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WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC

# NEWS

## Western Cooperative Electric, Inc.

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**Susan Rohleder**

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**Dale Weinhold**

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### General Manager

**Tom Ruth**

General Manager

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## Western Welcomes Nick Zerr to Board of Trustees

**NICK ZERR**, Gove, was elected as a Western trustee for District 3 at the 77th Western Cooperative Electric Annual Meeting.

After graduating from Fort Hays State University and The University of Kansas Medical Center, Zerr worked at Logan County Hospital for 10 years and currently works as a real estate agent and equipment sales agent.

Serving the community has always been a priority for Zerr. In the past, he has served on the USD 292 School Board, Knights of Columbus, Gove County Economic Development, and the Grainfield City Council.

Zerr has been married to his wife, Dusty, for nearly 20 years. The couple has three children together and stay active with school activities and 4-H.

"I would like to thank the members for allowing me the opportunity to serve as a Western trustee," Zerr said. "My goal is always to have an 'open door' style when



Nick Zerr was elected to the board of trustees during the 77th annual meeting

working with others. I think it is essential to have that line of communication with any member who may have a concern."

Western is a member-owned electric cooperative. The nine-member board of trustees regulates and governs the cooperative on the members' behalf. Trustees are elected to three-year terms with no limit on terms served.



HAPPY

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**4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY**

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INDEPENDENCE DAY

Our office will be closed on Monday, July 4, for the holiday.

# 2022 YOUTH

## Learning Awaits Klein and Lindsey at the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp



Greta Klein

Since the late 1970s, students have been selected to attend the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp (CYLC). While students have been unable to attend camp for the past two years, they are eager to return to the fun. This year, nearly 80 students will attend CYLC from Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado and Wyoming.

**GRETA KLEIN**, Ellsworth High School, and **CAMERON LINDSEY**, Plainville High School, will represent Western Cooperative Electric at CYLC near Steamboat Springs, Colorado, July 15-22, 2022. In addition, both students will receive a \$1000 college scholarship.

During CYLC, students will get the opportunity to view a high voltage display, learn about electric safety, attend leadership seminars, tour a solar farm, and view a Hawk Quest presentation. In addition to the core of CYLC, students will visit downtown Steamboat Springs, go white water



rafting, and participate in fun camp activities, including a volleyball tournament, talent show, and dance.

This is the 45th year that Kansas has participated in the camp, sending its first campers to what was then called the Energy Seminar in 1977. Western Cooperative sponsors the trip of two each year.

In late February, Klein and Lindsey were chosen through the youth program application and interview process.

"We are excited to return to the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp this year," said Member Services Manager Nolan Numrich. "Engaging with our student leaders ties back to our cooperative principles: Concern for Community and Education, Training, and Information."

For more information about this camp and other youth programs, contact Christina Lowry or visit [westerncoop.com](http://westerncoop.com).



Cameron Lindsey



## SMART PAYMENTS

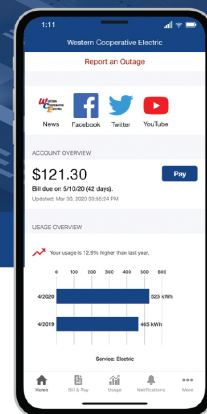
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# PROGRAMS

## Cramer and Metzler Selected for the 2022 KEY Leadership Conference

Seventeen students from Kansas electric cooperatives will attend this year's Kansas Electric Youth (KEY) Leadership Conference in Topeka from June 5-8. This in-person conference was developed as a leadership education opportunity for the children of electric co-op members.

During the KEY conference, students will participate in a variety of activities, including touring FreeState Electric Co-op and the Kansas State Capitol, engaging with government leaders, watching safety demonstrations, going on bucket truck rides, and developing their leadership skills through interactive presentations and workshops.

**ASHLYNN CRAMER**, Trego Community High School, and **DAKOTA METZLER**, Ellis High School, will represent Western Cooperative Electric at the

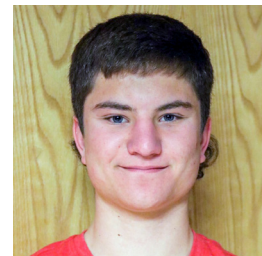
conference. Each participant was chosen through Western Cooperative Electric's application process. Winners are chosen based on their overall abilities as leaders, academic achievements, extracurricular activities, and character. In addition to attending the KEY conference, both students will receive \$1,000 scholarships.

"We are delighted to offer the KEY Leadership Conference as an in-person event this year, and we look forward to bringing together these student leaders," said Member Services Manager Nolan Numrich. "We continue to strive to find ways to engage with our local youth."

For more information on how to attend/send students to the KEY Leadership Conference, contact Christina Lowry or visit [westerncoop.com](http://westerncoop.com).



Ashlynn Cramer



Dakota Metzler

## SCHOLARSHIP Winner



Samantha Holmes

**SAMANTHA HOLMES**, Ellsworth High School, has been awarded the Darrell Brown Memorial scholarship. Samantha will also serve as an alternate for Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp and the KEY conference.

# 2022

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

If you're looking to add smart technology to your home, consider smart plugs. Smart plugs are inexpensive and can be used to control electronic devices, such as lighting, home office equipment and video game consoles, through a smart phone app. By powering off unused devices when you're away, you can save energy and money!

**SOURCE: [ENERGYSTAR.GOV](http://ENERGYSTAR.GOV)**



## Luetters Retires from Western Board of Trustees

After serving on the Western Board of Trustees for the past 16 years, **CHARLES LUETTERS** chose not to seek re-election.

“Over the years, it has been a pleasure to serve on the Western Board. Thank you to the members and employees of Western Cooperative for allowing me to represent a first-class organization,” said Luetters.

Luetters was elected as a District 3 Trustee in 2006, shortly before the Aquila acquisition. During his tenure, there have been many changes to the electric utility industry, but Luetters’ commitment to the members has always remained constant.

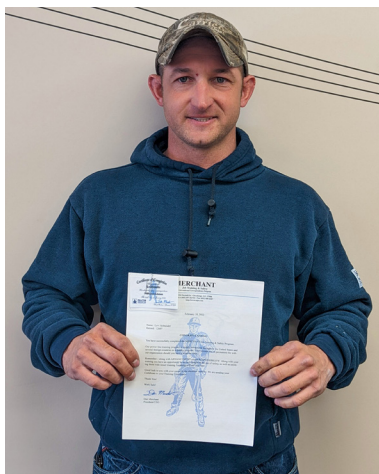
Board President Craig Crossland, “Chuck has been an outstanding Trustee over the past 16 years. He always kept the member’s best interests in mind when making decisions. We will miss having his perspective in the boardroom, and we wish him the best.”

Chuck, thank you for 16 years of dedication to Western members and employees. You will be missed.



**Charles Luetters** did not seek another term after serving on the Western board for 16 years.

## Schneider Earns Journeyman's Certification



**Levi Schneider** recently earned his journeyman lineman certification.

**LEVI SCHNEIDER** recently completed the Merchant Job Training and Safety Program.

Schneider grew up in Kannapolis and works at the Ellsworth outpost. After studying electric power technology at Pratt, Schneider started working at Western in 2018.

Congratulations, Levi!

## Klein Retires from Western

After a career dedicated to the service of others, **COLLEEN KLEIN** retired in early April. Klein spent the past 11 years as a member service representative for Western Cooperative Electric. With her friendly attitude and willingness to go the extra mile, Klein was a shining example of customer service.

Before working at Western, Klein spent several years as a daycare provider and a paraprofessional at the WaKeeney Grade school. Klein said the key to helping others was simple, “I always thought it was important to come to work with a smile on your face and treat people the way you would want to be treated.”

Klein’s positive attitude was crucial over this past year as Western implemented an entirely new software system.

“The last year was challenging, but in the end, it was rewarding to see the software conversion through to completion,” Klein said.

In May, for the first time in over a decade, Western held its annual meeting without Klein there to greet members.

“One of my favorite parts of working at Western was the annual meeting,” Klein said. “I loved interacting with the members and putting a face to a name.”

“Colleen is a special person. She exemplified kindness, patience and positivity,” said General Manager Tom Ruth. “She has always been one of those ‘go-to’ people that would take on any task and give it her all. We will miss having her light up the office with her positivity, and wish her the best in her retirement.”

During her retirement, Klein plans to quilt, read and travel to visit her five sons and nine grandchildren.



**Colleen Klein** (left), member service representative, accepts a plaque for her 11 years of service from **Christina Lowry**, office manager.