



RURAL MISSOURI

July 2010




CURRENT TIMES

News for members of White River Valley Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

WRVEC CAPTURES TOP HONOR IN NATIONAL COMMUNICATION COMPETITION

 White River Valley Electric Cooperative received the Edgar F. Chesnutt Award for Best Total Communication Program, the highest honor bestowed through the Spotlight on Excellence Awards program. WRVEC was recognized during the opening session of CONNECT '10, a national communication, marketing and member services conference held in May and convened by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives.

Karen Combs, president of the Council of Rural Electric Communicators, which established and co-sponsors the Spotlight awards with NRECA, made the announcement by introducing a video presentation detailing the WRVEC communication campaign, "Our Energy, Our Future®: We're All in This Together."

White River took the national electric co-op grassroots campaign Our Energy, Our Future® and expanded it into a locally focused education and communication effort involving the WRVEC membership. The goal: 50,000 Our Energy, Our Future messages to the U.S. Congress and a 75 percent awareness level of critical energy issues among co-op members.

The co-op developed a comprehensive action plan employing multiple communication vehicles showing local faces telling real stories to reach out to local and national decision makers. One vehicle was a video that featured interviews with co-op members who described the effect that rising electricity costs would have on their homes, their businesses and their futures. Print, broadcast, digital and social media saturated the co-op's service area reaching members, community groups, and elected officials.

The campaign was an all-employee effort



Karen Combs, President of CREC and Martin Lowery, Executive Vice President of External Affairs at NRECA, present The Edgar F. Chesnutt Award to White River Valley Electric Cooperative's Amy Rosier, Communications Coordinator and Jeff Pardeck, Member Services Manager.

through internal meetings, talking points, the employee newsletter and a contest to see which employee could deliver the most member-signed Our Energy, Our Future "Start the Dialogue" cards. It became a constant presence at WRVEC events and community gatherings.

The results: more than 107,000 messages to Congress – more than twice the original goal – and a survey showing that 94 percent of those who filled out a card or sent an e-mail message understood what they were signing up for. The members of WRVEC were the key ingredient that made the program so successful.

One Spotlight on Excellent judge said, "Engaging members in the promotional efforts gave this campaign its grassroots feel. Videos, television and radio commercials used a diverse group of real people to share their concerns. The results far exceeded the original projections."

Jeff Pardeck, manager of WRVEC's member services, and Amy Rosier, WRVEC's

communications coordinator, accepted the Chesnutt Award from NRECA Executive Vice President for External Affairs Martin Lowery, who praised White River Valley for its outstanding achievement in cooperative communication.

"White River Valley's grassroots efforts deserve this high praise," Lowery said. "Involving local people telling their own stories is an effective way to draw attention to energy and affordability issues."

The Spotlight on Excellence awards recognize electric cooperatives across the country for their high-quality communication and marketing efforts. More than 800 entries were submitted in this year's competition and were judged by faculty members of the University of Missouri-Columbia and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Edgar F. Chesnutt, for whom the award is named, was the manager of corporate communication with Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, Little Rock, from 1961 until his death in 1987. He wrote a highly praised handbook on public relations, "Getting in Step," which co-ops still use today and is required reading in preparing for the Certified Cooperative Communicator program.

NRECA is the national service organization that represents the nation's more than 900 private, not-for-profit, member-owned electric cooperatives, which provide service to 42 million people in 47 states. Touchstone Energy is a national alliance of local, member-owned electric cooperatives providing high standards of service to customers large and small. Touchstone Energy Cooperatives serve their members with integrity, accountability, innovation and a long-standing commitment to community.

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A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 



"I want to publicly thank our legislators, Sen. Jack Goodman, Sen. Dan Clemens, Rep. Nita Jane Ayres, Rep. Jay Wasson, Rep. Ray Weter, Rep. Maynard Wallace and Rep. Tony Dugger for their bipartisan support for this legislation, and especially for the emergency clause that made it effective immediately. Of all the things done in this legislative session, the passage of this bill was the most important for our state."

- Chris Hamon
CEO

Sales tax "reseller exemption" legislation Saved you millions

A Missouri Supreme Court decision that became effective last September reversed many years of state policy and practice with respect to state sales tax for virtually every business in Missouri. This decision did away with the so-called "reseller exemption." If implemented by the Department of Revenue, this ruling would have, for the first time, required generation and transmission co-ops to start collecting state sales tax from the distribution co-ops on retail electricity sales to tax exempt co-op members.

In essence, the court held that "someone up the ladder" had to pay the state sales tax even though the distribution co-op would remain prohibited from collecting the tax directly from the tax-exempt member. This necessarily would mean an increase in the co-op's overall cost of service, which in turn, would have to be recovered either through rate increases or reductions in capital credits to members such as you. The Department of Revenue was required to start implementing the court's decision retroactively to last September unless legislation was passed immediately to overturn the decision.

The Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives (AMEC) worked in cooperation with the Missouri Chamber of Commerce, Associated Industries of Missouri, investor and municipally owned utilities, the Department of Revenue, the Missouri Retailers Association, Boeing and many others in drafting legislation to overturn the court's decision. Reps. Mike Sutherland and Brian Munzlinger each filed this legislation in the House, while Sen. Brad Lager filed it in the Senate. During the course of the

legislative session, it was added as amendments to several other bills to increase its chance of passage.

AMEC, along with the stakeholders' coalition, pulled out all the stops in lobbying for the legislation, fighting off unrelated delaying amendments and moving it on to the governor's desk as quickly as possible. As a result, Senate Bill 928 sponsored by Sen. Lager passed the Senate 31 to 0 on April 6 and then passed the House 150 to 1 on April 28. The bill was sent to Gov. Nixon on April 29 and he signed it in a public ceremony on May 12, just prior to the end of the legislative session.

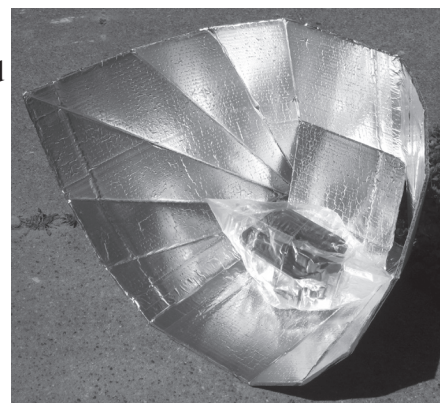
SB 928 became effective immediately upon Governor Nixon signing it. The Department of Revenue will not be implementing the court's decision. In these tough economic times, when the state is looking for new sources of revenue to balance the budget and fund the many programs it provides, it would have been easy for Gov. Nixon and our legislators to throw up their hands and blame the Supreme Court for driving up your electric bill. Instead, they recognized the hardship this would put on ratepayers and the potential loss of jobs from other affected industries.

I want to publicly thank our legislators, Sen. Jack Goodman, Sen. Dan Clemens, Rep. Nita Jane Ayres, Rep. Jay Wasson, Rep. Ray Weter, Rep. Maynard Wallace and Rep. Tony Dugger for their bipartisan support for this legislation, and especially for the emergency clause that made it effective immediately. Of all the things done in this legislative session, the passage of this bill was the most important for our state.

10 HOT TIPS FOR GREEN SUMMER COOKING

Keep your cool this summer when preparing meals. You can save money and reduce your carbon footprint with these 10 easy tips for going green when cooking summer meals (and year round, for that matter).

1. Cook outdoors when possible to reduce the load on your air conditioner. Try a solar cooker or oven. Solar cookers and ovens are by far the most energy-efficient cooking appliances. They require no fuel, reduce unwanted summer heat in your home by taking cooking outside, and can accommodate any food a slow cooker can. Some solar ovens can reach 500 degrees. To learn more, visit www.solarcooking.org.
2. Toaster ovens, convection ovens, and slow cookers get the job done with less energy than conventional stovetops or ovens, especially when preparing smaller meals.
3. Use as small a pan, as little water, and as little pre-heating time as possible.
4. Bake in glass or ceramic ovenware instead of metal. You can turn the temperature down by 25 degrees, and foods will cook in the same amount of time.
5. Avoid thawing food in the microwave. Thawing food in the fridge is far more energy efficient, contributes to the fridge's cooling, and is safer than thawing food on the countertop or in the sink.
6. Don't open the door and peek in the oven. Use the oven window instead!
7. Clean burner pans (the pans under the burners that catch grease) regularly. They'll more effectively reflect heat to the cookware. Dirty burner pans absorb heat and reduce efficiency.
8. Use flat-bottom cookware that rests evenly on the surface of electric coil burners, solid-disk elements, or radiant elements under smooth-top ceramic glass.
9. Use residual heat. Turn the stove or oven off before cooking is done to allow cooking to continue while reducing energy use. An electric burner element can be turned off two minutes before removing the cookware, since it remains hot. Ovens can be turned off 20 minutes before cooking's done.
10. Consider substituting one or more stovetop burners with an induction cooker. The typical efficiency of an induction cooker is 84 percent, gas stovetops are 40 percent efficient, according the U.S. Department of Energy. What's more, induction cookers (which require magnetic cookware such as cast iron or enameled steel) produce as much heat as gas and are less costly to operate than a conventional electric burner. Visit www.theinductionsite.com to learn more.



Solar cookers and ovens are by far the most energy-efficient cooking appliances. They reflect heat from sunlight to a central area to heat food or water.

Source: Solar Cookers International

Source: U.S. Department of Energy



WRVEC Operation Round Up Scholarship Trust

Local Fishermen Hooked on Education

Seventy-nine teams of local fishermen participated in White River Valley Electric Cooperative's 4th Annual Hooked on Education Fishing Tournament on Saturday, May 1, in support of WRVEC's Scholarship Trust. The tournament was held at Theodosia Marina on Bull Shoals Lake. The sportsmen launched their boats at 7:00 a.m. after a night of heavy rain, but reported back at 3:00 p.m. that the fishing was good.

According to CEO Chris Hamon, "The Hooked on Education Fishing Tournament allows members of the community to support the educational pursuits of our youth while doing something that they enjoy." Hamon went on to add, "As a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, one of White River's four core values is commitment to community. The Hooked on Education Fishing Tournament exemplifies that commitment."

Each of the 118 fishermen received a gift at registration worth over \$20. They returned in the afternoon to grilled hot dogs and the chance to win a portion of the over \$1500 worth of prize drawings such as fishing rod and reels, power tools and \$25 Bass Pro gift cards, plus 80% payback in prize money.

Clarence and Chance Snell, father and son angling team from Gainesville, took first place using worms to catch the top prize. Their six-fish limit won \$1500 for the biggest stringer at 19.79 pounds.

The team of Max Ray from Kimberling City and Harold Bryeans, Branson, took second place using jig pigs and netted \$1000 in winnings. They caught their six-fish limit, weighing in at a close to first place 19.77 pounds. The team also came in second place in the Big Bass competition reeling in another \$180 for their

catch of 6.07 pounds.

Third place finishers were another father and son team, Bob and Andy Foster of Salem, AR. This duo won \$700 using wacky worms to get their six-fish limit weighing 18.80 pounds.

Paul Brunson from Mountain Home, AR and Justin Phillips from Harrison, AR were the fourth place team bringing in a \$500 check for their six-fish limit by flipping a jig at a weight of



Clarence and Chance Snell, father and son team from Gainesville, took first place in WRVEC's 4th Annual Hooked on Education Fishing Tournament to net \$1500 for the biggest string at 19.79 pounds.

18.34 pounds.

The team of Bob Bryant and Steve McFarland, Gainesville, finished with a fifth place win for \$300 using a spinner bait for their 18.28 pound six-fish limit. Bryant and McFarland were also the first place winners of the Big Bass competition with a weight of 6.22 pounds and grabbed an additional \$400.

This year WRVEC added 6th – 9th place cash winnings to sweeten the pot. Darrell Stewart and Leon Newberry from Salem, AR, took 6th place and \$200 for a 17.59 pound catch. Gary Jones from Kimberling City and Mike Merrell from Forsyth won \$150 with 17.06 pounds for 7th place. The team of Link Humphries and Randy Zeigler, Salem, AR came in 8th place and took home \$150 with 16.83 pounds. Rounding out the winners at 9th place were Jason Davidson and Darren Tilley from Protem winning \$100 for their catch of 15.98 pounds.

Winners of the biggest junk fish went to the team of Gerald Pagan and Danny Neal from Forsyth for their 4.70 pound walleye. The proud winners of the lightest stringer coming in at 1.08 pounds were Marcus Baker and Jeff Prewitt from Marshfield who took home \$100 for their catch.

Proceeds from the Hooked on Education Tournament benefit WRVEC's Scholarship Trust (funded by Operation Round Up). Each spring, scholarship applications are available to full-time students from the cooperative's five-county service area. To date, the Scholarship Trust has awarded over \$1,000,000 in aid for higher education. Candidates are evaluated on the basis of financial need, overall academic performance, extra-curricular involvement and college acceptance.

For over 17 years, White River Valley Electric Cooperative's Operation Round Up program has collected and distributed over \$2.7 million to students, local organizations and needy families throughout their five-county service area. For more information visit www.whiteriver.org or contact Cindy Rains at 417/335-9335 or crains@whiteriver.org.

Special thanks to the White River Valley Electric Cooperative members who so generously donated their capital credit checks to Operation Round Up. Your gifts will make a difference in a lot of lives!

Energy & Education Pro-Am and Business After Hours

The Energy & Education Pro-Am golf tournament and Business After Hours (BAH) are just around the corner. The 2009 tournament generated over \$30,500 for the White River Valley Electric Trust Scholarship fund, which helps local students obtain a higher education.

The Pro-Am will be held on August 8 at LedgeStone Golf Course. This National Tour satellite tournament will consist of 28 teams that will include a tour pro and four players.

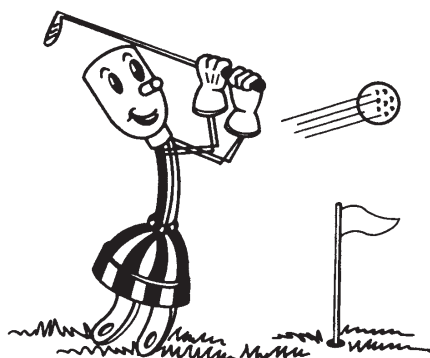
To date, the WRVEC Trust has awarded more

than \$1,000,000 in tuition assistance to area students. The funds for the scholarships are raised through Operation Round Up, the Energy &

Education Pro-Am, Hooked on Education Fishing Tournament and the Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours sponsored by WRVEC.

For more information about the 9th Annual Energy and Education Pro-Am or BAH call 1-800-879-4056. To find out more about Operation Round Up or the Scholarship

Trust visit www.whiteriver.org or e-mail crains@whiteriver.org.



TIP OF THE MONTH

Use shade trees in landscaping design to block summer sun and reduce cooling costs. Deciduous trees shed leaves in winter to let heat in.

Our Energy, Our Future WINNERS

Clifton Eserman, Ridgedale
Glenda Scott, Ava
Delbert Dickey, Kirbyville
Karyn Anderson, Gainesville
Tom Youngs, Taneyville

Congratulations to these members for sending in their **Our Energy, Our Future** cards and winning the \$50 bill credit drawings!





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We're all in this together

71st Annual Meeting of Members

As a member-owner of White River Valley Electric Cooperative, you have a voice. Join us for the 71st Annual Meeting of Members and let your voice be heard. Featuring free food, prizes, fun activities for the kids and entertainment.



**Saturday,
September 11
The Tri-Lakes Center
Branson**

**Featuring
Restless Heart**
Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.

Know What's Below: Call before You Dig

Whether it's a dreamed up deck addition or a landscaping masterpiece, summer weather is a great time for outdoor improvement plans to actually play out.

But if your planned projects include digging, like planting a tree or bringing in a backhoe for trench work, you'll have to wait a few more days so the job can be done safely. Underground utilities, such as buried gas, water, and electric lines, can be a shovel thrust away from turning a summer project into a disaster.

To find out where utility lines run on your property, dial 811 from anywhere in the country a few days prior to digging. Your call will be routed to a local "one call" center. Tell the operator where you're planning to dig and what type of work you will be doing, and affected local utilities will be notified.

In a few days, a locator will arrive to designate the approximate location of any underground lines, pipes, and cables with flags or marking paint so you'll know what's below. Then the safe digging can begin.

Many homeowners tackling do-it-yourself digging projects are aware of "Call Before

You Dig" services, but the majority don't take advantage of the service. A national survey showed that only 33 percent of homeowners called to have their lines marked before starting digging projects, according to the Common Ground Alliance, a federally mandated group of underground utility and damage prevention industry professionals.

Although light gardening typically doesn't call for deep digging, other seemingly simple tasks like planting shrubs or installing a new mailbox post can damage utility lines. A severed line can disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, harm diggers, and potentially result in fines and repair costs.

Never assume the location or depth of underground utility lines. There's no need: the 811 service is free, prevents the inconvenience of having utilities interrupted, and can help you avoid serious injury. For more information about local services, visit www.call811.com.

Sources: Common Ground Alliance, SafeElectricity.org



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**



WE WANT YOU

TO HAVE A

SAFE

AND

FUN

4TH OF JULY