672  
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WESTERN CO-OP ELECTRIC



WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC

# NEWS

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General Manager

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



## FROM THE MANAGER

# Small Change Can Change Lives



Tom Ruth

The holiday season is finally here. It's the time of year when we gather with family and friends to carry out family traditions, reflect on the past year, and spread joy

through giving.

But giving back reminds me of the many good things we have right here in our communities and why it's important to spread the good as far as we can, especially to the most vulnerable in our local area. I'm also reminded of how wonderful our communities are and what a big impact we can have when we work together.

As a member of Western Cooperative Electric, you help us spread the good throughout the year. By enrolling in our Operation Round Up program, your donations help local families and individuals in need by providing financial assistance with their energy bills.

When you "round up" your monthly bill from Western Cooperative and donate to the Western Cares fund, you're making a big difference in someone's life. You are helping to meet an immediate, critical need, but just as

importantly, you are telling this person the community cares.

Over the years, our community-focused programs, food donations, and other giving projects have helped local non-profit organizations, supported schools and students, fed hungry families, enabled families in need to keep the lights on, and so much more.

Western Cooperative also participates in the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, where we take our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C., for a weeklong immersion to experience democracy in action. Ultimately, the larger community benefits from these programs because of you and your neighbors.

You've likely heard me say that the cooperative principle of Concern for

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**Small Change, Big Difference**

**SIGN UP FOR ROUND UP TO FUND THE WESTERN CARES PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**




# Opportunity Awaits

## Apply for a \$1,000 Scholarship and a Trip of a Lifetime

Western Cooperative Electric invests in our youth with opportunities designed to reflect our society's realities and its preference for dynamic, personal interactions. It is important to build the skills necessary to become tomorrow's leaders through hands-on learning. These experiences are all-expenses-paid and will truly be the experiences of a lifetime for area youth.

### Who is Eligible?

Any high school junior whose parents or guardians are members of Western Cooperative Electric is eligible to apply for the scholarships and all-expenses-paid trips.

### How to Apply

Visit [www.westerncoop.com/youth-tour](http://www.westerncoop.com/youth-tour) for details on what is required to apply. Each student will need to fill out an application, provide a short essay and participate in a virtual interview.

### Electric Cooperative Youth Tour June 15-22, 2023



We're finally able to get back to our nation's capital! Cooperatives select youth for this opportunity as part of our strong commitment to the community and our mission to inspire future generations to become leaders. This trip opens the eyes of many students to future possibilities in leadership

roles while building lifelong friendships. In the past, delegates have visited many of our nation's monuments and attended the NRECA Youth Day, which brings together youth from all over the county to hear speakers.

### Cooperative Leadership Camp July 14-20, 2023



At the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp, the campers participate in daily membership meetings where they establish committees and elect a general manager and board of directors. Campers also have time to enjoy area activities, including visits to Fish Creek Falls and Steamboat Springs, river rafting, and participating in camp activities such as volleyball, swimming, and a talent show.

Students will learn about electric cooperatives through a variety of activities, including a voltage safety demonstration, building a model transmission line out of craft supplies, and a tour of the Craig Power Plant.

### Accompanying Scholarships

The top four finalists will be awarded \$1,000 Western Co-op Youth Leadership Scholarships. The fifth-place finalist will serve as a trip alternate and receive the \$250 Darrell Brown Memorial Scholarship. Don't miss out on this rare opportunity for juniors to get a head start on applying for college scholarships.

Apply Online! Scan the QR Code or Visit  
[www.westerncoop.com/youth-tour](http://www.westerncoop.com/youth-tour)





From left: Cameron Lindsey and Greta Klein represented Western Cooperative Electric at the 2022 Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, Colorado.



The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in June will begin with a Kansas State Capitol tour. Delegates will then travel to Washington, D.C.



## Application for Trips & Scholarship – Due Jan. 10, 2023

To apply for a chance to receive a Western Cooperative Youth Leadership Scholarship and attend the youth trips, please apply online at [www.westerncoop.com](http://www.westerncoop.com) or complete the form below and return it to Western Cooperative Electric Association Inc., 635 S. 13th St., P.O. Box 278, WaKeeney, KS 67672, **BY JAN. 10, 2023.**

Name of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Year in School \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent(s) or Guardian(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s) or Guardian(s) Phone Number(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Western Cooperative Electric Account Number \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

## Western Co-op Awards Sylvan Senior Center \$5,000 Sharing Success Grant

Western Cooperative Electric's Sharing Success Fund has awarded the **SYLVAN SENIOR CENTER** a \$5,000 grant to help with remodeling costs for their new location in downtown Sylvan Grove.

A friend of the Sylvan Senior Center (SSC) purchased the historic Farmer's elevator building in December 2018, then gave the building to the center as a gift. In the meantime, structural issues at the center's current location have become irreparable, making a move to the new location critical.

The newly acquired building is a historical landmark in Sylvan Grove — a windowed storefront and original limestone walls greet visitors as they enter downtown. Re-purposing the building is an opportunity for the nostalgic renewal of Main Street.

"We have contracted a historical architect to restore the building to its original 1930s appearance," said SSC Treasurer and Building Co-Chair Mike Kratky. "The completely remodeled inside of the building will provide a space for services and activities for older adults as well as various community events."

Senior Center activities will expand in this new and enlarged space, as other community members can use the facility. The building renovation will provide a great room that can accommodate gatherings of up to 85 people. Complete with a kitchen and handicapped-accessible bathrooms, the center will provide an opportunity to raise money for its care and operation by renting out the space.

"The hope is that the building will be used for business meetings, workshops, parties, special community events, family reunions, shows, and demonstrations. The possibilities are endless," said SSC President and Building Co-Chair Lorelei Dohl.

Thanks to donations, grants and extensive SSC fundraising, a new roof, tuck-pointed masonry on the limestone walls, a handicap accessibility ramp, and new concrete floors have been completed. Funding is now needed for HVAC, electrical, and plumbing installation and for the framework and finishing of interior rooms.

"Western Co-op is excited to help the Sylvan Senior Center with their



Sylvan Senior Center Building Co-Chair Mike Kratky (right) accepts a \$5,000 Sharing Success grant from Western Co-op's Member Services Manager Nolan Numrich for building renovations.

historic building renovation project," said Western's Member Services Manager Nolan Numrich. "This is a perfect fit for our Sharing Success fund. Not only are we helping preserve a piece of history, but the building will become a gathering place for the residents of Sylvan Grove and surrounding areas."

Since 2013, the Sharing Success program has donated nearly \$100,000 to local non-profit organizations. Western's Sharing Success grants are made possible, in part, through CoBank, which matches funds. In 2022, Western's board of trustees approved \$20,000 to be made available through a competitive grant process.

Applications for the 2023 Sharing Success grant cycle will be accepted starting in January. For more information, visit [www.westerncoop.com/sharing-success](http://www.westerncoop.com/sharing-success).

Donations can be made to Sylvan Senior Center at their current address: 109 S. Main Street, PO Box 34, Sylvan Grove, KS, 67481.

## Small Change Can Change Lives

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Community is part of Western Cooperative's DNA. It defines who we are as an organization. When we first brought electricity to the farms of rural Kansas in 1947, the quality of life improved. But other things also need to be addressed, and through the years, this co-op has been at the forefront of bringing improvements to the quality of life in our communities. It's why we created Operation Round Up and Western Cares.

To date, with your help, we've given tens of thousands of dollars back to local families and individuals through Western

Cares. And across the country, more than 350 electric co-ops have an Operation Round Up program, and together, we've raised millions for local communities. This shows that small donations from electric co-ops like ours, over time, can collectively make a big impact.

We hope you will think of Western Cooperative as more than your energy provider but also as a catalyst for good in our community. As a local cooperative, we have a stake in this community. It's why we support local schools, organizations, and not-for-profits. To enroll in Operation Round Up or apply for Western Cares assistance, visit [www.westerncoop.com](http://www.westerncoop.com) or call our office at 785-743-5561.

I hope all our members have a joyous holiday season. May it be merry and bright!