



NEWS CENTRAL

CENTRAL ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORP.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

THE POWER OF HUMAN CONNECTIONS

OCTOBER 2016

Make your voice heard in this year's election

As the presidential election draws closer, we are reminded of a troubling statistic. In the 2012 elections, voter turnout in rural communities dropped by 18 percent, twice the decline seen nationally. That means the voice of rural America isn't resonating as strongly as it should with our elected leaders and political candidates.

Fortunately, we have the power to turn this around.

Together, we can boost voter engagement and turnout on Election Day. Take the pledge to

become a "Co-op Voter," and be sure to cast your vote on Nov. 8.



Co-ops Vote is a non-partisan program developed by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the service organization that represents the nation's more than 900 private, not-for-profit, consumer-owned electric cooperatives.

The goal is to encourage co-op members like you to get out and vote and to inform other members of our community and candidates about the issues that matter to co-ops and rural communities, including the continued need for affordable and reliable electricity.

So, here's what we are asking you to do. Visit the Co-ops Vote site at Vote.coop and take the quick and easy pledge to become a Co-op Voter. By doing so, you'll be joining co-op members across the country in sending a powerful message: America's electric cooperatives are voting in 2016 and expect our elected leaders to address the issues facing co-ops and rural communities.

As an electric cooperative owned by the members, Central Electric cares deeply about the communities we serve and want the very best for each one of our members. With 42 million members in 47 states, electric co-ops can stand together as a powerful voice in this year's elections. Regardless of political party affiliation, we hope you'll join us in taking the pledge and going to the polls in November to support our country's democratic process.

The 2016 Annual Meeting of the Members of Central Electric Membership Corp.:

- ▶ Friday, Oct. 7 at the Dennis A. Wicker Civic Center in Sanford
- ▶ Food, registration and entertainment begin at 5:00 p.m.
- ▶ Business meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.
- ▶ Prizes and a cash drawing for \$750 at the meeting's conclusion!



POINT OF VIEW:

Cooperatives drive democracy

While the national elections coming up in November are on everyone's mind, voting for politicians is not the only way you as a co-op member can practice democracy.

Every co-op, whether it's Central Electric or your local credit union, follows the basic principle of *one member, one vote*. Most often you are asked to vote and elect individuals who will represent you on the board of directors. These folks are your friends, neighbors and fellow residents of our community.

It is easy to take our freedoms of democracy for granted, maybe because there are so many opportunities to exercise our rights. There are national, state and local elections for political offices. Then there are social or other civic organizations. With so many opportunities, our right to participate can easily be forgotten.

As we head into the final stage of what has been a contentious national election, it is a good time to remember that democracy doesn't have to be about bitterness and party divisions. Co-ops can and do play a role in cultivating a civil society where people can practice democracy at the local level. As a member of Central Electric, you have the right to run and vote for the board of directors. Even if you choose not to have that level of participation, you should feel empowered to reach out to current board members and candidates.

The beauty of belonging to a co-op is every member has a voice, but you must use that voice if you want to be heard on the issues that matter to you. Voting and being actively involved in the affairs of the co-op are key ways in which members can participate.



Just as it did in 1959 when the Annual Meeting of the Members was held at Central High School in Sanford, the cooperative continues to operate by one member, one vote. Make sure you come out and exercise your voice in the cooperative at this year's special 75th anniversary meeting on Oct. 7.



Morris McClellion
Chief Executive Officer &
General Manager

Take the time to get to know your board of directors; they work hard for you, making sure the cooperative is serving the best interest of the members. Seek out ways that you can help spread the word about the good work your co-op is doing.

The co-op invites the participation of every member. In fact, it is important to the survival of the co-op. That's why you should plan on attending the Annual Meeting of the Members on Oct. 7 at the Dennis A. Wicker Civic Center in Sanford, to not only participate, but to also help celebrate the milestone 75th anniversary of your electric cooperative.

Let your voice be heard by not only taking the time to participate in our country's democracy in November, but also our cooperative's democracy in October.

Until next time,

Morris McClellion

Think safety when landscaping this fall

Fall officially began on Sept. 22 and the cooler temperatures typically give way to lots of home improvement projects. Some of your projects might be around the yard. Landscaping is one of the best and most affordable ways to give your home's exterior a fresh look, but there's one thing many people don't consider before they start their landscaping projects – power lines. Before you grab your gardening gear, review this list of power line safety tips:

- ▶ Do not attempt to trim trees near power lines. Central Electric has an extensive right-of-way clearing program that ensures trees aren't too close to power lines. If you happen to see any that may



- ▶ look too close, call us, and we will send out the experts.
- ▶ Ladders are conductors of electricity. It's best to carry a ladder horizontally so that it doesn't inadvertently touch a power line, and always pay attention to where you set up the ladder.
- ▶ Call 811 before you dig to identify where underground utility lines are buried even if

you're just planting a tree or shrub. Digging around lines can cause serious injury as well as electrical outages. For more information regarding N.C. 811, please visit NC811.org.

Remember, electricity looks for the shortest, most direct path to ground. A ladder, pole or even a wet kite string touching a power line will give electricity a new, shorter path to ground. If you are holding one of these items, you could become a part of that path. Those consequences could be deadly, so please exercise caution when you're around power lines. If you have any questions, please contact us at 1-800-446-7752.

Take advantage of the online account portal

As a member of Central Electric, you have the ability to manage and track your account anytime, anywhere. Whether you need to pay your bill or monitor your energy use, the Member Service Portal at CEMCPower.com is your one-stop shop.



The free portal is available to you 24/7 and it offers an extensive range of account services for you to take advantage of. Not only can you track your energy use or make a one-time payment towards your account, you can

also set up a variety of different payment options, including a recurring payment draft for the bill due date each month or auto-pay, which will allow you to set a specific payment amount to occur on a specific date.

Another important feature of the portal is that you can keep your contact information up-to-date. Making sure the cooperative has your correct contact information is extremely important. That way, when we need to communicate with you and keep you current on cooperative news, we have all the information we need to reach you.

If you haven't already, click on the "Login" button on the home page at CEMCPower.com to get set-up today!

Apply now for the 2017 Youth Tour to D.C.

Each year, Central Electric sponsors two rising high school juniors or seniors on the trip of a lifetime to Washington, D.C. in connection with the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour.

While in D.C., they'll join 1,500 other students from across the country to meet members of Congress and learn more about American history and the electric cooperative business model.



Ever wonder what it's like to walk the halls of the Capitol with members of Congress? Apply now for a spot on the 2017 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C to find out.

You know what else? The trip looks great on college applications, and participants

will make new friends from all over the country.

Think you may be interested in this great opportunity or know someone who would like to go next year? The 2017 Youth Tour trip will be June 10-16. The application period for next year's trip has begun and will run through Jan. 13.

Visit CEMCPower.com to download the application or to find out more information on this incredible opportunity.

Morris McClellion
CEO & General Manager

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James Taylor, *Editor*



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