

The Current

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

“The Current - Informing Our Members Since 1957”

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Rachel Simon, left, Amber Powers, Hanna Stanton and Abby Wilcox represented Cotton Electric on the 2015 Youth Tour of Washington, D.C.

Flexibility key during 2015 Youth Tour

By Karen Kaley

For the small price of a well-crafted essay about life without electricity, four young women from the Cotton Electric service area earned a spot on the 2015 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. One of those winning essays is on Page 4.

Rachel Simon of Walters, Hanna Stanton of Lawton, Amber Powers of Loco, and Abby Wilcox of Geronimo joined 65 other teens to form the Oklahoma delegation. All had just completed their junior year in Oklahoma high schools. Most of them were from rural communities, all within areas served by electric cooperatives.

As always, the six-day June journey to Washington, D.C., turned out to be more than good times of friend making and sightseeing. It was an opportunity to learn first-hand about the nation's origins and capital city and to appreciate the people who have worked to create and maintain it.

And, with a group consisting of 69 teens and 12 adult chaperones, the importance of planning ahead and following a schedule is underscored. The 2015 tourists also learned the value of

flexibility and creating a Plan B on the fly.

The Oklahoma group had transportation issues from the first day. But, flat tires on buses, delayed airport take-offs and route changes forced by gatherings in D.C. caused only minor inconveniences and certainly didn't take away from the experience.

Setting aside one scheduled stop that first day opened up time for leisurely exploration of Inner Harbor in Baltimore before heading to D.C. Visits to memorials, originally spread across a couple of days, were combined into the remainder of the day.

The group had plenty of time to explore along the Reflecting Pool. The Washington Monument towered in the distance while the teens perused the seated statue of Lincoln, walked among life-size statues of Korean War soldiers, gazed at names of the fallen etched in the Vietnam Memorial and posed for photos at the beautiful World War II Memorial.

From there, it was a short trip to the Jefferson Memorial overlooking the Tidal Basin. The group walked through the sprawling memorial to

Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the adjacent massive Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial.

Rachel said it was amazing to see in person these things she had only heard of and seen in photographs and movies. She said that was a highlight of the trip for her.

The Oklahoma group wore matching red, white and blue T-shirts on the second day of the trip, which also happened to be Flag Day. It was a day of special events in the city, dictating an alternate route to Arlington Cemetery and witnessing a bonus ceremony there. Army Chief of Staff Ray Odierno, accompanied by an Army band and the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment, were conducting a wreath-laying at the Tomb of the Unknowns.

After spending a few afternoon hours exploring various buildings of the Smithsonian Institution, the group finished the patriotic day seeing a dinner theater presentation of "1776, The Musical."

The week of Youth Tour includes delegations from 35 states. Some 1,700 students gathered for a rally Monday morning. The overflow crowd of teens chanted state slogans and traded pins and stickers before hearing from several speakers.

The Oklahoma group gathered later in front of the White House for photos then spent time at the Holocaust Museum. They rejoined groups from other states for an evening cruise of the Potomac.

On Day 4, the yellow-shirted Oklahoma group took in the sights at Mount Vernon, the Newseum and the National Portrait Gallery before heading to Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum and mugging for photos with representations of everyone from Taylor Swift to Teddy Roosevelt.

Hanna said, "The most moving part of the trip was visiting the Newseum and seeing the 9/11 exhibit. Right in

the middle of the display was a large, deformed antenna from one of the towers and it really brought to life all the horror I've seen on TV and helped me understand what we, as a nation, have overcome."

The group finished the day in a shady spot at the Iwo Jima Memorial, watching the Sunset Parade featuring the U.S. Marine Drum and Bugle Corps and a precision drill by the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon.

The fifth day started on the Capitol steps, with the group hearing from Oklahoma Sen. James Lankford. They spent time roaming the gorgeous halls of the Library of Congress before walking to the Supreme Court and the Capitol for more group pictures. They visited the Botanical Gardens and Ford's Theater before heading back to the Smithsonian museums for a few more hours.

That evening, the group gathered once again on the Capitol steps, this time to meet up with Oklahoma's 2nd District Rep. Markwayne Mullin, his wife, Christie, and their five children. Amber said the two-hour private tour of the Capitol led by Mullins was one of the more exciting parts of the trip, a sentiment echoed by Abby and Hanna.

The final day of Youth Tour began with another meeting with Oklahoma legislators: Reps. Jim Bridenstine, Steve Russell and Frank Lucas, along with Sen. Jim Inhofe. There was time for a visit to the International Spy Museum before heading to the airport.

Weather and other problems delayed take-off but the big group made it to Dallas in time to catch a connecting flight, which also had its ups and downs. They arrived in Oklahoma City exhilarated and exhausted.

The trip was over, but one thing will stay with the Youth Tourists always.

Abby summed it up: "We made friendships that I know will last a lifetime."



Renovation scaffolding surrounds the dome of the Capitol behind Oklahoma's Youth Tour teens as they pose for one of many group photos while visiting Washington, D.C. More photos on Page 24.

Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment now being applied to bills mailed after July 1, 2015, is \$0.01440 per kWh.

On a member's average bill of 1500 kilowatt hours (kWh), this will amount to a charge of \$21.60 on the July bill.

June 2015 Temperature Extremes

Day	High	Low	Avg.	Day	High	Low	Avg.
1	84	59	72	16	87	71	79
2	90	66	78	17	77	72	75
3	91	69	80	18	91	72	82
4	92	68	80	19	94	69	82
5	91	65	78	20	94	71	83
6	93	67	80	21	93	71	82
7	94	67	81	22	93	73	83
8	94	69	82	23	94	68	81
9	96	67	82	24	95	72	84
10	99	68	84	25	95	74	85
11	96	73	85	26	90	74	82
12	93	67	80	27	90	66	78
13	85	68	77	28	93	62	78
14	85	69	77	29	97	68	83
15	86	70	78	30	97	68	83

Source: srh.noaa.gov/oum/

Average Daily High: 92 Average Daily Low: 69

Did You Know?

Cotton Electric members in Districts 1, 3 and 5 will have an opportunity to meet and elect representatives this year. Times dates and places of District Meetings will be in the August issue of The Current.

The next issue of The Current should arrive in mailboxes on Aug. 17.

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

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

By Jennifer Meason



Conserving energy on hot summer days can lower power cost. You can make a difference by lowering energy use from 4-6 p.m. on peak consumption days.

Only 2 Hours!

Conserve energy by making simple adjustments:

Turn off appliances, computers, televisions, game systems and other electric devices that are not being used.

Delay using hot water, especially if you have a tankless water heater.

Close curtains & blinds to prevent the sun from heating up your home.

Use washing machines, dryers and other major appliances during low energy use times, such as early morning or late evening.

Beat the Peak hours revised

Cotton Electric established our Beat the Peak program in 2009 as a way to help members learn how to use energy wisely, especially during peak periods when the cost of power is higher.

In Oklahoma, the demand is greatest in the late summer afternoons. As demand increases, electric suppliers must produce the needed power themselves or purchase it on the market. Consequently, the costs are greater during this peak time when demand is high. These higher costs are reflected in the power cost adjustment applied to the monthly bill.

Over the last six years, the Beat the Peak program has evolved in order to better manage peak periods. Technology continues to improve, and has allowed us to narrow the timeframe for our peak alerts. The peak timeframe will now be shortened to two hours between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. instead of the four-hour period we called in previous years.

The alert process will remain the same. When Cotton Electric determines that a peak alert should be issued, members will be notified by email or text message asking that they reduce the energy used between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. We will also post alerts on Twitter and Facebook.

When you receive a peak alert, we ask that you make a few small changes to help make a big impact overall. We ask that you turn off unnecessary lights or appliances, delay the use of major appliances such as dishwashers, washing machines and clothes dryers, and adjust your thermostat a few degrees.

Thank you to the 781 members who currently participate in the program. If you haven't signed up, we hope you'll join the team and help Beat the Peak this summer. The more participation we have, the bigger the savings for the cooperative family.

To join the effort, please visit our Web site at www.cottonelectric.com.

Invest in efficiency and watch your savings grow

By Meghaan Evans

It is the middle of the summer, temperatures are rising and so are your electric bills. It might be time to make a big investment, an investment in energy efficiency.

Making your home more energy efficient is still one of the safest investments you can make. Try employing these energy-saving measures to collect major returns on your investments:

- Install a programmable thermostat
- Install a hot water heater "blanket"
- Change your shower heads
- Upgrade appliances like your clothes washer or your refrigerator
- Replace old windows with energy-efficient ones
- Install water-efficient toilets

Making all of these changes at once could be difficult – if not impossible – but investing in just one of these measures can yield a significant return on your investment.

For example, installing a new, energy-efficient clothes washer can yield around a 24 percent return on investment. Do your research, and make sure you are purchasing the right size appliances. A small, energy-efficient washer will save you money, but if you have a larger family, having to do multiple loads could negate your energy savings.

Multiple energy-efficient upgrades will help you save no matter where you live or what time of year it is, but upgrading to efficient home cooling systems will help lower energy costs significantly during the hotter months of the year.

Six percent of American energy consumption goes toward space cooling and it costs \$11 billion per year for homeowners to power their air conditioners. You can reduce your energy use by 20 to 50 percent when you upgrade to energy-efficient home cooling unit. One option is to install a split unit air

conditioner and heating unit –they can be more expensive, but they are highly efficient, especially in homes without ductwork. Another option is to invest in an Energy Star approved air conditioning unit, which can be 15 percent more efficient than a standard unit.

If buying a new cooling unit isn't in the cards for you this summer, no need to worry! Replacing appliances isn't the only way to lower energy costs, one of the most important energy-efficient improvements to make during the hot summer months is air sealing and insulating. By adding insulation in attics, floors over crawl spaces and accessible basement rim joints, you can reduce your heating and cooling costs by an average of 15 percent (and it could lower your overall energy costs by an average of 11 percent!).

You can also lower your air conditioners energy consumption by between 5 and 15 percent by cleaning your air ducts. You can install energy-efficient window treatments, which can reduce energy costs by around 10 percent. Or, you can simply turn on a ceiling fan, which will allow you to raise your thermostat temperature by four degrees, without impacting your comfort.

Investing in any of these energy-efficient improvements will keep you cool in the summer, warm in the winter and will make significant changes to your energy bills. So do yourself, and your wallet, a favor and invest in a more energy-efficient home!

Sources: Energy.gov, EnergyStar.gov, NRDC.gov

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

By cleaning your air conditioner's air ducts, you can lower your energy consumption by between 5 and 15 percent.

Source: energy.gov

The Current

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May 2015 Operating Stats

	2015	2014
Total Amount Billed/Accrued	\$4,992,457	\$5,871,178
Cost of Purchased Power	3,511,417	4,357,729
Taxes	92,652	103,553
Total Operating Expense Per Mile	964	1,146
Average Farm and Residential Bill	115	133
Average Farm and Residential kWh	869	1,043
Total Meters Billed (farm, residential)	18,265	18,181
Miles Energized	5,147	5,139
Density Per Mile	3.55	3.54
New Service Connects YTD	129	141
Services Retired	94	82



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 August issue, please submit information by Aug. 3, by calling 580-875-4255 or send an email to info@cottonelectric.com.

CCC, WPA refuge memories sought

Friends of the Wichitas and the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge are looking for families who have, or had, a family member who worked with the CCC or WPA on Refuge projects to share their stories or photographs.

Volunteers will do one-on-one interviews and scan photographs of construction and CCC or WPA workers.

The event will take place at 2 p.m. Sunday, July 19, at the Environmental Education Center on the north side of Quanah Parker Lake. Email ellenfj@sbcglobal.net for information or call 405-701-3723.

Geronimo closet seeks donations

Got a closetful of gently-used clothes the kids have outgrown? Need to make room for a newer back-to-school wardrobe? Why not donate?

Community Free Closet in Geronimo needs clothes and shoes appropriate for school-age children and teens.

The Community Free Closet offers clothing, bedding, food, toys, shoes, small household items and even pet accessories to anyone who needs them. Hours are 8 to 10 a.m. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

For information or to arrange pickup of a donation, call Darlene Poindexter at 580-585-1754.

GoldSkye hosting free Saturdays

Families looking for budget-friendly fun should plan a day at GoldSkye Ranch Resort, where Saturdays are free days through the end of September.

From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., families can enjoy the swimming pool and waterpark, play basketball or volleyball, or go fishing. There is a small charge for horseback riding and the paddleboats.

The resort is located between Fletcher and Sterling. Visit GoldSkyeResort.com to see a map and find more information.

Walters Rodeo begins with parade

All individuals, horse riders, clubs and organizations are encouraged to walk, ride a horse or drive a float in the annual rodeo parade kicking off the Walters Round-Up Club Rodeo and Comanche Homecoming Pow Wow.

Parade lineup begins at 4 p.m. Thursday, July 16, at Broadway and Nevada for all entries except riding clubs, which will gather at Nevada and Sixth. Judging for floats, Best Dressed Cowgirl, Cowboy, Indian Girl and Indian Boy, and Best Decorated Bicycle will be during the hour before the parade kicks off at 5 p.m.

The rodeo begins at 8 p.m. nightly, July 16-18, at the Max Phillips Rodeo Arena west of town.

The pow wow, held July 17-19 in Sultan Park, features numerous dances and contests for all age ranges. For information, call 580-350-7374.

For parade information, call 580-875-3335. For rodeo information, call 580-252-6670.

Day of the Cowboy is July 25

Yeehaw! The National Day of the Cowboy is Saturday, July 25. Explore the wonder of the old West during the 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. celebration inside the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center, 1000 Chisholm Trail Parkway, Duncan.

Admission is free on this special day filled with plenty of family activities, music and special guests. The Heritage Center's exhibits are full of surprises including the 4-D experience theater, the animatronic Jesse Chisholm Campfire theater and much more.

This year's event will highlight the Singing Cowboy. Special exhibits include "Grand Ole Opry" featuring 30 original gelatin silver prints from the 1950s by Gordon Gillingham.

For information, visit OnTheChisholmTrail.com or call 580-252-6692.

Dehydrator set to pedal away

The 25th annual Dehydrator is a bicycle ride with varied mile routes. Riders leave at 7 a.m. July 25 from the Simmons Center in Duncan.

Entry fees are \$25 per person, \$40 per tandem team, non-refundable. A free T-shirt goes to the first 500 entries. A \$5 late fee will be assessed on entries after July 18.

For information and registration forms, visit thedehydrator.org.

OHCE sponsors workshops

Oklahoma Home and Community Education (OHCE) of Stephens County is hosting four workshops from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. July 27 in the Heritage Room and kitchen area of the Stephens County fair building.

The workshops will be Magic Christmas Stocking, "Hexies" – English Paper Piecing, Rag Rug made from T-shirts, and Microwave Candy. All workshops will run concurrently. There will be two 2-hour rag rug sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. There will be four 45-minute sessions of all other workshops, two in the morning and two in the afternoon.

There will be a \$5 charge for the meal. Registration by July 17 is necessary for a meal count and to give participants a list of supplies needed for each project.

To register, call Brenda Gandy, OSU Extension Educator, at 580-255-0510.

LCT opens with Charlie Brown

Lawton Community Theatre opens its 64th season with "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown." Auditions are scheduled for 7 p.m. July 27 and 28 at the John Denney Playhouse, 1316 NW Bell Avenue, Lawton.

The presentation is a musical, and those auditioning must have a prepared song and be dressed for dancing. Accompaniment will be provided.

Performance dates are set for Sept. 11-13 and 17-20.

For information, visit LCT-OK.org.

Velma plans 125th picnic

The Old Settlers 125th Annual Picnic will be at Humphrey Park in Velma. Festivities kick off with a ranch rodeo at 7:30 p.m. July 29. Activities will continue through Aug. 1.

A rodeo will be held at 7:30 each night. Team roping slack begins at 9 a.m. July 30 and 31, and steer tripping is at 1 p.m. July 31. The final day begins with a parade at 11 a.m., rodeo at 1 p.m.

Admission is free to all events, including the dance featuring a live band Friday and Saturday nights.

For information, call Chad Cowan at 580-444-3726.

Lakeside offers one-day VBS

Lakeside Baptist Church is hosting a one-day vacation Bible school. Children Pre-K through 6th grade will not want to miss the fun, food, games, crafts and free T-shirt while learning to Glow for God.

GLOW VBS will be from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Aug. 1. Parents can drop kids off for this free day of entertainment provided by The Bubba Adventure and Puppets for the Master.

The church is located just behind Clear Creek Lake dam in Stephens County. For information, call 580-333-0014.

More Community Spotlight on Page 5

Photo of the Month



This little firecracker is Davie Jo. The entry in our INDEPENDENCE DAY photo contest was submitted by Cotton Electric members and proud grandparents Melanie and David Simmons of Elgin. Her parents are Zach & Jordan Bethel of Geronimo and paternal grandparents are Mike and Becky Bethel of Lawton.

Enter your "best shot" in our Photo of the Month contest. Theme for August is AT THE BEACH. 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.

Oklahoma Living calls for calendar photo entries

Oklahoma Living magazine announces the opening of the 2016 Calendar Contest. Submissions can win as much as \$200 and have their photography published in the state's largest subscription-based monthly publication.

First, readers must take a photo in Oklahoma. Second, readers may choose which category is the most fitting for their photo. Third, readers may submit entries either online or through the mail.

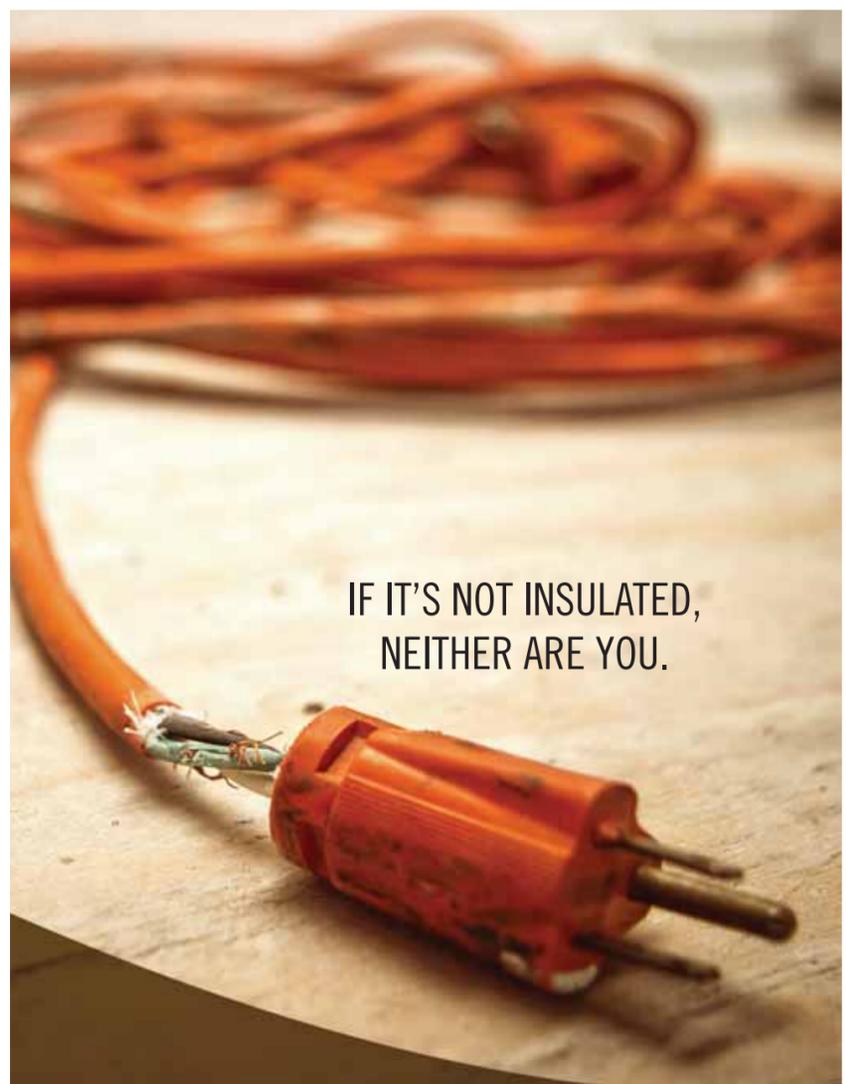
Submitted photos will be considered for the 2016 Photo Calendar, which will be sold through Oklahoma Living. There is a \$5 entry fee for each

photo submitted. Funds generated from entries and calendar sales will benefit NRECA International Foundation, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to bringing electricity to the world, one village at a time.

One grand-prize winner will receive \$200 and 12 other winners will receive a gift card. All winning photos will be published in Oklahoma Living and the 2016 Photo Calendar.

Entries must be received by Aug. 3. For more details, visit www.ok-living.coop/contests.

Oklahoma Living magazine is published by the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives.



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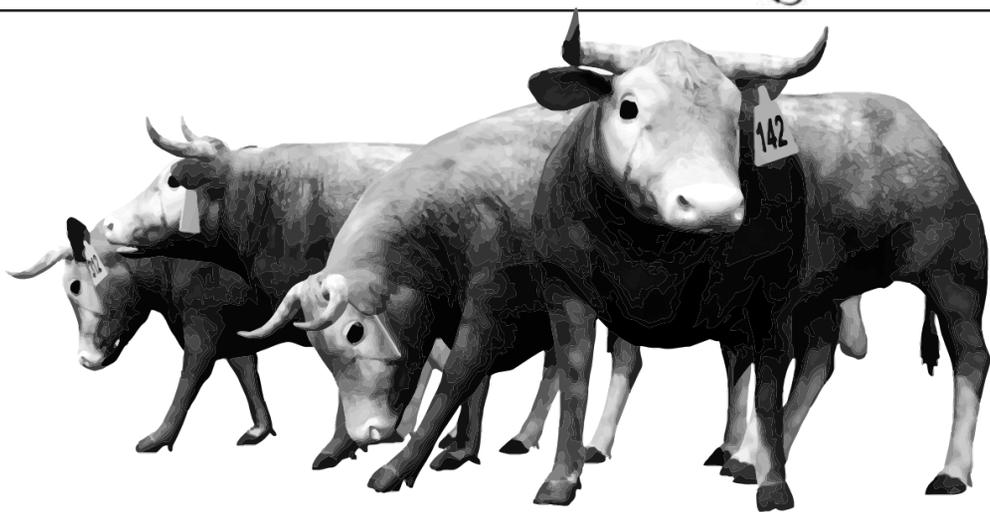
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2015 stocker cattle conference in Lawton

Oklahoma and Texas are famous for their cattle heritage, a large part of which is the cattle trails.

Cattle drives in the late 1800s moved millions of head of cattle from central and south Texas, through western Oklahoma, to the railheads in Kansas and, in some cases, as far north as Montana. Two of the more famous cattle trails were the Chisholm Trail and the Great Western Trail.

The Chisholm Trail started in central Texas and crossed the Red River northwest of Nocona, Texas. It moved up through central Oklahoma near the towns of Waurika, Duncan and Oklahoma City, ending at the railheads in Kansas.

The Great Western Trail began near Bandera, Texas, and moved

cattle through central Texas passing east of Abilene. The trail crossed into Oklahoma at the historic Doan's Crossing near Vernon, Texas, and proceeded through western Oklahoma to its conclusion near Dodge City, Kansas.

The land area between these two cattle trails still record cattle movements. Today, it is either in the mode of cow-calf operations or stocker cattle movements. This area is also the home of the Cattle Trails Wheat and Stocker Cattle Conference.

The conference is a joint effort between Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. The annual conference includes up-to-date information on topics that will influence profits.

In effect, the conference assists wheat and stocker cattle producers from southern Oklahoma and north Texas in driving their operations to profits.

The conference alternates between Oklahoma and Texas each year. In 2015, the conference will be held July 28 at the Comanche County Coliseum, 920 South Sheridan in Lawton.

Registration is \$25 per participant. This will include a noon meal, break refreshments, and materials of the topics discussed. Pre-registration is encouraged for an accurate meal count.

Owners and operators interested in attending should contact the local County Extension office. Information is also available at 580-255-0546 or by sending an email to marty.new@okstate.edu.

Community Spotlight

Lawton Rangers Rodeo begins Aug. 5

More than 400 top cowboys and cowgirls are expected to compete in the Lawton Rangers Rodeo set for Aug. 5-8 at L.O. Ranch Arena, 2004 SE 60th Street in Lawton. Featured events include barrel racing, tie-down roping, team roping, steer wrestling, bareback and saddle bronc riding and bull riding.

Gates open at 6:30 p.m. each night and Grand Entry begins at 7:30. Reduced-price admission is on Family Nights, Wednesday and Thursday. Tickets can be purchased at Crutcher's, Showman's Choice, Ruben's Shoes, Atwoods and all Lawton E-Z Go Stores.

Historical society plans annual meeting

Southwestern Oklahoma Historical Society will hold its annual meeting at 7 p.m. Aug. 13 in a new location, Building 100 at Great Plains Tech Center in Lawton. There is no admission fee, and the meeting is open to the public.

The event will feature entertainment from award-winning cowboy singer and songwriter Kevin Davis of Walters, and Constitution speaker Derald Ahlschlager.

The society will provide refreshments, and back issues of "Prairie Lore" will be available. For information about the group, visit SWOKHS.org.

Fiesta in Fuqua set for Aug. 15

Fiesta in Fuqua is a free, fun-filled day in the park for school-aged children featuring opportunities to exercise and be immunized. After completing activities, kids receive a package of school supplies.

Fun begins at 8 a.m. and runs through 11:30 on Aug. 15 at the park on U.S. Highway 81 in Duncan.

All children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Those wishing to receive immunizations must have shot records with them.

Sponsored by New Life Church and New Hope Baptist Church West, a portion of the cost of the event is defrayed by a grant from Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation. For information, call New Life Church at 580-736-4455.

Philharmonic celebrates American composers

Opener for Lawton Philharmonic's 2015 season, "An American Salute," is a celebration of American composers.

John Williams' soaring arrangement of the "Star Spangled Banner" is followed by Stephenson's Stars and Stripes Fanfare. Pianist Andrew Staupé returns to play Samuel Barber's breathtaking "Piano Concerto." To conclude, it's all Gershwin, with music from Porgy and Bess and An American in Paris.

Performance begins at 8 p.m. Aug. 29 in McMahon Memorial Auditorium, 801 NW Ferris Avenue, Lawton.

Tickets may be purchased by calling 580-531-5043 or visiting LawtonPhil.com

Comanche Nation Fair begins Sept. 25

Set against the picturesque backdrop of the Wichita Mountains, the 24th annual Comanche Nation Fair will be Sept. 25-27 at the Comanche Nation Headquarters, 584 NW Bingo Road, Lawton.

The fair offers free entertainment and activities for the entire family, including dances, hand games, a rodeo and a parade, fun runs, a carnival, arts and crafts booths and Native American foods.

For information, visit comanchenation.com or call 580-492-3384.

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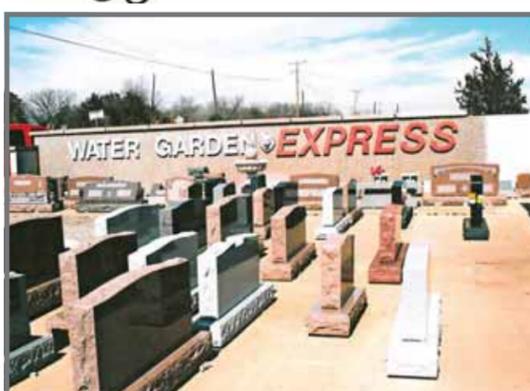
Some restrictions may apply. Services where available. Up to three connections waived. After 3 connections, additional connections are \$20 each.

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Landscaping Material
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Grady McCord, Owner

2015 Youth Tour essay topic: Life in rural southwest Oklahoma without Cotton Electric Cooperative

Cotton Electric provides power, security, charity, concern for community



Hanna Stanton
Lawton High School

Editor's note: Four area high school juniors recently won a trip to Washington, D.C., in Cotton Electric's annual Youth Tour essay contest. Each of the essays will appear in The Current.

Seven years ago, when a devastating ice storm struck my town and knocked down power lines everywhere, my bright little 11-year-old life went dark. I opened the refrigerator, and the chocolate milk was warm. I turned on the light switch, and realized the only glow in my bedroom would be coming from the sun shining through the windows. I adjusted the thermostat and, shivering, realized that it would be a three-dog night.

I might as well have been living in 1934, when electric lines had not yet been built to reach rural areas of Oklahoma. Farmers and country-dwellers alike had to make up for the lack of electricity with their own power, spending nearly 10 hours a week hauling clean water to their homes and taking on the backbreaking task of continuously chopping, stacking, and carrying firewood.

It wasn't until May of 1935 that action was even taken -- action brought about by resilient farmers who made up the first electric cooperatives and who financed the building of the first power lines in rural areas of Oklahoma. Since then, not only have the lights come on for farmers across the country; but electric cooperatives, like Cotton Electric, have grown into organizations that give back to the communities that created them by supporting nearby schools, helping local wildlife, and adding a personal touch to a formerly purely professional business.

The service Cotton Electric provides would leave more than a need for electricity if it were to disappear.

Before I go further, I want to make clear that the ice storm several years ago took away more

than electricity and some appliances. It affected my emotions and my psyche, too. Oh, sure, we had candles, but the sense of surrounding darkness was tinged with a bit of fear and, I must admit, a feeling of loneliness, of being cut off.

If it was that way for me, I can hardly imagine the feelings of rural Oklahomans before Cotton Electric. They were truly in darkness. No amount of candles could illuminate the surrounding farmlands at night. And, while big city folks were enjoying radios and records, rural Oklahomans were kept from the doings of the larger world and couldn't help but feel isolated and alone. Thank goodness that, today, Cotton Electric keeps such feelings of fear, loneliness, and isolation at bay.

And there's even more to it than that. Today, Oklahomans from Fletcher to Terral benefit from the charity Cotton Electric Co-op provides. In 2004, Cotton Electric launched the program Operation Round Up to support communities by urging members to round their bill up to the next dollar and donate the change to the cooperative. From buying new uniforms for Bray-Doyle's baseball team to purchasing an emergency generator for the town of Indianola, this program has helped communities that would otherwise lack adequate funds.

Not only does Cotton Electric work with the community, but it also establishes a relationship with their members, whom they refuse to call customers. When high winds knocked two young red-tailed hawks from their nest in members Bill and Karen Blanton's power lines, they reported the incident to Wildcare of Noble, Oklahoma. The next day, Cotton Electric linemen Terry Turner and Larry Crowell turned up to help Wildcare's director get in a bucket truck so that she could set up a replacement nest for the birds.

Other electric companies wouldn't even consider using their resources for something that wasn't their responsibility. Obviously, Cotton Electric possesses and spreads the friendly spirit of Oklahoma.

In the event that Cotton Electric went away, the implications for its members would be monumental.

In an edition of the cooperative's newspaper, The Current, Karen Kaley notes that a member is "more than a customer to [the cooperative]," and that "many of the ultimate decisions about the co-op are made by the board of trustees that is composed of members."

This proves that Cotton Electric takes great pride in its members' involvement.

In addition, Cotton Electric only wishes to break even in its expenditures and income; whereas, other companies exist to make money off of their customers. Aiming to make a profit, electric companies' "low prices" would be higher than a nonprofit cooperative's whose prices are proportional to their expense. While the same electricity would be provided, rural southwest Oklahoma would not be the same with the loss of Cotton Electric Cooperative.

When electricity finally reached rural areas, one woman in North Carolina described it as "coming out of the dark age."

With all the manual labor required of farmers to survive prior to electricity, the comparison is not hard to see.

Today, Cotton Electric has brought light to the rural areas of southwest Oklahoma with their bright spirits. Operating only to serve themselves, a regular electric company would once again cast darkness across the plains of Oklahoma if it were to replace the bright Cotton Electric.

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What Happens to My IRA After I'm Gone?

Contributing to an IRA can help you build some of the resources you will need to enjoy a comfortable retirement. But what happens to your IRA if you don't use it up in your lifetime?

You can still put the IRA's assets to good use — as long as you've made the right moves and communicated your wishes clearly to your family.

When you opened your IRA, you should have named a beneficiary — someone who will receive the IRA assets when you pass away. You could also name a contingent beneficiary if the first beneficiary dies before you. These beneficiary designations are important because they can supersede the instructions left in your will.

If you name your spouse as beneficiary of your IRA, he or she has options unavailable to other beneficiaries. Here

are two possibilities:

Roll over assets into a new or an existing IRA — Your surviving spouse can roll over your IRA's assets into his or her IRA or use the money to create a new IRA. And, as long as your spouse is eligible, he or she can then add new contributions to the IRA. This could be a good choice if your spouse won't need the money right away and would like to keep it in a tax-advantaged account for as long as possible. Upon reaching age 70½, though, your spouse will likely need to start taking withdrawals ("required minimum distributions"), unless the inherited IRA was a Roth IRA.

Convert the assets to a Roth IRA — If you are leaving a traditional IRA to your spouse, he or she could roll over the assets into a new or an exist-

ing IRA and then convert the assets into a Roth IRA. This move gives your spouse at least two potential advantages. First, if certain requirements are met, no taxes are due on the withdrawals. Second, as mentioned above, no withdrawals are even required — your spouse can leave the money intact for as long as desired. However, taxes will be due on the amount converted to a Roth, so this conversion may only make sense if your spouse has enough assets available in a nonretirement account to pay the tax bill.

Thus far, we've just talked about your spouse as the beneficiary. But what might happen if you've named someone else — perhaps a child or grandchild — as the primary beneficiary of your IRA? In this case, the beneficiary won't have the option of rolling over the

IRA. Instead, he or she can either take the money as a lump sum or take distributions over time. If you pass away before age 70½, and you hadn't started taking the required minimum distributions, your beneficiary must start taking withdrawals by Dec. 31 in the year following the year in which you pass away. These withdrawals can be stretched out over your beneficiary's lifetime, though, spreading out the tax obligations. As an alternative, your beneficiary can delay taking distributions, but he or she would need to withdraw all the money within 5 years of your death.

When dealing with any aspect of your estate plans, including naming beneficiaries for your IRA, you'll want to consult with your tax and legal professionals. You put a lot of time and effort into building the assets in your IRA — so you'll also want to take care in how you pass these assets along.

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Download CECF grant applications at CottonElectric.com.

Deadline for third-quarter 2014 grant applications is Aug. 27

Since its inception in 2004, CECF has issued grants to a variety of groups:

VFD	\$233,648.00
Community	187,779.54
Youth	113,918.11
Schools	101,416.26
Services	92,166.15
Individuals	52,750.00
Public Safety	48,299.00
Seniors	27,949.00
Grand Total	\$857,926.06

CECF issues 2nd-quarter grants

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

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

The funds are pooled and administered by the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation, a board of directors that meets quarterly to consider grant applications. The board consists of Warren Langford, the co-op’s CEO; Tim McCary, president of the co-op’s board of trustees; and three representatives from the Cotton Electric service area: Carly Douglass, Danny Marlett and Carter Waid.

The board met in June to review 13 grant applications. Grants totaling \$22,987.59 will be distributed to 10 of the applicants. Second-quarter grants include:

- Beautiful Day Foundation will use a \$2,000 CECF grant to provide birthday meals for children in Duncan elementary schools.
- Duncan Area Literacy Council will purchase bilingual dictionaries and workbooks with a \$789 CECF grant.
- Duncan Little Theatre will use a \$3,500 CECF grant to repair the building housing its costumes.
- The City of Elgin will purchase police body cameras with a \$1,500 CECF grant.
- Fiesta in Fuqua will use a \$500 CECF grant to purchase school supplies.
- Oakridge Volunteer Fire Department will purchase chainsaws, leaf blowers and a ventilation fan with a \$3,800 CECF grant.
- Randlett Volunteer Fire Department will use a \$3,500 CECF grant to replace wildland gear.
- Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma will supplement Food for Kids backpack programs in the CEC service area with a \$2,000 CECF grant.
- Rockin’ T Cure For Kids will use a \$2,897.99 CECF grant to repair a concession trailer used during fundraising events.
- Team CE will use a \$2,500 CECF grant to help with expenses of a teen with Down syndrome who has won an opportunity to represent Oklahoma on a national level.

CECF has awarded or pledged grants totaling \$857,926.06 since the foundation was established in 2004.

Applications for second-quarter grants are due by Aug. 26. Downloadable applications are available at CottonElectric.com.

7th annual benefit tourney draws 22 teams to Territory

Gusty winds and muggy temperatures in the 90s made for a challenging outing when 88 golfers turned out for the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation Summer Classic on June 22 at The Territory Golf and Country Club in Duncan.

The seventh year for the event drew 22 teams that were divided into two flights.

In a scorecard playoff, the team of Judd Davidson, Bryce Hooper, Jimmie Dedmon and Jacob Robertson, representing JH Davidson and Associates, placed first with a score of 55 in the Championship Flight.

The team of Dustin Keplinger, Steve Cordes, Scott Watson and Clint Powell, representing Southwest Oklahoma Federal Credit Union, was second in the flight with a score of 55.

Four strokes behind, the team of Jimmy Coslett, Mike Ottinger, Kenny Guffey and Wade Hurst had a score of 59, putting the Utility Plus, Inc. team at third in the Championship Flight.

Scorecard playoffs were used to determine the top three placings in the “A” Flight. Each team had an overall score of 66. First place in “A” Flight went to Hornbeek Vitali & Braun’s team of Adam Belusko, Dan Bryan, Taylor Clark and Malcolm Champlin.

Second place in “A” Flight was awarded to the Texas Meter and Device team composed of Sam Gonzales, Cody Pennington, Jason Red Elk and Josh Belcher. Third place in “A”

Flight went to the team of Barry Holt, Mike Zaccardo, Keith Bonham and Mike Hagy, representing Texas Electric Cooperatives.

Closest to pin awards went to Terry Ryel on the fourth hole; Melvin Jones, eighth hole; Ryan Aduddell, 13th hole; and Judd Davidson, 17th hole.

Scott Watson won the men’s longest drive on Number 10. Zana Crowson of the D&R Right of Way team won the ladies’ longest drive on the 10th hole.

“We would like to express our appreciation to the players who took time to support this great cause and to the hole sponsors and contributors who continue to help make the tournament a success,” said Bryce Hooper, director of marketing and economic development for Cotton Electric.

“We would also like to thank Tim Johnson and his staff at The Territory for having the course in excellent shape and always going out of their way to take care of our tournament participants,” Hooper said.

Proceeds generated by the tournament will be added to funds collected through Cotton Electric’s Operation Round Up, a voluntary program in which participating members have monthly power bills rounded up to the next dollar. Those contributions, along with proceeds from the Summer Classic, are distributed by Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation to organizations and individuals in need.



Club house at The Territory.

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The team of Judd Davidson, left, Jimmie Dedmon, Jacob Robertson and Bryce Hooper, representing JH Davidson and Associates, tied for first with a score of 55 and won the scorecard playoff in the Championship Flight of the CECF Summer Classic.



The team of Scott Watson, left, Steve Cordes, Dustin Keplinger and Clint Powell, representing Southwest Oklahoma Federal Credit Union, was runner-up in the Championship Flight of the seventh annual Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation Summer Classic.



The team of Adam Belusko, Taylor Clark, Malcolm Champlin and Dan Bryan, representing Hornbeek Vitali & Braun, tied for first with a score of 66 and won the scorecard playoff in the "A" Flight of the sixth annual Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation Summer Classic.



Representing Texas Meter and Device, Josh Belcher, Cody Pennington, Sam Gonzales, and Jason Red Elk placed second in the "A" Flight of the CECF Summer Classic.

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New place, same great items

A Touch of Bliss moves to north Broadway in Marlow

By Karen Kaley

Bringing new life to old things and creating a comfortable atmosphere is what the folks at A Touch of Bliss are all about. During the past decade, they have rescued, restored and renewed hundreds of items and massaged the distressed into something that works well.

That applies to so much more than furniture and home décor.

Late in 2014, owners and mother-daughter team Sherri Maxwell and Ashlie Magby put the building housing A Touch of Bliss on the market. It's not that they were unhappy with the location in downtown Marlow, it was just a bit too spacious.

They didn't have any big expectations. If the building sold, OK. If not, they were OK where they were.

"We had a contract in 10 days," Maxwell said, recalling with a bit of a grimace. All of a sudden, they had to scramble to find a new location.

Maxwell and Magby wondered about a lot on Broadway, the stretch of U.S. Highway 81 that passes through town. The women asked the owners of Patio Casa, located just south of the lot, if they knew who owned it.

Turns out, Patio Casa was shutting down and that building at 804 N. Broadway would be available.

"It's like it was all just meant to be. God was pointing the way," Maxwell said.

The building was the right size and had the key elements. There was space for Magby to continue offering massage therapy. There was an area for a showroom and

A Touch of Bliss
10% off store purchases or
\$5 off 1/2- or 1-hour massage



The staff at A Touch of Bliss includes Heather LaBarbera, Ashlie Magby, Paula Martinez, Sherri Maxwell and Reba Poston.



an area in the back for a workshop.

None of that was move-in ready, but the women applied the same philosophy to the building as they apply to old wooden furniture they consider for restoration at A Touch of Bliss.

"If it has good bones and is strong, it has potential."

They spent about three months doing what they do best: Cleaning up, painting, renovating and repurposing. The result is a cozy new spot to showcase the eclectic furnishings and décor they offer.

The workshop is the last portion to be readied, and Maxwell said it won't be long until they resume the work of restoring and painting cabinets, tables and chairs in sets or separates, bed-

room furniture, dressers and buffets.

The furnishings are complimented with the store's offerings of unusual lamps, tin ware, wall hangings and quirky items such as baskets made of wooden rulers. Maxwell observed that it is hard to describe in just a few words the eclectic offerings but said many customers find something ideal for any home in southwest Oklahoma.

The items are affordable, too. Cotton Electric members can present a Co-op Connections Card and get a 10 percent discount of store purchases. The Card is also good for \$5 off a one-hour or 1/2-hour massage therapy session with Magby, the touch part of A Touch of Bliss.

Magby's service is available by appoint-

ment only. Call her at 580-658-9026 or 580-641-2275.

She stays booked up, so plan ahead. It will be worth the wait. You'll feel so good, you'll want to share with others, so remember to ask about gift certificates.

After your massage, take time to look around A Touch of Bliss. You will find just the right thing to make a tired spot in your home look as restored as you feel.

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STORM SAFETY WORD SEARCH



Summer is the season for fun in the sun, but this time of year can also bring dangerous storms with lightning, wind and heavy rain. Remember to stay safe!

- If you hear thunder, seek shelter.
- Avoid flooded areas.
- Never go near a downed power line.

Circle all words associated with summer storms. The hidden words appear straight across, backwards, up and down, and diagonally. Use the word bank below as a guide.

WORD BANK

- DANGER
- LIGHTNING
- SHELTER
- WIRES
- POWER LINE
- STORM CLOUD
- FLOODING
- SAFETY
- THUNDER



Guests receive one ticket for every 50 points earned on their Comanche Club Card July 5, 2015-August 1, 2015. Players must check in for drawings beginning at 6PM via kiosk swipe or carded play on a slot machine.

(On slot machine they must insert and remove card and then reinsert card) Every Friday and Saturday beginning July 11th, one confirmed winner will be drawn approximately every 30 minutes from 7pm-10:30pm to reveal a prize from the Christmas Palm Tree and will receive one of the following prizes: Apple Ipad mini, \$250 Comanche Credit, 48" TV, \$250 Wal-Mart Gift Card, \$125 Wal-Mart Gift Card, \$100 Wal-Mart Gift Card, \$50 Wal-Mart Gift Card or \$50 Comanche Credit.

A winner can only claim one prize from the Christmas Palm Tree per evening. At 11:00PM the grand prize of \$500 Comanche Credit will be given away and all players will be eligible to win the grand prize drawing of \$500 Comanche Credit per night.

The drawing hopper will be emptied every Saturday after the promotion has ended.



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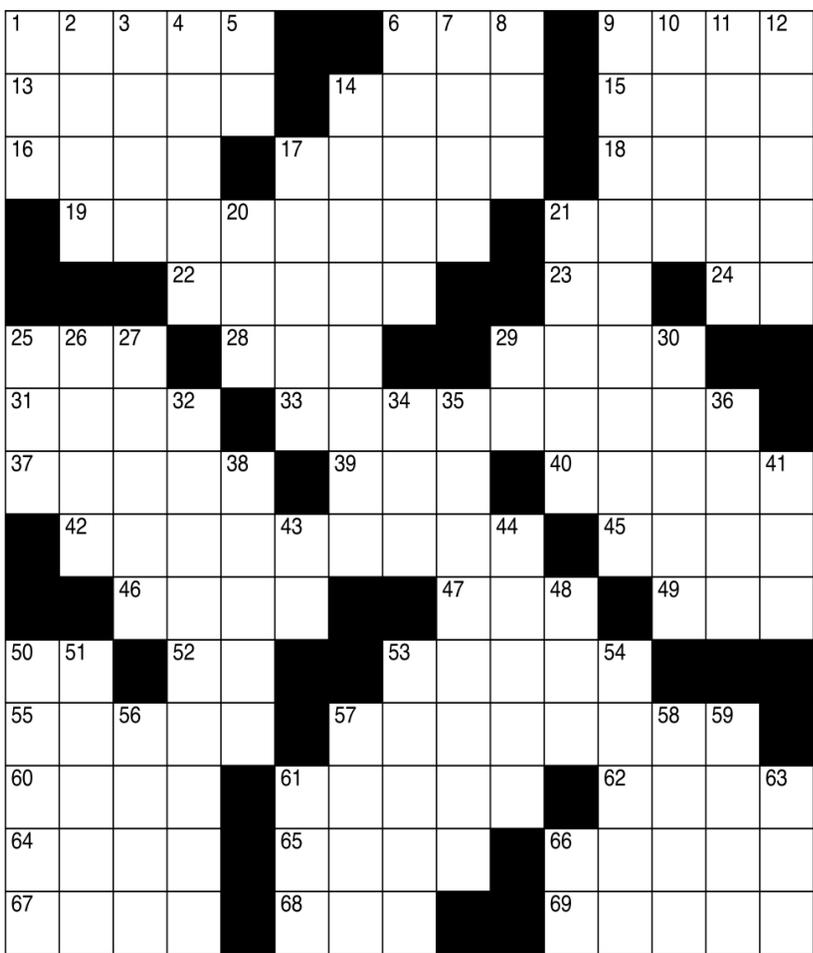
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ACROSS

- Islamic prayer leaders
- Waterproof raincoat
- Millisecond
- Popular pie nut
- A field of mowed grass
- RCO organic group
- Pomace brandy
- The innermost parts
- Gull suborder
- Became more intense
- Sound absorption unit
- Rattling breaths
- Indicates doctor
- For instance
- A doctrine or system
- Foot (Latin)
- Dirt shoulder
- Horn sound
- Mumbai film industry
- Disturbance
- Zedong or Tse-tung
- Cibin River city
- Kate's sister Pippa
- Twitches
- Formal close (music)
- A baglike structure
- Lease
- Typographical space
- Pa's partner
- King mackerels
- Ceremonial staffs
- About money
- Spoiled child
- Infants
- Semitic fertility god
- ___ Frank's diary
- Reimbursed
- English pennies
- 365 days



- G. Gershwin's brother
- Stopping device

DOWN

- Inches per minute (abbr.)
- Medieval honey drink
- Land area unit
- One who carries #55 across
- Tin
- Adult female horses
- Overwhelmed with wonder
- Brain and spinal cord (abbr.)
- Inept
- One who replaces a striker

- Any habitation at a high altitude
- Hold fast to
- Sad from being alone
- Slang for famous person
- Soft infant food
- Small mergansers
- Big Blue
- Appear to be
- Greek verse intended to be sung
- Next to
- Flying Pegasus corp.
- Records walking steps
- Broad back muscle
- Teased apart
- Cut into small cubes

- Icelandic poems
- American time
- City of Angels
- Nostrils
- Narrow canvas bed
- Force into a bay
- Sept. 1914 battle
- Sergeant fish
- Cavalry-sword
- Town of Jesus' 1st miracle
- Picasso's mistress Dora
- Frog genus
- Talk tiresomely
- Characters in one inch of tape
- Side sheltered from the wind
- Lead

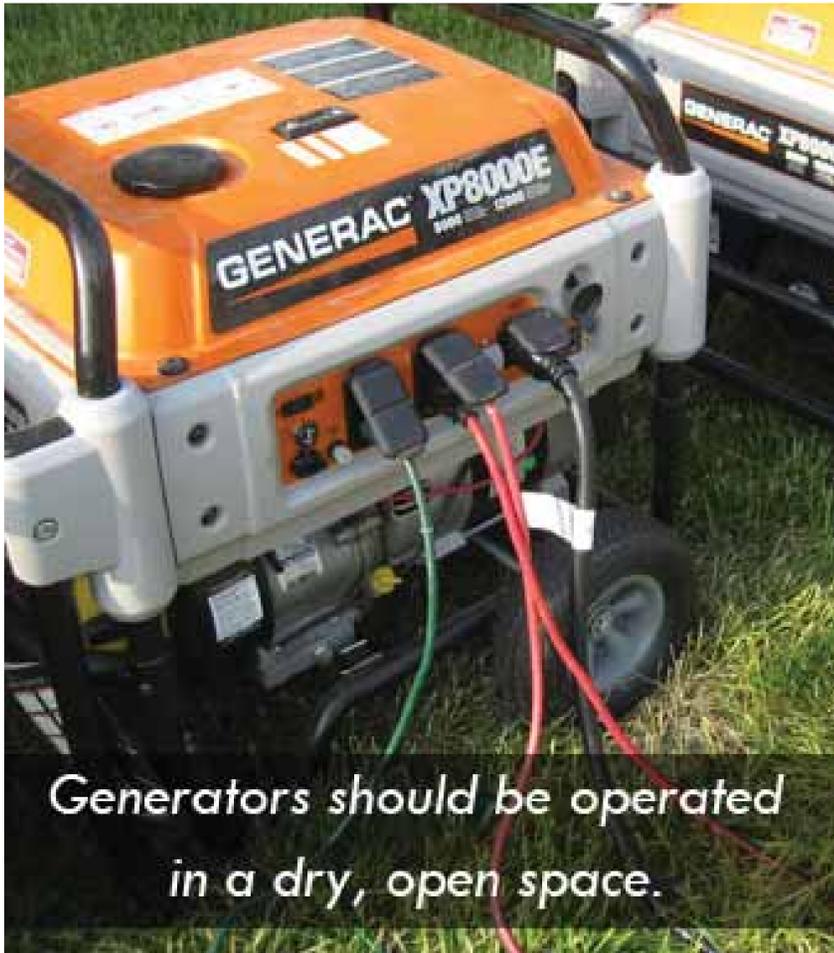
Stay safe on summer RV camping trips

Camping is an outdoor leisure activity that many people take advantage of during the summer season. As with all summer fun, being safe needs to be a priority. Cotton Electric and Safe Electricity want you to stay safe and have some electrical safety tips to take along on any trip that involves RV camping.

Tragically, just last summer a 3-year-old boy was electrocuted as a result of faulty wiring that electrified the family's camper. The child was touching a door handle of the camper while standing on wet ground when he was electrocuted.

Such a situation in which an RV frame is electrically charged is often referred to as "hot skin." Improper wiring or connection, no grounding, reversed polarity, and loose or worn outlets are just some of the potential causes. If a hot skin hazard exists, simply opening the door or coming into contact with the hitch can cause shock or electrocution.

To help prevent hot skin, your RV's electrical system needs to be regularly tested and maintained. A professional electrician can help you make sure the wiring in your RV is safe.



Generators should be operated in a dry, open space.

Perform a visual inspection of cords, plugs, and outlets. If there are cracked or frayed cords or broken or discolored plugs or outlets, do not use them. Have them replaced or repaired. Make sure RVs are equipped with fire extinguishers as well as permanently installed carbon-monoxide and fire detectors.

Always use electrical cords rated for the use they will get. Make sure the power demand of the appliances that will be used does not exceed the cord's rating.

To plug your RV into a campground power pedestal, use a heavy duty, four-wire cord with a grounding wire, not an extension cord.

Know the amperage your RV draws and the amperage available. If you try to draw more amperage than is available, you can cause serious damage to the electrical source and your RV. You could even start a fire. Also make sure you know where your electrical panel and major switches are.

Before using a camp-

ground hook-up, do a visual inspection of the area. If a campground hook-up appears to be damaged, put safety first and request another spot. Making the campground aware of the damage will also help future campers at that site. In addition, be sure to have the proper cord. Never plug more than one RV into a single hook-up. As with a generator, plug your RV in before turning appliances on.

For more information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

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Code writer

Many computer languages no mystery to McDaniel

By Karen Kaley

“It’s kind of like the old high school assignment of writing directions for making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich,” Monty McDaniel said.

“You can’t just say ‘Get peanut butter, get jelly and get bread.’ That doesn’t make the sandwich.

“You have to explain about selecting two slices of bread, getting a knife, opening the jars, dipping the knife into the peanut butter ...”

Monty likes to use that analogy to demonstrate what writing instructions for a computer is like. It’s what Monty spends a lot of time doing for Cotton Electric ... not making PBJs but writing computer software instructions.

“People think computers are smart,” he explained, “but the machines are really very stupid.”

Well, not so much stupid as the mechanical version of a blank slate. Computers are very literal and require specific, thorough instructions to carry out the simplest of tasks. If the instructions are faulty, the computer will attempt to carry them out but probably will produce an error message.

Definitely won’t produce a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

The instructions Monty writes are for tasks that are a bit more involved. To complicate things further, the instructions have to be written in computer code.

Some of the projects take a great deal of time. One of the first programs Monty worked on when he came to work for the co-op in November 2011 took about six months to complete.

Monty pulled out a binder and fanned the 280 pages of code.

“This is what it took to tell our system to send text messages to managers when the number of outages in our service area reaches a certain level.”

In that situation, he was telling an existing program to carry out another task. His current project does that, too.

The co-op plans to replace laptops in field workers’ trucks with iPads. The devices will use several applications that will help line workers and connect them with the co-op’s internal systems.

One app will eliminate the paper report that is part



Employee Spotlight
Monty McDaniel

Monty McDaniel flips through 280 pages of code he wrote to have the co-op’s system send text messages to managers when outages reach a certain level.

of a safety discussion at the beginning of jobs in the field. During these tailgate meetings, the crew will discuss how the job will be carried out, identify potential hazards, make note of nearby structures and landscape.

Currently, everything discussed is recorded on paper and has to be scanned and filed when it comes back to the co-op. The iPad will have a mechanical checklist, and the co-op needed a way to transfer the information into the main system.

So, Monty has been writing a program to collect the reports from the iPads, strip out the unnecessary parts and save the information to a database. Sounds simple, but Monty said the program has nearly 2,600 lines of code and it took quite a while to write.

This type of work is engrossing and tedious. It requires a great deal of focus. Monty said returning from interruptions can mean taking several minutes to mentally dig back down to where he left off before he can start following the path again.

Monty’s office is in a good spot to do work that requires so much focus. He is in the most remote corner of the hallway maze that makes up the Cotton Electric headquarters in Walters. Very few employees venture to the end of his hall except to access some nearby storage closets.

Monty’s job is not all code writing, which is also

a good thing. He occasionally needs to walk away from his computer screen. His job title, systems operator, sounds simpler than the system operations, integrations and communications work he does.

“I do a little bit of everything,” he said, and started ticking off tasks: One-off projects. Data integration that sometimes involves existing databases, sometimes involves creating some. Covering dispatch when someone is away. Helping move the giant wall map from the old dispatch area to the new dispatch area.

He chuckled and said, “I just do whatever they need me to do.”

The good-natured Duncan native and his wife, Stacy, are raising two boys, Lukas, 8, and Madden, 2. When he’s not working for Cotton, Monty works for his church. He is music minister at Bethel Assembly of God in Duncan.

He compared music and code writing this way: “Both are precise but you can be creative.

“Good music flows well. If it is out of key, I can hear it. It sounds discordant.

“Good programming has to flow, has to follow certain precise paths to work well. Bad programming doesn’t survive, it crashes.”

Kind of like the discordant sound of someone trying to eat peanut butter, jelly and bread without making a sandwich first.

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Stay safe while enjoying summer outdoor activities

By Abby Berry

Summer is in full swing, and that means it is time for fun in the sun! As you find yourself spending more time outdoors, Cotton Electric reminds you to stay safe.

Planning a home improvement project? When working outdoors, you may be using tools, such as ladders, power tools, shovels – or even paintbrushes with extendable arms. These items help you get the job done but have the potential to be dangerous if used improperly.

Pay attention to where you place metal ladders or dig for fence posts. Before you start any project, always look up and avoid overhead power lines. Keep a minimum of 10 feet between you and overhead lines.

If you are planning a project that requires digging, remember to dial “811” first to find out if the area you will be working in is clear of underground power lines. Power tools should be kept away from wet surfaces, and outlets should not be overloaded.

Exploring the great outdoors is a

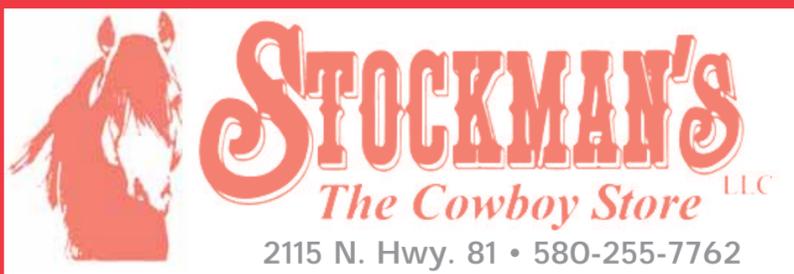
great way to spend time with the family, but keep these safety tips in mind.

Children should never climb trees near power lines – always assume a wire is live. Fly kites and remote controlled-airplanes in large open areas like a park or a field, safely away from trees and overhead power lines.

Planning to take a dip in the pool? Electrical devices, such as stereos, should be kept at least 10 feet away from water sources, and outdoor electrical outlets should always be covered. If you hear a rumble of thunder, exit the pool right away.

Speaking of thunder, summer storms can be dangerous if you’re caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. If you find yourself outdoors during a storm, move toward suitable shelter with covered sides, and stick to low-lying ground if possible.

These are just a few tips to remember when you are spending time outdoors this summer with your family. Have some fun out there, and always keep safety in mind!



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Simple Savings

Marlett offers parting tips

By Trent Marlett

Well, over the last five years, I have been writing about simple ways to save energy and money around the house. This will be the last Simple Savings column I write because I am leaving the wonderful Cotton Electric family and moving to southeastern Oklahoma, where my wife is from.

I would like to leave you with a summary of the most important things we can do around the house to save energy.

First off, remember the biggest consumer of energy in the home by far is the central HVAC system. It takes a lot of energy to heat and cool our homes in this part of the country. The weather has a huge influence on how much harder and more often this system has to work.

Keeping a house at 72 degrees when the weather outside is a breezy 80 degrees is a cake walk for the HVAC system, but keeping the house at the same 72 degrees when it's 100 degrees outside can really make the system work hard and for much longer periods. Keeping the house 76-78 degrees in the summer can save a significant amount of energy and, with the aid of ceiling fans, you might not even notice the difference.

In the wintertime, bundle up and keep the thermostat around 68 degrees, as well.

Keep those air filters changed out regularly. This is an easy way to maintain our units and help them run more efficiently.

The second biggest energy consumer in the house is the electric water heater. These water heaters are on 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, keeping water hot in the tank.

To save energy, we should take showers instead of baths, install low-flow faucet and shower heads, and keep the water heater thermostat as close to 120 degrees as we can.

If the water heater is in an unconditioned space, such as the garage, invest in a cheap water heater blanket and add some insulation to help maintain the temperature of the water in the tank.

Instead of budgeting for brand-new windows, first figure out how

much insulation is in the attic. Most homes I have visited have inadequate insulation in the attic.

A lot of times, there is about 6 inches of insulation and there needs to be double that. By getting to around 12-14 inches of insulation, you will probably see the quickest return on investment you can make when it comes to energy efficiency.

If you have double-pane windows and want to replace those with prettier double-pane windows, the return on investment could take 15-20 years in terms of energy savings.

Air infiltration is another big issue in a house. The good news is it's relatively cheap to fix, the bad news is it may take some hard work.

By investing in a cheap caulking gun and some tubes of caulk, you can do wonders in improving the efficiency of your home. Unconditioned air leaking into our homes will cause the big central HVAC units to run longer to keep the house comfortable.

The last tip I recommend to make a huge improvement to your home's energy use is scheduling a Home Energy Audit by calling Mike Stephens at 580-875-3351. This audit is a FREE service from Cotton Electric, and you would have to invest only about an hour of your time.

This is a wonderful, proactive approach that can find any and all problem areas in your home and suggest ways to fix them. Mike taught me just about everything I know about energy efficiency, and is a true expert on finding ways to help you save energy and money.

When Mike does these energy audits, he is not trying to prove a point or be judgmental in any way. He is truly looking out for you, the member, and wanting to make your life more enjoyable.

I think that is what separates electric cooperatives from other businesses. The members are our bosses, and co-op employees are here to serve you.

Cotton Electric members, count yourselves lucky. You are served by great people who keep you a top priority in all their decisions.



During the past five years, Trent Marlett has written the Simple Savings column, offering information on easy, low-cost ways to control energy consumption. Among the tips: Switch to CFL bulbs; ceiling fan direction changes with seasons; check attic insulation; open those HVAC vents; take advantage of oven warmth; insulation keeps cold and warm air in the right place; low-flow shower heads mean less water to heat; and foam inserts can plug outlet air leaks.






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Activate your summer with simple tips

(Family Features) When short-sleeve shirts, tanks and shorts make their way into your everyday wardrobe, summer has officially arrived. And looking and feeling your best for all of those warm weather activities is important.

Busy people know that being active means more than just picking up a few healthy habits; it requires daily dedication. But sometimes despite best laid plans, real life gets in the way. You miss that gym visit or sleep through that workout class. Make the most of summer days with these tips that are not only fun, but will get you moving, even on the busiest days.

Establish a summer schedule. With kids out of school, it can be easy to fall into a more laid-back routine. Fight the urge to turn on the television and create an active schedule with your children. After dinner, have a family walk around the neighborhood or plan for weekend outings to your favorite local nature preserve.

Schedule a walking meeting at work. If sitting in an office is part of your daily routine, make a point to be active. Need to go over some items with a co-worker? Avoid booking the conference room, and plan a walking meeting outside or around the building. Getting your heart rate up and taking in some fresh summer air may be just what you need for successful brainstorming.

Find motivation in all forms. Seek the help of like-minded individuals who also want to establish healthy routines. Look online for health and fitness blogs from other women who can share their own journeys toward better health. Or, invest in a wearable



Use your vacation as an opportunity to get moving.

fitness device that offers a personalized experience, such as a Mira Fitness tracker, that understands your fitness level and offers tips and inspirational boosts relevant to you. For more information and to check out their blog visit www.mymirafit.com.

Plan for an active vacation. Don't let travel plans justify inactivity. Use your vacation as an opportunity to get moving, and create new healthy experiences. Visiting a historic town or city? Check out a walking group tour to sightsee. Hitting the beach? Try beach volleyball, surfing or stroll beside the water every night. No

matter where you travel, you can always find a way to be active.

Find ways to beat the heat. Don't let the summer sun be your excuse to stay indoors on those extra hot days. Set your alarm early to get your morning run or hike in before those afternoon temperatures rise. Seek a refreshing, cool workout, such as water aerobics at the gym or paddle boarding at the lake when the temps are soaring.

Let the inviting sun rays lure you outside and get moving. You may discover your next favorite workout, and other life hacks for a healthier you.

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Explore the savory side of watermelon

It's that time of year where the confluence of holiday tradition, seasonal eating, and soaring temperatures mean watermelon is on everyone's mind and plate. While traditionally enjoyed by itself due to its sweet deliciousness, watermelon is actually very versatile and is tasty in sweet and savory dishes. Regardless of how you like it, watermelon is definitely a good-for-you food and, given its abundance during this time of year, it's a good idea to explore some other ways to enjoy it.

First, let's knock out the question of nutrition. Watermelon is a low-calorie food. You have to eat two cups to even get close to 100 calories. Isn't that better than an air-filled 100-calorie snack of wafer thin cookies or puffs of something?

Watermelon is also a good source of water – shocking, right? – vitamins A, B6, and C, that is good for the immune system, eyes and skin; potassium that is good for your heart and muscles and helps you stay hydrated; and lycopene, an antioxidant that can help prevent chronic disease.



Kim Bandelier, MPH, RD, LD

Food For THOUGHT

All that power for very few calories makes watermelon an excellent weight management food, too.

Unless you are buying pre-cut watermelon where you can control how much you buy, or you are hosting a large party, watermelon tends to produce a lot of leftovers. There are many ways to use leftover watermelon.

Cut it into cubes, freeze, and make watermelon ice cubes to chill your water later or throw in

a smoothie or make a watermelon slush, sorbet, frozen pops or granita.

You can dehydrate watermelon to make something similar to fruit leather.

While most people are familiar with watermelon's sweet side, many have never tried it in a savory dish. Watermelon goes great with jalapenos, feta cheese, blue cheese, chicken salad, avocado, olives, prosciutto, goat cheese, cucumber, arugula and tomatoes.

Add a slice of watermelon to a burger or a sandwich. Grill slices of watermelon with lime juice and chili sauce as a basting sauce.

The rinds – the white part between the red and the green – can be pickled and enjoyed alone or in dishes and appetizers. Watermelon adds beautiful color, subtle soothing flavor, and doesn't bust your calorie budget.

For some truly unique watermelon recipes, visit the Watermelon Board (www.watermelon.org), Pinterest, or just do an Internet search for watermelon recipes. Don't let any watermelon go to waste this summer.

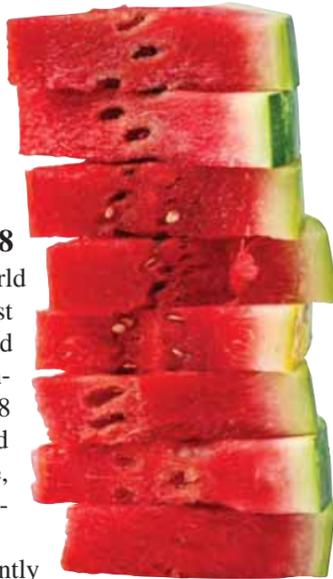


Rush Springs Watermelon Festival • August 8

- The first recorded watermelon harvest occurred nearly 5,000 years ago in Egypt.
- Watermelon is 92% water.
- Watermelon's official name is Citrullus Lanatus of the botanical family Curcubitaceae. It is cousins to cucumbers, pumpkins and squash.
- By weight, watermelon is the most-consumed melon in the U.S., followed by cantaloupe and honeydew.
- Early explorers used watermelons as canteens.
- The first cookbook published in the U.S. in 1776 contained a recipe for watermelon rind pickles.

- According to Guinness World Records, the world's heaviest watermelon was grown by Lloyd Bright of Arkadelphia, Arkansas in 2005, weighing in at 268.8 lbs (121.93 kg). Lloyd grew and weighed in for the Annual Hope, Arkansas Big Watermelon Contest on September 3, 2005.
- The United States currently ranks 5th in worldwide production of watermelon. Forty-four states grow watermelons with Florida, Texas, California, Georgia and Arizona consistently leading the country in production.

Source: Watermelon.org



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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	Category 2
You are between 55 and 74 years of age	You are between 50 and 74 years old
You are currently a smoker or have quit in the last 15 years	You have a 20+ pack-year* history of smoking
You have a 30+ 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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of Southwest Oklahoma
www.cancercentersswok.com

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WARM WARM

COLD COLD

HOT COLD

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Mangos offer surprising beauty benefits

(Family Features) If summertime brings visions of fresh fruity flavors to mind, remember that what you eat has an impact on the health and beauty of your skin. Choose your fruit wisely and enjoy the bonus benefits of skin-supporting nutrients and compounds.

Summer is a skin-centric season, when shorter pants and sleeves reveal more, so it's an ideal time to be mindful of the foods that help give you a beauty boost.

Mango is a beauty fruit, containing more than 20 different vitamins and minerals, including several nutrients that stand out when it comes to skin health: vitamin C, vitamin A (or beta carotene) and folate.

•Vitamin C supports many different functions in the skin, including collagen formation, regeneration and wound repair. One cup of mango delivers a whopping 100 percent of the

daily requirement for this important antioxidant. Vitamin C intake also has been associated with improved appearance of aging skin. According to the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, in a study involving 4,025 middle-aged women, researchers found that higher intakes of vitamin C were associated with lower prevalence of wrinkled appearance, dryness associated with aging and skin thinning.

•Beta carotene is an antioxidant pigment that the body converts to vitamin A. Mangos deliver 35 percent of the daily vitamin A requirement in the form of beta carotene. Research published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition has shown that lower levels of vitamin A in the diet have been associated with a wrinkled appearance. In addition, a number of studies in the same journal have shown that an elevated intake of carotenoids, such as beta carotene, may provide protection

from sunlight, lessening sunburn.

•Folate supports many different processes within the body. One cup of mango contains 20 percent of the daily requirements for this B vitamin. A study by researchers from the Department of Cancer Prevention and Control, The University of Arizona Cancer Center and Dermatology Professionals Incorporated, suggests that some of these may have an important impact on the maintenance and function of healthy skin and that exposure to UV radiation can break down folate, resulting in lower levels in the skin.

The distinctive flavor of fresh mangos makes them the perfect ingredient for a summer beauty boost. With a burst of nutrients, vivid color and taste of the tropics, they are ideal for salads, yogurt, grilled meats, side dishes and drinks.

For more delicious mango recipes visit www.mango.org.



Tomato, Chive and Mango Salsa

Servings: 3
Preparation time: 10 minutes

- 1 cup fresh mango, diced
- 1 1/2 cups ripe tomatoes, diced
- 2 tablespoons fresh chives, minced
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1/2 teaspoon fresh oregano leaves, minced

- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
 - 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and stir. Serve or cover and refrigerate until needed.

Nutritional analysis per serving (1/2 cup salsa): 31 calories; 0 g fat (0% calories from fat); 1 g protein; 7 g carbohydrates; 1 g fiber; 0 mg cholesterol; 121 sodium; 191 mg potassium.

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PUBLIC AUCTION
August 15, 2015
Saturday, 10:00 A.M.
2212 Scott Lane
Duncan, Oklahoma
Gary Criswell Auction Service & Real Estate, Inc. has been commissioned by Mr. and Mrs. Davis (John and Dorene) to offer at Public Auction their Real Property situated at 2212 Scott Lane in Duncan, Oklahoma.
Real Property consists of a nice 3 Bedroom Brick Home (Approximately 1,664 Square Feet) with a large Living Room, Family Room with Fireplace, Kitchen with Dining Area, Utility Room and 1-3/4 Baths.
Additional Improvements include an attached 2 Car Garage, Weather-matic Sprinkler System, a Storm Shelter, Storage Building (7'x8'), Storm Gutters, and a Wooden Privacy Fence. All situated on a nice Lot (75'x125') in a great neighborhood.
Terms of Sale: 10% Earnest Money on Real Property on the day of Sale. Balance due at Closing upon delivery of Title and Deed.
Preview of Real Property will be held Friday afternoon, August 14, 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: Mr. and Mrs. Davis live out of state (Mooresville, North Carolina) and are selling their Real Property in Oklahoma. This Home will make a nice Home for a Family or a great Investment Property. Please see to Appreciate! The Real Property will be offered "As-Is-Where-Is." Mr. and Mrs. Davis reserve the right to accept or reject the final bid. Stephens County Abstract will serve as the Closing Agent on the Real Property.
Gary Criswell Auction Service & Real Estate, Inc.
580-255-8162 • 806 West Main • Duncan, OK • 580-467-2248
(Auctioneer/Broker) email: garycriswell@cableone.net (Cell Phone)

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PUBLIC AUCTION
Saturday, July 18, 2015 - 10:00 A.M.
Velma Baptist Church (Education Building)
100 North Main Street
Velma, Oklahoma
Variety of Fixtures and Building Materials
Gary Criswell Auction Service & Real Estate, Inc. has been commissioned by the Velma Baptist Church to offer at Public Auction a large variety of Fixtures and Building Materials.
Church Note: Velma Baptist Church is going to demolish the Brick Education Building and construct a new Education Building. A variety of Building Materials will be offered at Public Auction on July 18, 2015. The Church Auditorium/Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall are not a part of this Public Auction.
Auction includes: 2 Car-Carport, YAMAHA Piano (2), KIMBALL Piano, Office Desk, Ward's Refrigerator, General Electric Range, Doors, Windows, Light Fixtures, Cabinets, Paneling, Ceiling Tile, Handrails, Variety of Heating Units and Air Conditioning Units, Gutters, Brick (if interested) and a number of Church Pews.
Terms of Sale: Personal Property - Cash, Personal or Company Check accepted. Positive I.D. required. All Checks shall be made payable to Velma Baptist Church.
Preview of Education Building: will be held Friday afternoon, July 17, 2015 from 1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Announcements made day of Sale supersede any and all other advertisements.
Auctioneer's Note: To view Education Building and the Materials and Fixtures prior to Preview, please contact Mr. Shannon Files at (580) 467-4142. This is a great opportunity to purchase Fixtures and Building Materials. All proceeds from the Public Auction will go to the Velma Baptist Church. Please plan to attend this Public Auction.
Gary Criswell Auction Service & Real Estate, Inc.
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