

# The Current

A Publication of Cotton Electric Cooperative Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

*"The Current - Informing Our Members Since 1957"*

VOLUME 56

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NUMBER 2

## Let's meet up!

### 75th Annual Meeting set for Sept. 26

Cotton Electric employees have been planning for months. The caterer has the menu, Stephens County Fair & Expo Center is reserved, goodie bag items are ordered ... all the members of the cooperative have to do is clip out the registration card to the right and take it with them to the 75th Annual Meeting on Sept. 27 in Duncan.

Starting at 5:30 p.m., members can turn in registration cards and sit down to a meal of barbecued brisket, potato salad, coleslaw and dessert provided by End O' Main Catering of Watonga.

CEC employees will be on hand to help point out parking places and offer golf cart rides for those needing help getting to the building. Further assistance will be available inside to help carry food trays and other items.

There will be plenty of entertainment for kids, including inflatable bounce houses and balloon animals. Star Spangle the clown will be there, telling jokes while making balloon animals and hats for young and old.

Don't forget to pick up a goodie bag while wait-

ing for the business meeting to begin. Member bags will contain a limited-edition cap and other items.

The 2013 Annual Meeting will have a few special features. U.S. Rep. Tom Cole is scheduled to address the crowd. There will be a special presentation of the Beacon Award.

For the third year in a row, CFL Charlie will be dancing about, offering hugs and high-fives for young and old. Weather permitting, the Touchstone Energy hot air balloon will make an appearance at the Stephens County fairgrounds.

The annual meeting is a business meeting required by the Cotton Electric bylaws. Board President Tim McCary will call the meeting to order at 7 p.m. Various members of the board and Cotton Electric CEO Warren Langford will present reports to the membership.

When all cooperative issues have been discussed and the business meeting has adjourned, prize drawings will be held.

For information about the annual meeting, call Trent Marlett at 580-875-4248.

CLIP OUT AND BRING TO ANNUAL MEETING

### Official Registration Card

### 2013 Annual Meeting

of Cotton Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Sept. 26 at the

Stephens County Fairgrounds

in Duncan

Please present this card at the registration booth. Registration begins at 5:30 p.m. This registration card entitles the holder to one gift ticket per membership. Only connected members are eligible for prizes, and members must be present to win. BE SURE TO LEAVE NAME LABEL ATTACHED



The official annual report on the income and expenses of the cooperative is included in this issue of The Current. The report includes financial information pertaining to the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation and a recap of gross receipts taxes paid by the co-op.



Employees are always on hand to give members a look at equipment and answer questions.



Employees also cooked back then, now we use a caterer. The long lines at the food tables haven't changed.



Vendors set up tents to demonstrate modern conveniences powered by electricity.



Board trustees gathered on a stage set up under the trees. They addressed the crowd, giving reports on the state of the cooperative. Door prizes after the speeches is a fine tradition that will be carried out this year, too.

#### Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment now being applied to bills mailed after Sept. 1, 2013, is \$0.00132 per kWh.

On a member's average bill of 1500 kilowatt hours (kWh), this will amount to a credit of \$1.98 on the September bill.

#### August 2013 Temperature Extremes

Day	High	Low	Avg.	Day	High	Low	Avg.
1	95	75	85	16	87	65	76
2	104	78	91	17	86	65	76
3	101	75	88	18	88	68	78
4	100	72	86	19	93	66	80
5	103	73	88	20	96	69	83
6	105	72	89	21	95	63	79
7	101	77	89	22	97	69	83
8	97	73	85	23	99	72	86
9	92	72	82	24	100	72	86
10	89	70	80	25	97	73	85
11	97	68	83	26	95	72	84
12	99	75	87	27	88	69	79
13	90	73	82	28	98	72	85
14	89	70	80	29	101	68	85
15	90	67	79	30	103	69	86
				31	106	68	87

Source: srh.noaa.gov/om/  
Average Daily High: 96 Average Daily Low: 71

#### Did You Know?

Peak demand tracking period ends every year on Sept. 9. Thanks to all Cotton Electric members who did their part this summer to help us Beat the Peak!

The October issue of The Current will be delivered on or about Oct. 15, 2013.

#### 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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More news at cottonelectric.com

# Co-op retiring \$300,000 in capital credits

Cotton Electric Cooperative belongs to its members. When a resident or business owner signs up to receive electric service from Cotton Electric Cooperative, he or she becomes a member and owner of the cooperative.

As owners, members have a responsibility to help finance their business. They do this by using our services and by allowing the co-op to retain any money collected in excess of actual operating costs. The money is used to build and maintain the facilities needed to serve the co-op's members and to service our long-term debt.

This money is considered to be capital furnished by the members — capital that will be returned to the members at a later date. While the co-op uses the money, members' capital credits are considered "allocated" but not "retired."

Capital credits are retired at the discretion of the cooperative's board of trustees.

"Two things that must be considered before retiring capital credits are the financial condition of the co-op and the impact on electric rates," said Warren Langford, CEO. "The co-op is financially sound, and the board has elected to retire a portion of members' equity in the co-op."

CEC will retire \$300,000 in capital credits in 2013. The capital credit retirement will benefit both active and former members of the not-for-profit electric cooperative.

Your cooperative continues to be financially strong and, as a result, we are able to share this economic benefit with our members. It is very important to the trustees to be able to return capital credits to our current and former members.

**Cooperative Principle #3  
Members' Economic Participation**  
Cooperatives provide services "at cost" and remain not-for-profit regardless of the value of benefits delivered. Any money left over after all expenses are paid — margins — belongs to the members. Each member's share in the margin is determined by the amount of his or her use of the co-op's services.

Capital credit checks will be in the mail after Oct. 1. The size of individual checks is based on the amount of electric power purchased by each member. If the amount of the refund is under \$5, a check will not be issued. Instead, it will be carried forward and added to any amount authorized for refund the next time capital credits are retired.

Cotton Electric needs changes of address when refunds are paid, even if a person has moved and is no longer a member of the cooperative. Members are encouraged to keep CEC informed of any change of address, as several hundred checks are returned to the co-op for lack of proper address each time capital credit refunds are issued.

**Frequently asked questions:**

**Why am I getting this check?**

Cotton Electric is retiring capital credits. This check is your portion of that retirement.

**What are capital credits?**

Cotton Electric operates at cost — collecting enough revenue to run and expand the plant. When the co-op has margins left over, they are allocated back to you and other members as capital credits.

**Why didn't I get a check?**

If the amount of refund is under \$5,



Cotton Electric will mail capital credit checks after Oct. 1

a check is not issued. Instead, your allocation will be carried forward and added to any amount authorized for refund the next time capital credits are retired.

In some cases, an account may be in arrears and the retirement is put toward the past-due amount.

**How is the amount of the check determined?**

The amount allocated is based on the amount of electric power you have purchased.

**I have not been a member for years. Why did I get a check?**

You may still have a portion allocated to you, even though you have not been a Cotton Electric member for a long time. Capital credit refunds over \$5 are issued to all active and inactive accounts.

**I am moving out of the Cotton Electric service area. Will I still get my capital credit check?**

Yes. Let us know your new address, and checks will be mailed as refunds become available.

**How do I know if you have a current address for me?**

We will publish a list of members needing to provide updated addresses

in the November and December issues of The Current.

**How can surviving family members or former co-op members claim capital credits?**

To claim a capital credit check intended for deceased members or those who have moved away, we require certain information to verify the member's identity. Former members or their heirs can call the office at 580-875-3351 or 800-522-3520 to begin the process.

**Still confused?**

Think of capital credits as water in a large barrel. Annual capital credit allocations are extra water, added to the barrel and retained to keep things afloat.

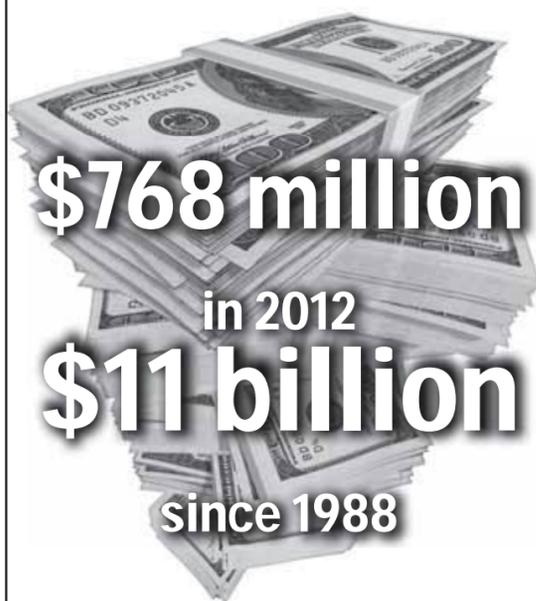
Occasionally, a percentage is retired to all who contributed to the total amount. How it is distributed is similar to dipping out the water. The size of your drink of water is proportionate to how much you contributed or how much electricity you purchased.

If your portion is only a drop or two, it is left in the barrel. You continue to contribute through power purchases and may get a dipperful with the next retirement.

## Did you know?

Electric cooperatives have retired \$11 billion to members since 1988 — \$768 million in 2012 alone.

Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues, called margins, are allocated and retired to members in the form of capital credits.



Source: National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation

## Looking for you at member meetings

### MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

By Jennifer Meason

**Cooperative Principle #2  
Democratic Member Control**

Co-ops are democratically controlled, with each member having one vote. As a result, control remains in the hands of all customers. Directors are elected from the membership.

As I write you this month, our district meetings are in progress. The purpose of a district meeting is to elect a trustee that represents your area for a three-year term on Cotton Electric's board. This year, meetings were held for Districts 4, 7 and 9.

We had the privilege of meeting with several members at each meeting and appreciate those who attended. Your feedback and participation is integral to Cotton Electric Cooperative. The smaller group format allows for more one-on-one discussions and allows members to share their thoughts and ideas with cooperative trustees and staff.

After the district meetings are held, all members have the opportunity to participate in the democratic process at the 75th Annual Meeting. This year's meeting will be held on Sept. 26 at the Stephens County Fairgrounds in Duncan, and employees have worked hard throughout the year to plan a great event.

Cooperatives are guided by seven principles: open membership; democratic member control; members' economic participation; independence; education, training, and information; cooperation with other cooperatives; and — above all — concern for our community. The annual meeting puts the principles in action and reminds us of the ways Cotton Electric is different from other utilities.

We hope you will all attend this year's annual meeting. Registration will open at 5:30 p.m. and will remain open until 7 p.m. when the business meeting is called to order. A meal will be served prior to the meeting, and we encourage you to bring your family. An area for the children will be provided with inflatable games, and Star Spangle the

Clown and friends will join us again this year.

Cooperative employees will be in various places around the fairgrounds to answer your questions and provide information about the services Cotton Electric offers. We look forward to visiting with you.

## The Current

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By Cotton Electric Cooperative, Inc.

- Warren Langford.....CEO
- Jennifer Meason.....Vice President of Marketing
- Karen Kaley.....Editor
- Jennifer Kriz.....Display Advertising
- Logann Pennington.....Classified Advertising

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## July 2013 Operating Stats

	2013	2012
Total Amount Billed/Accrued	\$5,960,659	\$5,870,874
Cost of Purchased Power	4,189,786	3,891,027
Taxes	108,167	95,803
Total Operating Expense Per Mile	1,108	1,030
Average Farm and Residential Bill	158	181
Average Farm and Residential kWh	1,537	1,950
Total Meters Billed (farm, residential)	18,139	17,916
Miles Energized	5,128	5,135
Density Per Mile	3.54	3.49
New Service Connects YTD	217	220
Services Retired	135	119



**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 October issue, please submit information by Sept. 30, by calling 580-875-4255 or send an email to [info@cotnonelectric.com](mailto:info@cotnonelectric.com).

## Farmers market open twice weekly

A farmers market hosted by the Southwest Growers Association is held from 8 a.m. to noon Wednesdays and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays through October at the Comanche County Fairgrounds, 920 S. Sheridan Road, Lawton.

For information, visit Lawton Farmers Market on Facebook.

## CTHC celebrates Western spirit

Western Spirit Celebration is a weekend in Duncan packed with activities. Events begin with a longhorn cattle drive at 10 a.m. Sept. 13 to the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center, 1000 Chisholm Trail Parkway. The annual celebration is two days of free, family-oriented festivities commemorating the Chisholm Trail and the cowboy way of life.

Activities on Friday include horse-shoes, dominoes, bingo, a spelling bee, mustache and beard contest and liar's contest. Senior citizens can learn about healthy living and get health screenings. Evening activities feature a Front Porch Weekend Winedown and Dance Under the Stars.

Saturday will be Family Day and will feature live music, cowboy poetry, pony rides and games of skill all day. Chuck wagons will provide lunch from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. A blacksmith, leather tooler, basket weaver and rope maker will be among the vendors.

The evening winds up with the kick-off concert for the Chisholm Trail Arts Council season. Walkin' the Line, a tribute to Johnny Cash, begins at 7:30 p.m. in the Simmons Center.

Information about the celebration is available by calling Chisholm Trail Heritage Center at 580-252-6692. Concert information is at [ChisholmTrailArts.com](http://ChisholmTrailArts.com) or 580-252-4160.

## Geronimo planning birthday bash

Geronimo kicks off its annual birthday bash with a parade beginning at 6 p.m. Sept. 20 followed by a fire department barbecue dinner. A powwow and fire dancers will be part of the evening's entertainment.

Festivities continue on Sept. 21 with a firehouse breakfast from 7:30 to 10:30 a.m. The Lil' Miss and Mr. Geronimo pageant and a kids' fishing derby begin at 9. Stage entertainment will begin at 10 a.m. and continue through 3 p.m.

The evening's entertainment features the annual Geronimo Bull Riding Classic, benefiting the Geronimo Volunteer Fire Department, beginning at 5:30 p.m. Mutton bustin' and chute doggin' are new features this year. The Allen Biffle Band will wind up

events, performing from 8:30 to 11:30 p.m.

Entries are being accepted for parade entries, stage entertainers, vendors and food booth operators. For celebration information, call Geronimo City Hall at 580-355-5511, email [events@yahoo.com](mailto:events@yahoo.com) or find Geronimo Events on Facebook.

Bull riding tickets for adults are \$8 in advance, \$10 at the gate. Tickets are \$5 for 6- to 12-year-olds, and children under 5 are admitted free. For information or advance tickets, call Julie Spaulding at 580-591-6529.

## DLT presents 'Dixie Swim Club'

Duncan Little Theatre will present "The Dixie Swim Club" for the season opener at 7:30 p.m. Sept. 20, 21, 27 and 28 in the Simmons Center. It is the story of five Southern women, whose friendships began many years ago on their college swim team.

This is the full version of the OCTA award-winning presentation by five veteran DLT actresses.

For information, visit [DuncanLittleTheatre.com](http://DuncanLittleTheatre.com).

## Bark in Park set for Sept. 21

Four-legged fur-bearing critters will take over Duncan's Fuqua Park during Bark in the Park from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sept. 21. This tail-waggin' celebration is open to all pets, their owners and spectators.

The Stephens County Humane Society and Friends of the Humane Society plan fun, food, contests, a Bark Boutique/Meow Mart, cat photo contest, vendors, demonstrations, a Strut Your Mutt pledge walk and on-site adoptions. There will be competitions for best costume, best bark, owner look-alike, best trick and longest tail.

For information, call Patti Whitaker at 580-641-0667.

## Care2Cure car show in Lawton

Care2Cure is an indoor car show to be held Sept. 21 in the Expo Building of Great Plains Coliseum in Lawton. This is the third annual event, a fundraiser benefitting the southwest Oklahoma affiliate of Huntington's Disease Society of America.

Registration is \$20 per car and begins at 8:30 a.m. The show will be open to the public at 10 a.m.

For information, call Pat Timberlake at 580-351-7520 or email [patkathyt@gmail.com](mailto:patkathyt@gmail.com).

## Empire VFD plans fundraiser

Empire Volunteer Fire Department is planning a car and motorcycle show to run from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sept. 28 at Empire School. The event will feature a brisket dinner, kids' zone, shotgun raffle, burnout contest and live entertainment.

For information, call Steve Earnhardt at 580-656-1022 or Donald Ashford at 467-6879.

# Photo of the Month



Tela Monroe blows out three candles and one to grow on during this Celebration of her third birthday. She is the granddaughter of Cotton Electric members Terry and Frankie Whaley of Duncan and the daughter of Celia Monroe of Norman.

Enter your "best shot" in our Photo of the Month contest. Fall and Halloween are just around the corner, so the theme for October is Costume Contest. Entries can be emailed to [info@cotnonelectric.com](mailto:info@cotnonelectric.com) or mailed to The Current, 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572. Winners will receive a Cotton Electric prize package of CEC goodies.

## International Festival begins Sept. 27

Elmer Thomas Park is the site of the 34th annual International Festival to be held Sept. 27-29. There is no admission or parking fee.

Three days of concerts and entertainment kick off with a Parade of Nations beginning at 5:45 p.m. Friday, followed by a naturalization ceremony. Activities will continue until 10 p.m., then resume from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Detailed information is available at <http://www.cityof.lawton.ok.us/lahc/IF.htm> and on Facebook.

## MP hosts Art Walk, Flute Fest

Medicine Park will host the annual Art Walk and Flute Festival on Sept. 28 and 29.

The art show runs from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Saturday performance times for the flute festival are noon to 1 p.m. at the Main Stage, then 1 to 8 p.m. at the Island Stage at Bath Lake. Sunday performances are from noon to 8 p.m. on the Island Stage.

Attractions include handmade instruments, arts and crafts and a food court.

## Quilters focusing on roses

"Parade of Roses" is the theme of the free show sponsored by Stephens County Historical Museum and OHCE (Oklahoma Home and Com-

munity Education) groups of Stephens County. There will be a quilt competition for quilts featuring roses, whether applied, embroidered or simply part of the fabric or design. All quilts, new to antique, are welcome and encouraged. There is no entry fee.

Quilt entry will be 1 to 5 p.m. Oct. 2, and the show runs Oct. 4 and 5 at the museum in Fuqua Park. For information or quilt entry forms, contact OHCE Cultural Enrichment Chairman Sharon Pulis at 580-606-0525, or Museum Director Pee Wee Cary at 580-252-0717.

OHCE members made and donated a quilt to be raffled during the show. All proceeds will benefit the museum.

## LCT presents 'Spitfire Grill'

Lawton Community Theatre opens its 62nd season with "The Spitfire Grill." Performances are scheduled for 8 p.m. Oct. 4, 5, 10, 11 and 12. Matinees will be at 2 p.m. Oct. 6 and 13. All performances are in the John Denney Playhouse, 1316 NW Bell Ave., Lawton.

The presentation is a musical, set in a small town suffering from a lack of hope until a feisty newcomer arrives to find her dreams. It offers a country-flavored score and message of warmth and goodwill.

For information, visit [LCT-OK.org](http://LCT-OK.org) or call 580-355-1600.

## More Community Spotlight on Page 5

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# Visionaries make co-op a reality

*'Electric-minded men' include Cox, Ketchum, Weatherly, many others*

Re-telling the story of rural electrification and Cotton Electric's beginnings is a time-honored tradition. At 75 years old, there are not many around who recall the birth of the co-op, but there are a few documents that have preserved the memory.

The excerpt below was published in the 1949 Annual Report to the membership of Cotton Electric Cooperative, when memories of life before "the electric" were still fresh.

There was no magic wand that waved over the area bringing light and power into the rural homes and farmyards. There was only the yardstick of ceaseless endeavor over legal obstacles, skepticism, and endless detail inherent in so vast a project.

Behind the program stood the established success of many similar ventures in the state, and the capital of the Rural Electrification Administration, the banking agency in Washington.

If other communities with similar problems could work their way into a land of better living through rural electricity, why not southwest Oklahoma?

So thought C.W. "Charley" Cox, a native of Walters and a radio repairman familiar with the ways and power of electricity. He saw in the REA program a tremendous opportunity to stimulate business in the area, revitalize farming procedures for added efficiency and productivity, and provide added home comforts in areas not served by electricity.

The story of the Cotton Electric Co-op is in a large measure a story of Cox and his insistent efforts, and those of close associates, men like first co-op president T.H. Ketels, Sam Philpott, Tab Dowlen and Floyd Jackson, the co-op's first attorney.

Cox sought their aid as well as that of other Walters businessmen and community-minded farmers. With Dr. F.D. Stalford and C.C. Campbell, Cox wrote letters to earlier electric co-ops and to Washington to explore the possibilities. Morris Cook, then REA administrator, quickened the tempo with information on setting up a local co-operative.

With Bob Lines, Frank Clark and Harry Collins, Cox and others visited other co-ops in the state.

The job looked huge in those days late in 1937, but Cox was convinced it could be done. Cox and the others continued their job of selling their pet project to the community during the early months of 1938.



**C.W. Cox led the charge to bring electricity to southwest Oklahoma.**

Then, in August 1938, two meetings charged the electric-minded men into action.

At a state meeting of REA groups in Oklahoma City, Cox enlisted the aid of C.O. Falkenwald, director of the REA examining division, and Frank Higginbottom, secretary of the Oklahoma Municipal League. An organizing meeting was called for Aug. 12 in Duncan.

Others attending the meeting included Olie Snipes, Carl Carter and Louis R. Burkhart.

About the same time, Cox learned that Leonard Ketchum, a Stephens County farmer, was actively engaged in promoting a similar idea for his area. Ketchum joined forces with the Walters group. Cox was elected temporary chairman for the project at the first meeting.

An organizing committee of Ketels, Ketchum, Burkhart, Dowlen, Bob Taylor, Charles Flanagan, C.E. Martin, Albert Carter, Philpott and Carl Carter was formed.

On this group and the others fell the task of signing new members to the infant organization. It wasn't easy.

Old-timers in the project say there was no harder work in the entire history of the co-op than getting the \$5 subscription fee from farmers in those days in 1938 when money was scarce.



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**Electricity in rural homes would change the way of life in rural America, bringing people out of darkness into light.**

In addition to the fact that \$5 bills were something of a premium, there were some who felt the electric co-op idea was "another skin game."

Solicitation was slow until R. A. Carnes, REA official, suggested public meetings to spread the word of the project. The issuance of the state charter Sept. 15, 1938, lent impetus to the young organization.

Listed as charter members were R. A. Taylor, Charles Flanagan, S.W. Philpott, T.H. Ketels and Albert A. Carter, all of Walters; Leonard Ketchum, Carl Carter and Louis R. Burkhart, of Duncan; J.W. "Tab" Dowlen of Temple; and C.E. Martin of Velma. These men lived in areas not receiving service from a central electric station, a basic REA requirement for members. Cox, who lived within the city of Walters, was not eligible as a member.

The charter made the name Cotton Electric Co-operative official.

With the new charter in hand, the group elected Burkhart, president; Ketels, vice president; Dowlen, secretary-treasurer; and Philpott and Ketchum, directors. Cox was named coordinator for membership.

A series of meetings was called throughout the area of Cotton, Comanche, Stephens and Jefferson counties.

Almost nightly gatherings were scheduled in schoolhouses, churches, and other public buildings as the expanding co-op maintained a constant drive for new members. G.L. Pfeifer of Randlett was the first farmer to pay his \$5 membership fee during a meeting.

The object was to obtain sufficient membership to justify to REA requirements building 234 miles of electric power lines. Skeptics were at every meeting, but the staunch builders of the program countered their arguments with renewed efforts to obtain offsetting members.

Often, those eager to join the project could not produce the \$5. One man wrote a check for the amount, then sold a parcel of his chickens to make the check good.

At one stage when the membership drive was lagging, L.L. Weatherly of Ryan, deep in southern Jefferson County, appeared in Jackson's law office in Walters, early headquarters for the co-op.

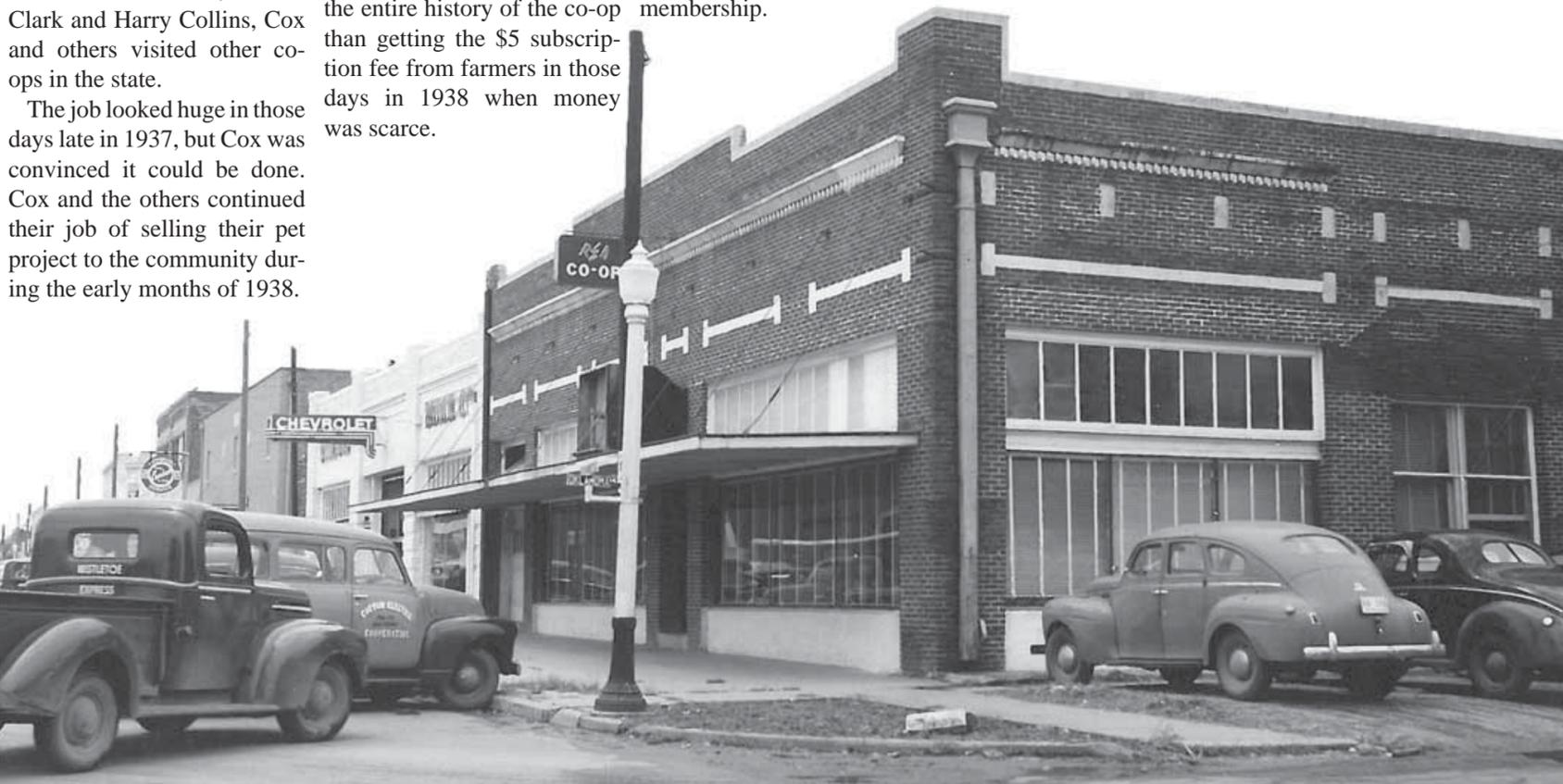
In a mild manner, he asked if the Walters group would consider about 60 subscribers in the Ryan area to sign as members. The co-op men nearly fell on his neck. And the membership drive gained new impetus.

While the project was under consideration in Washington, co-op members intensified their work of checking land titles, and rights-of-way easements in the areas of the proposed lines.

Finally, on Feb. 20, 1939, word was received from REA that a \$230,000 loan had been allotted to the Cotton Electric Co-op for the construction of 234 miles of lines to serve 780 customers in four counties.

The lines of progress for that first section stemmed from Walters east nearly to the Stephens County line, then south to the east of Temple to the juncture nearly at the Red River. From that point, one line ran west into the Randlett area, the other east and south near Waurika and Ryan.

**Continued on Page 5**



# Line construction begins, lights shine 84 days later

*Continued from Page 4*

The northern part of the initial lines was in two sections. One went east from Walters, then north to Hulen, west to Geronimo, and from Hulen to north of the Letitia community. A second portion stemmed from between Letitia and Hulen east into Stephens County, north of Duncan, and then a three-forked line serving the Cruce, Velma-Alma areas, and Loco. An estimated 90 miles of the new line were to be built in Cotton County, 135 in Comanche, Jefferson and Stephens counties.

That first REA loan was a 25-year loan drawing an interest rate of 2.73 percent. Later loans were payable over a 35-year period at 2 percent interest.

The City of Walters supplied power for its new major customer at a rate of 1.25 cents per kilowatt hour. A later source of REA power was the Marlow city-owned plant. In recent years, Southwest Light and Power Company, and currently Public Service Company, have supplied power for the co-op.

Each new member signed made the solicitation that much easier, and as the signing progressed, directors asked engineers of the Midwestern Engineering and Construction Company to plot the members on projected lines.

The membership drive and paper survey continued through the fall of 1938. Finally, Ewel Stone, REA field representative, examined the project, and set a deadline of Dec. 3 for the signing of members.

By Jan. 1, 1939, the project was mapped and a request forwarded to Washington for the construction of lines. Building on their initial membership success, Cox and the directors immediately launched an additional

survey to expand their paper project.

A meeting of the directors was called March 25 in Walters, and Keltels was elected president; Burkhart, vice president; and Philpott, treasurer.

Construction bids were received March 29, with the contract being awarded to Walco Engineering and Construction Company on its bid of \$148,000 accepted and approved by the REA.

Work was begun as soon as the weather cleared. Post-hole diggers were hired for 40 cents per hour, and the lines were long with men seeking the work. The land was dry, and diggers found dry earth 6 feet deep, according to early co-op men.

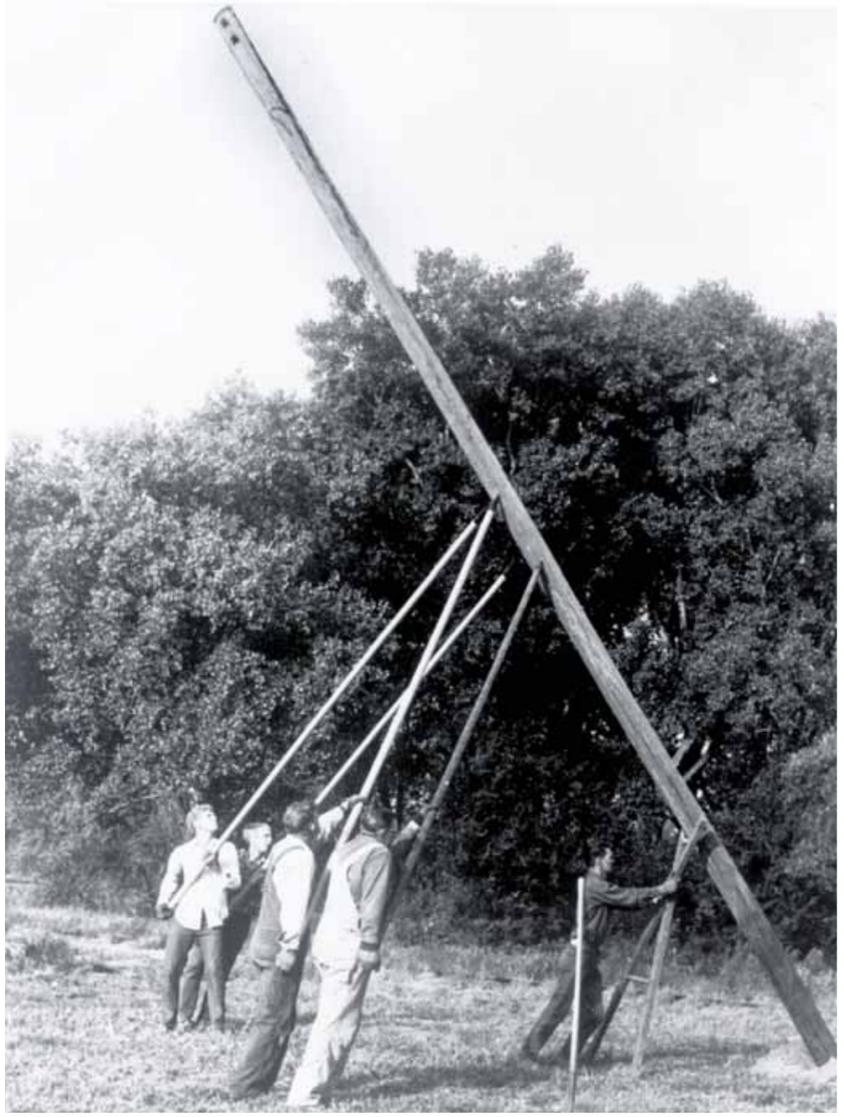
One of the construction problems of that early day was the need for individual members to wire their farm homes to utilize the forthcoming power. The co-op provided electric lines from source to pole to homes, but the homeowner was responsible for the wiring in his establishment. In many cases, this proved an economic burden.

Construction work was started June 1 and, 84 days later, the first lines were completed, a record time for REA construction work, engineers said.

The day of light was Aug. 26, 1939, planned as something of a holiday. The Walters Chamber of Commerce organized a switch-throwing ceremony, and furnished a free barbecue for the occasion.

Speeches that night were kept brief so members could attend the ceremony and return home to enjoy the fruits of their long labors.

Attending the celebration were Rep. Jed Jackson, Sixth District congressman; F.E. Stanley, president of Midwestern Engineering and Con-



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**Construction of Cotton Electric lines began on June 1, 1939. Post-hole diggers were hired for 40 cents per hour, and the lines were long with men seeking the work in an area hard-hit by the Depression.**

struction Company, Tulsa; Frank Higginbottom, secretary of the Oklahoma Municipal League; Mayor Paul Mershon, of Walters; the Rev. J.T. Jones, Walters; and Olie O. Snipes, Hastings, co-op extensions coordinator.

Following the barbecue and the talks, the switch was thrown that sent the lights into 150 homes along 109 miles of the new line throughout southwest Oklahoma.

The remainder of the initial service contract was energized within a short

time after the opening ceremony.

Quickly, coal oil lamps were replaced by electric light bulbs. Electric fans, irons, radios, refrigerators and water pumps were welcome additions to rural homes.

*At the time of this 1949 Annual Report, Cotton Electric was serving about 5,600 members along 2,450 miles of line. Today, the co-op serves 18,139 farm and residential meters along 5,128 miles of line.*

## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

### Walter Car Cruz set for Oct. 5

Walters Car Cruz is set to shake, rattle and roll the community on Oct. 5. Registration begins at 8 a.m. for this annual event sponsored by the Walters Chamber of Commerce.

For a \$10 entry fee, vehicles can participate in the car show, cruise, burnout and motorcycle show.

Other activities include a chili cook off, twist and bubble gum contests, carhop relay and scavenger hunt. There will be a mechanical bull, car bash and vendors offering a wide variety of foods. Prize drawings are scheduled throughout the day.

For information, call 580-695-1350.

### CTAC presents 'Masked Marvels'

Masked Marvels and Wondertales is the second installment of the Chisholm Trail Arts Council season. This night of family entertainment features Michael Cooper, an eye-popping visual artist and virtuoso mime. The one-man show combines handcrafted masks, original stories of courage and wonder, and outlandish stilt dancing.

Performance is at 6:30 p.m. Oct. 10 in the Simmons Center.

For ticket information, call 580-252-4160 or visit ChisholmTrailArts.com.

### SOS runners take off Oct. 6

Spirit of Survival events take off at 7:30 a.m. Oct. 6 in Elmer Thomas Park.

The Hulkin' Half Marathon and Quick Silver Quarter Marathon take off first. A 5K run takes off 15 minutes later.

The annual event continues with a kids' marathon of young walkers and runners who have already logged 25 miles embarking on the final 1.2 miles at 2 p.m. Participants in the 1-mile Leah M. Fitch Spirit Walk will begin their leisurely stroll or family fun run at 3 p.m. For information, visit spiritoofsurvival.com.

### Farm Bureau sets annual meeting

Comanche County Farm Bureau will hold its Annual Meeting at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 24 in the cafeteria of Eisenhower Junior High School, 5702 W. Gore Blvd., in Lawton.

### Cox's Store VFD plans fish fry

Cox's Store VFD will hold its 17th annual Fish Fry from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Oct. 19 at the fire station. The station is 3 miles north of Oklahoma Highway 7 on Oklahoma Highway 65.

There is no charge for the meal of fish and all the trimmings, but donations will be accepted. Door prizes will also be awarded.

For information, call Jody Dreves at 248-0932.

### WMASC hosts activities

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

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 starts 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.

### Food pantry open twice monthly

Walters Community Food Pantry is open from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month. The pantry is in the old City Hall, 131 1/2 W. California Street.

Pantry organizers try to provide a two-week supply of basic staples to anyone with identification.

For information, call 580-591-6826.



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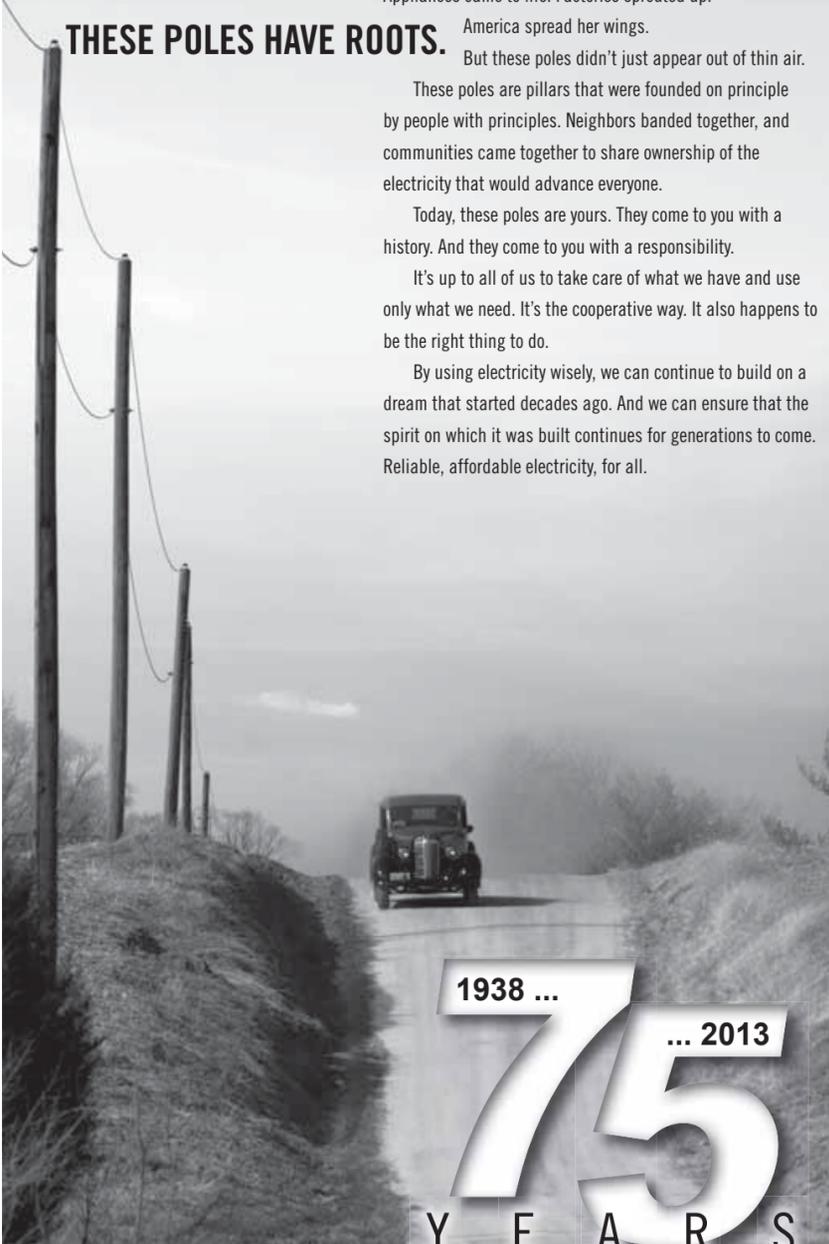
America spread her wings.

But these poles didn't just appear out of thin air. These poles are pillars that were founded on principle by people with principles. Neighbors banded together, and communities came together to share ownership of the electricity that would advance everyone.

Today, these poles are yours. They come to you with a history. And they come to you with a responsibility.

It's up to all of us to take care of what we have and use only what we need. It's the cooperative way. It also happens to be the right thing to do.

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Y E A R S

# Dieting can be dangerous as you age

As you age, you need fewer calories and more of certain vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients. You also tend to become less active, creating a perfect storm for weight gain. While some studies suggest that being at the upper end of the normal weight range can be a good thing as we age because we have more energy reserves in the event of a critical illness, being overweight and obese is still associated with negative health outcomes and increased healthcare costs.



Kim Bandelier, MPH, RD, LD

## Food For THOUGHT

Middle-aged and older adults should remove the term "diet" from their vocabulary. Many diets and diet pills produce fast but temporary weight loss and often result in losing water weight and some lean body mass. What you need is a permanent change in lifestyle to reach a healthy weight as you age. Small changes to your diet and physical activity regimen over time will result in a slow, healthy weight decrease to a weight that is right for you.

Learn to prioritize the food on your plate. Lean protein is essential at every meal to preserve lean body mass. Remember, maintaining your lean body mass is key to keeping your strength and functionality, preventing falls and other injuries, helping you recover from illness, and keeping your body running as it should.

Because you need additional vitamins, minerals, and nutrients

such as fiber and antioxidants, fruits and vegetables must be prioritized as well. Fruits and vegetables are low in calories, unless you add a significant amount of fat or sugar to prepare them, but are high in fiber and other nutrients. They help keep you full and nourished without busting your calorie budget.

Because fruits and vegetables contain carbohydrates, whole grains are prioritized after fruits and vegetables. Include whole grains in your diet in the proper serving sizes, about one-quarter of your plate.

Save foods that are calorie-dense but have few other nutrients for special occasions. If you have lots of "special occasions," limit your portion size. Yes, that means having a small slice of

cake, 1 to 2 inches, and a small dip of ice cream.

Also, before you eat that special treat, ask yourself, "Am I hungry?" and "Do I really want to eat this?" Do not succumb to societal pressures to participate in celebrations by consuming food. There are lots of other ways to celebrate that do not negatively impact your health.

Be very careful about added calories in beverages. The healthiest beverages as you age are low-fat or skim milk, water, unsweetened tea, and unsweetened coffee. Avoid all other beverages that have calories, but do not forget to stay hydrated, especially in warmer climates. As you age, you do not have the luxury of consuming extra calories on a regular basis.

If you develop a chronic disease such as diabetes or heart disease and you need to lose weight, seek out the advice of a registered dietitian. Most nutrition recommendations for controlling chronic diseases will also produce slow weight loss over time. Registered dietitians can help personalize nutrition and physical activity recommendations to your lifestyle, which will make the changes easier and sustainable.

Remember, it is never too late to start and there are safe and effective ways to go about changing your lifestyle to be a healthier older adult.

# Make mealtimes simple as 1, 2, 3

(Family Features) The days just keep getting busier and busier. Schedules are more hectic and, too often, meals take a backseat to family chaos. Instead of opting for delivery or carry-out, build a repertoire of nutritious, delicious and quick recipes that can be prepared at home for the entire family to enjoy.

A salad is a simple mealtime solution for a household on the go. This Beans & Greens Salad takes less than 15 minutes to assemble when you begin with a pantry staple, a can of READ 3 or 4 Bean Salad, and just four other ingredients. Already seasoned and ready to eat, this salad is chock-full of green beans, wax beans, kidney beans and chickpeas in a tangy, slightly sweet dressing. Toss the bean salad with mixed greens and lemony vinaigrette, then top with crumbled bacon

and cheese, if desired. For additional recipes and more information about READ Salads, visit [www.readsalads.com](http://www.readsalads.com).

Not only is it easy to make, it's very versatile whether served as a side salad or a light, meatless main dish. The addition of sliced cooked chicken or beef makes a heartier entree. You'll feel good about this meal, and you'll feel even better about your newly acquired spare time.

### Beans & Greens Salad

- Servings: 4
- Prep Time: 15 minutes
- 1 can (15 ounces) READ 3 or 4 Bean Salad
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice or white wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Coarsely ground black pepper
- 1 package (about 10 ounces) mixed salad greens with carrots
- 4 slices bacon, cooked



Beans & Greens Salad

crisp and crumbled, about 1/4 cup, optional Shaved Parmesan or Asiago cheese, optional Drain bean salad well; reserve 1/2 cup liquid in small bowl. For dressing, whisk together bean liquid and lemon juice, then whisk in oil. Add pepper, as desired

Place salad greens in bowl. Add bean salad and bacon, if desired. Add dressing, as desired. Toss gently to coat. Arrange on platter; top with shaved cheese, if desired.

Nutrition information per serving (1/4 of recipe): 153 calories; 2

g protein; 20 g carbohydrate; 7 g fat; 389 mg sodium; 0 mg cholesterol; 4 g dietary fiber; 2 mg iron; 0 mg thiamin; 4587 IU vitamin A; 22 mg vitamin C

Variation: Top salad with sliced cooked chicken or beef, then top with cheese.

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## Should You Take a Pension Buyout?



Kelsey Avants

Have you recently received a pension buyout offer? If so, you need to decide if you should take the buyout, which could provide you with a potentially large lump sum, or continue accepting your regular pension payments for the rest of your life. It's a big decision.

Clearly, there's no "one size fits all" answer — your choice needs to be based on your individual circumstances. So, as you weigh your options, you'll need to consider a variety of key issues, including the following:

- Estate considerations — Your pension payments generally end when you and/or your spouse dies, which means your children will get none of the money. But if you were to roll the lump sum into an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), and you don't exhaust it in your lifetime, you could still have something to leave to your family members.

- Taxes — If you take the lump sum and roll the funds into your IRA, you control how much you'll be taxed and when, based on the amounts you choose to withdraw and the date you begin taking withdrawals. (Keep in mind, though, that you must start taking a designated minimum amount of withdrawals from a traditional IRA when you reach age 70½. Withdrawals taken before age 59½ are subject to taxes and penalties.) But if you take a pension, you may have less control over your income taxes, which will be based on your monthly payments.

- Inflation — You could easily spend two or three decades in retirement — and during that time, inflation can really add up. To cite just one example, the average cost of a new car was \$7,983 in 1982; 30 years later, that figure is \$30,748, according to TrueCar.com. If your pension checks aren't indexed for inflation, they will lose purchasing power over time. If you rolled over your lump sum into an IRA, however, you could put the money into investments offering

growth potential, keeping in mind, of course, that there are no guarantees.

- Cash flow — If you're already receiving a monthly pension, and you're spending every dollar you receive just to meet your living expenses, you may be better off by keeping your pension payments intact. If you took the lump sum and converted it into an IRA, you can withdraw whatever amount you want (as long as you meet the required minimum distributions), but you'll have to avoid withdrawing so much that you'll eventually run out of money.

- Confidence in future pension payments — From time to time, companies are forced to reduce their pension obligations due to unforeseen circumstances. You may want to take this into account as you decide whether to continue taking your monthly pension payments, but it's an issue over which you have no control. On the other hand, once your lump sum is in an IRA, you have control over both the quality and diversification of your investment dollars. However, the trade-off is that investing is subject to various risks, including loss of principal.

Before selecting either the lump sum or the monthly pension payments, weigh all the factors carefully to make sure your decision fits into your overall financial strategy. With a choice of this importance, you will probably want to consult with your financial and tax advisors. Ultimately, you may find that this type of offer presents you with a great opportunity — so take the time to consider your options.

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# Switching bulbs saves energy, money

By Trent Marlett

Last month, I talked about insulation and how it is one of the first things I look at when performing an energy audit for a member. Adding insulation is one of the smartest, easiest, and most cost-effective ways to increase a home's energy efficiency.

Another thing I look at is the type of lighting in a home.

According to the EPA, lighting accounts for around 12 to 15 percent of our home's entire energy consumption. By making a change to more efficient bulbs, the savings can be significant.

The longevity of a compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulb combined with the savings on power bills means for a quick return on investment, usually about a year.

This is mainly because CFL bulbs consume 75 percent less energy than an incandescent bulb, all while putting out the same amount of light.

## Simple Savings

CFL bulbs also put off 75 percent less heat and last around six times longer than incandescent bulbs, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

CFL bulbs have received some bad reviews by some. The complaints are varied: They are not as bright, they burn out too quickly, they look funny, and they contain mercury. There are explanations for all of those problems.

Yes, they do take about 30 seconds to get their brightest, but once warmed up, studies show they are, in fact, putting out as much light as an equivalent incandescent.

Well, in most cases, the reason for a bulb burning out too soon has to do with manufacturing.

Some of the cheaper bulbs are made in who-knows-where.

The amount of mercury in a CFL bulb is around 1 to 4 mg and would just about fill the period at the end of this sentence. The irony of it all is the amount of mercury needed to power an incandescent versus a CFL. According to the EPA, a power plant will emit 10mg of mercury to produce the electricity to run an incandescent bulb compared to 2.4 mg to

run a CFL of the same light equivalent.

Also, if every American home replaced just one light bulb with one that has earned the Energy Star rating, we would save enough energy to light 3 million homes for a year, save about \$600 million in annual energy costs, and prevent 9 billion pounds of greenhouse gas emissions per year, equivalent to those from about 800,000 cars, according to the Department of Energy.

So, if you're interested in reducing the amount of energy for lighting your home by as much as 75 percent, it's as easy as changing a light bulb.



Switching from incandescents to compact fluorescent light bulbs is a great idea.

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Saturday, September 28, 2013 10:00AM  
**MULTI-PROPERTY AUCTION**  
 Simmons Center - Wildhorse Suite  
 800 Chisholm Trail Parkway - Duncan, Oklahoma

Gary Criswell Auction Service & Real Estate, Inc. has been commissioned by Mr. David Chadd and Mr. James Livingston to offer at Public Auction 8 Parcels of Real Property situated in Duncan, Oklahoma.

**107 East Cedar Avenue (2 Houses)** Front House consists of a 2 Bedroom Frame Home (Approximately 774 Square Feet) with Living Room, Kitchen (with Washer/Dryer Hookup) with Breakfast Area and Full Bath. Home freshly painted with new Gas Lines and Water Lines, new Windows on North and new Carpet in Bedrooms. North House in the remodeling stage. All situated on a 60'x80' Lot. Property currently not rented. Front House rental fee \$425 per month. North House would rent for \$225 per month. Insurance \$380 per year, Ad Valorem Taxes \$176.

**313 West Cedar Avenue** consists of a nice 2 Bedroom Frame Home (Approximately 992 Square Feet) with a Living Room, Kitchen/Dining Area Combination and 1 Bath. All situated on a nice lot (50'x165'). Property currently rented, \$425 per month, Insurance \$411.96 per year, Ad Valorem Taxes \$163.57.

**912 North 10th Street - 2 Story** consists of a Frame Home (Approximately 1,248 Square Feet Downstairs and 1,332 Square Feet Upstairs Apartment) with a Kitchen with Breakfast Area, 1 Full Bath and an **Upstairs Apartment**. All situated on a nice corner Lot (50'x100'). Downstairs Rental and Upstairs Apartment rent for \$400 Each, Insurance is \$460.92 per year and Ad Valorem Taxes \$258.29.

**305 North "A" Avenue** consists of 2 Bedroom Frame Home (Approximately 840 Square Feet) with a Kitchen with Breakfast Area and 1 Full Bath. All situated on a nice lot 50'x120'. This Home is currently rented for \$350 per month, Insurance \$408.96 per year, Ad Valorem Taxes \$205.27.

**420 North "A" Avenue** consists of a nice 2 Bedroom Frame Home with 2 Living Areas or could be a 3 Bedroom Home, (Approximately 1,042 Square Feet), with a Living Room, Kitchen with Dining Area and 1 Full Bath. Home has an Attached Garage. All situated on a nice Corner Lot 50'x120'. Property currently not rented (\$425 per month), Insurance \$400 per month?, Ad Valorem Taxes \$255.

**110 East Fir Avenue** consists of a nice 2 Bedroom Frame Home (Approximately 1,027 Square Feet) with Living Room, Kitchen with Dining Area and a Full Bath. All situated on a 50.4'x101' Lot. Rent \$350 per month, Insurance \$400 per year, Ad Valorem Taxes \$245.

**112 West Spruce Avenue** consists of a nice 2 Bedroom Frame Home (Approximately 817 Square Feet) with a Living Room, Kitchen with Dining Area and Full Bath. All situated on a 50'x115' Lot. Remodeled in 2012 with nearly a New Roof. Home currently rented, \$425 per month, Insurance \$453.96 per year, Ad Valorem Taxes \$119.59.

**113 Ash Avenue - Duplex** consists of 2 Bedroom Brick Home (Approximately 824 Square Feet each) with Living Room and Kitchen/Dining Area and Full Bath. All situated on a 100'x107' Lot. Home currently rented \$350 each, Insurance \$531 per year, Ad Valorem Tax is \$477.26.

**Preview of Real Properties:** To preview Real Property prior to Public Auction, please contact Auction Company for appointment.

**Auctioneer's Note:** Real Properties currently Listed and Managed by James Livingston Real Estate. These are good Investment Properties with a majority of the rentals currently rented. The Real Property will be offered "As-Is-Where-Is". Please go to garycriswellauctioneers.com to view photos of Homes, www.AuctionZip.com to view upcoming Auctions and Like us on Facebook. The Seller reserves the right to accept or reject the final bid. Stephens County Abstract Company will serve as the Closing Agent on the Real Property.

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Bob Chambers, left, and Bill Gorley are ready to bring comfort to your home.

# House uncomfortable? Cool It!

By Karen Kaley

Whether a person works indoors or out, he or she probably can't wait to get to the "Ahhhhh!" comfort of their own home, where everything is just right ... except that one room, where there is a thermostat war being waged because it is too hot ... or too cold ... or it's too dusty or ... well, it's just not right and the homeowner is just not comfortable.

Perhaps a call to someone who sells comfort would be a first step toward making things right. Why not try 580-355-1749? That's the number for longtime HVAC contractor Bob Chambers Cool It.

Call or visit the family-owned business at 2407 SW Lee Boulevard in Lawton and perhaps you'll meet Bill Gorley. He is all about finding solutions to uncomfortable problems in the home. That's why they call him Home Comfort Expert at Bob Chambers Cool It. "We are a bit different," Gorley

**Bob Chambers Cool It**  
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said when explaining what Cool It offers. "We don't just sell heating and air conditioning, we sell comfort. (The) heating and air conditioning part is just a small part of the equation."

He said the industry is changing, and so is Bob Chambers Cool It.

"The way heating and air conditioning businesses have worked for years has gone like this: A customer calls in, needs a new system. Somebody goes out and gives quote for three pieces of equipment – an outdoor unit, furnace and coil."

After installation, many of the same problems can remain.

"We've learned that the whole house contributes to how an HVAC system works, so we are

taking a whole house approach to recommending and installing new systems," Gorley said.

"We are looking at everything: insulation, ceiling, duct modifications ... these are all things that can work together to make energy bills go down, to make a home more energy efficient."

Gorley said Cool It offers home evaluations as a way to provide information and options. The evaluations are free and there is no obligation for homeowners to follow any of the recommendations generated.

During the 60- to 90-minute procedure, Gorley visits with customers to learn their concerns. He asks about electric bills and rooms that are hard to cool or heat.

*Continued on Page 9*



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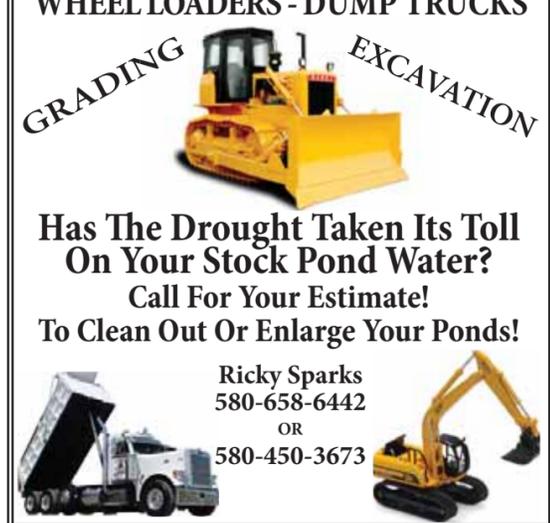
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# Air flow customized for each room in a house

Continued from Page 8

He will ask about excess dust issues and if anyone in the household has breathing problems.

After the interview, he assesses the condition of the home's HVAC equipment, its size and how it is installed.

"I look for deficiencies that may need corrected. I get up in the attic and measure insulation. I look at ductwork, see if insulation has come undone, is worn out, or seals have failed."

He takes measurements.

"Instead of just measuring square footage of house, I take room-by-room measurements. My calculation takes outside walls into consideration, which direction they face, window measurements, type of window."

This is at the heart of the whole house approach.

"Every room has different air flow requirements."

If a homeowner chooses to have Cool It install a system, one of the final things Gorley will do is use an air flow capture



Bill Gorley uses an air flow capture hood to adjust settings for maximum comfort.

hood in each room.

"This is probably the most important thing I do," he said.

After all the information Gorley gathered at the initial interview has been run through a computer program, it generates a report that tells him how many cubic feet of air per minute (CFM) should flow through each room to make it comfortable.

The air flow capture hood measures CFM, and Gorley and another Cool It team member make adjustments in each room for maximum comfort.

"It's done with a series of dampers throughout the duct system," he said. "That is how we control where and how much air is distributed throughout the house."

Gorley said all recom-

mendations for a home are listed and priced separately, so homeowners can choose what they want done and have it carried out at a pace that works for them.

Cool It offers financing options as well as accepting major credit cards, checks and cash.

There are special offers for Cotton Electric members presenting a Co-op Connections Card. In addition to \$20 off on service calls, members purchasing a whole system will get a \$250 discount.

Gorley said there are trade-in allowances and other special offers coming. They will be posted on the company's Facebook page, Bob Chambers Heat, Air and Appliance Repair, and on the website, BobChambersHVAC.com, which includes a link to schedule a service call.

You can always call and the phone will be answered 24/7 by one of the home comfort experts at Bob Chambers Cool It.

Now, isn't that a comfort?

# What to look for in an HVAC contractor

By Madeline Keimig  
Touchstone Energy®  
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It's no secret that replacing your heating and cooling system can be a headache. When is the right time? What kind of system is best? Where can I find a reliable contractor?

Because the right contractor remains the critical cog in this process — for determining the type and size of the unit needed, explaining your options, and proper installation — consider these tips before making a selection.

## Ask around

What are the contractor's licensing and qualifications? Is the contractor a member of state and national contractor associations, such as Air Conditioning Contractors of America? Is he or she adequately insured? Ask for verification of licenses and insurance.

"Most people don't realize that almost 50 percent of their energy bill comes from an HVAC [heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning] system," said Mike Stephens, Energy Use Advisor for Cotton

Electric. "It's important to have the right person put in and maintain the equipment."

Word of mouth provides a valuable resource, so ask neighbors and friends if they can recommend a good contractor — or if there's someone you should avoid. And remember to check on what a prospective contractor guarantees and whether any follow-up services, such as a maintenance agreement, are offered.

"It's important to have these conversations before work begins," Stephens said. "That way, if there are any surprises after installation, you know what to expect."

## What the contractor and you should do

After you ask these questions, a good contractor should start by inspecting your home and old system and then explaining your options.

"Never have a unit installed by 'rule of thumb,' Stephens said. "A load calculation from the contractor should be included in the bid."

Be sure to get the estimated annual operat-

ing cost of the proposed HVAC system at different efficiency levels, as recommended by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star program. Air conditioners are measured by Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER) and Energy Efficiency Ratio (EER).

SEER is calculated by dividing the amount of cooling provided during a normal year by energy used — the higher the SEER, the more efficient the unit.

EER helps if you want to know how a system operates at a specific temperature. This will help you to determine the total cost over its lifetime.

EER is the ratio of the cooling capacity in British thermal units (Btu) per hour to the power input (in watts). The higher the EER, the more efficient the air conditioner will be.

Stephens advises asking for three written estimates of the work: What is being done, what equipment is being provided, and when installation will begin and be completed.

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**Little house of memories**  
*Fran Ryan and pine wood journey together from Plato school, to father's shop, to home*

By Karen Kaley

Fran Ryan reckons her cozy little home in the middle of rural Stephens County has been about 150 years in the making. It is definitely the most recent of several incarnations.

First, there was the pine tree ... or trees. "That tree was probably 50 years old when it was cut down to be made into lumber," she guesses.

The lumber traveled in the early 1900s to an undeveloped spot just north of Duncan. Soon, it became boards of education, the four-room Plato schoolhouse. This place of learning served children of rural families for 50 years.

All the while, the town sprawled nearer and nearer. Plato was eventually annexed, which created a need to expand the school. In 1956, Gates McPhail submitted a successful bid to tear down a portion of the old wooden building.

McPhail had a full-

time job with Halliburton and was not in the business of demolition. But, he did have his eye on that lumber.

McPhail and his wife, Loretta, encouraged their demolition crew with many positive declarations. Pre-teens Fran and her brother, Mac – the crew – were not quite as positive the project was as much fun as their parents claimed.

However, Fran recalls, "We learned a lot ... how to back out nails and stack lumber ..." She discovered with patience and hard work, an idea can come to fruition.

The pine wood traveled again, a few miles north and west, and was reassembled as a large shop behind the McPhail home. Reconstruction was also a family project, and the notions of creating something from materials available and pride in the final product became part of Fran's lifestyle.

Another 50 years passed. Fran earned a bachelor's degree in interior design, and a master's in construction science and worked on numerous projects throughout Oklahoma. She married, had a family and enjoyed a career that fed her creative spirit.

The McPhails grew older, too. After Loretta passed away in 2000, Fran helped ease her father through 10 years of failing health. They had long talks, many about what to do with the home and the shop, and the memories built into them.

Fran had an idea. She had her eye on not just that lumber, but the entire shop.

After her father's passing, Fran embarked upon an ambitious plan: Moving the shop to another parcel of land that had been in her family since the days of Indian land grants and transforming it into a retreat, a home away from her home in Oklahoma City.

Fran tapped into her experience and skills and drew up a plan that retained the 20' by 36' structure and added another 720 square feet. She recruited family and friends to contribute ideas, experience and labor. She told them it would be fun.

She found and hired trustworthy contractors and a house mover. As moving day approached, she rounded up even more helpers, such as local law enforcement, to help with traffic.

*Continued on Page 11*

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# Moving day includes help from Cotton linemen

*Continued from Page 10*

Even Cotton Electric played a role on moving day, late in the summer of 2012. Linemen Scott Dennis and Matt Winburn used a bucket truck to raise power lines as the building passed below on its 15-mile journey.

The sturdily built structure travelled well. Once it was in place, construction craftsmen went to work immediately and had Fran in her new home in time for the holidays.

Sheathed in modern siding, covered with a metal roof with a wide southern overhang, the building looks like any other country home from the outside. On the inside, though, Fran is surrounded by the rich history of her family – a grandmother’s cabinet here, her father’s workbench and tool shelving there, numerous other mementos everywhere – all retained and repurposed, enveloping her in a loving and lasting embrace.

This project has been the culmination of a path Fran has traveled all her life. The building is an organic part of her because she helped take apart the original building, helped reconstruct it as the second building, and has transformed it into a third building. It remains alive and a part of her personal journey.

And it continues to be a place of learning, a place to encourage the creative spirit. “If you have a dream or vision, don’t let fear keep you from it,” Fran said. “Just walk it out. Go and do it.”



*Fran Ryan has combined old with new, rustic with polished, in her home in Stephens County. A flat-screen TV sits atop an antique store counter. Walls made of planks from the old Plato school are adjacent to a custom-built fireplace made of Texas limestone.*

*The interior of Fran Ryan’s house is made of pine that was once a school, then a shop. She moved the shop about 15 miles last year. Moving day required the help of many, including Cotton Electric linemen Matt Winburn, shown in photo at right, and Scott Dennis.*



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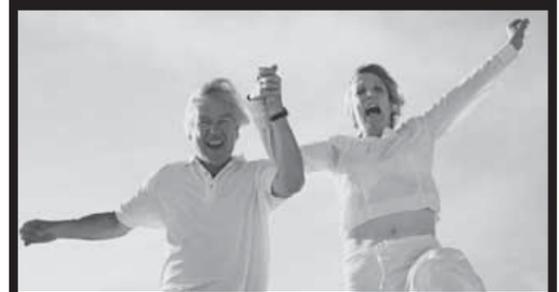
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The queens of the Stephens County Free Fair paid a visit to the Cotton Electric booth on the final night of the fair. They took a spin on our Energy Bike before lining up to show off their winning smiles. In the bottom photo, they are, from left, Mini Miss Alix Standridge; Young Miss Taylor Battles; Petite Miss Kinlee Scott; Junior Miss Abbey Gammill and Little Miss Emaleigh Parks.



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**ACROSS**

- 1. Former NBA player Bison \_\_
- 5. Rabbit \_\_, Updike novel
- 10. Rectangular groove
- 14. Formally declare
- 15. A citizen of Oman
- 16. Dull in color
- 17. Pace of movement
- 18. Athletic saucers
- 19. Not crazy
- 20. \_\_, denotes past
- 21. 17th Greek letter
- 22. “\_\_, Chihuahua”
- 23. Sight, smell and touch
- 27. Ribbon belts
- 30. Products of human creativity
- 31. Behave in a certain manner
- 32. Breathing out
- 37. First St. Louis bridge
- 41. No variation
- 42. 1/1000 of an ampere
- 43. Palladium
- 44. Cain and \_\_
- 45. Small stone coffin-like box
- 46. Failed 2012 candidate
- 49. Point midway between E and SE
- 51. Turns into noun
- 52. Temper or anger
- 54. Atomic #56
- 56. Negligible amounts
- 59. Wuthering Heights author’s initials
- 60. The cry made by sheep
- 61. Exclamation of surprise
- 62. Basics
- 65. Wife of Mohammed
- 67. Wing-like structures

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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72					73					74		

- 69. Smaller amount
- 70. Lesion
- 71. Transfer property
- 72. Indian groom
- 73. Round stone
- 74. Sums up
- 24. Canonized
- 25. Stray
- 26. Speak haltingly
- 27. \_\_ Dee, actress
- 28. Air cooling machine
- 29. Stanley’s automobile
- 32. Old world, new
- 33. 16
- 34. Foot (Latin)
- 35. A citizen of Thailand
- 36. Select
- 38. Airborne (abbr.)
- 39. River in NE Scotland
- 40. Skilled in deception
- 47. Hot condiment
- 48. Not divisible by two
- 50. Point midway between S and E
- 52. Apportions cards
- 53. Ruled by an abbe
- 55. Expressed pleasure
- 57. Bleated
- 58. Storage buildings
- 60. Stored in the gallbladder
- 63. Reciprocal of a sine
- 64. Point midway between S and SE
- 65. 8th Month (abbr.)
- 66. They \_\_
- 67. Dental group
- 68. Conducted

**DOWN**

- 1. Challenges
- 2. Hedge
- 3. Lease
- 4. Before
- 5. Singer Stewart
- 6. Islamic prince
- 7. African shirt
- 8. Unusually (Scot.)
- 9. Twelve
- 10. Tooth caregiver
- 11. Macaws
- 12. Mother of Perseus
- 13. Does as told

**Employee Spotlight**  
Roy Mason

# Pole setter

*Hauling, digging, placing all in a day's – or night's – work for Roy Mason*

By Karen Kaley

Roy Mason had been home for about three hours after working a full day on the Cotton Electric construction crew when he got a call to come back in.

The evening of Aug. 15, a thunderstorm rumbled through the area, pushed by wind gusts nearing 45 mph. The storm passed pretty quickly, leaving damage that took quite some time to repair.

"We've got poles down," the caller told Mason and all other co-op employees who could help with restoring power to about 1,000 members in Jefferson County.

As a heavy-equipment operator for the co-op, one of Mason's duties is to haul poles. He does it on a normal workday and he does it during emergencies such as the one created by the storm. Usually, he loads seven or eight poles atop his truck, but this time he needed more.

"We loaded about 18 poles on a gooseneck trailer and headed out," Mason said. "We got to the location and there were poles lying everywhere."

Along a three-mile stretch, there were fewer than 10 poles standing.

"We dropped poles everywhere there was a broken one," and crew members started framing, adding cross arms, hardware and grounding wire to the fresh poles.

As the framing went along, "We realized we didn't have near enough poles and eventually went back and loaded up 15 more," Mason said.

Once he had them all distributed, Mason started framing, too.

"We finished framing the last pole around 10 a.m."

All night and into the morning, diggers followed framers, pulling out broken poles, digging out the 6-foot holes to place the new ones. Linemen followed diggers, getting the three phases of wire strung.



Roy Mason cuts a length of grounding wire to be attached to a power pole.

By 1 p.m., all power had been restored. The crew Mason was working with had put up 28 poles. Contract crews had also worked all night, putting up more than 35 poles.

Putting up replacement poles in the middle of the night is somewhat different from putting them up as part of the routine construction Mason and his colleagues carry out. In the week following the storm, the crew continued to replace broken and temporarily repaired poles. The rate of replacement seems much slower, five to eight in a day, until one considers the drive time between damaged poles scattered throughout the southeast part of the service area.

As they make their way, Mason also takes turns running the digger. He straps on the controls to operate the boom and auger remotely. The long digging arm hovers over the spot to dig and Mason presses the toggle to lower it while other crewmembers guide it to the precise spot.

The auger bores into the red earth. Mason stops the drilling and slowly brings the auger back to the surface, blades laden with dirt that he expertly deposits around the hole with a quick flick of the toggles.

He uses the same remote controls to swing the pole into place so the crew can guide it into the hole. All the while, Mason looks up, looks down, looks to

the side for hand signals from crew foreman Robert Martinez, then looks up again. All members of the crew follow the same routine, looking up, down and to the side, in a wordless and combined effort to get the pole up straight and the cross arm turned perfectly parallel to others down the line.

Shovels and tampers are used to pack dirt around the newly placed pole, while Mason uses the remote to lift the discarded pole, stripped of its hardware, onto his truck to be carried back to the pole yard.

The crew clears the site and travels to the next, which could be anywhere along the 5,100-plus miles of line serving Cotton Electric members.

Mason has been working on the construction crew for five years, joining them after the co-op phased out the truck testing he had done for the previous three years. He said it's a good job, keeps him fit, and he is glad to be working outside, even if it's not always good weather, not always daytime.

He said he could do without the chiggers and had a message for those out on the roads: "Please slow down. Any time you see a crew working along the side of the road, please slow down. Everybody wants to go home to their families."

For Mason, that is his wife, Janice; 12-year-old son, Noah; and daughter and son-in-law, Brittany and Steve Morris.

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# Scout strives for high rank via gentle slope at Empire

By Karen kaley

Ask Matthew Patrick how long he's been part of Boy Scouts of America and he will tell you he has been on the scouting path for as long as he can remember.

While Tiger Cubs are for the youngest of boys, one has to be at least 7 years old to participate. Matthew got started earlier than most because he was following in his brother's footsteps.

"I've been involved with scouting pretty much my entire life. Even when I wasn't in scouting as a young kid, my older brother was in scouting.

"I remember going on camp outs and visiting him at summer camps. I remember thinking, 'This is so cool!'"

Matthew points to his brother Jonathan, older by seven years, as one of the main reasons he is in scouting today. He also points to the support and guidance of his parents, Sheresa and Mike Patrick.

Matthew said his brother and his father were both in Scouts and had gone pretty far within the organization, but neither had achieved the rank of Eagle. Matthew set his sights on the highest rank in scouting in those early days and met all requirements to achieve it, just days before the deadline of his 18th birthday. All that's left is a board review.

Achieving the rank required spending many, many hours in service to community, in leadership roles within his Troop 417 of Duncan, and working his way up through the ranks earning required merit badges along the way. And, of course, his Eagle project.

An Eagle project must benefit community, school or church. Matthew had been scouting potential projects on the campus of Empire School for years. In the fall of 2012, he settled on one that would make the school more handicap-accessible.

His project involved removing an existing concrete slope that was too steep an incline for safety. In its place, Matthew and his many helpers built a longer ramp between the high school and cafeteria that is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The new ramp features a gentler slope, rising one inch for every foot of its 36-foot length. That's pretty long as ramps go, but it includes a 5-foot landing pad, or flat surface, in the middle.

Additionally, a single step leading into the high school was replaced with a short concrete slope, thus eliminating another wheelchair barrier.



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The project took quite a bit of research and planning, a lot of materials and a great deal of physical labor from many people, including the other members of his troop. It was up to Matthew to organize it all in order to meet the Eagle requirements.

When it came time to round up materials, Matthew got a lot of donations from businesses like Volvo Rents, Dolese, Petty's Top Soil and WW Builders. However, there were still some costs. He and the school applied for, and received, a \$2,500 grant from Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation to cover them.

Given an opportunity to comment on that, Matthew said. "Cotton Electric members, you rock!"

The project required a lot of mentoring. Matthew said his parents played a key role and that Max Floyd of Dolese provided invaluable expertise about the finer points of building a concrete ramp.

It was hard, hot work, but the ramp was in place at the opening of the 2013-14 school year. Matthew said there are not any students with permanent physical handicaps enrolled this year, but he pointed out football season was about to begin and it was not unusual to have an injured athlete hobbling or wheeling around the campus.

For all those out there hoping to earn an Eagle ranking, Matthew had a couple of thoughts: "Get it done quickly and stick to it."

He said he had not followed advice to try to complete the Eagle program by the time he was 15. He learned the wisdom of that when he turned 16 and his focus shifted to things such as a car and a job.

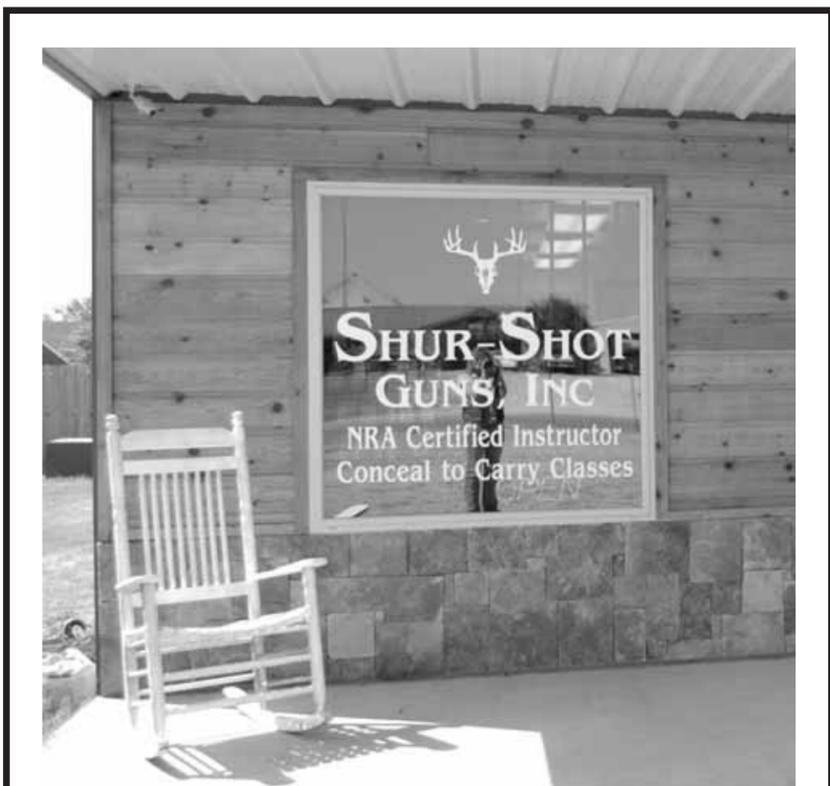
As for sticking to the goal of Eagle, he said, "It will be hard, stressful, but it will be worth it in the end."



Matthew Patrick stands midway along the ramp built at Empire school as his Eagle project.

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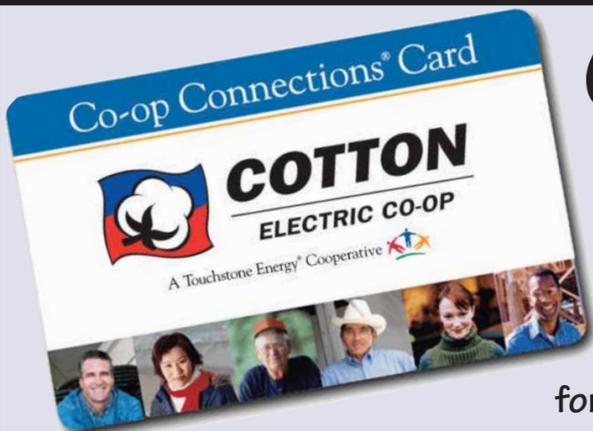
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Matthew Patrick's Eagle project was also a family project. His father, Mike, left, and his mother, Sheresa, not pictured, worked alongside him every step of the way.

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