Let your voice be heard

And get a chance to win $100 in electricity

With climate change legislation on the front burner in Congress, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) launched a campaign to get members across the nation involved in the debate. The "Our Energy, Our Future" campaign is designed to ensure elected officials grasp the importance of reliable, affordable power.

Whatever your stand on the climate change debate, the price you pay for electricity in the future, and likely its availability as well, depends on getting involved in this discussion.

If unchanged, climate change legislation will result in the average monthly electric bill increasing $175 to $190. NRECA has made it easy to start the conversation by providing standardized letters that ask elected officials important questions.

**Your signature indicates that you give WRVEC permission to communicate through the “Our Energy, Our Future” campaign on your behalf**

It’s easy to let your voice be heard. All you have to do is fill out the card below and send it in with your electric bill. Based on the information you provide, an e-mail on your behalf will be sent to your representatives in Congress asking, “Balancing electricity needs and environmental goals will be difficult. How much is all this going to increase my electric bill and what will you do to make it affordable?”

All cards received will be entered into a random drawing for a $100 White River bill credit. A total of three (3) $100 bill credits will be awarded. The drawing will be held on December 9, 2008.

If you would like additional information please visit www.whiteriver.org, e-mail arosier@whiteriver.org or call 800-879-4056. We’re all in this together.

For more information visit www.ourenergy.coop

**Your signature indicates that you give WRVEC permission to communicate through the “Our Energy, Our Future” campaign on your behalf**

Hamon honored with Missourian Award

Chris Hamon, CEO of White River Valley Electric Cooperative (center) accepts the 2008 Missourian Award from Master of Ceremonies John T witty, CEO of City Utilities of Springfield (right) and Ralph H. Slavens, Missourian Awards event chair.

Presented by the American Heart Association, the Missourian Award is given annually to nominees who have made an outstanding contribution to their state or nation in civics, business, education, politics or the arts.

"These awardees have dedicated their lives to making their communities and this state better by their diligent work and their charitable ideals," said Kevin Harker, Executive Vice President of the American Heart Association, Heartland Affiliate. "We applaud their accomplishments, celebrate their award, and appreciate their commitment."

Past Missourian honorees have included such individuals as newsman Walter Cronkite, developer John Q. Hammons and Bass Pro Shops founder John L. Morris.

“Missourians are among the top business leaders, educators, statesmen, writers and artists in our country,” said Ralph Slavens, Chairman and Founder of the Missourian Awards Committee. “This year’s winners have achieved greatness.”
Not Just a forgotten holiday

It’s easy to get caught up in our everyday lives and take for granted this great country we are blessed to live in. Just as I have for the past five years, I’d like to share a passage written by Navy Chaplin Denis Edward O’Brien. As we prepare to celebrate Veteran’s Day on November 11, I hope that you can find meaning in the Chaplin’s powerful words.

“A vet is the cop on the beat who spent six months in Saudi Arabia sweating two gallons a day making sure the armored personnel carriers didn’t run out of fuel.

A vet is the nurse who fought against fatality and went to sleep sobbing every night for two solid years in Da Nang.

A vet is the POW who went away one person and came back another - or didn’t come back at all.

A vet is the drill instructor who has never seen combat - but has saved countless lives by turning teenagers into Marines, Airmen, Sailors, Soldiers and Coast Guardsmen, and teaching them to watch each other’s backs.

A vet is the parade-riding Legionnaire who pins on his ribbons and medals with a prosthetic hand.

A vet is the career quartermaster who watches the ribbons and medals pass him by.

A vet is the three anonymous heroes in The Tomb Of The Unknowns, whose presence at the Arlington National Cemetery must forever preserve the memory of all the anonymous heroes whose valor was unrecognized with them on the battlefield or in the ocean’s sunless deep.

A vet is the old guy bagging groceries at the supermarket - palsied now and aggravatingly slow - who helped liberate a Nazi death camp and who wishes all day long that his wife were still alive to hold him when the nightmares come.

A vet is an ordinary and yet extraordinary human being, a person who offered some of his life’s most vital years in the service of his country, and who sacrificed his ambitions so others would not have to sacrifice theirs.

A vet is a soldier and a savior and a sword against the darkness, and he is nothing more that the finest, greatest testimony on behalf of the finest, greatest nation ever known.”

To me a veteran is also an uncle, a cousin, a brother-in-law, a father-in-law and a nephew. This month, as we celebrate Veterans’ Day, I encourage each of you to say thank you to the veterans in your life. All too often Veterans’ Day is simply another day off of work. I urge you to remember the true meaning of the day and don’t let Veteran’s Day remain a forgotten holiday.

As with this war and all others our country has seen, many have and will make the ultimate sacrifice for our great country. We will always remember those lost and those still fighting. With uncertain times ahead, let the American spirit, the true cooperative spirit, continue to shine as we honor the heroes who have inspired our nation with their dedication and bravery. On behalf of White River Valley Electric Cooperative, I would like to take time to honor, and most importantly thank, the veterans for their service and allegiance.

Please join us in prayer for Grant Hulland, WRVEC lineman, who is currently serving his second tour of duty in Iraq.

Rescue at Possum Walk Creek

On the black, howling morning of September 14, 2008, 23 year old Dawn Williams woke at 5 a.m. in Gainesville, MO to strong winds, rain, no electricity, and no idea that her young life would soon be in danger. She readied herself for work as well as she could in the dark house and headed off in her little 2007 Hyundai Elantra to Baxter Hospital in Mountain Home, AR, where she works as a nurse.

Gary Snelson was also on his way to his job. As a hole digger for White River Valley Electric Cooperative, he had received an early morning call to get into work as soon as possible to help start fixing the damage and widespread power outages that Hurricane Ike had left with the area. He was frustrated. His way to the office was blocked by a large tree and she hydroplaned to the middle of a flooded bridge with no siderails and a drop-off to the creek below.

“I felt that I had no way of surviving the situation,” she said later. “I opened my door and there was a strong current of water a foot or two deep moving so fast that it would have washed me off the bridge if I got out, but if I stayed in the vehicle the water could wash it right off the bridge, with me in it. I was terrified and panicking and not ready to die. So I started praying.

Gary was frustrated. His way to the office was blocked by a large tree across Highway 160 and even though he was in a hurry, he would have to take the longer back route down T Highway. As his headlights swept around the corner coming upon Possum Creek, he caught sight of the flooded bridge and the car precariously sitting in the middle of it all.

It was still dark at that hour and the creek was roaring so loudly that it was difficult for Gary to see and hear, but he could make out someone waving frantically and yelling. He backed his truck up to better shine his headlights on the scene, and then reacted without really thinking of the danger to himself. “I just know what I’d want someone else to do if they came up on one of my kids in a bad situation,” said the father of three.

“This great big man was coming slowly through the terrible current and when he got to the car he first made sure I was okay,” Dawn said. “He helped me out of the car and told me not to raise my feet, just to scoot slowly. He kept a hand on my arm and was between me and the rushing water and I felt that God had sent a guardian angel to watch over me.”

Gary doesn’t see it like that. “It doesn’t seem to me like I did anything that big,” he said. “Anyone would have done the same thing.”

CEO’s Perspective

On behalf of White River Valley Electric Cooperative, I would like to take time to honor and most importantly thank, the veterans for their service and allegiance.”

Chris Hamon
CEO
2008 Annual Meeting Attendance Prize Winners

Georgetta Mease, Reeds Spring, MO, $50 donated by A-I Mini Storage

Jack Pohl, Kimberling City, MO, Travel Mug, Jug & Umbrella donated by Allied Waste

Jim Russell, Taneyville, MO, (2)$25 Wal-Mart Gift Cards donated by Arkansas Electric Co-op

Phyllis Hatcough, Gainesville, MO, $50 donated by Bryant Plastics

Silver Bell Associates, Kimberling City, MO, Sunday Brunch donated by Chateau on the Lake

Herbert C Horton, Kesser Mills, MO, certificate for Carhartt Jacket donated by Cummins Mid-M-4

Dennis E Nelson, Isabella, MO, $150 Wal-Mart gift card donated by Ditch Bic

Ellsworth A Shaw, Ava, MO, First Aid Kit & cake set donated by First Choice First Aid / Donalda Cleaning

Gary Baty, Hollister, MO, $50 Visa gift card donated by Great Southern Bank


Lonnie Snowden, Walnut Shade, MO, $50 Olive Garden gift certificate donated by Indoff

James Pede, Forsyth, MO, Ilack & Decker Storm Station donated by KAMO Power

Marlyn Hardesty, Ozark, MO, smoke alarm and ceiling fan donated by Lloyd’s Electric Supply

Margaret Hafenhaus, Protem, MO, Carhartt jacket donated by Nixa Hardware Company

Gerald Johnson, Kimberling City, MO, (2) sunglasses donated by Ozarks Family Vision Center

David McAfee, Kimberling City, MO, certificate to Sheep-herd of the Hills donated by Shepherd of the Hills

Eloise Hallmark, Ava, MO, $100 donated by Sunbelt Environmental Services Inc.

Carolyn Holtrop, Branson, MO, ball cap & (2) cds donated by Shoji Entertainment, Inc. / (2) screwdriver kits donated by United Laboratories

Walter D Bates, Protem, MO, Emerson 19” LCD HD television donated by Wal-Mart

Jerry Dooley, Gainesville, MO, toaster oven donated by Workizer Mining Products

Kay Renfro, Kimberling City, MO, electronic digital safe donated by Federal Protection

Gary J Kenny, Theodosia, MO, (4) $25 Beth’s Bake Shop donated by Williams Construction

Kathryn Garreans, Protem, MO, Duffle bag & Umbrella donated by NISC

Ben Burky, 8, $100 gift certificate for bike (ages 0 - 12) donated by WRVEC

Kenneth W Raines, Rockaway Beach, MO, Digital camera donated by WRVEC

William R Stimson, Branson, MO, Power juicer donated by Sho-Me Power

Harold D Hill, Sr, Rockaway Beach, MO, coffee-maker donated by Sho-Me Power

Peter S Dale, Branson West, MO, Nintendo DS & Zelda game donated by WRVEC

Bill G Stone, Reeds Spring, MO, Polariod portable DVD player donated by WRVEC

Richard L Moore, Kimberling City, MO, $150 bill credit donated by WRVEC

Jerry L Cranker, Walnut Shade, MO, Umbrella & Golf Balls donated by Allied Waste

Nancy Akronis, Kimberling City, MO, Work Light donated by Bux Andrews Track Equipment Inc.

Bonnie L Schrieb, Rockaway Beach, MO, Carhartt Jacket donated by Cummins Mid-M-4

Elia Climz, Galena, MO, $100 Wal-Mart Gift Card donated by Acela Technologies

Frank Visconti, Protem, MO, $150 Wal-Mart gift card donated by Ditch Bic

Steven S Thornton, Ozark, MO, Savings Bond donated by First Community Bank of Taney County


Cl Rantos, Hollister, MO, $50 donated by H.L. Baggie Company

Willa A Kiss, Kisser Mills, MO, Bass Pro card & cooler donated by Hubbell Power/Fletcher-Reinhardt

Lucinda Shoemaker, Branson, MO, (2) tickets & surge strip donated by Jim Stafford / Harry Cooper Supply

Jody Lemaster, Branson, MO, Pendleton wool blanket donated by KRZK Hometown Radio

Ruth Jones, Ridgedale, MO, ceiling fan and smoke alarm donated by Lloyd’s Electric Supply

Tammy M Heath, Ava, MO, (2) Bass Pro Shops gift cards donated by Neale & Newman Law Firm/LLP

Donald G Vaughn, Ava, MO, Castrol wall clock donated by Oakland Lubrication

James H Epps, Branson, MO, golf balls & pen & certificate donated by Roadway Express/Watt’s Fordy Hardware

Eudine Robb, Forsyth, MO, $100 U.S. savings bond donated by Metropolitan National Bank

Keith Moore, Ava, MO, (5) bags of salt donated by Tri-Lakes Culligan

Tom Kinsella, Forsyth, MO, Melitta travel mug coffee maker & magic trick rope donated by United Laboratories

Arthur J Elder, Reeds Spring, MO, Philips DVD player donated by Wal-Mart

Larry W Martin, Highlandville, MO, $100 Lowe’s gift card donated by Creative Ink Architects

Jon Simons, Ozark, MO, $25 Gifts from the Heart certificate donated by Williams Construction

Nellita Pillers, Kimberling City, MO, cooler with radio & BBQ utensil set donated by NISC

Lawrence J Miller II, Theodosia, MO, $350 bill credit donated by WRVEC

Atehia Boatwright, Spokane, MO, $50 bill credit donated by WRVEC

Wilbur L. Carlson, Stratford, MO, Smoother maker donated by White River Valley Electric

Virgil O Myers, Branson, MO, Kitchen Aid food chopper donated by WRVEC

Gerald G Kroft, Protem, MO, $50 bill credit donated by WRVEC

Gene McSwain, Ava, MO, $100 bill credit donated by WRVEC

Patricia Spring, Springfield, MO, $100 bill credit donated by WRVEC

Mark T Laatz, Branson West, MO, (2) Tickets donated by Baldknobber’s Theater

Harold M Salmon, Joplin, MO, HD LCD television donated by Century Bank of the Ozarks

Rodney L Fassett, Kirbyville, MO, certificate for Carhartt Jacket donated by Cummins Mid-M-4

G C Mease, Reeds Spring, MO, $150 Wal-Mart gift card donated by Ditch Bic

Donald Whorton, Kirbyville, MO, Bass Pro Shops gift card donated by Employer Screening Services, Inc.

Joseph Hyatt, Sparta, MO, (4) free Imax admission tickets donated by IMAX Discovery Theater

Vivian Hels, Rockaway Beach, MO, (4)$25 Bass Pro gift cards donated by K & R Electric

Loretta F Lunsly, Kisser Mills, MO, (2) 6” subs & $25 donated by Subway/T&K Electric Supply Co Inc.

Donald D Stubbs, Theodosia, MO, $100 U.S. Savings bond donated by Ozark Mountain Bank

H G Stanzell, Protem, MO, portable CD player donated by Ozarks Pigskin Preview


Ronald Shelton, Ava, Mo, Wet/Dry Car Vac donated by Scott Consulting Engineers PC

Martha J Williams, Rockaway Beach, MO, $100 donated by Springfield Recovery Inc.

Bryan Heredi, Ava, MO, portfolio & binoculars donated by Touchstone Energy Cooperatives Inc.

Richard Y Roberts, Webster City, IA, knife, binoculars & trick rope donated by United Laboratories

Jerry Derby, Protem, MO, 23 piece socket set donated by Utiliseerve Electric Company

Robert G Janovasky, Ridgedale, MO, (6) brass padlocks donated by Wilson Bohannan Company

Jim Gardner, Hollister, MO, t-shirt and (2) cds, t-shirt & (2) passes donated by Shoji Entertainment/Grand Country Square

Theda Little, Highlandville, MO, (4) Longhorn Grill certificates donated by Williams Construction

Adam Larson, 13, $300 Tanger gift card (ages 0 - 13) donated by White River Valley Electric

Robert W Fischer, Branson, MO, Kodak digital photo frame donated by WRVEC

Connie Goin, Bruner, MO, Ipod Nano and iTunes gift card donated by WRVEC

Ruth Perrigue, Kimberling City, MO, Brita filtration system donated by WRVEC

Paul Welch, Ava, MO, $50 bill credit donated by WRVEC

Lyle Bughton, Rockaway Beach, MO, RCA DVD player donated by WRVEC

Dave Dalton, Fordland, MO, $50 bill credit donated by WRVEC

Fern CAIN, Sullivan, MO, $100 donated by Booth Well Drilling

Table Rock State Park, Branson, MO, Crystal Barrel donated by Maynard Wallace

Darryl Ogden, Kirbyville, MO, $150 bill credit donated by WRVEC

Our special thanks go out to the businesses that contributed to the success of our Annual Meeting by generously donating these wonderful prizes.
We’re all in this together

Recap of the 69th Annual Meeting

A record turnout of over 1200 registered members and nearly 4000 total attendees were at White River’s 69th annual meeting of members on September 6, 2008 at the Tri-Lakes Center in Branson. Members were treated to a car show, inflatables for the children, a climbing wall, free refreshments, a health assessment, and entertainment by Jim Stafford. The following nominees for the Board of Directors were voted on and approved during the business portion of the meeting: Keet Short for Stone County, Joe Brazeale for Christian County, and Pat Funk for Ozark County. CEO Chris Hamon held a question and answer session and discussed the importance of becoming involved in the “Our Energy, Our Future” campaign. Interested persons can log on to www.OurEnergy.coop or send in the card on the front page. The date for next year’s WRVEC annual meeting is September 12, 2009.

1) Doug Rye, energy efficiency expert, answers members’ questions about conserving electricity.
2) Madison Pardeck enjoys the children’s activities as Flowerpot paints a rainbow on her cheek.
3) Jim Stafford and family pose for a picture after wowing the crowd with music and comedy.

Do you know what to do if the power goes out?

When an outage occurs, you should: call WRVEC dispatch at 417/335-9311, or call the toll free outage line at 800/695-0056 and leave your phone number or map location number (but only if you have no more than one account). During regular business hours you can call WRVEC’s main number at 417/335-9335. E-mail messages can be sent via the website information line at www.whiteriver.org. In addition, during an outage, WRVEC provides updates to local television and radio stations. WRVEC greatly appreciates the patience, understanding and appreciation shown by our members during this trying time. We’re all in this together.

Ike knocks out power to 18,000

Hurricane Ike whipped through White River Valley Electric Cooperative’s five-county service area in the middle of the night on Sept. 14, leaving fallen trees, creeks over their banks, downed electric lines and approximately 18,000 WRVEC meters without power. Almost half of White River’s 40,000 members had no electricity. All crews had been dispatched by 5:00 a.m., and in 36 hours there were only 1,500 meters still without power. All members were back on line by 10:00 p.m. Tuesday.

WRVEC wasn’t the only electric cooperative in southern Missouri hard hit by the storms. For example, Howell-Oregon Electric Cooperative, based out of West Plains, had 7,400 members without power and Ozark Border Electric Cooperative in Poplar Bluff suffered almost 25,000 outages at its peak.

The damage from this storm was most comparable to an ice storm as the outages were spread over the entire WRVEC service area, as opposed to a concentrated area, or a path, that is usually associated with these types of severe storms.

During the effort to restore power at the cooperative, phone lines were overrun with calls. It was fortunate that WRVEC has an automated meter reading outage program. Because of this, dispatchers were able to determine who was out of power. WRVEC is in the process of installing additional phone lines to help ease the congestion and frustration associated with the current phone system.

Bill Davis, Director of Operations at White River, was proud of the way that the employees responded to the biggest outage in over a decade. “Everyone rose to the challenge,” he said, “and it went smoother than any outage we’ve ever had.” He credited the mild weather after the storm as an asset in getting the work done so quickly and also that the cooperative has improved its emergency system over the years. He added that it was the men out in the field who do the toughest, most dangerous part of the work.

“The guys (linemen and staking engineers) did a wonderful job,” he said.