

MONROE ELECTRIC NEWS

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Alan W. Wattles

Across The President's Desk

Youth to Washington contest

Cooperative member high school juniors

Monroe County Electric Cooperative (MCEC) is proud to sponsor the Youth to Washington Contest again this year and will award one son or daughter of a MCEC member an all-expense paid weeklong trip to our nation's capital. High school juniors, whose parents are MCEC members, are eligible for this once in a lifetime, all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. To enter the contest, students must complete an application that consists of short answer and short essay questions.

The MCEC winner will join about 70 other Illinois high school students in Washington June 19-26, 2020. While in D.C., students will learn about American and rural electric history, as well as state and federal government. In past years, students met with representatives in the House and Senate, visited Arlington National Cemetery, the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, many memorials and monuments, the U.S. Memorial Holocaust Museum, and even enjoyed the Marine Corps Sunset Parade.

As part of the contest, MCEC will award all the top finalists from each school an all-expense paid trip to Springfield as part of Youth Day on March 31, 2020 when students from across the state will visit the Illinois State Capitol to see state government in action. One of these students will be awarded the trip to D.C.

For more information about Youth Day or Youth Tour, visit aiec.coop/youth-programs/. To enter



"The friendships you make and the experience you are given is something you will never forget. You are constantly surrounded by amazing people who make every effort to make this trip special for you. Everything in Washington D.C. is great to look and interact with, but the people you are with while touring the historic city is what makes it something to remember."

-Brandon Hall, 2019 Y2W winner

the contest, visit our website at www.mcec.org/community/youth-to-washington/ and download an application. Contact your school guidance counselor or Youth Tour

cooperating teacher for details about the contest. If you do not know who your cooperating teacher is, contact Allan Masterson at amasterson@mcec.org or call 939-7171, ext. 115.

School grant winners

MCEC recently awarded 15 grants to area schoolteachers. They were each awarded a \$500 Touchstone Empowerment grant for school projects that improve the learning environment or increase educational resources for the school. Below are the winning submissions and schools represented:

Name	School	Project
Christine Thompson	Zahnow Elementary School	Fine motor/physical skills project
Tony Meyer	New Athens Elementary	Digital LED Microscope
Patricia Hurst	Gibault High School	Wireless electronic projector/speakers
Judy Glaeser	St. James Catholic, Millstadt	Elevate Science project/STEM lab
Ginny Rusteberg	Red Brick Regional School	Chromebook headphones/mouses
Charity Eugea	Rogers Elementary School	WIN hands-on coding project
Madi Scace	SS. Peter & Paul, Waterloo	3-D Printer Project
Mark Mueller	Valmeyer High School	Energy Saving Remodel project
Teresa Fehrenz	Columbia Middle School	Circuits & STEM Creativity project
Andrea Sattler	Trinity Lutheran School	Chromebook Charging cabinet
Will Pitts	Columbia Middle School	Sphero SPRK+ for STEM projects
Ashley Seibold	St. Agatha, New Athens	Microscopes for the classroom
Julie Lewis	Red Bud High School	Engineering Concepts project
Jenny Vise	Waterloo Junior High	Infrared thermometers/incubators
Kris Hill	St. John the Baptist, RB	Digital microscopes project

Meet the Employees



Darren Knobloch
Field technician

Tell us about yourself:

My wife, Amanda, and I have been married for 5 years and we have a daughter, Brooke, who is 3 years old.

When I was a child, I wanted to be:

A professional hunter

If I could have any meal to eat, it would include:

Ribeye steak

Describe the best vacation you ever took:

Jamaica for our honeymoon. We went ziplining through the jungle, night snorkeling and deep sea fishing.

Do you have a collection of something?

No

What was your favorite thing to play as a child?

Baseball

What do you see yourself doing after you retire?

Going on hunting trips, golfing and annoying my wife

HELP KEEP LINEWORKERS SAFE



Lineworkers take great pride in providing safe and reliable service, but their job involves working around high-voltage power lines in all kinds of weather conditions.



Never plug a generator into an indoor or outdoor wall outlet, which can cause voltage to back feed.



Workers need to efficiently and safely restore power when it goes out; please be patient.



Do not post signs on a utility pole, especially with staples and nails, which can puncture protective gear.



Slow down and move over in utility work zones. Crowding workers can cause accidents.

Learn more: 

MCEC line outages - December 2019

Date	Duration	# Out	Map Location	Cause Desc	Substation
12/7/19	1:10	3	Lou Dell	Small animals or birds	North Waterloo
12/9/19	0:33	274	Waterloo	Unknown	Waterloo
12/15/19	0:52	43	Roachtown Rd	Vehicles or machinery	Smithton
12/28/19	1:35	17	Apple St	Small animals or birds	Smithton
12/29/19	0:41	126	Lou Dell	Wind, not trees	North Waterloo
12/29/19	4:48	18	Nollmann Rd	Other, faulty equipment	Millstadt
12/30/19	1:26	167	Wildwood Lake Estates	Other, faulty equipment	New Athens



www.mcec.org

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Office hours: Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Smart home devices that can save you money

Some smart devices for your home can help save money. Others are designed for convenience – like phone apps used to remotely close the garage door or see who is on the front porch. Using smart devices that can impact your energy bill won't make you rich, but they can help lower bills each month, which adds up over time. Here are some devices to consider:

■ Smart thermostat

A smart thermostat studies your heating and cooling trends over time and can help reduce your energy bill by optimizing energy-saving tactics. You can adjust the temperature of your home remotely and know how much energy you use to heat or cool your home. While a programmable thermostat can help save money, a smart version earns its name by all the extra features it has beyond programming.



In either case, adjusting your thermostat just one degree, depending on the time of year, can make a difference in your utility bill. Households can save up to 3 percent on heating and cooling by making that simple adjustment.

■ Smart light bulbs/lighting

The first way to save money on lighting comes from good old-fashioned smarts and not a literal smart bulb, per se. Look around and see what kind of light bulbs are in your house. By replacing your home's five most frequently used light fixtures or bulbs with Energy Star versions, you can save \$75 a year, according to energy.gov.

By upgrading your light bulbs, you won't have to replace them as often. A



60-watt incandescent bulb lasts an average of 1,000 hours, while a 12-watt LED bulb has an average life span of 25,000 hours.

Then there are actual smart bulbs that allow you to "schedule" lights and control them remotely. This could save a little money if you or someone in your house is always leaving the lights on.

■ Smart window coverings

Smart window coverings are pricey, but they can help save money on energy bills over time. For example, they allow you to lower blinds on hot, sunny days even if you're not home, which may prevent your air conditioner from kicking on. About 76 percent of sunlight that falls on standard double-pane windows enters your home to become heat, according to energy.gov. Conversely, about 30 percent of a home's heating energy is lost through windows, and the efficient use of window coverings can reduce energy loss when it is cold outside.

■ Smart water valves

According to the U.S. EPA, an average household's water leaks can account for 10,000 gallons of water wasted every year. Collectively, that's 1 trillion gallons of water each year in the U.S.! Smart leak sensors monitor leaks under sinks, behind toilets and near other water sources in your home. Like most smart home devices, the sensors can be linked to a smartphone to alert leaks. There are also smart water valves designed for the main water line for catastrophes like bursting pipes, although these are pricey and require professional installation.



■ Smart plugs

This device plugs into an outlet and allows you to control appliances remotely via a phone app. Most smart plugs track energy use so you can see how efficient (or inefficient) an appliance is. Some have a convenient away feature that allows you to program lights to make it look like someone is home.

For more information about electrical safety and efficiency, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Are you using your fireplace efficiently?
Remember to turn down the thermostat
when burning a fire, and close the damper
when a fire is not burning.

Source: energy.gov

