

The Current

A Publication of Cotton Electric Cooperative Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

75 TH ANNIVERSARY • COTTON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE • 1938-2013

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Finalists in Cotton Electric's 2013 Youth Tour contest included, front row, from left, Kaitlyn Sieber, Megan McCoy, Ashley Powers and Marissa Adams; back, Samantha Ciaramitaro, Chance Stillwell, Cassidy Johnson, Lucas Ninman, Sam Kimbrough and Tori Hack.

Youth Tour contestants tell Cotton Electric story

By Karen Kaley

High school juniors from around the Cotton Electric service area have been competing in the annual Youth Tour Essay Contest for the past 49 years. Every spring, finalists and their parents and teachers have come to Walters for a banquet and the final round of competition.

Cotton Electric employees and board members present at the 2013 event couldn't help but stand a little taller, smile a little broader and feel a little prouder of the cooperative while hearing the telling of their favorite historical tale.

Students competing in the final round included Samantha Ciaramitaro and Kaitlyn Sieber, both of Lawton High; Marissa Adams of MacArthur High; Sam Kimbrough and Tori Hack, both of Marlow High; Ashley Powers

of Powers Homeschool; Lucas Ninman of Ryan High; and Megan McCoy and Chance Stillwell, both of Walters High.

Each contestant delivered a speech on the topic "Lighting the Way for 75 Years," reminding listeners of the efforts to bring electricity to rural southwest Oklahoma in the late 1930s and recounting Cotton Electric's many accomplishments in the decades since.

While telling the story of electricity coming to rural locations, they mentioned the contributions of historical figures including Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Edison, Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Walters businessman C.W. Cox.

They spoke of the co-op's beginnings and growth, saying it had "grown and expanded, not only in size, wattage and membership, but

also in their generosity and service to their community. Because of this, one might say they've not only been lighting people's homes for 75 years, but also spreading the light of knowledge ..."

They highlighted efforts to reach out to members with efficiency programs during the energy crisis of the '70s, to schools through equipment donations in the '80s and to communities with the creation of Operation Round Up in the new millennium. In the decade beyond, they noted Cotton Electric's partnership with members, offering seedling sales and programs to Beat the Peak and Save a Watt

They pointed out the co-op's encouragement of youth and said the essay contest itself gives testimony to the co-op's wish for students to succeed.

They had some fun with the topic. One concluded with a little song: "If there's something strange in your neighborhood, when the lights go out and it don't look good, who you gonna call? Cotton Electric."

They looked to the future, too, with one saying we "should be celebrating 75 years of Cotton Electric's promise for a brighter future."

"Happy birthday, Cotton Electric," said another. "Your finest days are yet to come."

Three members of the audience had been invited to hear the 10 speeches because of their familiarity with youth programs and oral presentations. It was their task to assign points for speaking ability, knowledge of subject, poise, personality and appearance.

See Winners, Page 8

Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment now being applied to bills mailed after May 1, 2013, is (\$0.00052) per kWh.

On a member's average bill of 1500 kilowatt hours (kWh), this will amount to a **CREDIT** of **\$0.78** on the April bill.

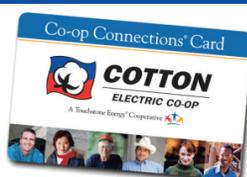
March 2013 Temperature Extremes

Day	High	Low	Avg.	Day	High	Low	Avg.
1	50	25	38	16	83	51	67
2	57	25	41	17	57	44	51
3	78	28	53	18	65	41	53
4	75	46	61	19	61	34	48
5	54	28	41	20	63	37	50
6	54	22	38	21	76	47	62
7	72	39	56	22	48	39	44
8	64	53	59	23	50	39	45
9	71	51	61	24	49	32	41
10	60	31	46	25	50	23	37
11	60	30	45	26	58	20	39
12	61	37	49	27	74	42	58
13	67	29	48	28	76	46	61
14	77	35	56	29	76	54	65
15	84	42	63	30	80	46	63
				31	71	45	58

Source: srh.noaa.gov/oun/

Average Daily High: 68 Average Daily Low: 42

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Contact Us

Do you have a story idea for The Current or do you need to place an ad? If so, let us know.

We can be reached at 580-875-3351 or by email at info@cottonelectric.com.

You can also drop us a line at Cotton Electric Current, 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572.

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The May issue of The Current will be delivered to mailboxes on or about May 13, 2013.

From the CEO

Building future leaders through contest

Every year, Cotton Electric Cooperative sponsors an essay contest. High school juniors from area schools are given the opportunity to write an essay and give a report about the cooperative. I was in attendance as this year's finalists gave their speeches –

10 young people willing to make a presentation in front of a group of people they didn't know.

I've always admired these students, but they also have my sympathy. They have been through a long process, and many are worried sick about the upcoming speech. Do you remember what it was like when you were that age? To better appreciate their efforts, let's put ourselves in the contestants' shoes. For a few minutes, let's pretend we're 16 again ... for some of us that was a long time ago.

OK, the English teacher has just given us an assignment to write an essay about a rural electric cooperative. The first thing that pops into our mind is, "An essay? Just what is a rural cooperative?"

We wonder, "Just what did I do to deserve this?"

But, it gets better: If we do a good job, we get to give an oral presentation to a room full of strangers! The possibility of transferring schools is beginning to cross our mind.

Then the teacher explains that this is the 49th year that Cotton Electric Cooperative has sponsored an essay contest and the winner receives an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C.

A trip. No parents. Finally, something positive our 16-year-old brain can relate to!

Since we are just pretending, we're going to be one of those over-achieving teenagers with a self-imposed standard of excellence – just



Warren Langford, CEO

like the real ones who enter the essay contest. We are class leaders who are not afraid of work. Everyone expects us to produce a quality product. More importantly, we expect it from ourselves. We will treat this assignment as we do any other.

I'm beginning to like myself more and more. This pretending stuff is beginning to make my head swell!

The subject of the essay is "Lighting the Way for 75 Years," and we begin to pore through the information that has been provided. We soon learn that Cotton Electric was formed during a desperate period of time, 1938 to be exact. The area's agricultural economy was stymied by the Great Depression, and the quality of life in rural areas suffered. We learn how a group of people led by Charles Cox, the cooperative's first general manager, went from farm to farm asking for \$5 and a commitment to support the new utility.

We write about how the cooperative has grown and all the wonderful achievements of the past, present, and the expectations for the future. We make sure the essay is accurate, interesting and tells the intended story. There can't be any mistakes in grammar, punctuation or spelling. We proofread every paragraph a hundred times before turning it in. We have no idea that 130 other students have also written essays.

After a few months, we receive notification that our essay has survived two rounds of judging cuts. Yippee! We are one of 10 finalists. But, uh-oh, now we get to give a speech!

One of the five greatest fears known to mankind is public speaking. But it's too late to back out now, so we go to work. We memo-

rize the text and we spend countless hours in front of the mirror practicing our delivery. Whenever we're alone, we practice. We are often caught talking to ourselves, and friends begin to wonder about our sanity.

Ready or not, the big day arrives.

The essay contest and banquet are held at cooperative headquarters in Walters. It's early evening when we arrive, and our parents have come along for moral support. We've just finished a wonderful dinner – we wouldn't know because we barely touched it – and we begin to gaze around the room. The knot in our gut tightens as we size up the competition. The other contestants are well-dressed and look invincible.

We ask ourselves, "Just how important is a trip to D.C.?"

The emcee for the evening approaches the podium and welcomes the guest. Stomach butterflies go crazy as the rules for the evening are explained. Our speech will be judged using the following formula – 50 percent speaking ability, 30 percent knowledge of subject, 10 percent poise, and 10 percent personality and appearance.

We are all escorted to a different room. Names are randomly drawn, and our mouths become dry and knees begin to knock as we wait our turn. We pray that our legs will work when our name is called.

Finally, the door opens and the escort calls our name. Our mind goes totally blank as we re-enter the banquet room. Suddenly, we are face-to-face with the judges who are sitting in front.

Under our breath, we keep repeating, "Just let me die, just let me die."

As we try to remember the opening sentence, eye contact is made with the crowd and, more importantly, with the judges. We take a deep breath and, suddenly, our memory returns.

After speaking just a few words, we begin to feel more comfortable. Because we have done our research and are thoroughly prepared, our speech soon turns into a story. After a few minutes, we begin to move casually in front of the judges.

As we emphasize the important points of our speech, the audience is made aware of the many accomplishments made by the members of Cotton Electric Cooperative. They are reminded how the cooperative has improved the quality of life in southwest Oklahoma. By the time we're finished, everyone knows they can expect more good things from the cooperative in the future.

It's over before we know it! For the first time in months, normal breathing returns and we can't stop smiling.

We have relived the past enough because, at this point in 2013, all who are present can actually feel how relieved those kids are. The judges leave the room to make their decisions. All of the contestants are patting each other on the back and heaving sighs of relief. Each participant already sees himself or herself in Washington, D.C.

I know it's easy to say, but the trip is not the real reward. Through this experience, these students have learned how to face and control their fears. They know that being nervous is OK as long as he or she is prepared. These kids already realize the value of good oral and written communication skills. Most importantly, the contestants gain confidence and self-esteem.

Students like these make me feel good about the future. Good job, Cotton Electric and happy 75th birthday!

Oh, yes. In our imaginary trip back to our own teen years, the judges return and the winner is announced.

Did we win? Just use your imagination.

DeMarcus joins co-op board

Brian DeMarcus of Meers has been appointed trustee for District 4 in the Cotton Electric Cooperative service area. He replaces David Butler, who served as a trustee for the past five years, but has moved out of the area. DeMarcus will fill out the remainder of Butler's term, due to expire in October.

The business and affairs of Cotton Electric are managed by a board of nine trustees representing geographical districts with similar densities of service. Most of District 4 is in the north-central portion of Comanche County with a few meters in Caddo County. The district includes the communities of Meers and Medicine Park and covers an area stretching from just south of Lawton to the Comanche County line and west of Cache to east of Elgin.

"I look forward to serving the



Brian DeMarcus

members of Cotton Electric as the trustee for District 4," DeMarcus said. "I have grown up in the rural area and realize the importance of reliable electricity that the co-op distributes to these areas."

DeMarcus has lived in the

Meers area all his life. He attended school in Cache, graduating in 1983. He has remained involved with the school system and is president of the Cache Public Schools Board of Education.

He continued his education at Cameron University, where he earned a degree in education.

DeMarcus said his principal occupation is as a banker. He is executive vice president and manager of the Medicine Park branch of Bank of the Wichitas. He is also a farmer and rancher.

He and his wife, Cassie, have been married for 25 years. Cassie is a language arts teacher at Central Middle School in Lawton.

The couple has three children: Jordan, 21, is a student at Oklahoma State University; Madison, 18, attends Cameron University; and Wesley, 8, is a student at Cache Elementary School.



Keep energy efficiency in mind as you plan spring landscaping. Properly selected and planted trees, shrubs, and bushes can insulate your home year-round. Before you start, check on the right plants and techniques for your climate at EnergySavers.gov.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

The Current

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February 2013 Operating Stats

	2013	2012
Total Amount Billed	\$4,806,056	\$4,594,911
Cost of Purchased Power	3,428,990	3,158,954
Taxes	99,294	98,563
Total Operating Expense Per Mile	931	888
Average Farm and Residential Bill	131	133
Average Farm and Residential kWh	1,251	1,293
Total Meters Billed (farm, residential)	17,987	17,787
Miles Energized	5,138	5,138
Density Per Mile	3.50	3.46
New Service Connects YTD	57	62
Services Retired	29	42



COTTON
ELECTRIC CO-OP

Mission Statement

Our mission is to be the leader in providing the most reliable and innovative electric system, with affordable rates, through the positive, enthusiastic and professional use of its resources and people.

Community Spotlight

If you would like your community event listed in the May issue, please submit information by April 4, by calling 580-875-4255 or send an email to info@cottonelectric.com.

CU presents 'Drowsy Chaperone'
Cameron University's Theatre Arts department presents "The Drowsy Chaperone" at 7:30 p.m. April 18-20 and at 2 p.m. April 21 at University Theatre.

The production features a narrator who is a fan of vintage musicals. He seems to be suffering from a free-floating depression and quickly decides to cheer things up by playing a record of the original cast recording of a (fictional) Broadway musical titled "The Drowsy Chaperone." This recent Tony Award winner is a play-within-a-play crammed full of every cliché, gag and gimmick from the golden age of musicals.

CCAC hosts Arts, Crafts Fest

Artists and crafters will gather from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. April 20 for the Cotton County Art Council's annual Arts and Crafts Festival in the Comanche Nation Community Center.

More than \$3,000 in prizes and purchase awards will be handed out.

Entries and fees are due by April 13. Downloadable forms may be found at the Cotton County Art Council Facebook page. For more information, call Sharon Wiley, 580-875-2238, or Lavonne High, 875-2144; or email Pattie Calfy at calfinator@yahoo.com.

The Cotton County Art Council meets at 7 p.m. on the second Monday of each month at the Walters Depot. Weekly painting lessons are held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the depot.

Challenge Futurity set for April 27

Area fans of bucking bulls will have an opportunity to see a top-notch event April 27 at the Stephens County Fair & Expo Center. The 10th annual Chisholm Trail Casino TwoBulls Challenge Futurity returns to Duncan, hosting 150 of the rankest up-and-coming 2-year-old bucking bulls destined to be stars.

First-place in the Challenge Championship will earn a check for \$50,000, making the event the second-richest of its kind. Organizers expect competitors from 26 states and Canada.

First round of competition begins at 9 a.m. There is no admission fee.

For information, call Jim McLain at 580-786-1010 or visit TwoBullsChallenge.com.

WMASC plans Cajun Food Feed

Wichita Mountains Area Senior Citizens offers a variety of activities and sponsors weekly and monthly events at the Legion Building near Medicine Park.

A fund-raising Cajun Food Feed is planned for April 27. Rush Rushing, well-known in the area for his

Cajun cuisine, will have jambalaya, white beans and cornbread ready to serve at 11 a.m. and food will be served as long as it lasts or until 3 p.m. WMASC is asking for a \$5 per plate donation. Proceeds will support programs at the center.

Cecil Gardner's famous homemade Indian tacos are featured at the Indian taco sale, held on the second Saturday of each month. Drinks and desserts are included at \$5.50 per plate.

A dance is held each Friday. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., dancing begins at 7.

All activities are held in the Legion Building on Wildhorse Road near Medicine Park. From Interstate 44, take Exit 45 to Oklahoma Highway 49. Traveling east, bear right onto Wildhorse. The building is on the right.

Domino tourney benefits ball team

A fundraiser Domino Tournament has been set for May 4 at the Bray Community Center. Registration will be from 8 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and play will commence at 10 a.m. A consolation tournament will follow the main tournament.

Payback will be \$200 to first place and \$100 to second place.

The event will include a silent auction. Breakfast and other concessions will be available.

Proceeds benefit the Bray baseball team, who will use the funds for uniform replacement. Contact Garry or Cathy Jackson at 580-467-6076 or 470-9390 for information.

Horse club announces trail ride

Duncan Lake Horse Club is having its Spring Trail Ride on May 4 and 5 at Duncan Lake. Fee is \$20 per ride. Children 12 and under are free.

Saturday features several events. The long ride will leave the lake pavilion at 10 a.m. and participants may want to bring a sack lunch. The short ride leaves at 1 p.m.

Jeff Porter will offer freeze branding from 11 a.m. until dusk for \$30 per horse. For information about freeze branding, call 580-574-9606.

The Sunday ride leaves at 10 a.m.

The Saturday evening meal will be potluck with the club providing the meat. Breakfast will be provided Sunday.

Negative Coggins required. Camping and trail fees should be paid to the City of Duncan. For information about the ride, call 580-475-7190 or visit duncanlakehorseclub.com.

Mt. Scott Kiwanis to host fish fry

The Mt. Scott Kiwanis will host its 21st annual fish fry from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., May 21 at Fisherman's Cove on Oklahoma Highway 49 near Medicine Park. Meals will include fried catfish, hush puppies, coleslaw, french fries and a drink.

Tickets are \$12 in advance and \$13

Photo of the Month



Our "April Showers" photo was submitted by Matthew Eccles, retired chief of the Cove Acres Volunteer Fire Department. He snapped this shot of a helicopter about to dump a large bucket of water, showering a large wildfire east of Fletcher in 2011.

Enter your "best shot" in our Photo of the Month contest. Entries can also be emailed to info@cottonelectric.com or mailed to The Current, 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572. Winners will receive a Cotton Electric prize package of CEC goodies.

at the door for adults, and \$6 in advance and \$7 at the door for children age 6 to 11. Proceeds are used to support education and local charities.

Advance tickets are available at Fisherman's Cove or by calling 580-529-2353 or 580-529-2272.

Center available at Central High

Need a good, clean place for your next family reunion, business luncheon or party? Central High Community Center is available. Rental fee is \$70 per day with a cleaning deposit of \$50. Call Julie McKinney at 580-641-2974.

Stitching Memories meets monthly

Stitching Memories Quilt Guild meets at 6 p.m. on the third Monday of each month in the Duncan Senior Citizens Center, 1110 N. Seventh.

The guild provides a unique opportunity for quilters of all levels to get together and share finished or unfinished items, demonstrations and experiences. Guests are welcome to enjoy the fellowship and knowledge of the world of quilting.

For information, call Dottie Alexander at 580-255-0244 or email quilt_girl@sbcglobal.net.

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Cotton Electric CEO elected to 2nd term on Touchstone Energy board of directors

Warren Langford, chief executive officer of Cotton Electric Cooperative, has been elected to a second term on the Touchstone Energy Cooperative board of directors. Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (WFEC), the generation and transmission cooperative owned by Cotton Electric and 21 other Oklahoma and New Mexico cooperatives, nominated Langford for this position.



Warren Langford, CEO

The Touchstone Energy brand represents a nationwide alliance made of more than 740 local, consumer-owned electric cooperatives in 46 states. Touchstone Energy cooperatives col-

lectively deliver power and energy solutions to more than 40 million members every day.

Cotton Electric, headquartered in Walters, has been active in effectively promoting the Touchstone Energy brand since its inception in 1999. Under Langford's leadership, Cotton Electric's employees and board of trustees use

the brand's programs to improve member communication and educate members about energy efficiency and to emphasize the importance of business integrity and accountability.

"Price, power quality, the environment, and business ethics are no longer local issues," Langford said.

"Recent events have made it imperative that rural electric cooperatives expand upon the relationship between cooperatives and their members. Touchstone Energy is an avenue by which rural America has a united voice concerning the problems and solutions that impact our

daily lives."

He believes that through coordinated advertising, marketing and communication activities, Touchstone Energy has brought a level of positive recognition that rural electric cooperatives have never seen. And, he recognizes the need for the continuance of these programs in the future.

Langford brings more than 38 years of industry experience to this board of directors, which consists of 14 cooperative professionals from across the nation. Langford retains his seat on this board for a second consecutive three-year term.

CECF announces first-quarter grants

Pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters – set enough of them aside on a regular basis, and the coins add up to dollars. That's how Operation Round Up works.



Download CECF grant applications at cottonelectric.com.

Deadline for second-quarter 2013 grant applications is May 30.

Most Cotton Electric members participate in ORU, in which power bills are rounded up to the nearest dollar. The amount rounded up can be as little as 1 cent and is never more than 99 cents. On average, each participating member contributes about \$6 each year.

The funds are pooled and administered by the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation, a board of directors that meets quarterly to consider grant applications. The

board consists of Warren Langford, the co-op's CEO; Tim McCary, president of the co-op's board of trustees; and three representatives from the Cotton Electric service area: Carly Douglass, CECF president; Keith Hooker, CECF vice president; and Carter Waid, CECF secretary and treasurer.

The board met March 12 to review 11 grant applications. Grants totaling \$11,563 have been distributed to six of the

applicants. First-quarter grant recipients include:

- ◆ Bray-Doyle baseball team, \$1,500 for equipment and facility upgrades.
- ◆ Comanche Middle School, \$1,200 for iPads for STEM Lab.
- ◆ Town of Central High, \$5,000 for a generator for community center.

◆ Fiesta in Fuqua, \$500 for school supplies.

◆ Empire Schools and Boy Scout Troop 4417, \$2,500 for improving handicap accessibility at the school.

◆ Stephens County Humane Society, \$863 for van repair.

CECF has awarded more than 280 grants totaling \$651,860 since the foundation was established in 2004.

Applications for second-quarter grants are due by May 30. Downloadable applications are available at CottonElectric.com.

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Stephens County quilt show features 'Parade of Roses'

"Parade of Roses" will be the theme of the 35th annual free quilt show sponsored by the Stephens County Historical Museum and OHCE (Oklahoma Home and Community Education) clubs of Stephens County.

Organizers expect to have more than 100 quilts and quilted items on display the first weekend in October at the museum at the intersection of Beech and Highway 81, inside Fuqua Park in Duncan.

There will be a competition among quilts featuring roses in their design. The roses may be appliquéd, embroidered, or part of the fabric or design.

All quilts, new to antique, are welcome and encouraged. There is no entry fee.

Quilt entry will be from 1 to 5 p.m. Oct. 2 at the museum. The show will be open to the public from 1 to 5 p.m. Oct. 4 and from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Oct. 5.

There is no admission fee to the show.

A quilt made and donated by OHCE will be raffled. Tickets may be purchased from OHCE members. Drawing will be at 3:30 p.m. Oct. 5.

For information or quilt entry forms, call OHCE Cultural Enrichment Chairman Sharon Pulis at 580-606-0525 or Museum Director Pee-Wee Cary at 252-0717.

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Members recall electricity's arrival

Nineteen forty-six was the year REA out of Lindsay, OK, came to our farm in the Bray community.

My dad borrowed a book on how to wire our house. At that time, knob-and-tube insulators were used. Circuits were protected by fuse boxes.

Our house had an upstairs floor, so we needed a way to illuminate the staircase. This was provided by a switch at the top and one at the bottom of the staircase.

I was 16 at the time, but by using a book, "How to Wire Your Home," and Dad's practical knowledge, we got the job done.

Later, 1947 or '48, the telephone came. At that time, they used the electric lines for the telephone company. This did not last long. One could pick up phone conversations on the car radio. At times, we could eavesdrop on our neighbors, with comical results. Sort of strange, hearing country-type language coming from the car's radio.

— William D. Grigsby



William Grigsby remembers when electric and telephone companies used the same lines.

I remember very well, "before electricity."

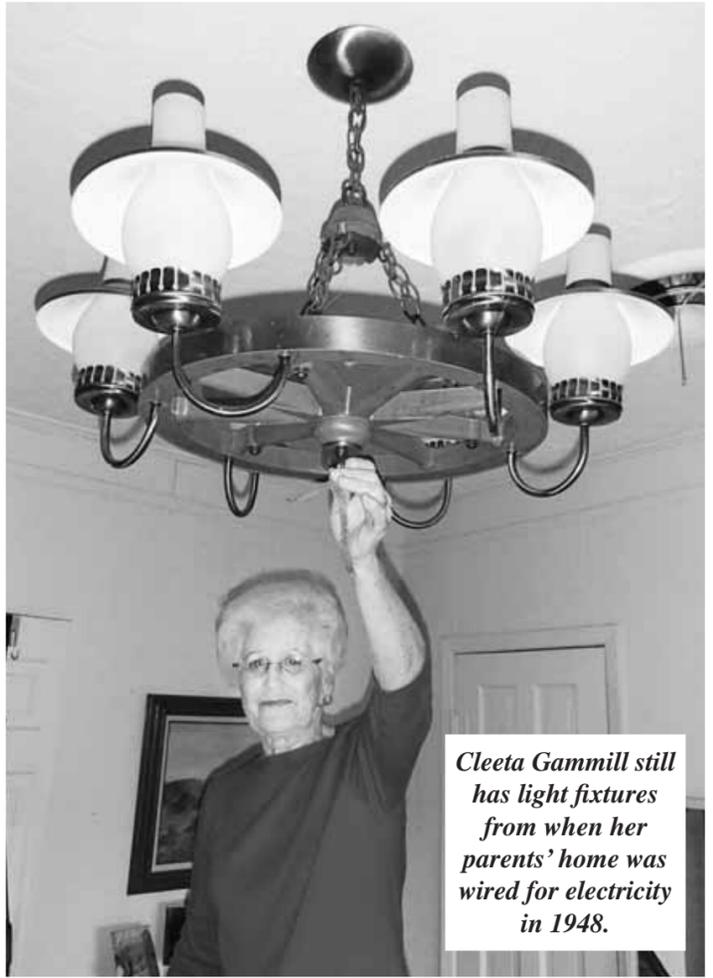
In January of 1946, my husband and I came back from his service in the Air Force. We moved into this little four-room house. There was no electricity, no telephone, no water except cistern water, and we drew the water out with a rope and bucket.

The summer of 1948 was spent building onto these four rooms. The cement foundation was mixed, powered by a Maytag motor. All lumber was cut by hand. My dad, who was an electrician, wired our house and put in beautiful light fixtures, some of which are still in my home.

The day after Christmas, 1948, Cotton Electric service crew turned our electricity on. That was one of the most memorable days of my life. If we had not lived without all those luxuries in 1946, 1947 and 1948, it probably would not have been so special.

Thank you, Cotton Electric.

— Cleeta Gammill



Cleeta Gammill still has light fixtures from when her parents' home was wired for electricity in 1948.

Do you remember when the lights came on?

Perhaps you or a family member has special memories about those times. Please send suggestions, memories or contact information to The Current, c/o Cotton Electric, 226 Broadway, Walters, OK 73572, or use modern-day technology and send an email to info@cottonelectric.com.

BUILDINGS

by

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Close damper to keep conditioned air inside

By Trent Marlett

For the most part, cold weather has passed and the nice springtime weather is here to stay. For those of us who own a fireplace, there is no more need for heat from a crackling wood fire. With that in mind, let me tell you about one of the first things I notice when I visit a home to perform an energy audit or to investigate a high bill complaint.

A fireplace and chimney always grabs my attention.

Once I see that, I ask the member, "Is the damper to that fireplace closed when not in use?"

For the most part, people know what I am asking about and assure me it is, but I have come across some who don't know that a chimney flue has a damper, or didn't think much of it and just left it alone.

A flue runs through the chimney, connecting the fireplace opening to the outside. For those who don't know, a damper is a mechanism that fits in or just below the flue opening. The damper can be opened or closed and is used to control airflow.

I'm sure I have emphasized this fact over and over: Heating and cooling accounts for the most energy consumption in the home. Everything else is minimal compared to it.

Another little fact: Unconditioned air infiltration and conditioned

Simple Savings

air exfiltration causes the heating and cooling system to work harder to keep the house comfortable.

We can caulk and install weather stripping in every nook and cranny of our homes, but if we own a fireplace and the damper is open, all that work can go up like smoke.

The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that around 30 percent of the energy used to heat and cool a home can go right up the chimney if the damper is not properly closed, thus sealing off the flue. If we think about it, that's what a flue is designed to do: Pull smoke and gases up the chimney instead of letting it go back into the home. It does this through pressure differences between the chimney and the house. The height of a chimney creates a natural draw on the fireplace, making sure no smoke-filled air will sneak back in the home.

So, if there is no fire burning in your fireplace, all your conditioned air — which you are paying to condition — is getting sucked up the flue if the damper is open.

If you don't have a damper, it would be smart to find a way to have one put in. I have also heard energy experts suggest wrapping an old pillow in a tough trash bag and stuffing it in the chimney just far enough to where you can't see the pillow. This will stop conditioned air from escaping the house through the chimney.

I have a wood-burning stove in my home and it does not have a damper. The air is drawn from underneath the stove. My firebox is made of metal, so I purchased a very inexpensive magnetic register cover and placed it over the hole. The cover creates a tight seal and ensures no conditioned air leaves my house.

When I want a fire, I simply remove the magnet and away I burn.

Whatever method you use to block air in a chimney, remember to pull objects out or open the damper before starting any fires.

Here's another springtime tip: This is a great time for fireplace owners to have their chimneys cleaned and inspected. This will make sure there are no obstructions in the chimney and eliminate fire hazards from creosote built up in the chimney.

Remember: If you have a fireplace in your home and it's not in use, close the damper or seal up the chimney in order to keep conditioned air — and your money — from going up the flue.

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 Directions: From the Intersection of New Highway 81 South and Fuller Road, go West 2-3/4 Miles on Fuller Road, then go South on Adams Road 1/8 Mile. Real Property situated on East Side of Road.
 Terms of Sale: 10% Earnest Money on Real Property on the day of Sale. Balance due at closing upon delivery of Title and Deed.
 Preview of Real Property will be held Friday afternoon, April 19, 2013 from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Announcements made day of sale supersede all other advertisements. Please plan to attend this Public Auction.
 Auctioneer's Note: This Home will require repair and maintenance. The best features of the Public Auction are 1) The Location of the Property 2) Nice 1.5 Acre Lot and 3) Rural Water Meter. A Certified Survey dated January 31, 2012 will be provided with Real Property. Mr. Glendel Allen Lackey reserves the right to accept or reject final bid. The Real Property will be offered "As-Is, Where-Is." Stephens County Abstract Company will serve as the Closing Agent on the Real Estate.

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Are you prepared? *Make plans to build an emergency kit*

By Karen Kaley

I think enough time has passed that I can refer to The Ice Storm without causing people to cringe and shudder – at least not much.

For those of you new to the Cotton Electric service area, The Ice Storm struck Jan. 28, 2010. It was the largest natural disaster endured by the co-op. Widespread damage meant most of the 17,000-plus cooperative members experienced a power outage that ranged from a few hours to as much as 13 days.

The Ice Storm was a big learning experience for me in many ways. I had worked for the co-op just 16 months and was astonished by the profound impact Mother Nature can have. The dedication to restoring power by my colleagues in the co-op world was humbling to behold.

On a more personal note, I learned I live not only in the wild-weathered state of Oklahoma, but I apparently have a well-established place in the state of Denial.

We were warned. In the days leading up to the storm, weather experts told us to brace for the worst and to gather up the things we would need to make it through.

But I did not take the warnings very seriously. I simply could not believe it was going to be all that bad. I had been through a few ice storms, but my memory recalled one-day inconveniences of bad driving conditions. As a lifelong city-dweller, the longest power outage I had experienced was about six hours and I slept through most of it.

The day before the storm hit, as the warnings sounded more urgent, my husband and I decided we should make a half-hearted attempt to get ready. We went to the local big box store to get a few things.

The scene was a little shocking. The place was packed with people and the atmosphere was a bit cutthroat. I saw a friend who answered my greeting with, “Where did you find that candle?” as she eyed the contents of my shopping cart.

As it happened, I had picked up the last candle – a pillar style – in the place. There were no C or D batteries, lamp oil was wiped out and camping lanterns were a precious commodity.

We went home with a few items, still thinking it was much ado about nothing.

I sat in the dark the next evening learning my first lesson: Pillar candles smell nice and can be pretty but they don’t put out much light. The long tapers I found in the back of a drawer were brighter.

I was one of the lucky ones. Power was restored to my house in about 30 hours, a short time compared to friends and family members who endured several days without electricity.

The outage at my house was long enough and uncomfortable enough to make a lasting impression, but apparently not enough to drag me completely out of Denial. I say that because, some three years later, I finally got serious about putting together an emergency kit.

I started with a little research. As usual, the Internet provided too much information. There are nearly 5 million responses to a search for emergency preparedness kit. Add quotation marks to the phrase and it is narrowed down to 230,000.

There are hundreds of pre-assembled kits, ranging in price from \$25 for a very basic single-person one-day kit to a \$1,350 package that will keep a family of four going for seven days.

I wanted to put together my own kit, so I sifted through numerous lists, some short and basic and some very long and comprehensive. I settled on two to guide me, one offered by the American Red Cross and another from The New York Times.

I already had a few of the basics – flashlights, taper candles, matches, bandages, some batteries – but I was going to have to purchase many items. I didn’t buy everything at once because my household budget wouldn’t allow it. Instead, I spread the purchases out over several weeks. Most items were inexpensive and only four cost more than \$10, but they were important.



A well-stocked emergency preparedness kit will include a weather radio, flashlights, batteries, clean-up supplies, water, non-perishable foods, first aid items, cash and copies of important documents. Extra clothing and blankets are important, too.

The items and brands I am about to mention are choices I made. Cotton Electric does not endorse any particular item or brand but does recommend preparing for emergencies.

I focused first on the things I remembered wishing for during The Ice Storm. The only battery-powered radio in my house was small and ancient and insisted on picking up stations in Arkansas and Tennessee, but none from Oklahoma. Therefore, my first emergency kit purchase was a safety-preparedness radio endorsed by the American Red Cross. At \$30, it is the most expensive item I bought.

I chose an AM/FM weather band radio that includes a built-in LED flashlight, a USB cell phone charger and headphone jack. No batteries are needed because it is crank-powered and solar-powered.

The two nights we spent playing Yahtzee and gin rummy were pretty dim. For my kit, I spent \$20 on a small LED lantern that puts out 105 lumens and should last several hours on four AA batteries. I’ve also grabbed every “gimme” flashlight I’ve come across in the last couple of years, but still would like a full-sized lantern. It is on my wish list.

Another “big-ticket” item I’ve purchased is a kit from Sterno. For \$25, I got a large 60-hour candle, six smaller 9-hour candles, two 7-ounce cans of cooking fuel and an aluminum folding stove. I wanted that for coffee. Starbucks makes a pretty decent instant coffee, but I didn’t have a way of heating water.

I know. I really have to get my priorities straight.

Nearly everything else I have collected has been fairly inexpensive. The local dollar store is a great source of many types of non-perishable foods and sanitary items. High-protein shakes are a little pricey, but peanut butter, potted meat and granola bars are easy to stock up on.

Most of the food items have expiration dates, so I’ll have to send them on camping trips with my sons from time to time and refresh the supply.

There are still some things I need to collect so I’ll be prepared for an extended power outage or a more serious disaster. You can never have too many batteries, I need more first aid items and most lists call for a whistle and a solar blanket. I need to fill an airtight container with cat food, make copies of important documents and build a cash stash. There are many other things I can add.

About the fourth item I spent \$20 on. I could have kept all of these things in a laundry basket, but decided I wanted something with a lid. I studied all the plastic containers available, decided they were either too large or too small and settled on a trunk style with a hinged lid. It has handles and, most importantly, wheels.

My kit is still a work in progress, but I feel much better about how I’ll fare in the next major storm, be it ice or tornado.

I wonder what my husband will do?

Being prepared means being equipped with the proper supplies you may need in the event of an emergency. Keep your supplies in an easy-to-carry emergency preparedness kit that you can use at home or take with you in case you must evacuate.	Experts recommend keeping a three-day supply of food and water in a container like a duffle bag or waterproof box that is easy to transport. Here is a list derived from suggestions offered by American Red Cross and The New York Times.
Water 1 gallon per person per day	Matches
Non-perishable foods such as nutrition bars, vegetable juice, high-protein diet shakes, dried fruit	Rain gear
First-aid kit	Towels
Medications (7-day supply) and medical supplies such as hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, etc	Work gloves
Sanitation, personal hygiene items	Duct tape
Crank/solar-powered AM-FM radio	Tools/supplies for securing your home
LED flashlights	Plastic sheeting
Batteries in a variety of sizes	Scissors
Unscented bleach	Extra clothing, hat and sturdy shoes
Manual can opener	Extra cash
Whistle	Compact multi-purpose tool
	Solar blanket, cloth blankets or sleeping bags
	Baby supplies (bottles, formula, baby food, diapers)
	Games and activities for children
	Pet supplies (collar, leash, ID, food, carrier, bowl)
	Extra set of car keys and house keys
	Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, proof of address, deed/lease to home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies)
	Cell phone with chargers, two-way radios
	Family and emergency contact information

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MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

By Jennifer Meason

Recently, my family and I were enjoying an afternoon outside and getting in some last-minute chores since we anticipated possible thunderstorms moving through the area. We had received a text message from iMap Weather Alert, a free service offered to members by Cotton Electric, stating Cotton County was under a thunderstorm watch. We hoped that we might finally see some much-needed rain.

As we worked in the yard, we saw the storm front begin its approach. The wonderful and long-anticipated smell of ozone began to build in the air, and we could see flashes of lightning in the distance.

Suddenly, a loud boom of thunder sounded. Not long after, we received an iMap update that we were now under a Thunderstorm Warning. The rain began to fall soon after.

The sights and sounds of the storm startled our 5-year-old daughter. She became frightened by the storm, and my husband

and I began to discuss why she suddenly seemed to be scared of storms. We realized that with the drought over the past few years, she didn't have many storm experiences in her memory.

She's certainly experienced a few more, as we've enjoyed several days of the much-needed rainfall we have prayed for. We've taken that opportunity to talk about storms with her and the importance of being prepared.

As a family, we've put together our own "Storm Kit" following Karen Kaley's suggestions in her article on storm preparedness on page 6.

We've also talked more about the weather with our daughters. When we receive an iMap Weather Alert, we tell them that our area may have some storms so they know what to expect.

We also go to the iMap Weather Radio app to look at the weather

forecast and current iMap Radar to track the storms.

The iMap Weather Radio app is like a traditional NOAA Weather Radio, sending critical alerts regarding life-threatening weather events via voice and push notifications to a smart phone.

Our girls have now become amateur meteorologists and require a daily weather report before they head out each morning.

Members of Cotton Electric can receive free weather alerts through the iMap Alert program by signing up on our webpage or downloading the free iMap Weather app in the App Store or Google Play. A forecast is delivered daily, and weather alerts are sent by email or text message as issued by the National Weather Service.

The iMap Weather Radio app is available for purchase on iTunes and Google Play.

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ACROSS

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71. Showing game
72. Medieval merchant guild
73. Current units

DOWN

1. Applied over
2. Gettysburg Union Gen.
3. Inches per minute (abbr.)
4. The bill in a restaurant
5. Draw on
6. Currency exchange fee
7. 19th C. Polish composer
8. A festival or feast
9. Affirmative
10. UC Berkeley
11. Rapid bustling movement
12. Dining, coffee or

13. Region surrounding ancient Troy
24. Rad squared
25. An old phonograph record
26. Sang in a Swiss folk style
27. Guided the car
28. Exclamation of surprise
29. A Senate member
32. Very fast airplane
33. Myanmar monetary unit
34. Right-angle building wing
36. Returned merchandise authorization
37. "Rubber Ball" singer Bobby
39. Express pleasure
40. Women's undergarment

41. 3rd-largest whale
49. Exist
51. The 4th state
52. Expressed pleasure
53. Cutting part of a knife
55. Civil Rights group
56. Makes taunting remarks
58. = 100 paisa in Bangladesh
59. American steam engineer James
62. Golfer Snead
63. Type of health insurance
64. Thyroid-stimulating hormone
65. Point midway between S and SE
66. Patti Hearst's captors
67. E. British University river

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Winners of the 49th annual Rural Electric Youth Tour contest sponsored by Cotton Electric Cooperative are, from left, Chance Stillwell and Megan McCoy, both juniors at Walters High School, and Lawton High students Samantha Ciaramitaro and Kaitlyn Sieber.



Ashley Powers of Loco and Sam Kimbrough of Marlow will represent Cotton Electric at the 2014 Leadership Summit in Oklahoma City.

Winners selected for trip, summit

Continued from Page One

The three judges in the 2013 contest included Sondra Boykin, communications coordinator for Western Farmers Electric Cooperative and former editor of The Current; Joe Wynn, coordinator of Youth Tour and Energy Camp programs at Southwest Rural Electric Association; and Dr. James Heflin, associate professor in the Department of Communication at Cameron University.

Once the judging scores were tallied, CEO Warren Langford announced winners while Tim McCary, Cotton Electric board president, presented certificates.

The first two names announced were Ashley Powers of Loco and Sam Kimbrough of Marlow. They will represent Cotton Electric at

the Leadership Summit in January 2014. In addition to a day of training and discussions designed to broaden leadership skills and interact with like-minded peers, each student will receive a \$250 college scholarship. At the conclusion of the training, students and their parents will be treated to an event like a Thunder basketball or Barons hockey game.

The top four in the final round of the contest won an all-expense paid one-week trip to the nation's capital in June. They are Samantha Ciaramitaro, Megan McCoy, Kaitlyn Sieber and Chance Stillwell.

During their trip of a lifetime, they will join more than 1,500 other students, educators and cooperative employees and follow

itineraries filled with activities from the moment they arrive until they day they fly back home.

The students will have an opportunity to visit with Oklahoma's congressional delegation and learn about government, the cooperative form of business and the business of rural electrification. They will become more familiar with the historical and political environment of the nation's capital through visits to monuments, government offices and cooperative organizations.

Because these four bright teens learned, wrote and spoke well about the history of Cotton Electric, they have earned a chance to learn about the nation's history in a way no textbook or website will ever match.

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Protein key to preserving muscle

Sarcopenia, or the loss of muscle mass, is associated with aging. The decrease in muscle mass can begin as early as age 40. Decline that negatively impacts your health can be prevented by maintaining an active lifestyle and ensuring that you consume enough protein and a balanced amount of calories.

Why should you care about your muscle mass? Muscles keep your bones healthy, help you recover from traumatic events like surgery or accidents, and keep you steady on your feet. The more you start with, the more you have to work with as you age.

Staying active is one way to prevent or slow sarcopenia. A daily mixture of strength training by lifting weights and aerobic exercise such as lifting, walking, jogging, biking and swimming is best. Extreme exercise is not necessary, but you must do something. Inactivity is the biggest contributing factor to muscle loss.

Nutrition is also key to preventing muscle loss. In particular, protein plays an important role in keeping your muscles healthy. Researchers are finding that while eating enough protein is important, it is more important to spread that protein intake throughout the day.

Think about your typical breakfast. Do you consume a source of protein such as milk, eggs, meat, nuts or soybeans? Most people prefer carbohydrate-heavy breakfasts such as cereal, pastries,



Kim Bandelier, MPH, RD, LD

Food For THOUGHT

or toast. Unfortunately, you are missing an opportunity to provide your muscles with the protein needed to stay healthy.

The amount of protein recommended per day for adults is 0.8g per kilogram of body weight per day. If you weigh 150 pounds, you need 55g of protein per day. It is best to divide that amount over several meals during the day. In this example, the individual would need to consume around 18 grams of protein per meal for three meals.

To get an 18-gram protein breakfast, you could eat 1 cup of milk – skim milk is best for heart health – one whole egg or two egg whites, and a bowl of cereal (read the label and pick one with some protein) or oatmeal. How does your typical breakfast compare?

Lunch and dinner should be easier to meet your protein needs

as long as you include a source of protein in your meal.

More protein is not necessarily better, and you can't make up for low-protein meals earlier in the day. Your body can make use of only so much protein at one time. What is not used is excreted and can tax your kidneys if you regularly consume too much.

Getting enough protein is especially important if you are unable to be active. Studies have shown that adequate amounts of protein consumed at each meal protect muscle mass when you are bedridden. If you have a friend or relative who is hospitalized or bedridden, encourage him or her to focus on protein first at each meal.

Both animal and plant sources of protein will work to help preserve lean body mass as you age. Animal sources carry more essential amino acids or protein building blocks than plant sources, meaning they more closely match exactly what humans need. Plant proteins in the correct combinations can provide the same complement of amino acids. You just have to watch your protein intake more closely to get the right combinations.

One cannot forsake the other components of a healthy diet – fruits, vegetables and whole grains – but as you age, you need to focus more on getting the right amount of protein spread evenly throughout the day in order to slow muscle loss and continue a healthy aging process.

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Create a sweet and refreshing salad

There are many reasons to experiment with salad. Salads fill you up without causing you to feel overly full. They can be mixed using your favorite varieties of lettuce, and the taste can be changed instantly by the add-ins used.

Salads featuring the flavors of orange and sesame are popular and refreshing. Made with chunks of chicken, this type of salad makes a complete meal, providing protein and fruit all in one serving.



Orange Sesame Chicken Salad

- Orange Sesame Chicken Salad**
 Makes 4 servings
- 20 square wonton wrappers
 - 2 3/4 cups vegetable oil, divided
 - 1 head romaine lettuce, cut into bite-sized pieces (about 8 cups)
 - 1/4 cup soy sauce
 - 1/4 cup fresh-squeezed lemon juice
 - 2 tablespoons sugar
 - 1 tablespoon distilled white vinegar
 - 1 teaspoon salt

- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
 - 1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
 - 3 to 4 cups coarsely shredded cooked, rotisserie chicken
 - 1/2 cup chopped green onions
 - 2 navel, Cara Cara or Valencia oranges, peeled, segmented
 - 1/2 cup sliced almonds, toasted
 - 2 tablespoons sesame seeds, toasted
- Cut wonton wrappers into 1/2-inch-wide strips and separate on paper towels. Heat 2 1/2 cups vegetable oil in a large, wide saucepan over medium heat. Fry the wonton strips, 5 or 6 at a time, gently turning over once

- with a slotted spoon, until golden, 10 to 15 seconds per batch. Transfer to paper towels to drain.
- Put romaine in a large salad bowl. In a separate mixing bowl, whisk together soy sauce, lemon juice, sugar, vinegar, salt and pepper. Add sesame oil and remaining 1/4 cup vegetable oil in a slow stream, whisking until the sugar is dissolved and the dressing is well blended.
- In a third bowl, combine chicken, green onions, orange segments, almonds and sesame seeds. Add 1/3 cup of dressing and toss to coat. Toss romaine with enough dressing to lightly coat. Add the chicken

mixture and toss lightly. Top with fried wonton strips and serve.

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Flexible fellow

Woods adapts to new opportunities

By Karen Kaley

Eric Woods is OK with change, molding his schedule to meet the needs in his home and work life, bending his focus to new tasks as they come along. He is as flexible as the protective rubber goods he has washed, examined and tested for more than six years.

Flexibility has always been a characteristic at Cotton Electric Services Inc. (CESI) where Woods works. The subsidiary has changed over time to meet the needs of members and the cooperative.

Woods' first tasks at CESI kept him on the road, but an opportunity came along at a good time for Woods. He was about to be married and preferred staying closer to home. He gladly accepted a position at CESI in late 2006, testing rubber goods while serving as a night dispatcher for the co-op.

Woods juggled the two jobs for about a year and a half. Between phone calls, he performed electrical and visual tests on rubber goods. "Mostly line hose," he said.

For a while, testing the long rubber tubes that cover power lines and protect linemen "was the only thing I knew how to do," he recalled.

"I got quick at it. I could wipe out a cartful in a few hours."

At about the time Eric and his wife, Ashley, were preparing to welcome an addition to their family, another change presented itself at CESI.

When a daytime position became available, Eric moved into that slot.

"I didn't want to be gone all night and sleep during the day with a new baby in the house."

As a full-time lab tech, he expanded his expertise from line hose to sleeves, gloves, sticks and all other items the lab tests. He learned a lot and credits the late Tommy Meyer for sharing his knowledge about the test lab.

"He was an excellent teacher, taught me everything I know ... mechanical maintenance, making sure voltages are accurate, inventory ins and outs ..."

Meyer instilled an attitude for the job that Woods and all CESI employees carry forth.

"We do a good job so linemen can go home to their families at night. Working here at the co-op, we know the people we are testing for. They are our friends. We see them daily. We do the best job we can because we know people's lives depend on what we're doing," Woods said.

The next big change for Woods came suddenly and was not as welcome. When Meyer passed away unexpectedly, Woods was well

Employee Spotlight Eric Woods



Eric Woods prepares a batch of line hose for visual and electrical testing.

qualified to step into the role of lab foreman.

He misses his mentor. "I would like him here to answer questions sometimes."

In the past year, Woods' duties have expanded to include monitoring deadlines and work flow. He and the CESI staff are committed to a high customer service standard of a two-week turnaround on any shipment of items needing testing.

He recently took on a new job title: customer service and lab supervisor.

In that position, he will become more involved with the administrative

work at CESI. He will also handle sales and marketing, attend vendor shows and perform safety demonstrations.

In other words, he'll be back on the road a bit more. Not too much, though.

One of his non-CESI responsibilities is getting his 5-year-old daughter, Ava, to dance practice on time. He likes to spend time on yard work and home improvement projects, maybe a little hunting and fishing, some drawing during quieter moments.

He'll make sure his schedule is flexible enough for all of that.



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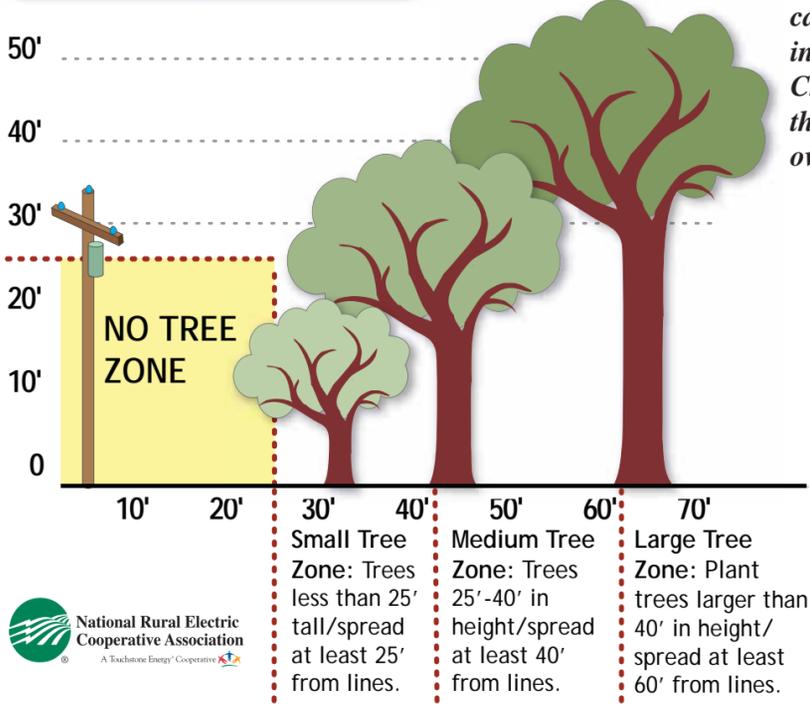
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Tree Planting Guide



Properly placed trees can be a valuable tool in energy conservation. Choose a tree and location that will not interfere with overhead power lines.



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Water drought-stricken trees along the drip line

By Karen Kaley

As Cotton Electric's contractor coordinator, Mike Darnell spends a great deal of time discussing trees with the co-op's members. Most of the information he supplies concerns the value of properly placed trees.

"A tree placed near a home but away from power lines provides shade and comfort while helping lower utility bills," he always tells members.

A common question during recent conversations, Darnell said, has been about damage from frost when the temperatures dipped into the 20s during the last week of March.

The frost may have caused buds to drop and tender new leaves to wither, but Darnell said homeowners should not worry too much.

"Fruit trees in the area suffered some from the light frost. It may affect tree production for the season, but the tree itself is not damaged."

The tree may look bad but "brown leaves don't justify cutting a tree down," he said.

The drought, however, is a weather condition that is causing problems for trees. Darnell said the topic comes up often and he has a bit of information to share about watering trees.

"Many people will take a water hose and throw it at the base of a tree and let it flood," Darnell said.

"That is worst thing to do. It just attracts pests and bugs to the heart of the tree."

The mistake has to do with where a tree absorbs water.

"Water isn't absorbed by the base of a tree, it's absorbed by the root system," Darnell pointed out.

"Watering is better at the drip line. A drip system is the way to take care of trees."

Darnell likes to refer to information from a document he found online. "Watering Trees" is by Dr. Kim D. Coder of the University of Georgia. It is a publication from the Daniel B. Warnell School of Forest Resources Extension.

Coder recommends watering the surface of the soil from about 3 feet away from the tree's trunk out to the crown edge, or drip line. He says there is no need to water beyond the drip line.

He also cautions against using a pipe or wand to get water deep into the soil.

"Most of the tree's absorbing roots are in the top foot of soil," he said, pointing out that watering deeper is a waste of effort and water.

Water is becoming a precious commodity as the drought lingers. Many communities in the Cotton Electric service area have imposed or are considering watering restrictions. Be sure to follow guidelines issued in your area.

Also, when considering planting a tree, "Always look up," Darnell said. Choose a tree and location that will not interfere with overhead power lines.

Also, remember to Call Okie before planting trees or starting any digging project. To keep from damaging underground power, water and cable lines, call 1-800-522-OKIE (6543) at least 48 hours before digging. This free service will mark the location of lines. Location requests can also be made at callok.com.

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Country music artist donates song to save lives through organ donation

Cotton Electric member and recording artist Dawn Anita Plumlee is very excited about her latest musical effort. Just in time for Donate Life Month in April, she recently released a new video promoting organ donation.



Dawn Anita Plumlee

Plumlee combined her skills with Bob Aronson, a Jacksonville, Fla., businessman and heart transplant recipient, to produce "The Gift of Life" song and video.

The three-minute, 30-second song about the joy of living was written, produced and performed by Plumlee at her own expense and donated to Aronson's Facebook group, Organ Transplant Initiative (OTI). Drawing from her late mother's favorite line, "I'm so glad I'm alive," Plumlee's song is about the joy of living experienced by patients who have had transplants.

Plumlee described "The Gift of Life" as a happy song.

"It's about helping other people live with your organs after you don't need them anymore.

"People have good intentions," she said, "but they just don't get around to registering as organ donors and the result is that 20 people die every day because there aren't enough organs. It's hard to believe that only 40 percent of us are organ donors when almost everyone agrees it's a good idea."

With a smile, she added, "Don't take your organs to heaven. Heaven

knows we need them here."

Aronson said, "I'm alive and was able to produce this video to help others because a total stranger gave me his heart."

"Registering is easy. You can check 'Yes' for organ donor when you get or renew your driver's license or register online at DonateLife.net. It takes only about a minute.

"Above all," he added, "tell your family so there's no confusion when the time comes."

Information distributed by Aronson said there are about 118,000 people on the national transplant list but only 28,000 transplants are performed each year. Thousands die waiting.

He shared these points about organ donation:

- There is no age limit, anyone of any age can register (under 18 with parental consent)

- Organ donation is approved by almost all major religions

- Being an organ donor costs nothing. The recipient's insurance pays all costs, and

- There are 98,000 people waiting for kidneys. Living donation is possible because we all have two kidneys and a person can live with just one.

Aronson and Plumlee are encouraging people to download "The Gift of Life" and share the link on social media and with everyone they know.

"We would like the song to be like a virus and spread everywhere," Aronson said.

"All you have to do is go to YouTube, type in 'Dawn Anita's Gift of Life' and the video is yours."

The Gift of Life song is a free download at ReverbNation.com/DawnAnitasMusic.

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Stampede features special appearances

Rodeo fans will want to mark May 3 and 4 on their calendars as the date for the Chisholm Trail Stampede PRCA Ram Rodeo. In its 24th year, the event is presented by Mike Terry Auto, Chisholm Trail Casino, and KFXI Foxy 92.

Shows will begin at 7:30 nightly in the Stephens County Expo Center in Duncan.

The rodeo will feature some of the top-ranking bulls and horses in the industry, furnished by Rafter H Rodeo Livestock Company. Entertainment includes bullfighters Greek Elick Jr. and Jason Gibbs, and trick rider Dusta Kimzey. The Canadian Valley Rangerettes of Mustang will perform a fast-paced drill.

There is still time for any young woman in the state to enter the rodeo queen contest. Entry forms are available at Crutcher's Western Wear in Duncan. Miss Rodeo America 2013 Chenae Shiner will be



Miss Rodeo America 2013 Chenae Shiner will be at the Chisholm Trail Stampede PRCA Ram Rodeo. She will sign autographs and crown the 2013 Miss Chisholm Trail Stampede.

on hand to crown the 2013 Miss Chisholm Trail Stampede. Shiner is a Utah native who will travel more than 100,000 miles during the year representing MRA and

children's tickets are \$5. All military tickets are half price.

Advance tickets can be purchased at Crutcher's and Stockman's in Duncan, Speedy Gs in Velma, First National Bank in Comanche and Frontier Feeds in Marlow.

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Wide-eyed wonder

Shop's offerings will please people from 4 to 104

By Karen Kaley

Step inside Blue Eyed Girls – Dear Friends and you'll have a hard time deciding – is it a women's clothing boutique or a children's entertainment store? Did I come here for home décor or paper goods? The answer is: Yes!

Stylish women's clothing and colorful children's items are the main offerings. Depending on the time of year, it may seem there is more of one than the other. At mid-March, there were more toys than clothes. That's because the blue-eyed Pat Rosen and Crisi Chapman had provided a great selection and sold out of their winter line.

By the time Cotton Electric members read about and visit the store in Duncan's Elk Plaza, shipments of spring clothing will have arrived and all the toys will be shifted to make room.

The mixture of offerings has to do with the history of the combined stores. The mother-daughter team started with the women's boutique, opening Blue Eyed Girls in September 2009. A couple of years later, they purchased the shop next door, Dear Friends, which specialized in unusual children's diversions and items for the home and office.

There is no wasted space in the blended store. Plush animals covered in bright floral prints fill top shelves, and equally bright totes hang from lower shelves. The animals run from the traditional bears and bunnies to the unusual: roadrunners, armadillos, turtles and skunks.

A pole covered in hooks holds scarves and handbags across from a collection of Lampe Berger scent diffusers and a wide selection of scents. Colorful chandeliers hang above.

"Goodnight Moon" and other titles for the very young are neatly arranged next to a shelf filled with books such as "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea" for older readers.

Crisi picked up a book entitled "Wacky Facts About the U.S." and flipped to the page about Oklahoma. Along with a picture of Will Rogers and the mention of shopping carts being invented in the Sooner state, she reads that Boise City was mistakenly bombed in World War II.

"Well, I didn't know that," she said.

What she does know is all of her products. She is quick to make gift suggestions and just as quickly makes her way to the items to show how they work. She grabbed a few tins from the play table where children are encouraged to try out some of the store's offerings.

The tins hold putty that is far from silly, it's special. Thinking Putty comes in several colors and properties. A dark batch with silvery flecks of metal has a magnetic cube inside. The filings become magnetized and the blob will stick to metal objects. Another batch is clear as glass, one glows in the dark and yet another changes color when exposed to cold surfaces or warm hands.

"We try to carry unique items," she said, then she pointed out the Animails: pink, blue or white stuffed animals with a smooth surface for writing a message and address. With proper postage, they can be mailed as is, without wrapping.

Speaking of wrapping, they offer the same special giftwrap that Dear Friends has always provided for items purchased at the store.

Blue Eyed Girls – Dear Friends has baby registries and birthday wish lists, too. Pat and Crisi can also keep track of what charms a young person may already have for their Charm-It bracelet or necklace. Crisi said this is an inexpensive gift that can be added to over time.

They can offer guidance on personal items, such as decorative signs or stationery. They can help design invitations and announcements of all sorts.

"We have something for all life events." Crisi said.

The only thing constant in the store is change.

Blue Eyed Girls – Dear Friends

10 percent discount on regular-priced items, excluding tubes, tanks and tights.



Crisi Chapman, left, and Pat Rosen encourage frequent visits to Blue Eyed Girls – Dear Friends at Elk Plaza in Duncan. New merchandise arrives daily.

Both women said customers should check the store's Facebook page or drop by often because new merchandise comes in nearly every day.

Cotton Electric members should remember to bring their Co-op Connections Card. Blue Eyed Girls – Dear Friends offers cardholders a 10 percent discount on regular-priced items, excluding tubes, tanks and tights.

Co-op Connections update

Johnson and Johnson Locksmith has a new location, 1913 NW Cache Road in Lawton. Call them for any kind of lock problem or advice on securing your home or business. Remember to present your Co-op Connections Card prior to service and ordering parts to get a 10 percent discount.



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LIVING ESTATE AUCTION

THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2013 @ 6:00 P.M.
NEWLY UPDATED MOBILE HOME & 2 ACRES



Recently remodeled, then due to health reasons, MUST SELL! This will be a bargain for Someone!
If you are looking for a place to live OR an affordable rental unit.....Don't Miss This Sale!!

DIRECTIONS:

Hwy 53 west of Comanche to Edgewood Store, then north ¼ mile to Terapin Road, go west on Terapin ¼ mile, Property is on south side w/ 6' chain link fence.

THIS IS A MUST SEE!!!!

Very attractive 2 bedroom 2 bath home. Completely remodeled and Move-In Ready!!! Laminate floors, vinyl siding, new H/A, all new double pane windows. Complete with new washer & dryer and refrigerator, new concrete cellar, 6 Car covered carport or patio, new roof, rural water & well. 1 Acre is under 6' chain link fence.

Open House April 25th from 4:00-6:00 p.m



LIVING ESTATE AUCTION

MAY 11, 2013 @ 10:00 A.M.
200 E. MAIN, DUNCAN, OK

Due to health reasons, owner is selling home in the midst of remodel and lifetime of collections & memorabilia.

REAL PROPERTY:

Home located at Rt. 1, Box 21, Comanche, OK, Will be sold at 2:00 p.m. at Main Street auction location during personal property auction.

Directions to home: Hwy 53 west of Comanche, turn south at Edgewood Store and go 4 miles south. Home is on the west side of the road.

REAL PROPERTY:

2 Acres with 27 Large Pecan Trees and 2700 sq. ft. 2 story home. Home has new roof, New Central AC Unit, Master Suite w/ bath, walk-in closet & wall closet, powder bath, stained concrete floors, foyer, all new kitchen cabinets, whole house has new plumbing, all new windows downstairs, rock fireplace w/ wood burning stove insert, new electric wiring downstairs, open kitchen/dining room/den combination, basement or inside cellar. Downstairs is nearly complete, upstairs is still work in progress. 3 bedrooms upstairs & office or 4th bedroom and bathroom w/ Jacuzzi tub.

PERSONAL PROPERTY:

Consists of an accumulation of collectables, antiques and memorabilia. Three buildings full of boxes with unknown treasures. Pearl drum set, 5 electric amps, 9 guitars, antique fishing rods & reels, bird show boxes, 1995 Pontiac Firebird, Aluminum Christmas tree, 2 axle roofing trailer, Joe Camel Collection, Old Baseball Cards, Hamms Bear, sports memorabilia, tools, tool boxes, ice chests, old minnow buckets and fishing gear, old bowling pins, traps, dining room table & chairs. Items way too numerous to mention.

View our website for complete listing or sale bill.

Open House April 30th 4:00-6:00 p.m



TOOL & EQUIPMENT AUCTION

MAY 4, 2013 @ 10:00 A.M.
Jim Davis Texaco - Walters, OK

55 years as a gasoline distributor
and a lifetime accumulation of tools & livestock equipment.

REAL PROPERTY:

Corner of Colorado & 9th Street in Walters, OK (Located outside city limits)
1½ Acres of pens and barns with hydraulic squeeze chute, WW cattle tub and ally. Drive thru load and unload. Lots of holding and sorting pens. This would make someone an excellent place to unload, load, sort & work cattle Very Nice Setup!!

TOOLS & EQUIPMENT:

Trail Master 32' Tandem Dual Flatbed trailer, 2006 Dodge 2500 4 door dsl pickup with 45k miles, flatbed w/hydraulic hay spear, 24 portable panels, headgate, hydraulic hay spears, 10' heavy duty brushhog, J.D. 5 btm moldboard plow, 20' covered gooseneck stock trailer w/ bridge timber floor, Hamby extensions for Krause & Sunflower chisels, air compressors, (2) complete sets of Anhydrous hoses & meter mags, car washer, 50 ton hydraulic press, (2) grain auger buckets, assorted work benches, Thermal Dynamics plasma cutter, new complete 10 ton Porta Power, 5 hp cut-off saw, (5) fence stretchers, (6) hi-lift jacks, big set of chain tongs, (2) complete sets of rigid pipe threaders, big bench grinder, Couplamatic hydraulic hose coupler, hydraulic hoses, H.D. welding table, complete sets of Snap-On ¾ drive sockets up to 2", Craftsman ¾ drive socket sets, sets of Craftsman large end wrenches, house jacks, new trailer jack, drill press (2) Saddle King saddles, generator, new tractor tires, implement tires, car and truck tires, Lots of Carbide plow chisel points, hard surfaced plow points, tire racks, new 18" sweeps, Duckfeet, vise, Approx. (22) Gas Pumps, complete Millermatic 35 wire welder, squirrel cage shop fans, bull dozer chain, pipe wrenches, electric fence chargers, portable air compressor w/ gas motor, sledge hammers, 3 pt. hay spikes, large heavy duty drags, 2000 gal. fuel tank, 1500 gal. fuel tank, cracker box welder, full set ¾ drive sockets up to 2 ½ inch, tool boxes full of ¾ drive Craftsman sockets & wrenches, big tool box full of large combination wrenches, ½ in. electric drill, ¼ cut solid oak two sided office desk w/ matching antique chairs, file cabinets, one w/ safe, right angle grinders, lots of hand tools, water well drilling machine w/ 20 joints of pipe auger & motor, Rnd bale hay rings, bunk feeders, pipe trailer, 8 bale hay trailer, antique trunks, aluminum calf pullers, J.D. 158 front end bucket, grain auger w/ gasoline motor, barrel dolly, hay baler parts & belt splicer. Many more items too numerous to mention. Something for everyone!!



ANNUAL SPRING EQUIPMENT CONSIGNMENT AUCTION

SATURDAY, MAY 25TH - 10A.M.
LAND PRO'S AUCTION YARD, WEST OF FAIRGROUNDS ON HWY 81, DUNCAN, OK

TRACTORS, LIVESTOCK EQUIPMENT, TRAILERS, DOZERS, GOLF-CARTS & MUCH MUCH MORE!

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CONSIGN EARLY FOR ADVERTISING

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- 1575 ACRES LOCO, OK
- 60 ACRES GARVIN COUNTY
- 47 ACRES NEAR LINDSAY
- 180 ACRES WASHITA RIVER BOTTOM-GARVIN CO.

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*Minimum purchases do apply. **Pictures for illustration purpose only.

