

The Current

A Publication of Cotton Electric Cooperative Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

“The Current - Informing Our Members Since 1957”

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NUMBER 3

Annual Meeting highlights members

Speakers underscore cooperative difference for quorum turnout

By Karen Kaley

A gathering of the members of Cotton Electric Cooperative is always a festive event. The 77th Annual Meeting proved to be an impressive demonstration of the power of membership, coincidentally held on the eighth day of National Cooperative Month, October.

Members and their families showed up early to visit with one another over a hearty barbecue dinner and stayed late to collect door prizes. They mingled through two buildings at the Stephens County fairgrounds, perusing the wares of Co-op Connections partners, taking bucket rides in a lineman’s truck, getting faces painted and children bounced.

They became acquainted or reconnected with employees and board trustees, and took advantage of the opportunity to offer input into the running of the co-op.

At precisely 7 p.m., the nine members of the board of trustees filed onto a stage bedecked in colorful gourds, flowers and country charm. Board President Tim McCary stood at the podium and called the business meeting to order.

Some 1,800 heads bowed in prayer. Then those heads were held high with hands over hearts and the crowd quietly sang along with Penny Gardner’s a cappella delivery of the National Anthem.

Getting down to business, McCary reported that of the 15,340 members of the cooperative, 5 percent or 767 members was the minimum required for a quorum. There were 827 registered members present.

The membership elected to dispense with the minutes from the 2014 Annual Meeting and moved on to hear the president’s report.

McCary’s remarks underscored the value of being a cooperative member. He reminded the group that the board of trustees is composed of their neighbors, members of the cooperative working to keep quality power affordable.

“Folks who receive electricity from co-ops are lucky,” McCary pointed out.

“As locally owned and operated businesses, electric co-ops understand the people they serve. Trustees and employees at your co-op share the same values and have the same pride of place as you do because it is our community, too.

“We act like neighbors because we are neighbors.”

Next up to the podium was Ken Layn, board secretary-treasurer, to report the co-op was in sound financial condition. Layn took the opportunity to make a few comments about the co-op’s CEO.

“They told me not to do this, but I’m going to anyway. Warren Langford will be retiring soon and I want you to know, there is no better cooperative CEO in Oklahoma. He has done a great job for Cotton Electric.”

Langford’s focus was also on co-op members during his final Annual Meeting address.

“We have had a good year because of you,” he said. “I couldn’t be more proud of the members of this co-op.”

Langford recalled first attending an Annual Meeting during 1973, his first year of employment at the co-op.

“I was helping with parking cars ... hundreds of cars!

“I was mesmerized by the turnout. We had a quorum that year. It was quite an event.”

He said many questions came to his mind: Why are they all here? Was it the barbecue? The prizes? The fellowship?

As time went on, he realized Cotton Electric was – and still is – a special place to work.

“It was because of you. You cared about me. You cared about my co-workers and you cared about our families.

“Then I understood. You come to the Annual Meeting because you care about this co-op.

“You embody that strong democratic control that makes co-ops different. You come to Annual Meeting to flex your muscles, to say, ‘I’m in charge.’

See Members, Page 6



“Cotton Electric Cooperative will always be next to my heart,” CEO Warren Langford said during his final Annual Meeting address.

Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment now being applied to bills mailed after November 1, 2015, is \$0.00351 per kWh.

On a member’s average bill of 1500 kilowatt hours (kWh), this will amount to a charge of \$5.26 on the November bill.

October 2015 Temperature Extremes

Day	High	Low	Avg.	Day	High	Low	Avg.
1	96	70	83	16	95	71	83
2	97	69	83	17	98	74	86
3	97	66	82	18	96	73	85
4	97	70	84	19	82	66	74
5	98	74	86	20	70	64	67
6	101	74	88	21	92	64	78
7	103	71	87	22	94	65	80
8	103	76	90	23	91	71	81
9	90	66	78	24	91	68	80
10	95	64	80	25	93	61	77
11	89	67	78	26	88	63	76
12	87	63	75	27	88	62	75
13	93	59	76	28	89	57	73
14	95	66	81	29	91	57	74
15	92	66	79	30	88	62	75

Source: srh.noaa.gov/oum/

Average Daily High: 92 Average Daily Low: 67

Did You Know?

Cotton Electric offices will be closed Wednesday, Nov. 11. Emergency calls will be answered at 580-875-3351 or 800-522-3520.

The November issue of The Current should arrive in mailboxes on Nov. 16, 2015.

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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Celebrate being a cooperative member

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

October is National Cooperative Month and, for the many different types of co-ops in the U.S., it's the time of year to celebrate what membership truly means. You could be a member of a lot of different places – a gym, a 4-H club, a food of the month club – the list goes on and on. But what makes being a member of a co-op different?

The simple answer to that question is that when you are a member of a co-op, you are also an owner. You own a stake in our business and, just like any stakeholder, there are many benefits to your membership. As a member of Cotton Electric Cooperative, you have a say in the representatives who are elected to serve on the co-op's board of trustees.

You have an opportunity to make your voice heard every year at our Annual Meeting, recently held on Oct. 8.

You get a say on policy issues your electric cooperative sup-

ports or opposes. You can even help to determine how your profits are redistributed.

Our bottom line is providing you with safe, reliable and affordable electricity. Sure, we

have to think about expenses, overhead and other aspects of daily business, but when we have a little left over, we send it right back to you. Whether we return it to you in the form of a bill credit or a check – you have a say in where that money goes.

And returning capital credits to you is a major part of why being a co-op member matters. The Cotton Electric Cooperative board of trustees recently approved the retirement of \$500,000 in capital credits that were mailed this month.

As your local electric co-op, we get to be a part of this community. When we think about membership, we think about all of the ways we can give back to you, our members – and that's what matters most to us.

CO-OPS.

Take OWNERSHIP

CO-OP MONTH OCTOBER 2015



Door prize winners at the District 1 Meeting held in Velma are, from left, Garvin Clower, Wanda Simpson and Leonard Jackson.



Door prize winners at the District 3 Meeting held in Sterling are, from left, Lowry Liverman, Ron Clifton and Steve Phearson.



Door prize winners at the District 5 Meeting held in Chattanooga are, from left, Joyce McCary, Herwannah Sellers and Hazel Helms.

Districts 1, 3 and 5 hold triennial meetings

By Karen Kaley

Electric cooperatives operate under a set of principles. Principle No. 2 is about democratic member control, with each member having one vote. As a result, control remains in the hands of all who purchase power from the co-op. Trustees are elected from the membership.

Cotton Electric has nine membership districts. Each district is represented by a trustee serving a three-year term. The terms are staggered so three trustees come up for re-election each year. In 2015, those trustees represented Districts 1, 3 and 5.

On Sept. 10, trustee Shan Files began the District 1 meeting in Velma with comments stressing the importance of the co-op's right-of-way program and using the improved quality of power in the area as an example.

He noted the generosity of co-op members through participation in the Operation Round Up program meant a recent \$3,500 contribution to the Velma Community Outreach.

Files assured the members present that the co-op is in fine condition and that "the best years are ahead of us."

Four days later, members of District 3 gathered in Sterling, a town trustee Charles Spencer said was special to him.

"My mother is a Sterling High School graduate and, tonight, I am a Sterling Tiger."

Of his position on the co-op board, he said, "I try to serve you, the whole district."

Spencer expressed pride in the entire board.

"The nine trustees are a diverse group. Cotton Electric members should be pleased with what we get done."

At the District 5 meeting the next evening in Chattanooga, trustee and board president Tim McCary quipped, "This is the best group of all three meetings."

He, too, mentioned his mother, who was among the members present.

He also commented about Operation Round Up, noting the program has given more than \$800,000 to communities in the service area. He pointed to the chairs and tables in the room and said they had been purchased with a Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation grant issued in 2007.

Members at each meeting selected a chairman from among those present. The chairmen appointed a meeting secretary then asked for a report on the presence of a quorum. Co-op bylaws require a quorum of 5 percent of a district's members to hold an election. Neither a quorum nor opponents were present at any of the meetings held this year, so each trustee was held over for another three-year term.

Warren Langford, the co-op's CEO, addressed each gathering. He said there had been a rate increase earlier in the year but pointed out that at a not-for-profit such as the co-op, every dollar over the break-even amount goes into capital credit accounts. He then announced a retirement of \$500,000 of those monies.

Langford opened the floor to the members, asking if they had any issues or comments. Members expressed satisfaction with the co-op, with one saying they were proud to point out that their power stayed on at times when it had gone out in the city. Another observed that cutting trees had made a big difference in the quality of power at his home.

Langford expanded on that.

"The world is changing. Technology has exploded. We try to stay caught up.

"In spite of all the technological advances, we still deal with the old-fashioned problem of trees. It makes a huge difference in power quality if we can get trees out of the lines. It also means quicker power restoration after storms."

He introduced co-op employees present at the meetings, grouping and describing them by department.

"You won't find a better group," he said.

"It has been my pleasure to work for you all these years," Langford said before announcing he will retire at the beginning of the new year.

The meetings concluded with drawings for door prizes that included a \$50 energy voucher and a pair of Buck knives.

Meetings for Districts 4, 7 and 9 will be held in late summer 2016.

The Current

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Jennifer Meason..... Vice President of Marketing
Karen Kaley..... Editor
Jennifer Kriz..... Display Advertising

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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.

August 2015 Operating Stats		
	2015	2014
Total Amount Billed/Accrued	\$5,676,085	\$6,550,207
Cost of Purchased Power	3,895,986	4,986,707
Taxes	120,659	127,110
Total Operating Expense Per Mile	1,058	1,264
Average Farm and Residential Bill	156	174
Average Farm and Residential kWh	1,550	1,531
Total Meters Billed (farm, residential)	18,312	18,269
Miles Energized	5,150	5,148
Density Per Mile	3.56	3.55
New Service Connects YTD	231	237
Services Retired	126	111

Community Spotlight

If you would like your community event listed in the November issue, please submit information by Nov. 2, by calling 580-875-3351 or sending an email to info@cottonelectric.com.

Bratfest time at Good Shepherd

Lunch or dinner, you can't miss with a home-cooked meal of brats, warm German potato salad, cinnamon applesauce and desserts of all kinds, including the sugar-free type.

Lunch will be served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and dinner from 5 to 7 p.m. Oct. 22 at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 2401 Country Club Road in Duncan. Carry outs will be available.

Cameron-Nashville event Oct. 23-24

Cameron-Nashville Connection is a first-ever event encouraging members of the region's music community to either participate in or witness a live recording session. Sponsored by Cameron University and the Fairmont District Experience, there will be three sessions Oct. 23 and 24 in Cameron Theatre. The Friday session will begin at 7 p.m., and Saturday's will be at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.

"We are bringing Nashville to Lawton," organizer Joe Tilton said. "It's time we keep our musical talent in Oklahoma, so we're bringing two of Nashville's best to Lawton to show us how it's done."

Nashville producer Bubba Smith will work with three artists or groups on stage. After coaching and refinement, Brent Teegarden, a Nashville recording engineer, will supervise a live on-stage recording.

Musicians interested in participating can send an email to fairmontdistrict@gmail.com. They will be notified when the event website is ready for audition submissions.

The sessions will be open to the public. Smith will answer questions about the business of music and how it's changed, and how to make the most of a talent. Technical questions will be addressed, also.

Family fun at Simmons Festival

Lots of family fun is in store on Oct. 24 at the Simmons Center in Duncan. Planned activities include live performances, a craft show, carnival, magic show and haunted house.

The haunted house will be open from 7 p.m. to midnight Saturday.

Other activities include a craft show from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and a magic show at 5:30 p.m. in the Simmons Center theater.

The carnival will include giant inflatables, games, rides and food. It will run from 1 to 5 p.m. Admission is \$10. Tickets can be purchased in advance from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at the north entrance of the Simmons Center. Tickets will be also available at the door.

More Community Spotlight on Page 5

The Cotton Electric Current's

Holiday Guide

Reserve Your Space Today
In Our Holiday Gift Guide!

Deadline To Advertise
Is October 21st

to be included in the
November issue!
Featuring gift ideas,
recipes, decorating tips
& holiday crafts.

Contact Jennifer
580-875-4277

jkriz@cottonelectric.com
Publish Date Nov. 16th

LETRA hosting fish tournaments

LETRA (Lake Elmer Thomas Recreation Area) is hosting three fishing tournaments on Oct. 24. Each tournament begins with registration at 6 a.m. and fishing starts at 6:30 a.m.

Participants can fish from shore or from a boat. A valid Oklahoma state fishing license is required.

Prizes will be awarded to overall weight of fish caught with a maximum of five fish. Must have a minimum of four registered for tournament to start.

Rocky Horror comes to LCT

Wear your fishnets and get ready for a night of wacky fun and audience "participation" when Lawton Community Theatre presents "The Rocky Horror Show" for three nights in late October.

This humorous musical tells the story of a newly engaged couple getting caught in a storm and coming to the home of a mad scientist unveiling his new creation, a muscle man named Rocky Horror.

This production is for adults and contains material some may find objectionable.

Curtain times are 8 p.m. Oct. 29, 9 p.m. Oct. 30, and 10 p.m. Oct. 31. All performances are at John Denney Playhouse, 1316 NW Bell Avenue. For information, visit lct-ok.org.

Magic Lantern offers 'The Birds'

Magic Lantern Film Society of Cameron University screens DVD presentations of classic films each month in the CETES Conference Center, Room B. Most screenings begin at 7:30 p.m.

The Oct. 30 offering will be Alfred Hitchcock's "The Birds." Tippy Hedren portrays a woman visiting a small town. The trip becomes ominous when birds suddenly begin to attack people. Rod Taylor and Jessica Tandy also star in this 1963 classic.

There is no admission charge, but donations are accepted. For information about the society, or to see a schedule and synopsis of films, visit Cameron.edu/magiclantern.

Fort Sill plans Monster Dash

Get your costumes ready for the Monster Dash on Fort Sill. Racers, walkers and stroller riders are all invited for the 9 a.m. race and 9:15 fun run on Oct. 31.

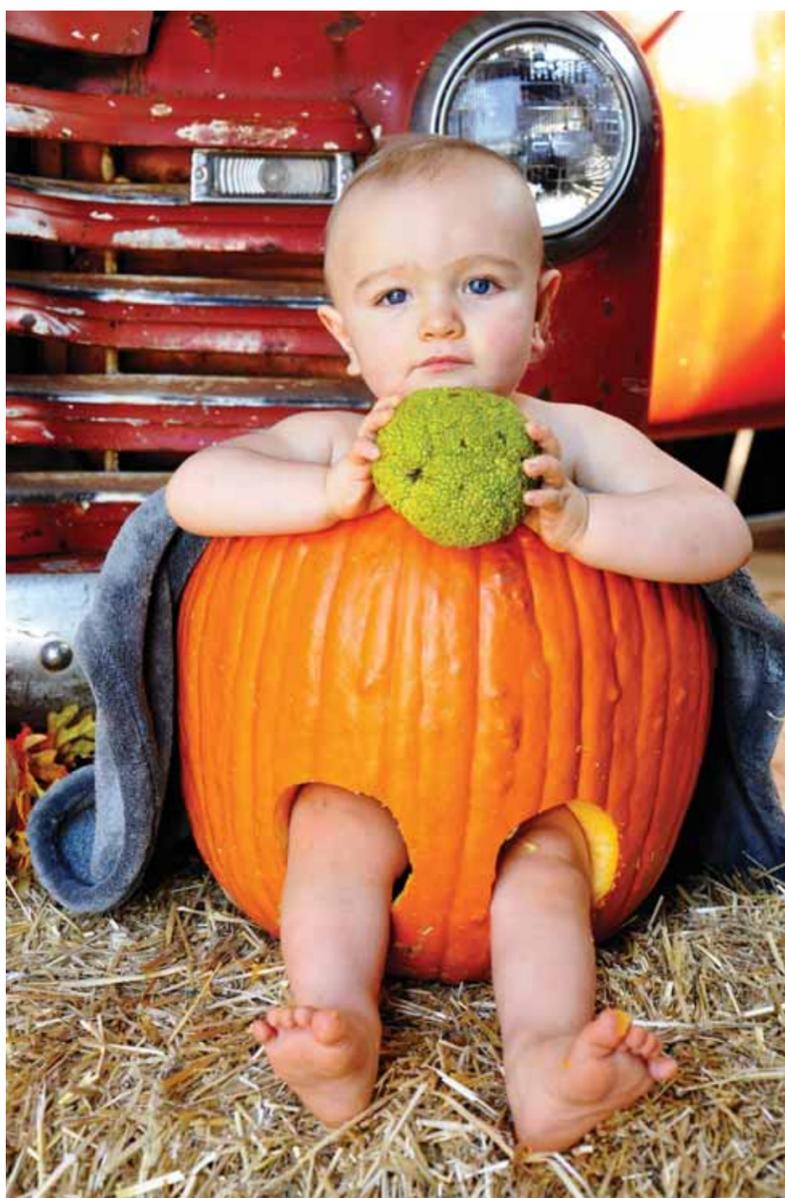
Prizes for best costume will be awarded in adult, group and children's categories.

To register, go to the 77th Army Band Hall, Bldg. 1721, across from the commissary. Registration fees must be paid in cash only.

Daylight Saving Time ending

Daylight Saving Time ends at 2 a.m. Nov. 1. Remember to "fall back" – turn clocks back one hour – or you'll get to church an hour early!

Photo of the Month



When we asked for Fun in the Fall photos, Mindy Nichols remembered this shot of 1-year-old son Preston by Candi Chandler three years ago. Preston's parents are Cotton Electric members Mindy and Trevor Nichols of Marlow.

Enter your "best shot" in our Photo of the Month contest. Theme for November is Let's Eat! Entries can 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.

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A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 



Bryce Hooper, left, director of marketing and economic development, and Carly Douglass, secretary-treasurer of Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation, present a CECF grant to Sterling Police Chief Mike Barker. The police department will purchase body cameras with the funds.

Deadline for classified ads for the November issue of The Current is Nov. 5. Display ad space must be reserved by Nov. 2.

Home Grown Trees
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Community Spotlight

Pecan Creek VFD fundraiser set for Nov. 7
Pecan Creek Volunteer Fire Department will hold a first-time barbecue fundraiser from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Nov. 7 at the firehouse on NW 112th north of railroad tracks near Goodyear plant. The new VFD will serve an area five miles south and west of Lawton city limits.
For information, call Joe English at 580-351-4316.

LPO featuring Staube in Power of Piano
Lawton Philharmonic is hosting a solo recital by brilliant young pianist Andrew Staube at 3 p.m. Nov. 8 in McMahon Memorial Auditorium, 801 NW Ferris Ave.
The concert will feature a wide range of piano pieces from nearly every period of classical music. Power of the Piano is the first fundraiser of the Lawton Philharmonic's 2015-16 season.
General admission tickets and other information are available by calling 580-531-5043.

DLT presents 'Miracle on 34th Street'
Is there really a Santa Claus? Find out when Duncan Little Theatre presents "Miracle on 34th

Street," a heart-warming holiday comedy of the story of Kris Kringle, who gets a job working as Santa for Macy's Department Store.

Kris unleashes a wave of good will with Macy's customers and suggests that parents find what their children have asked for, even in other stores. Seen as deluded and dangerous by Macy's counselor, Kris ends up in court in a competency hearing. Especially at stake is one little girl's belief in Santa.
Performances are set for 7:30 p.m. Nov. 13, 14, 20 and 21 at the Simmons Center Theatre.

Walters 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 Roger Noland at 580-591-6826.

Walters Food Pantry is a Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation grant recipient. In 2014, CECF made a \$1,000 contribution toward the purchase of food.

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Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Don't let vampires suck the life out of your energy efficiency efforts! Unplugging unused electronics – otherwise known as "energy vampires" – can save you as much as 10 percent on your electric bill.
Source: energy.gov

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Download CECF grant applications at CottonElectric.com.
 Deadline for fourth-quarter 2015
 grant applications is Nov. 25.

Operation Round Up is a voluntary program and members may opt out at any time by calling or sending a letter or email stating the account holder's name, account number and the request to be removed.

Mentoring program fosters one-on-one time with students

By Karen Kaley

Think back. As a child, you met many adults aside from Mom and Dad. Some were stern and bossy, some were aloof and distant, and some were warm and friendly.

Of those adults who fell into that last category, was there one or two in particular who really made a difference? Are you a better person because an adult believed in you, encouraged you and possibly guided you through the more perplexing moments of being a kid?

You had a mentor. That person gave of himself or herself in some way and left you with a lasting impression.

You may have gone back to that person, explained how important his or her time and attention were for your younger self. You may have tried to flatter them, to thank them, but they may have brushed it away, saying, "It was you. You had it in you all along."

That's what a mentor does. This trusted adviser finds the potential in another person and lifts them up, helps them identify goals and explore ways to achieve them.

Perhaps the best way to repay your mentor is to become one yourself. There are many, many children in our hustle-bustle world who could use a little one-on-one time with a helpful adult.

In fact, if you live in Stephens County, One True Light's Link One program has a list of them.

Formerly known as The Well Outreach, One True Light has a tagline – Linking generations to learn, love and live together – and uses this quote from Matthew as a sort of mission statement: "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that

they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

Carol Wanzor, administrative director, said One True Light grew out of an effort fostered by First Christian Church but is now a freestanding non-profit organization. She pointed out that First Christian has a history of incubating community-minded organizations in Duncan.

"First Christian started the first Gabriel's House. First Christian is the original home of Christians Concerned and Duncan Senior Citizens Center," she said.

All of those groups have outgrown the church facilities, broken away and flourished on their own. In other words, they are successful because of an early mentor.

One True Light has two major projects: Spokes for Hope and Link One. Spokes for Hope is a feeding program offering nutritious lunches for children during the summertime school break. The program recently completed a third summer feeding kids all across Duncan.

Link One is the mentoring program begun in 2014. The first of the mentors were matched with students in November.

Wanzor said the program blossomed.

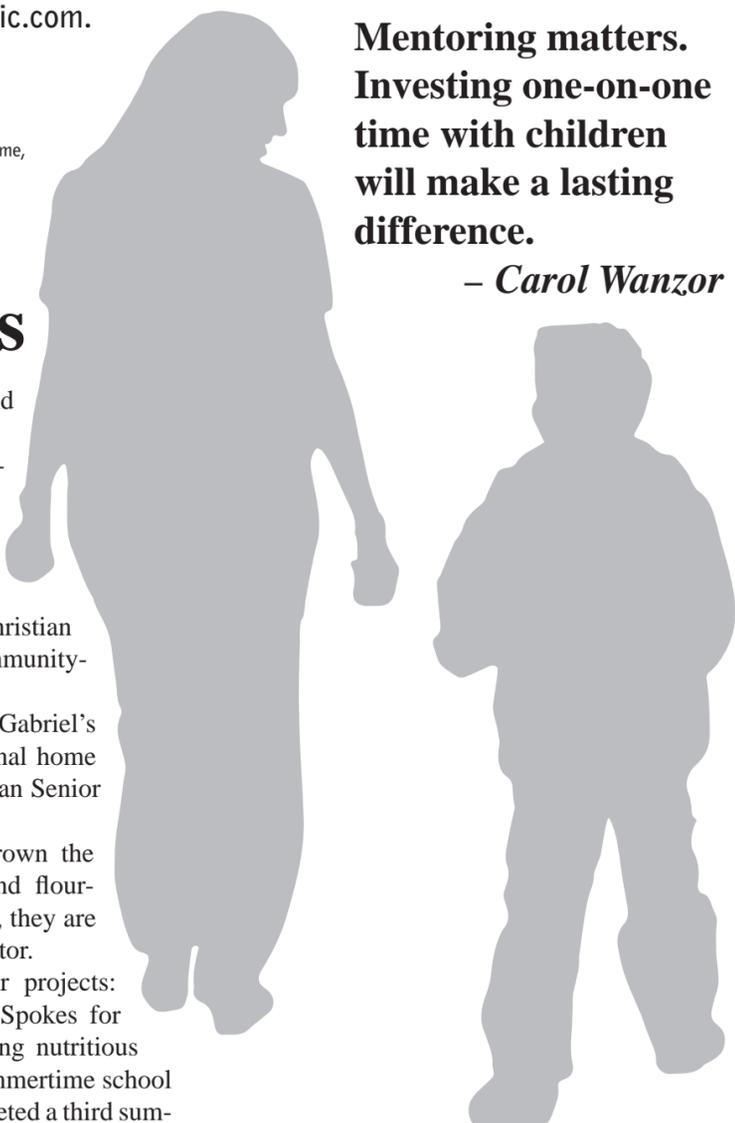
"We had placed 52 mentors by the end of the school year."

That seems like a lot, but Wanzor said the program could use more mentors. The students on her waiting list have been referred by teachers and have parental permission to participate.

Mentors must be at least 18 years old and will-

Mentoring matters. Investing one-on-one time with children will make a lasting difference.

– Carol Wanzor



ing to commit to spend one hour per week with a student for the duration of the school year. There is a 3-hour training session and a background check.

There is a lot of paperwork that Wanzor and mentor coordinator Joan Brock keep up with. Some of it has to be copied and filed. Some of it can be scanned and stored digitally.

All of that can be done with a refurbished office-grade printer that One True Light purchased recently with a \$1,000 grant issued by Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation.

The mentor then meets with the student where he or she attends school. They may share a meal or play a game. They may read or work on homework. They may just talk.

"Often," Wanzor said, "the child just needs someone to spend some one-on-one time with them. It is a generally positive outcome for both the student and the mentor."

The mentor sees the youngster without the filters teachers and parents have. Wanzor said mentors find a lot of potential in these youth.

The kids look forward to seeing the mentors. Some were surprised to the point of tears upon seeing the mentor return at the beginning of the new school year, particularly when it was at a different school.

"For someone to continually show up just for them is huge," Wanzor said.

"Mentoring matters," she said of the small investment of time and interest on the part of caring adults.

"Investing one-on-one time with children will make a lasting difference."

You know that. Someone made a difference for you. Perhaps you can make a difference for someone in the next generation.

Learn more at OneTrueLight.net or give Wanzor a call at 580-467-8133 to find out ways to help.



Cyndi Crook sets up a game of checkers during a mentoring session. She meets the student weekly for one hour before school starts. They engage in an activity, or just talk if that is what's needed.

When Investing, Put Time On Your Side

Now that we're well into autumn, the days are getting noticeably shorter. The change in seasons reminds us that time is passing – and it's important to use that time wisely. When used well, in fact, time can be your greatest gift in many walks of life – and that's certainly true when you invest.

To illustrate the importance of time, let's look at a scenario. Suppose you start saving for retirement when you are 25. If you invest \$3,000 per year in a tax-deferred vehicle, such as a traditional IRA, and you hypothetically earn a 7% annual return, you will have accumulated more than \$640,000 after 40 years, when you reach 65 and are ready to retire. (Keep in mind that you will be taxed on withdrawals.)

Now, though, suppose you wait

until you're 55 before you start saving seriously for retirement. If you put that same \$3,000 per year in that same IRA, earning that same hypothetical 7% return, you'd only end up with slightly more than \$44,000 after 10 years, when you reach 65. And to accumulate the \$640,000 you would have gotten after 40 years by contributing just \$3,000 per year, you would have had to put in about \$43,500 per year for the 10 years between ages 55 and 65.

Clearly, it's a lot easier to come up with \$3,000 per year than \$43,500. So, to accumulate the resources you need for a comfortable retirement, you'll help your cause greatly by saving and investing as early in your working life as possible – and then continue to

save and invest right up to, and even during, your retirement years.

The ability to potentially grow your portfolio sizably is the key benefit of using time when you invest – but it's not the only benefit. You can also use time as a target, or a way to frame a specific investment goal.

For example, suppose you have an 8-year-old child whom you want to send to college in 10 years. When that day arrives, wouldn't it be nice to know that you've been saving money for a decade? One popular college savings vehicle is a 529 plan, which has high contribution limits and allows tax-free withdrawals, provided the money is used only for qualified higher education expenses. (Withdrawals for other purposes will be taxed and may be

subject to an additional penalty.)

You can also use time as a signal to adjust your investment strategy. If you're going to retire in, say, two or three years, you might want to shift some – but certainly not all – of your assets from growth-oriented investments to income-producing ones. As you know, the market will always fluctuate, so you don't want to be in a position where, once you retire, you need to start taking significant withdrawals – i.e., selling investments – when the market is down. Remember the time-honored rule of investing: "Buy low, sell high."

When you invest, make the best possible use of time – remember, it's the one asset that can't be replenished.

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Tanner L Cline
 (580)252-9048

Lynn Bailey
 (580)658-2704



Cotton Electric's Annual Meeting is an event filled with smiling faces. Members wear hats given out at the event, such as the one at top left, or old favorites as the rest of the top row shows.

Employees offer golf cart rides to members as the parking lot fills up, middle left, or in bucket trucks, above.

In the bottom left photo, a member and board trustee Brian DeMarcus enjoy a friendly discussion. Annual Meeting is a great opportunity for members to meet with old friends, co-op employees and members of the board.

More Annual Meeting photos on Page 24.

Members praised for cooperative leadership

Continued from Page One

"You come to provide leadership for me and the rest of the employees. That's important.

"I've seen you change by-laws when they needed it. You made it right. You took care of business. You raised your hand and voted.

"You have let us know what you want from your electric cooperative: reliable power with no blinks and when it goes out, you want it back on quickly."

He concluded, "Cotton Electric is truly a special place. After 40-plus years, it is time for me to turn the page, time for me to retire.

"I don't know what the future will bring, where I will be, but no matter where I am, Cotton Electric Cooperative will always be next to my heart."

The evening of festivities ended on a positive note, when drawings were held and about 75 door prizes were awarded, including a \$500 energy voucher that went to Deanna Dear of Comanche.

A list of all prize winners is on Page 7.

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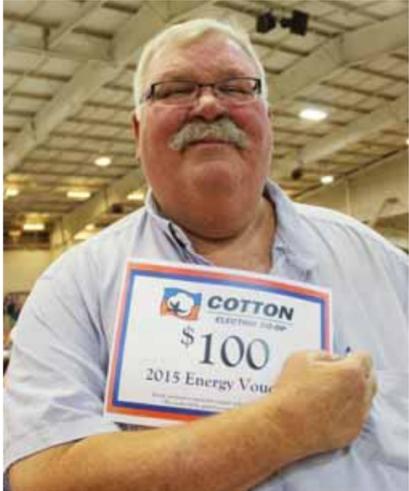
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Deanna Dear



Marcus Hall



Russ Scherler



Kelsey Dillin

Door prize winners:

- \$500 Energy Voucher: Deanna Dear
- \$250 Energy Voucher: Heith Renschen, Marcus Hall
- \$100 Energy Voucher: Russ Scherler, James King
- \$50 Cash: Curtis Wilson, Douglas Craig, Cecil Stringfellow, Joe Sullivan, R. M. Fishgrab, Mindy Nichols, Hollis Heman, Sammy Harrell, Jimmy Nichols, Ervin Nunley, Eddie Sutton, Joyce Lowery, Kenneth Scott, Parker Scroggins, James Sanders, Joyce Scroggins, Will Sasser, Terry Teague, Harold Taylor, Donna Evans
- Kids \$5: Isaac Romero, Presdon Davis, Jacee Seaton, Nicole Archer, Jerimiah Jonsen, Lyla Kinder, Jaylee Anderson, Cash Clark, AJ Fixico, Kenna Thompson, Bryce Seaton, Ryan Davis, Bryce Seaton, Maliki Pannell, Preston Nichols
- Kids grand prize X-Box: Kelsey Dillin
- Snap-on ratchet Straps: Marta Bruno, Ira Kennedy, Calvin Sweat, Janice Morgan, David Gammill
- Vizio 32" TV: Kay Wilson
- 50-ft. Zilla Reel: Timothy Helton, Ray Bennett
- Fuji Film Camera Bundle: Casey Anderson
- LED Flood Lamp Bulb: William Farris, Dewey Cox, Clif Taylor
- USB Charging Tower: Andrew Gonzales
- 450 Amp Battery Jumper: Charles Weger
- Copper Party Tub: John Barton
- Nutri Ninja Blender: Benny Johnson
- Titan Zipperless Cooler: Richard Harrell
- Stanley Rechargeable LED Flashlight: Dean Ellis, Karen Johnson
- SOL Wireless Speaker: Joe Henderson
- Toshiba 1TB USB Hard Drive: Deborah Hawthorn
- Wolfgang Puck 10pc Mixing Bowls: Danny Barnes
- SOL Wireless Speaker: Billie Gilpen
- Camo 45 L Hiking Pack: Johnny Webb
- \$50 Gift Card: Pat Bloomer
- \$25 Walmart Gift Card: Kent Adams, Delisa Clark, Rogello Perez, Keith Copass
- Sunglasses and Gift Bag: Billy Kidd



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How are we doing?

As part of our ongoing efforts to improve service to our members, Cotton Electric Cooperative is conducting a membership survey.

The survey is done via telephone by FGI Research, Inc., a large market research firm based in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The calls will be placed between 5:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Telephone interviewers will identify themselves as calling on behalf of Cotton Electric. All telephone interviews will originate from FGI Research's call center with a caller ID phone number with a 919 area code.

Your feedback is important to us and we appreciate your help in this project. If you have any questions or concerns, please call Jennifer Meason at (580) 875-4217.



COTTON
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A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



Early Detection Saves Lives!

FREE Lung Screening For High Risk Individuals

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

- Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women worldwide.
- Nearly 160,000 Americans die of lung cancer each year.

Based on findings of the National Lung Screening Trial (NLST), we know that CT lung screening can save lives of people at high risk for developing lung cancer.

Low-dose CT (LDCT) lung screening is quick and easy and results in a minimal amount of radiation exposure. The Cancer Centers of Southwest Oklahoma is determined to raise awareness and improve access to this testing for all people at high risk. Therefore, Cancer Centers of Southwest Oklahoma and Jackson County Memorial Hospital are now offering in conjunction **FREE LDCT lung screening** to individuals who meet the established high-risk criteria.



QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

You may qualify for a free LDCT lung screening if you fall into one of these categories:

Category 1

- You are between 55 and 74 years of age
- You are currently a smoker or have quit in the last 15 years
- You have a 30+ pack-year* history of smoking

Category 2

- You are between 50 and 74 years old
- You have a 20+ pack-year* history of smoking
- You have one additional lung cancer risk factor (not to include secondhand smoke exposure)

*pack-years are calculated by multiplying the number of packs a day you smoke by the number of years you have smoked.

Example: 2 packs a day for 15 years = 30 pack-years

**Call to schedule a screening
1-877-231-4440 to see if you qualify.**

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Reading recorder

Meters coming in from service area stop first at Jason Red Elk's station

By Karen Kaley

Jason Red Elk uses high-tech and low-tech tools to carry out his job in the meter shop at Cotton Electric. The meter technician looks at the screen of a handheld device that collects data from a mounted and energized meter via wireless Bluetooth technology. He then picks up a freshly sharpened pencil and carefully records the information on the next line of a well-used legal pad.

He is on the 27th page, each with hand-drawn lines to form three columns. Easy-to-read figures, preceded mostly with TT, march down the page under the Meter heading to the left of five- and six-digit numbers marked Reading.

The pattern is broken by tiny notations about why a particular meter had no reading and by horizontal lines and a date, so one can see at a glance how many meters Red Elk tested on any given day.

"Let's see," Red Elk said in a voice that is soft and deep, "I've been using this pad since I transferred to the meter shop two years ago. I guess you could count the lines on each sheet to see how many meters I've looked at."

It works out to about 3,000 meters that have come in from the field. Red Elk has initiated all they go through at the shop by recording the meter's co-op number and current reading. After that, Red Elk and other meter shop staffers clean the useable meters and update software. The devices are boxed up and stored until needed again to measure the flow of electricity at a new location.

Some meters have problems and can't go back into service. Red Elk may pull the shell off a meter with a

working display and damaged mechanics and swap it for a damaged shell on an otherwise well-functioning meter.

Some meters are beyond functioning for a variety of reasons.

Red Elk recalled, "We lost a lot of them to the flooding back in May."

Those meters are also handled in a particular way.

"We create pallets of meters taken out of service. We hold them for six months and then we have them destroyed."

A high-tech and low-tech record of each reading, each swap, each transition from active to inactive is kept. The information is keyed into the co-op's massive data system and is dutifully recorded in a stack of thick ledgers.

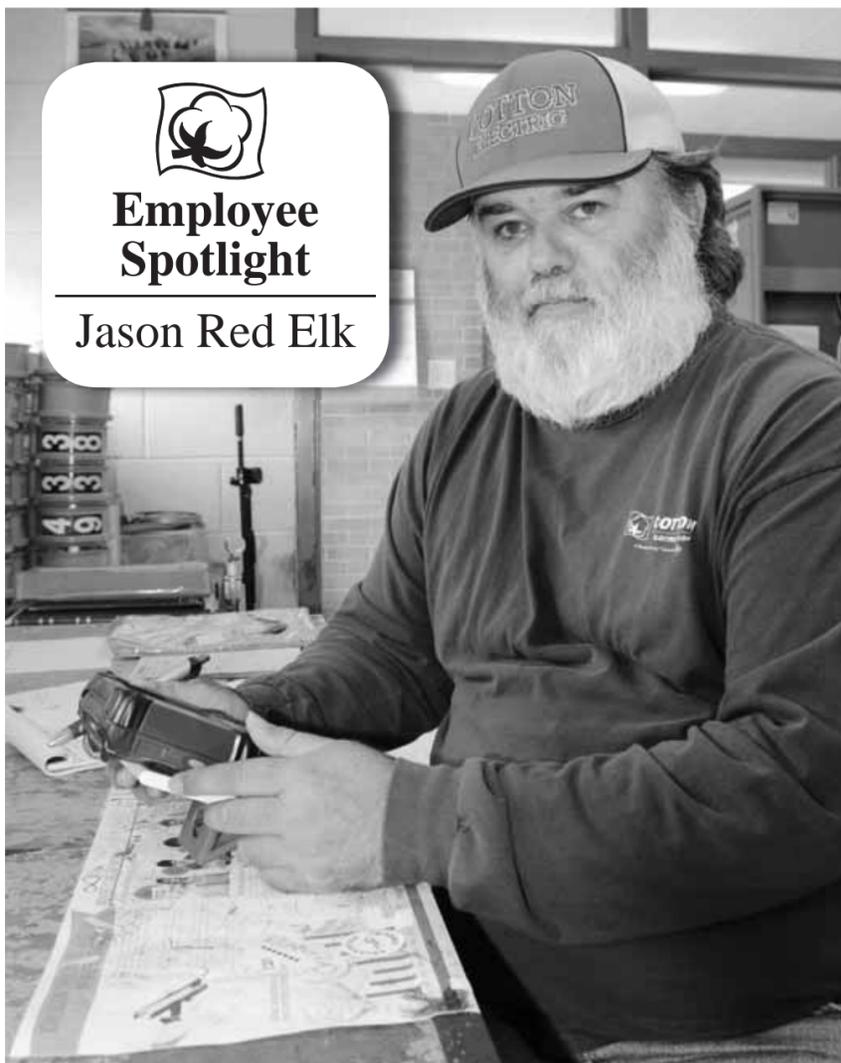
"We track meters in the system but also use ledger books and pencils to track the meters. It serves as a safety backup. We go through the books a lot to verify information."

Red Elk grinned and quipped, "If a meter cannot be reused, we take it off the books. Literally. With an eraser."

Some days, there are hundreds of meters waiting to be processed and, some days, there is only a handful. Red Elk will look up from his station to peer out the window and sometimes miss the change of scenery offered during his first three years with the co-op, working on the right-of-way crew.

"The (Walters) Post Office is OK, but ... People get in the wrong car a lot. One day, I watched a guy chase his dog around a car about 10 times before he caught it."

To break up the routine, Red Elk and others in the shop will switch up tasks or go out in the field on meter



Employee Spotlight

Jason Red Elk

Jason Red Elk uses a handheld device to collect data from a meter. If the meter will send the information, it will be cleaned, reprogrammed and sent back into the field.

routes. They visit substations or build meter loops or help when the load gets heavy in the transformer shop.

The 2011-13 summers were brutally hot and poison ivy unkind, so Red Elk doesn't miss right-of-way too much. The easy-going fellow is happy to be working in town.

Walters is his hometown.

He pointed over his shoulder and said, "I went to kindergarten right over there, in the Quonset hut," a building now owned by Cotton Electric and used for storage.

After graduating from high school

in 1989, Red Elk enlisted in the U.S. Navy, serving during the Desert Storm and Desert Shield campaigns. He lived in nine states and met people from all over before coming back to a part of the country where the name Red Elk is not considered unusual.

Jason and Ralynn live west of Walters and are raising Zoe, 10. He said that is the best part of working in town.

"If Zoe needs me, I'm accessible."

In the meantime, Red Elk will stay busy keeping meticulous high-tech and low-tech records on the comings and goings of Cotton Electric meters.

COPPER THEFT isn't just a felony ...



"Copper stealing, removing, or aiding in copper theft is a felony met with certain penalties. Any person who shall receive, transport, or possess in this state stolen copper wire, copper cable, or copper tubing under such circumstances that he knew or should have known that the same was stolen shall upon conviction thereof be guilty of a felony and shall be confined in the State Penitentiary for a term of not less than one year nor more than five years, or shall be confined in the county jail for not less than ninety days nor more than two hundred days, or shall be fined not less than \$100.00 nor more than \$500.00, or both such fine and imprisonment." Okla. Statute Title 21§1727

... it's deadly.

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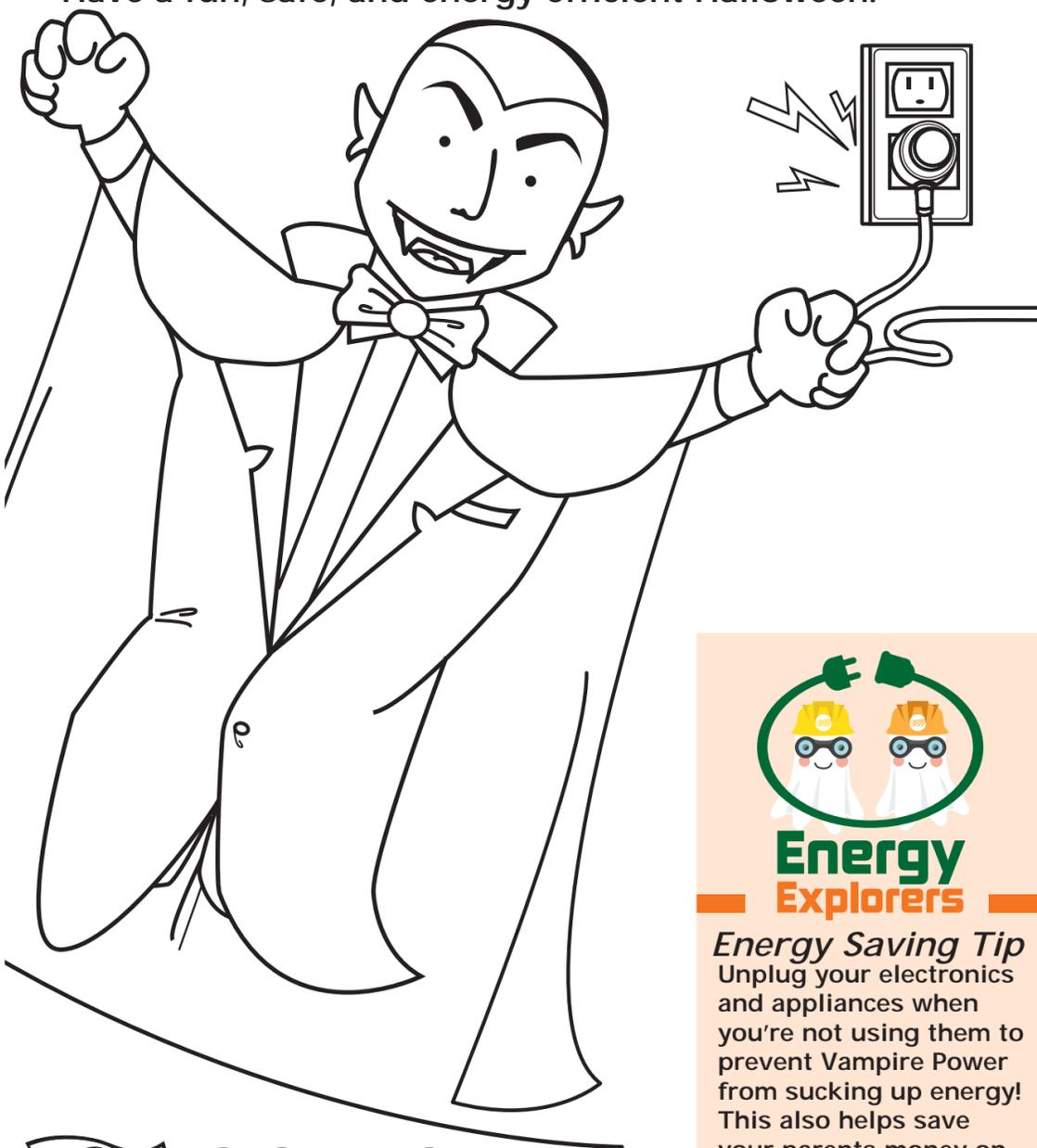
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Energy Explorers

Energy Saving Tip
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This month's Gift of the Week may cause an increase in cravings, appetites & the creation of delicious food. Earn 200pts in 1 day, Tues-Thurs, & take home your Gift of the Week. Play each week to complete your New 4 piece cast iron cooking set.

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Limit: 1 per week, per participant.



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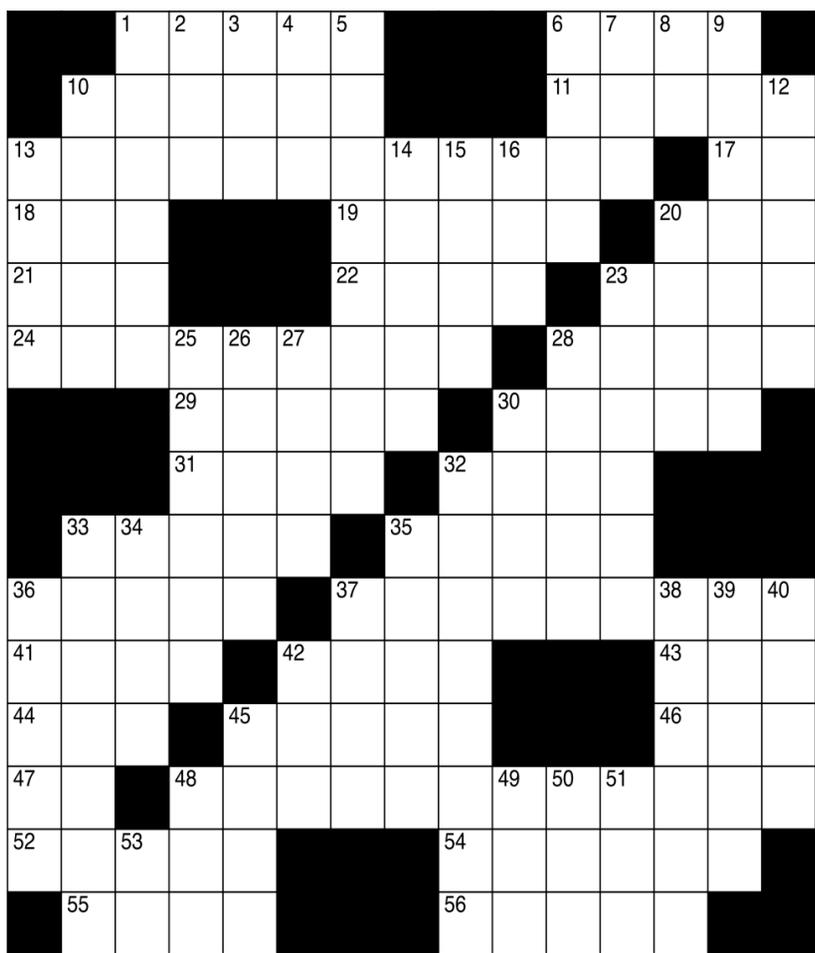
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ACROSS

- 1. LA team member
- 6. Young Fr. woman (abbr.)
- 10. Per __, each
- 11. Foots
- 13. Veggie toy
- 17. Overdose
- 18. US, Latin America, Canada belong to
- 19. So. Am. plain (Span.)
- 20. Point midway between N and NE
- 21. Single
- 22. Inactive
- 23. Mother of Hermes
- 24. Gives a new meaning
- 28. Silent players
- 29. One who adds Cluny trim
- 30. Men or boys
- 31. God of War
- 32. Self-immolation by fire ritual
- 33. Inevitable events
- 35. Add piquancy
- 36. Skin lesions
- 37. Cannabis
- 41. River of NE Turkey
- 42. 2 family struggle
- 43. A young swine
- 44. __ student, learns healing
- 45. 55300 MN
- 46. Opie actor Howard
- 47. World's oldest news gathering organization (abbr.)
- 48. Luke's Jedi mentor
- 52. Japan's knife & scissor city
- 54. Medical antiseptic & dye
- 55. Early female flyers



DOWN

- 1. No longer practicing
- 2. Military mailbox
- 3. Cowboy Carson
- 4. 7th Greek letter
- 5. Nautical ladder rungs
- 6. Hmong
- 7. Fellow
- 8. Maltese pound
- 9. Coal blacks
- 10. Japan Airlines bird
- 12. Different concepts
- 13. Secure a ship with ropes
- 14. Elder
- 15. Belongs to famous computer
- 16. Point midway between NE and E
- 20. Moniker
- 23. Environment
- 25. Fills with joy
- 26. Transportation charges
- 27. Frosts
- 28. Counterpart
- 30. 2nd largest Hawaiian island
- 32. Grimly humorous
- 33. A dog's front foot
- 34. Mures River city
- 35. Steam bath
- 36. South African Music Awards
- 37. Sound made by a cat
- 38. Clothing protectors
- 39. Wife of Amphion
- 40. God of fire (Hindu)
- 42. Favorite weekday (abbr.)
- 45. Japanese sashes
- 48. Klutz
- 49. "__ Koo," Debbie Harry debut album
- 50. Tokyo
- 51. Hardly any
- 53. Cathode

Heritage Center packed with wonder

Modern technology delivers sights, sounds, smells, sensations of Old West

By Karen Kaley

First-time visitors to the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center (CTHC) are always surprised.

Out-of-towners and local Duncan residents go there knowing it is a museum about an old cattle trail, which seems like a dry and dusty topic. What they find is a vibrant state-of-the-art facility packed with sights, sounds, smells and sensations designed to im-

merse a patron in all the wonder of the era's story.

In fact, the very mission of the heritage center is "to celebrate and perpetuate the history, art and culture of the Chisholm Trail, the American Cowboy and the American West."

Even Stacy Cramer Moore clearly remembers her first visit to the center, long before she became the executive director at CTHC.

"I remember thinking, 'Wow! This is really neat!'"

"I was taken by the animatronics in Campfire Theater. They are so wonderful, so lifelike."

She looked around to see if anyone was listening, then leaned forward and said in a low whisper, "I just had to touch him."

She's talking about Jesse Chisholm, or rather, a mechanical representation of the man for whom the trail is named. He and Tex sit around a campfire under a star-studded night sky, drink coffee and discuss the history of the trail. Their gab is punctuated by loud exclamations from Cookie, heard but never seen inside a nearby chuck wagon.

Moore is quick to say that one should NOT touch the automated men but softens the admonition by pointing out there are so many things throughout the center that guests MUST touch to truly enjoy the visit.

There are pelts to run a hand across. There is rope to try tossing around a steer's long horns. There are buttons to press to hear snippets of songs. There are drawers to pull open on another chuck wagon and checkers to play in the old Duncan store.

There is another theater area that touches the viewers in a way that earns it the name Experience Theater.

Art lovers will not want to miss the visual feast of Garis Gallery of the American West, a stunning collection of Western and Native American art.

Regional artists are featured regularly, too. Woodland Hymn, the work of Cotton Electric member Christen Walden, will be on display through the end of October. Dylan Cavin's ledger art will open in November and run through the end of the year.

Whether visiting CTHC for the first

time or the hundredth time, one always learns something. This is a fact recognized by educators and organizations throughout Oklahoma and northern Texas.

Throughout the school year, thousands of students visit Chisholm Trail Heritage Center, which boasts the only Great Expectations education certificate earned by a non-profit. Cotton Electric's Charitable Foundation has supported educational outreach efforts at the center, issuing grants totaling \$2,500 over the past five years.

Looking forward, Moore said she and CTHC staff members are busily making plans for a sesquicentennial. The Chisholm Trail first became active in 1867, and a great deal of the activities planned for 2017 will focus on the 150th anniversary.

"Many organizations are planning events," Moore said.

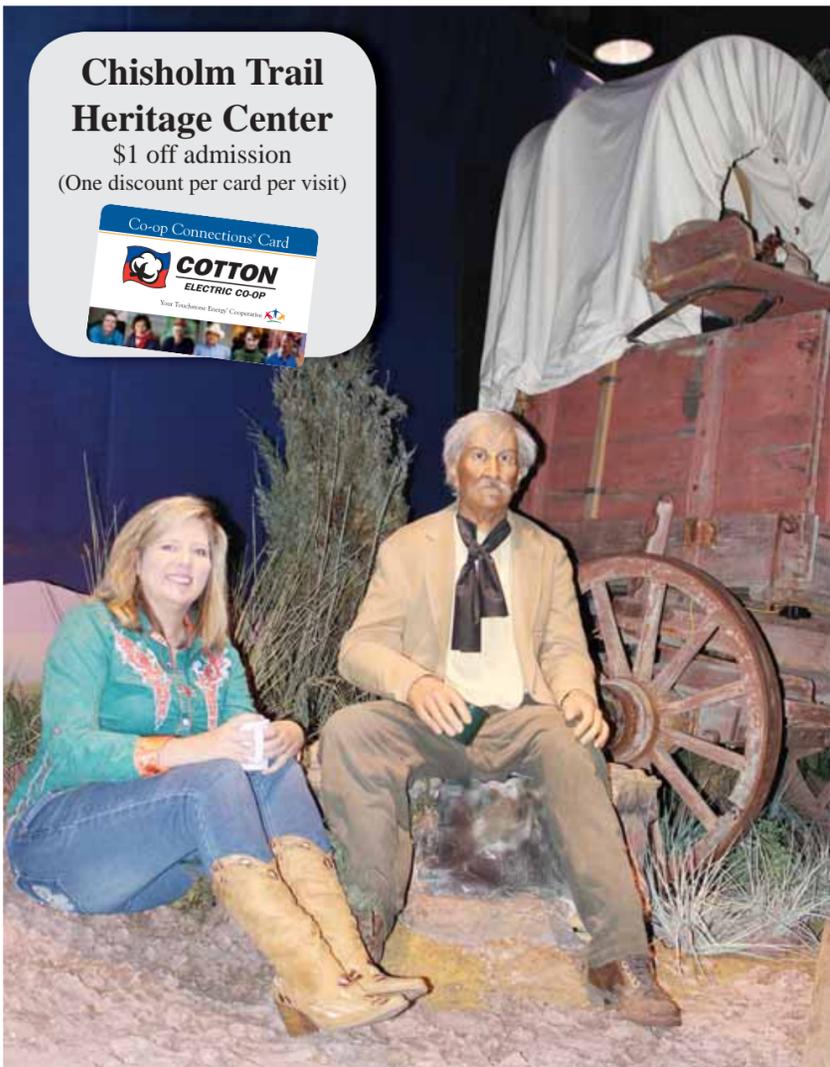
"We are looking for more partners to make note of the significant year. We're looking for attractions, events and ideas."

To participate, Moore said people could visit ChisholmTrail150.org or find the Facebook page to get ideas.

Or, visit the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center, a place you have to experience to really appreciate. Located just north of the Simmons Center at 1000 Chisholm Trail Parkway, the facility is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and from 1 to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

Cotton Electric members can present a Co-op Connections Card to get \$1 off the admission price, per card per visit.

Visit often, because things are always changing and Moore has big thoughts about ways to enhance the experience. She has this idea about holograms ...



Stacy Cramer Moore and Jesse Chisholm enjoy a cup of coffee and conversation in Campfire Theater at Chisholm Trail Heritage Center.

Chisholm Trail Heritage Center
 \$1 off admission
 (One discount per card per visit)

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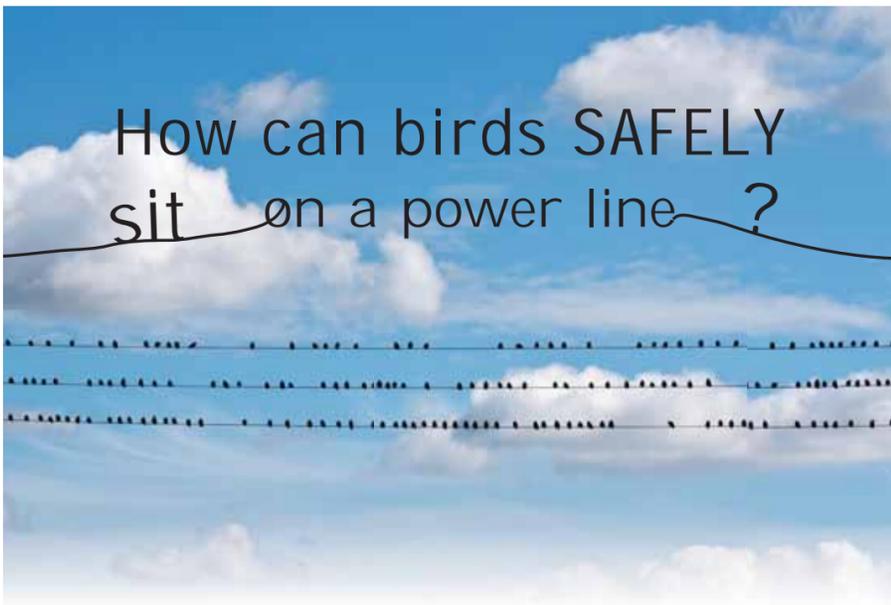


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It's NOT because the wires have a protective coating that prevents shocks. They DON'T.

The bird is safe because it is sitting on a single wire and is at one point of contact — and one electrical potential.

Electricity is always looking for a path to ground. With just one false move that connects different potentials, the bird could sadly be electrocuted.

Be aware of the location of overhead power lines, and stay at least 10 feet away at all times.

Co-op lines: single or double?

By Tom Tate

Living on Cotton Electric Cooperative's lines is a literal expression, meaning you have a system of poles and wires connecting your home or business to the co-op so you can get power when and where you need it. While these systems of poles and wires all look quite similar, there are distinct differences. Let's take a look at those differences and why they are important. Caution: Utility terms ahead!

Everything starts at the substation when it comes to co-op distribution systems. Transmission lines feed high voltage into the substation, where it is reduced to a more manageable and safer level. On the other side of these transformers, distribution feeder lines carry the power out and into the service area, where they "feed" power to a sizeable block of co-op members. This is an efficient way to move a large amount of power closer to its point of use. These are also what are termed radial feeds, meaning only one end is connected to a power source.

At certain points along the feeders, lateral lines branch out to connect member loads, which are the amounts of power a home or business needs. Systems are designed to supply the amount of load to which they are connected. If you look at a simple map of Cotton Electric's distribution system, it resembles



the veins and arteries of the human body. Only in this case, it carries life-enhancing electricity instead of life-sustaining blood. These lateral lines are also radial in many cases. Eventually, the last member is reached and the system goes no further.

Lateral lines are the "single" lines referenced in the title of this article. When co-op distribution systems were first built, the most cost effective solution in a lot of cases was the lateral approach. This was especially true for far-flung, end-of-line members. There is one drawback to a lateral or single line approach, however. When there is a fault — something causing the flow of electricity to stop, like a tree on the lines or a pole being broken by a car — in the system, every member beyond that point loses power until the problem is located and corrected.

Enter the double line approach. A normal evolution in distribution system growth is

to replace radial lines with loop connections. The loop is connected to a power source at two ends rather than one. This power source can be another substation or another feeder from the same substation. With this approach, when power is interrupted, we have the opportunity to rapidly restore power to a large portion of the affected members.

Here is how the loop works. Let's say a tree branch breaks and falls onto the wires. Equipment on the lines senses the fault and operates protective devices immediately in front of the fault, just like circuit breakers do in your own home. No power flows beyond the protective device, and all members beyond this point lose power.

Back at the co-op, members have started calling about the power outage and the system has alerted dispatchers to the size of the outage. Crews are sent to the area to find and fix the problem. If the line is a single, radial one, power for everyone is out until the problem is corrected. But, if a loop is in place, the operators at the co-op or crews in the field can flip switches and reroute the power around the fault. This means faster power restoration for many members. The purpose of the loop or double line approach is exactly this, restoring power to members faster than where a single line is in place. Cotton Electric maintains 5,150 miles of line, bring power to 18,312 farm and residential members. In the event of a power outage, please give us a call at 580-875-3351 or report the outage using the free SmartHub app.

Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

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Saturday, 10:00 A.M.
211 East Texas Street
Multi-Property Auction
Walters, Oklahoma
 Gary Criswell Auction Service & Real Estate, Inc. has been commissioned by The James E. Cain Revocable Trust to offer at Public Auction the Real Property situated at 211 East Texas Street, 125 East Virginia Street, Lots (or portions thereof) 22-25-Block 28, Ross Addition, Lots 9,10,11,12-Block 33, Ross Addition and Lots 19-20-Block 29 in Walters Heights Addition.
(1) 211 East Texas Street- The Real Property consists of a 2 Bedroom Frame Home (Approximately 1,204 Square Feet) with a Living Room with Dining Area, Kitchen with Dinette, Full Bath and Large Utility Room with Shower. The Home has Central Heat and Central Air with plenty of Cabinets and Storage.
Additional Improvements include a Detached Carport (20'x23'), Sheet Metal Workshop (13'x24') and a Sheet Metal Shed (12'x36'). All situated on Lot 21 and West Half of Lot 22-Block 29, Walters Heights Addition.
(2) 125 East Virginia Street The Real Property consist of a 2 Bedroom Frame Home (Approximately 1,311 Square Feet) with a Living Room with Dining Area, Study/Den, Kitchen with Dinette, Full Bath and 1/2 Bath. The Home has Central Heat and Central Air.
Additional Improvements include an Attached Carport (18'x18') and a Storm Cellar with a nice Fenced in Backyard. All situated on Lots 25-27, Block 26, Walters Height Addition in Walters Oklahoma.
(3) Lots 22-25, Block 28-Ross Addition, (4) West 22' of Lot 9 and All of Lots 10-11 and 12'-6" of Lot 12, Block 33-Ross Addition, (5) Lots 19-20, Block 29-Walters Heights Additions, Walters, Oklahoma. Note: Lots will sell with Quit Claim Deeds only (No Abstracts).
Automobile: 1997 CHRYSLER CONCORDE with a 3.5 Liter Engine, All Power, 4 Door with Leather Seats, Mileage 93,000.
Terms of Sale: 10% Earnest Money on Real Property on day of Sale. Balance due at Closing upon delivery of Title and Deed.
Preview of Real Property will be held Friday afternoon, October 23, 2015 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: The Real Properties and CHRYSLER CONCORD will be Auctioned off from 211 East Texas Street. These Homes could make a nice Home for a Family. The Lots could be good Investment Properties. The Real Property will be offered "As-Is-Where-Is." The James E. Cain Revocable Trust reserves the right to accept or reject the final bid. Stephens County Abstract will serve as the Closing Agent on the Property.
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Fall FIX-UP Time

It's that not-too-hot, not-too-cold time of year: Just right for preparing for your home for the coming winter. Mike Stephens, our Energy Use Advisor, suggests these projects that will help save on your power bill.



Flush and drain water heaters. Turn off power before starting!



Check air filters, smoke detector and carbon monoxide batteries.



Have your air conditioner and furnace inspected and tuned up.



Change the direction of your ceiling fans. They should turn clockwise for heat savings.



Install coverings or remove window unit air conditioners.



Have fireplace flue cleaned and make sure damper and hearth are tightly sealed.



This is the best time of the year to check your ductwork and insulation R-value. Upgrading can bring savings all year, every year.



Caulk and weather strip doors, windows and any exterior penetrations.



Look for falling prices on all LED lighting for Christmas decorations and all your home lighting needs.



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Ingredient lists

What is really in the food you eat?

If you are a label reader or suffer from a health issue that requires paying close attention to foods you eat, you have probably read the ingredient list on a food item. The ingredient list holds the truth of the contents of the package – or at least it should. It is governed by the Food Labeling and Nutrition guidelines set forth by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, or the FDA.

If you suffer from food allergies or a chronic condition that requires exclusion of certain food ingredients, the ingredient list can be a lifesaver. While one would think the claims on the front of packaged foods are legitimate, they are closer to advertising than transparency of ingredients, and the ingredient list must be checked to truly verify the claim.

Food ingredients are listed in order of weight, so the first ingredient on the list makes up more of the weight of the food item than any other ingredient. While the first few ingredients are hopefully fairly recognizable, often consumers get lost in the food additives, including chemicals and colors that are not familiar to the general public.

The FDA conducts an approval process of food additives and will occasionally post updates on its website of additives it is investigating. The FDA has a database called Everything



Kim Bandelier, MPH, RD, LD

Food For THOUGHT

Added to Food in the United States (EAFUS), but it does not have all ingredients so you must also be familiar with food additives that are Generally Recognized As Safe (GRAS).

Needless to say, getting to the bottom of what is really in your food can be tedious and overwhelming.

If you search on the Internet for food additives or preservatives, you will discover many opinions on what food ingredients to avoid. The issue with most of this advice is it is not supported by conclusive research. One study may reveal an association between a certain additive and a health condition, then another reveals a different association or no association at all.

When a body of research on a topic is contradictory, we are

forced to apply logic to decipher what actions we should take. The logical action is to eat foods with as few ingredients as possible, and track individual reactions to certain foods in order to determine which to avoid.

Nutrition research is constantly evolving, and the policies that govern what goes into our food are changing. In 2015, a bill called the Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act of 2015 has caused much controversy, mainly over the way it proposes to address genetically modified organisms, or GMOs, in foods. While the current science suggests GMOs are safe, many individuals are concerned and want to know what foods contain them.

As consumers, we must do our best to become educated about food ingredients so we

can make the best decision for our health. Start by reading labels and looking up ingredients with which you are not familiar. Of particular interest should be preservatives, artificial sweeteners, and food dyes. Those seem to generate the most complaints and conflicting research.

Begin by visiting the FDA website, clicking on "Food" and scrolling down to "Ingredients, Packaging, and Labeling." Other reliable sites include the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), the U.S. National Library of Medicine, and the World Health Organization. These entities tend to give advice based on large bodies of research, instead of just looking at one study. You can also reach out to your physician or registered dietitian for more information.

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Party Perfect

Halloween Carvings



(Family Features) It's that time of year – jack-o-melon carving time! Watermelon carvings are a fun and different way to show off your spookiest Halloween faces. Throwing a Monster Mash has never been more fun, and this watermelon carving makes the ultimate centerpiece as the head of Frankenstein. Then round out your party menu with these kid-friendly Watermelon Glazed Meatballs and let the spooktacular celebrating begin.

Before you start carving, check out a few helpful carving tips and tricks:

- The whole watermelon should be at room temperate when you carve to make cutting and slicing easier. Then chill the watermelon after cutting and before serving.
- Cut a small, thin, flat piece from the bottom of the watermelon before carving. This will provide a flat base, making the

watermelon more stable when carving.

- Draw the design on the watermelon rind with a fine/medium point waterproof marker or a sharp pencil before you cut.
- Use a sharp knife with a pointed tip – the sharper the knife, the easier and cleaner the cuts will be.

For more wicked watermelon carving inspiration, visit www.watermelon.org/Carvings.

Head of Frankenstein

- Oblong shaped seedless or seeded watermelon
- Large kitchen and paring knives
- Melon baller
- Honeydew
- Green dry erase marker
- Straight pins or toothpicks
- Chocolate wafer cookies, large and mini sizes
- Black edible sugar sheets or construction paper
- Black licorice strings
- Pair of chop sticks
- Chocolate covered mini donuts
- Spooky decorations

Wash watermelon under cool running water and pat dry. On cutting board, place watermelon on its side and cut 1/2 to 3/4 inch from each end, creating a sturdy base and top portion of carving. Stand watermelon upright.

Scoop out a good amount of red fruit from top of watermelon with melon baller, also using a melon baller scoop a generous portion of honeydew to

make fruit salad. Refill top portion of watermelon with balls of watermelon and honeydew.

From ends that were cut off, draw nose with dry erase marker and use paring knife to cut it out. Attach to watermelon using straight pins or toothpicks.

For eyes peel two large and two small chocolate wafer cookies in half. Using sturdy toothpicks or straight pins, attach large cookies with white icing facing out from watermelon and attach small black cookie portion to white icing to create Frankenstein's pupils.

Cut black edible sugar sheets or construction paper half length wise then make zig zag cuts to create hair; attach this to top of watermelon using straight pins.

Use straight pins to attach black licorice to create mouth and stitches randomly on face.

Three-quarters down watermelon on each side of face, insert a chopstick and attach a chocolate covered mini donut to each chopstick to resemble screws in Frankenstein's neck.

Complete carving with spooky decorations.

Watermelon Glazed Meatballs

Serves: 6 to 8

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 24-36 frozen prepared mini meatballs
- 1 cup watermelon puree (instructions below)
- 1 cup prepared barbecue sauce



Heat oil in large heavy saute pan over medium high heat or electric skillet set on 325°F. Saute meatballs until browned and hot. Reduce heat to low.

To make the watermelon puree, remove seeds from fresh watermelon and cut into large chunks. Place in a blender and process until smooth and well pureed.

Mix together barbecue sauce and watermelon puree. Pour over meatballs and simmer for a few minutes. Serve hot.

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LIQUID GOLD GOES BOLD

FAMILY FEATURES

A spicy new take on cheesy pasta

If cooler days have you wishing for savory dishes, give your menu a boost this fall with a bold, spicy twist on your favorite comfort foods. Rich, creamy dishes featuring pasta and a kick of spicy heat will warm you up from the inside out.

A traditional pasta and cheese is the perfect foundation for a delicious skillet dish, one-pot pleaser or casserole that blends familiar flavors with new ones to make an easy and complete weeknight dinner. Packaged options such as *Velveeta Shells & Cheese* can help shave preparation time, and with new bold Jalapeño and Chipotle flavors, you can bring the heat to a whole new level.

These recipes show how easy it is to combine simple proteins, such as chicken or beef, in addition to your favorite cheesy pasta and spices for a cozy dish in minutes. Find more recipes at Velveeta.com.



Beefy Nacho Shells and Cheese

Servings: 3

- 1 package *Velveeta Shells & Cheese Bold, Jalapeño*
- 1/2 pound lean ground beef
- 2 teaspoons taco seasoning mix
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup crushed tortilla chips

Boil 6 cups water in saucepan. Stir in shell pasta and jalapeños; cook 8-10 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally. Drain pasta and jalapeños. Do not rinse. Return to pan. Add cheese sauce; mix well. Meanwhile, brown ground beef in skillet; drain. Add taco seasoning mix and water; simmer until most of the water is cooked off. Add meat mixture to cooked pasta with cheese sauce; mix well. Top with tortilla chips.

Smoke and Spice

Chicken Shells and Cheese

Servings: 3

- 1 package *Velveeta Shells & Cheese Bold, Chipotle*
- 3/4 pound chopped, cooked chicken

Boil 6 cups water in saucepan. Stir in shell pasta; cook 8-10 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally. Drain pasta. Do not rinse. Return to pan. Add cheese sauce and seasoning; mix well. Add chicken to prepared pasta.



Jalapeño-Bacon Shells and Cheese

Servings: 3

- 1 package *Velveeta Shells & Cheese Bold, Jalapeño*
- 4 slices cooked and chopped bacon

Boil 6 cups water in saucepan. Stir in shell pasta and jalapeños; cook 8-10 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally. Drain pasta and jalapeños. Do not rinse. Return to pan. Add cheese sauce; mix well. Add bacon to prepared pasta.

Perfect Your Pasta

No cheesy pasta is complete unless it's perfectly prepared. Follow these dos and don'ts to get your pasta just right:

Do use lots of water. The ideal amount is 4 to 6 quarts per pound of pasta. This allows the pasta enough room to cook without sticking together.

Don't add oil. If you have enough water, you won't need to add oil to prevent sticking.

Do stir pasta when you first add it to the water to prevent it from sticking together and to the bottom of the pot.

Don't throw pasta against the wall. Instead, use the cooking time on the package as a guide, then try a piece to see if it's the right texture. Italians like their pasta "al dente" (a little chewy), but you might like it softer.

Don't rinse cooked pasta; you'll rinse away the starch, which actually helps the sauce stick. Only rinse pasta if it will be used cold, such as in a salad.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Cotton County Rural Water District #2 Has Levels of Arsenic above Drinking Water Standards

Our water system recently violated a drinking water standard. Although this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. The table below shows the average amount of arsenic, in water samples from our system, exceeded the standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for arsenic. The standard for arsenic is 0.010 mg/l.

Sample Site	Twelve Month Period	Arsenic Running Annual Average
Chlorination Station 5 (CL005)	July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015	0.013 mg/l
Chlorination Station 5 (CL005)	April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015	0.012 mg/l

Arsenic in drinking water can come from the erosion of natural deposits, or runoff from orchards, or glass and electronic production wastes.

Este informe contiene información importante acerca de su agua potable. Haga que alguien lo traduzca para usted, o hable con alguien que lo entienda.

What should I do? There is nothing you need to do. You do NOT need to boil your water or take other corrective actions. However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor. If you have a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water.

What does this mean? This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified within 24 hours. Some people who drink water containing arsenic in excess of the MCL over many years could experience skin damage or problems with their circulatory system, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

What is being done? We are working with ODEQ and our engineer to evaluate the water supply and are researching options to correct the problem. These options may include treating the water to remove arsenic or blending the water with our existing wells.

We anticipate resolving the problem by December 31, 2016.

For more information, please contact David Rodriguez at (580) 875-2027 or PO Box 65 Walters, OK 73572.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

This notice is being sent to you by Cotton County Rural Water District #2. State Water System ID#: OK2001702.



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Co-op's principles make a difference

Every October since 1930, not-for-profit cooperatives of all kinds have recognized National Cooperative Month as a way to educate our members about what makes cooperatives different: the seven cooperative principles and how they lead us to do business in a better way. Here are real-life examples of how Cotton Electric follows these principles:

1 Voluntary and Open Membership, and 2 Democratic Member Control

A co-op is open to anyone who is able to use its services, which means any person who moves onto Cotton Electric lines is allowed membership. Democratic member control means members vote for a trustee who represents them on a board that governs the cooperative. District meetings, which are held prior to our annual meeting, serve as the forum for electing trustees.

Annual meetings serve as a way for members to get to know the people who run their co-op, and it's where members are updated on business matters. Thank you to all of our members who recently attended the annual meeting.

3 Members' Economic Participation

Because electric cooperatives are owned by their members, they do not create profits for distant shareholders. Any excess revenue – called "margins" – is allocated back to the membership in the form of capital credits, or patronage capital. Capital credits are "retired" and then paid back to members each year based on their purchases (in



the case of electric cooperatives, electricity) from the cooperative. Margins are used by the co-op as working capital for a period of time, then paid back to individual members.

At this year's annual meeting, CEO Warren Langford announced that the board of trustees authorized a capital credit retirement in the amount of \$500,000. Those checks will soon be in your mailboxes.

Allocating and retiring excess revenue to members helps distinguish cooperatives. We're proud to support our communities by putting money back into the local economy – and into the pockets of those we serve. It makes our business model special.

Nationally, electric cooperatives have retired \$12 billion in capital credits since 1988 – \$814 million in 2013 alone.

4 Autonomy and Independence

Electric cooperatives form a vast network across America. They're found in 47 states, and cooperative-

owned electric lines cover 75 percent of the nation's land mass. But what's unique is that each cooperative is an autonomous, independent business.

We work with our co-op neighbors, but Cotton Electric members are the sole governors of their cooperative, and our member-elected board of trustees approves policies and resolutions that guide the way we do business.

5 Education, Training, and Information

Cooperatives have a charge to keep their members informed – not just about cooperative business, but also about topics such as energy efficiency, safety and community contribution. For example, The Current is one way Cotton Electric keeps its members up on relevant news.

You can also stay informed via our website, Facebook and Twitter.

6 Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Even though co-ops are independent

entities, they still rely on one another to share resources, information, and, in some cases, manpower.

Electric co-ops have long relied on one another to get power restored more quickly after severe weather emergencies. Called "mutual-aid agreements," it works just as it sounds: When Cotton Electric needs extra hands after a natural disaster, like the ice storm of 2010, co-ops from neighboring cooperatives help out. And when neighboring co-ops need help, Cotton Electric sends crews to them in order to restore power more quickly. During the 2010 ice storms, crews from eight co-ops assisted with the restoration efforts.

7 Concern for Community

Possibly the most visible of all the cooperative principles, the last is what drives electric co-ops to be good stewards of the communities they serve. In 2004, the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation was established, and our members have since donated more than \$873,000 to our area communities. Those contributions have made a huge impact in our area with almost \$233,000 contributed to volunteer fire departments.

Cotton Electric undertakes a variety of projects such as the Youth Tour and Energy Camp youth contests, safety presentations at area schools and sponsorship of area community and school events.

While the first priority is delivering safe, affordable and reliable electricity, supporting and contributing to the development of our communities is equally important. Even if there were no concern for community principle, every person who works at Cotton Electric lives here, too. We're friends and neighbors first.

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