

The Current

A Publication of Cotton Electric Cooperative Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

“The Current - Informing Our Members Since 1957”

VOLUME 61

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NUMBER 1

Go solar! Embrace wind power!

It's as easy as stepping into the backyard

By Karen Kaley

When looking for ways to conserve energy, you may have a low-tech option just outside your back door. Your clothesline may need to be re-strung and you may have to purchase some clothes pins, but those are small investments. The solar and wind power are totally free.

Use a clothesline during warmer months and let sunlight and breezes dry clothes naturally.

This will reduce your electric bill by not running a dryer, and add a genuine clean scent to your family's laundry.

If the weather isn't cooperating, consider using a collapsible clothes rack indoors.

Using indoor drying racks and outdoor clotheslines as much as possible could cut dryer use by half. You could save as much as \$45 a year, according to Cooperative.com.

In addition to saving energy, air-drying means less wear and tear on clothing and your dryer. You also get the benefit of physical activity.

So, grab that basket of washed clothes, head out the back door and start to bend and stretch.

Your clothes, your body and your wallet will reap the benefits.



10 SAVE ENERGY • SAVE MONEY TIPS

1. Wash clothes in cold water. Use hot water only for very dirty loads.
2. Wash only full loads of laundry.
3. If you must do smaller loads, adjust the water level in the washing machine to match the load size, especially when using hot water.
4. Always use cold-water rinse.
5. Clean off the dryer's lint trap before each load.
6. Check that the dryer vent hose is tightly connected to dryer.
7. Make sure the dryer vent hose is tightly connected to inside wall fitting.
8. Make sure the dryer's outdoor exhaust door is not blocked or clogged.
9. Minimize clothes drying time by using an auto moisture sensor, if available.
10. Dry consecutive loads to harvest heat remaining in dryer from last load.

Meetings set for CEC Districts 2, 6, 8

District meetings for three of the nine voting districts of Cotton Electric Cooperative have been set for the purpose of electing trustees and for reports involving other business matters.

The business and affairs of Cotton Electric Cooperative are managed by a board of nine trustees representing geographical districts with similar densities of service across the eight-county service territory. The board establishes the overall policies of the cooperative.

Each trustee is a co-op member who represents one district, the area in which he or she resides.

Terms are staggered in such a way that only three trustees are up for election each year.

Members residing in Districts 2, 6 and 8 will receive mailed notices that will include information about the time, date and location of the meetings they should attend. The cooperative's bylaws stipulate that district meetings are to be held in three of the nine voting districts annually and only members in these three voting districts will receive notices.



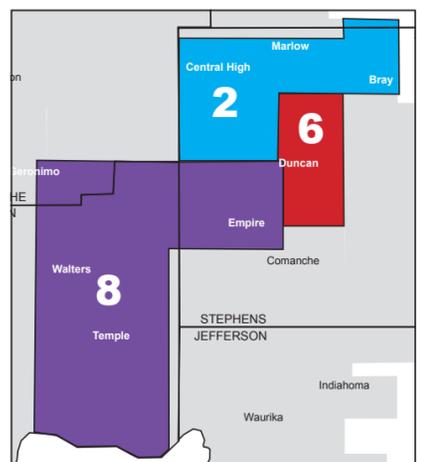
KEN LAYN
represents District #2



TOMMY JONES
represents District #6



DEWAYNE HIGH
represents District #8



This year, the meeting schedule is as follows:

District 8: Aug. 31 at Cotton Electric Community Center in Walters

District 2: Sept. 7 in the chapel at First Baptist Church of Marlow

District 6: Sept. 12 at Stephens County fairgrounds in Duncan

Registration at each meeting will begin at 6 p.m. and a mailed official registration card will be required for members. The registration card allows for quicker

registration and makes the holder eligible for an attendance prize.

Registration ends at 7 p.m. when the business meeting will be called to order. Each member is entitled to one vote in trustee elections.

Churches, clubs, schools, organizations and others will receive credentials to be used to designate a person as the voting delegate. Forms must be presented at registration with all forms completed and notarized. These will enable

the representatives of each organization to vote and participate in the business of the cooperative.

Trustees who are elected at the district meetings will take office immediately following the annual meeting and will serve a three-year term. The Cotton Electric Cooperative annual meeting will be Sept. 28 at Stephens County Fair & Expo Center in Duncan.

Registration for the annual meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m.

Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment now being applied to bills mailed after Aug. 1, 2017, is \$0.00165 per kWh.

On a member's average bill of 1500 kilowatt hours (kWh), this will amount to a charge of \$2.48 on the August bill.

July 2017 Temperature Extremes

Day	High	Low	Avg.	Day	High	Low	Avg.
1	89	68	79	16	94	73	84
2	95	70	83	17	95	73	84
3	97	65	81	18	96	74	85
4	88	66	77	19	98	74	86
5	89	70	80	20	100	75	88
6	95	69	82	21	101	75	88
7	97	70	84	22	104	73	89
8	96	72	84	23	101	74	88
9	89	73	81	24	92	69	81
10	93	70	82	25	98	75	87
11	97	73	85	26	100	73	87
12	96	73	85	27	103	71	87
13	96	71	84	28	101	77	89
14	99	71	85	29	98	79	89
15	101	73	87	30	91	73	82
				31	89	69	79

Source: srh.noaa.gov/om/
Average Daily High: 96 Average Daily Low: 72

Did You Know?

Cotton Electric offices will be closed Monday, Sept. 4 for the Labor Day holiday. Emergency calls will be answered at 580-875-3351 or 800-522-3520.

The next issue of The Current should arrive in mailboxes on Sept. 11, 2017.

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

From the CEO

Energy demand affects purchase price

You may not think you need to understand the complexities of energy demand and purchasing, but do you ever look at your energy bill and wonder what it all means? If your answer to that question is “Yes,” then you might be interested to learn how demand impacts your utility bill.



Jennifer Meason, CEO

G&T is based on several factors, one of the largest being peak demand. Peak demand refers to the time of day when the demand for electricity is highest, which a sister cooperative has coined as the “power rush hour.”

Just like roads are busier during major commute times, our electric grid sees an increase in demand during peak hours. Using electricity during peak demand periods often costs more to both Cotton Electric and to our members.

During this time of year, the power rush hour typically occurs between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. when air conditioners are working hard to cool your homes and families are returning home from work or school, cooking dinner and using appliances the most. During winter months, we typically see peak use in the early morning hours as heaters work hard to heat up your home and you begin preparing for the day ahead.

You may ask, “But, how does demand affect the price of kilowatt hours I use during the month?”

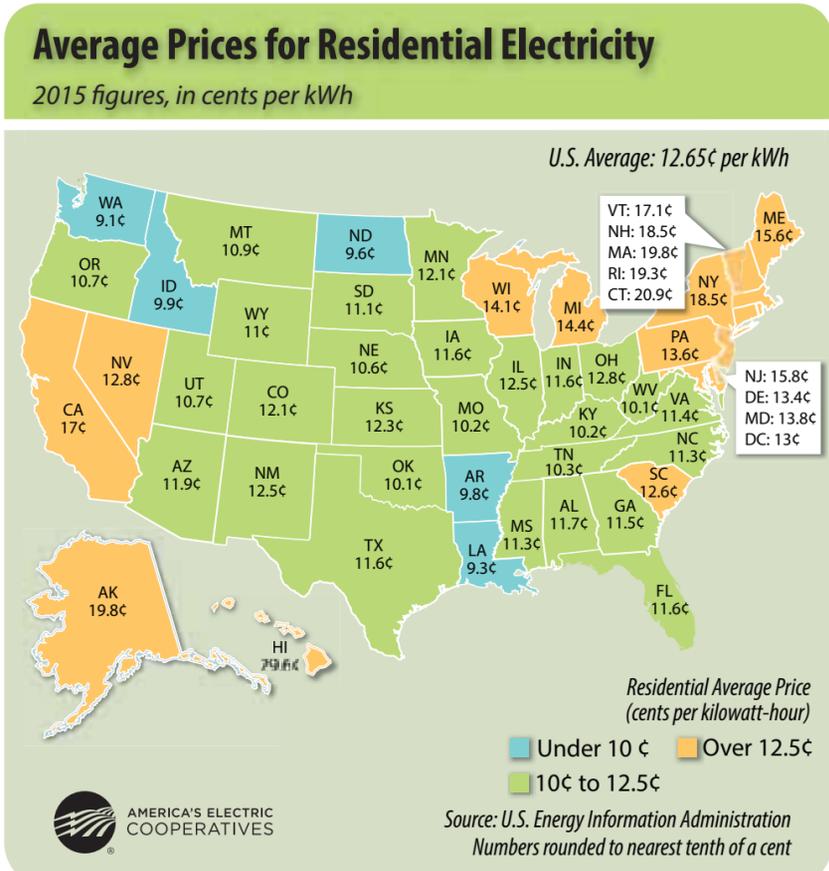
Let’s break it down. Consumption is measured in kilowatt hours (kWh). Demand is measured in kilowatts (kW). A light bulb “consumes” a certain number of watts, let’s say 100 watts per hour. If that light bulb stays on for 10 hours, it “demands” a certain number of kilowatts (in this case, 1 kW) from the generation sta-

First, it is important to understand how electricity is made and how it is delivered to your home.

Before Cotton Electric Cooperative can deliver power to your home, electricity must be generated by our generation and transmission cooperative (G&T), Western Farmers Electric Cooperative. Once the electricity has been generated, it travels over high-voltage transmission lines to substations, where the voltage is reduced to a safer level. The electricity then travels over distribution power lines and finds its way into your home.

So, while you pay your bill to us – your electric distribution cooperative – we don’t actually generate the electricity you use. That is the job of the G&T. And, just like you’re a member-owner of Cotton Electric, your cooperative is a member-owner of Western Farmers Electric Cooperative. Cotton Electric pays a power bill from Western Farmers on behalf of our members

Cotton Electric’s bill from the



Ever wonder how Oklahoma electric rates compare to other states? This map shows average prices during 2015. More than a third of Oklahomans are served by electric cooperatives.

tion producing electricity. Now, if you turn on ten 100-watt lightbulbs in your home for one hour, you are still consuming the same number of kW. However, you are placing a demand on the utility to have those kW available to you over the course of one hour, instead of ten. This requires the generation and transmission plant to produce more power in less time in order to meet your demand and increases costs.

Generating and distributing power can be a tricky and com-

plicated business but rest assured that Cotton Electric will always meet the necessary demand to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity to your family.

We’re all in this together. That’s why we encourage you to take advantage of our home energy consultations that help you find ways to save throughout the year. You can also find more information at our website.

Meanwhile, consider slowing down energy consumption just a little during the power rush hour.

Democracy is a basic component of cooperatives

Every year, Cotton Electric Cooperative holds a series of district meetings. This is an important opportunity for members to elect representatives for the co-op’s board of trustees. These are the nine people we entrust to give strategic direction and ensure the co-op has good governance.

In 1844, when the 28 Rochdale pioneers created the modern cooperative movement, they were insistent that all members have the right to vote. Unless we consistently remind ourselves about how precious this right to vote truly is

we can easily take it for granted. We encourage Cotton Electric members to attend the district meetings and annual meeting. As the utility industry is experiencing some of the biggest changes since its founding, electric co-ops need your active participation. As a member of a co-op, you have the right (and some may even say the obligation) to help set the direction for the co-op. This is a critical difference between co-ops and other electricity providers, such as investor-owned utilities (IOUs) or municipally-owned systems.

With IOUs, you are a customer and there is no required ownership. IOU stockholders live far away and have no direct attachment to the organization other than seeking a return on their investment. Communities served by municipally-owned systems may vote for the mayor or city council, but the connection to the electric service is very indirect.

The board of trustees of a co-op makes important strategic decisions for the organization, while the operations (day-to-day running of the business) is entrusted

to the employees. Examples of decisions boards make that impact all the members are:

- the level of involvement in community economic development
- whether to offer renewable types of energy such as solar or wind generated power to the members
- approving the budget for the co-op

So when the next meeting in your district comes around, you may want to attend and discuss these issues and others with the trustee representing your district.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Setting your thermostat to a colder setting than normal when you turn on your air conditioner will not cool your home any faster and could result in excessive cooling and unnecessary expense.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy

The Current

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Jennifer Meason CEO
Bryce Hooper..... 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.

	2017	2016
Total Amount Billed/Accrued	\$5,584,667	\$5,710,317
Cost of Purchased Power	3,647,053	3,639,483
Taxes	98,178	97,322
Total Operating Expense Per Mile	1,012	1,050
Average Farm and Residential Bill	160	164
Average Farm and Residential kWh	1,251	1,354
Total Meters Billed (farm, residential)	18,331	18,231
Miles Energized	5.166	5.156
Density Per Mile	3.55	3.54
New Service Connects YTD	141	91
Services Retired	77	47

**2017 Youth Tour essay topic:
The Power of the Cooperative Model**

**Peace of mind,
quality of life
flourish through
cooperative model**



*Haley Smith
Walters High School*

Editor's note: Four area high school juniors recently visited Washington, D.C., representing Cotton Electric in the annual Youth Tour as winners of an essay contest. Each of the essays has appeared in The Current.

My mother and I were dredging through a hot Oklahoma summer when she received a call from Cotton Electric informing her that her bill was estimated at over \$600. When she thought back to what caused this, she remembered that the air conditioner had been running continuously. She began to shut the air conditioner off manually; however, after a miserable weekend of suffering a teeter-totter of temperatures, we learned this solution was no real solution.

Thankfully, being part of the Cotton Electric Cooperative, we had access to an energy auditor who came to our house and examined our heating/cooling unit; he saw that a heat sequencer had been heating up the inside of the unit, causing the air conditioner to run non-stop. The auditor then removed the part, but as cooler months came rolling in, we began to have heater issues. My mother, yet again, turned to her trusted energy auditor; who reminded her about the heat sequencer and informed her that the system was still under warranty, meaning the parts and labor would be free. If it wasn't for the auditor provided

by Cotton Electric, my family and I would have been forced to choose between either comfort, or a low electric bill. Our community's cooperative let us have both and gave us peace of mind, knowing there would always be someone available to help; something that C.W. Cox had hoped for when he established Cotton Electric all those years ago.

On Aug. 26, 1939, Cox's dream of providing electricity to southwest Oklahoma came true when 150 houses in four counties received electricity for the first time ever, and while Cox helped flip the switch, he also ensured that the bulb would keep burning for generations to come by following the Rochdale Principles. These principles are cited to be the keys to establishing a successful cooperative model, and include the ideas of open membership, democratic control, and return of margins to members. These ideas establish a mutual benefit relationship between the members and the cooperative; allowing the members to receive the services provided by the cooperative and a say in the running of the business, while also providing the cooperative with a definite source of income through membership dues.

Currently, Cotton Electric provides services to its members such as energy auditors, a live map of service outages, a members-only newspaper, and a Co-Op Connections card that gives card holders discounts at certain

establishments. They also give end-of-the-year dividends and provide an annual meeting for members where they vote, two services unique to the cooperative model. While our community cooperative provides certain services exclusively to its members, it also provides services to the community that helped support Cotton Electric, such as providing free electrical safety presentations to schools and supporting local programs such as 4-H, which I appreciate as an eight-year member myself. They also help sponsor the Oklahoma Youth Expo. The members themselves help by donating money to Operation Round-Up, which helps fund grants for community members and local businesses. The interest in the community and its youth is magnified in the Youth Tour, which allows four juniors an all-expense paid trip to the nation's capital regardless of whether or not their parents are members of the cooperative.

With this commitment to members and the community, it's no wonder that Cotton Electric has jumped from providing electricity to 150 houses to over twenty-one thousand locations today. Investment in the community with a focus on the youth, along with the following of the cooperative model, ensures that the light turned on by Cox will continue to burn for generations to come; and give the community, and its youth, a brighter future.

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Community Spotlight

If you would like your community event listed in the September issue, please submit information by Aug. 30 by calling 580-875-4259 or send an email to info@cottonelectric.com.

CTAC reception opens season

Chisholm Trail Arts Council will hold its annual Kick Off Reception from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Aug. 17 in the CTAC Art Gallery. The event will feature nearly 20 new and returning artists displaying beautiful, unique, and exciting new artwork.

Patrons at the come-and-go reception can learn about the upcoming CTAC Live Concert Series line up while enjoying refreshments. For information on memberships and programs please visit us at www.chisholmtrailarts.com or call 580-252-4160.

Aug. 18 car cruise closes summer

Cruising down Main Street in Duncan is a time-honored tradition that has continued during Summer 2017. The Aug. 18 cruise will celebrate "Summer's Last Blast."

For information about the cruises, call Main Street Duncan at 580-252-8696 or visit the Main Street Duncan website or follow Main Street Duncan on Facebook and Twitter.

Farmers Market open twice weekly

Lawton Farmers Market is open from 7:30 a.m. to noon on Saturdays from April through October at the Comanche County Fairgrounds, 920 SW Sheridan Road. They are also open on Wednesdays during peak growing season.

In addition to local seasonal produce, expect to see specialty foods such as jams, jellies, salsas, baked goods, wine, freshly roasted coffee beans, as well as hand-made soap, herbs, plants, eggs, beef and an assortment of handcrafted items and food concessionaires.

For information, visit Lawton Farmers Market on Facebook.

Walk to End Alzheimer's is Aug. 26

Come join us at the Walk to End Alzheimer's of Southwest Oklahoma and smash our fundraising goal of \$50,000. We're almost halfway there!

The party starts at 7:30 a.m. Aug. 26 in Elmer Thomas Park. The 1.5-mile Walk begins at 9.

Registration is open for teams and people who wish to join a team or walk as an individual. To sign up online, go to www.swokwalk.org.

For information, call Paula Huckabaa at 580-699-2877 or send an email to swokwalk@alz.org.

Ice Cream Freeze-Off is Aug. 26

Need a cool treat on a hot day? Come to the annual Ice Cream Freeze-Off sponsored by Walters Chamber of Commerce. The competition to see who can produce the best homemade ice cream begins at 11 a.m. Aug. 26 in the Cotton County Expo Building.

Contestants should plan to bring their fruit, plain vanilla or chocolate, or specialty ice cream to compete for the \$50 first prize in each of three categories. The best of all three will win a \$50 grand champion prize.

For information, call 580-678-8586 or 875-2310 or call City Hall at 875-3337.

LPO opens with 'Vibrant Violin'

Opener for Lawton Philharmonic, "The Vibrant Violin," is one of three "Stop and Smell the Music" performances planned for the 2017-18 season.

Lawton favorite and Philadelphia Orchestra Concertmaster David Kim returns to play one of his favorites, The Bruch Violin Concerto. Mozart's mystical overture to The Magic Flute and Schumann's picturesque "Rhenish" Symphony complete the program.

Performance begins at 8 p.m. Aug. 26 in McMahon Memorial Auditorium, 801 NW Ferris Avenue, Lawton.

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

Blues Ball features 3 days of music

Medicine Park's annual Blues Ball will feature live performances by blues artists throughout the Labor Day weekend.

Performances begin with Roland Bowling at 7 p.m. Sept. 1. Sweet Brenda and Sour Mash follows and New York City's Jane Lee Hooker begins at 10:30.

Several artists will be featured during the afternoons and late into the evenings of Sept. 2 and 3. Saturday's lineup features Sweet Brenda and Sour Mash, Dirty Red and the Soulshakers, Miss Blues, Chant and Mr. Sipp.

Sunday's acts include Blueprint, Kyle Lacey, Caleb McGee, Kalo and Lil' Ed and the Blues Imperials.

Sipp, known as the "Mississippi Blues Child" has won the International Blues Challenge in Memphis and Lil' Ed is straight out of Chicago. Roland Bowling and Miss Blues are both inductees in the Oklahoma Blues Hall of Fame

There is no admission charge, and those attending should take lawn chairs but no ice chests. For information, find the Medicine Park, OK Fun page on Facebook.

Chapter of the Blind meets monthly

Duncan Chapter of the Blind meets at 1:30 p.m. on the third Saturday of each month at New Hope Baptist Church, 200 S. 42nd Street.

This is an opportunity for those who are visually impaired or blind and their caregivers to learn about the availability of services and equipment such as white cane training and large lighted magnifiers. The group also provides information about free access to an extensive library of audio books.

For information about the group or to arrange free transportation to the monthly meeting, call Jerri Gay at 580-252-6404.

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



This is "my grandson, Tye Looper, and his trusty companion, Beef-eater," said Tammi McCarter, who submitted this entry in our MY PET AND ME photo contest. Tye, 5, lives with his parents Colt and Brandy Looper in Milano, Texas. He is related to several other Cotton Electric members: Great-grandparents Ray and Kathy McCarter of Marlow, and great-great-grandmother Betty Bowles of Duncan. The photo is one of many we received and can be seen on the Cotton Electric Facebook page.

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

Exhibit explores printed imagery

Westward expansion was one of the most transformational elements in American life throughout the 19th century. Printed imagery played an important role in the dissemination of knowledge and understanding about the West and those who inhabited it. "Imprinting the West: Manifest Destiny, Real and Imagined" is a traveling exhibit featuring 48 hand-colored engravings and lithographs that explore these depictions and the influence artists had on the perception of the wild West.

Chisholm Trail Heritage Center will host the Mid-America Arts Alliance exhibit from Sept. 1 through Oct. 20. Located just north of the Simmons Center at 1000 Chisholm Trail Parkway in Duncan, the Center 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.

Byron Berline opens CTAC Live

CTAC Live concert series opens the 2017-18 season with Byron Berline Band. A three-time national champion fiddler, Berline and his band offer an exciting evening of traditional bluegrass and Western swing.

Performance is set for 7:30 p.m. Sept. 21 in the Simmons Center. For ticket information, call 580-252-4160.

'Evening of Shorts' returns to DLT

Duncan Little Theatre continues the 2017 season with a return of the popular "Evening of Shorts." Presentations of short skits of comedy, drama and more from new playwrights and local writers will be at 7:30 p.m. Sept. 8, 9, 15 and 16 at Marlow Opera House

Tickets can be purchased at the door.

'Meet Our 4-H' in Stephens County

Free food, fun and 4-H are in store for those who attend "Meet Our 4-H" from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sept. 9 at Claud Gill Arena south of Stephens County fairgrounds in Duncan.

This is a great opportunity to learn about 4-H and what it has to offer while enjoying hot dogs, pony rides, zip lines and bounce houses.

The event is organized by Stephens County Extension Office. For information, call 580-255-0510.

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.

More Community Spotlight on Page 9



Bowie's Second Monday
has evolved into one of the largest flea markets on five acres!

SECOND MONDAY TRADE DAYS
takes place the weekend prior to the second Monday of every month.

NEXT TRADE DATES
Sept. 8 - 10

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ROW program improves quality of cooperative members' lives



Tree clearing is a safety issue, too. Leaves toward the middle of this photo are discolored from burning contact with electrified lines.

By Karen Kaley

Looking back over a dozen years of vegetation management, Mike Ottinger stated the obvious and the not-so-obvious. "Well, I've learned a lot about trees. I've learned a lot about our members, too."

"I've learned," Ottinger said, "that trees don't always grow the way one thinks they might. They grow quickly when it seems like they wouldn't and, sometimes, they grow sideways."

"I've learned that there are many ways to address an issue. I've learned to find solutions that work for members while helping us with our mission."

Ottinger refers to the Cotton Electric Cooperative mission quite often. It is what guides the right-of-way (ROW) program, which falls under his supervision as vice president of operations. As vegetation management coordinator, Scott Crew oversees day-to-day supervision of ROW and he, too, invokes the mission when talking about the co-op's methodical efforts to clear vegetation that will interfere with power lines.

The comprehensive plan begun in 2005 uses employees and contractors to address trees and dense undergrowth along all the feeders of a substation before moving to the next. To make it across the entire 5,160-mile system may take another 6 or 7 years.

Ottinger and Crew refer to a two-pronged approach,

All aspects of the cooperative are driven by this 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.

but really there are three important components. An area is first cleared mechanically and revisited at prescribed intervals to be maintained with herbicides. Throughout both approaches, there is constant education for employees, contractors and co-op members.

Before clearing, Crew and other ROW workers make efforts to contact landowners. They knock on doors and leave materials asking members to call them. They know a conversation explaining the process is important.

Clearing crews are well-trained in proper methods and use tools and heavy machinery designed to do the job quickly and efficiently. Part of their job is to leave a site reasonably clean.

Line workers are trained, certified and re-certified to handle herbicides carefully chosen for being most effective with least impact to the environment. The herbicides will stop the growth of trees beneath power lines while allowing grasses to flourish.

Over time, co-op employees and co-op members have discovered the value of the ROW program. Ottinger said, "There are fewer blinks and so there are fewer nighttime call-outs for linemen. They get good rest which keeps them safe during the work day."

Cutting trees back has helped cut down on animal-related outages. It is harder for a squirrel to jump from a tree branch to a transformer and meet an electrifying end, causing a power outage that can affect hundreds of households.

Fewer trees and brush beneath lines mean quick power restoration. Fewer trees are damaged in storms, meaning fewer lines and poles are damaged.

"It has cut down considerably on massive pole loss during storms," Ottinger said.

He said the best part of the program is that members have come to embrace it. "Happenstance conversations with members have changed from, 'My lights blink all the time,' to, 'My lights haven't blinked in a long time. You guys are doing a really good job.'"

"It has been a worthwhile investment of the co-op's resources," Ottinger said. "It is a low-tech solution that has had a high impact in a world that requires reliable electricity."

"A good ROW program has improved the quality of life for our members."

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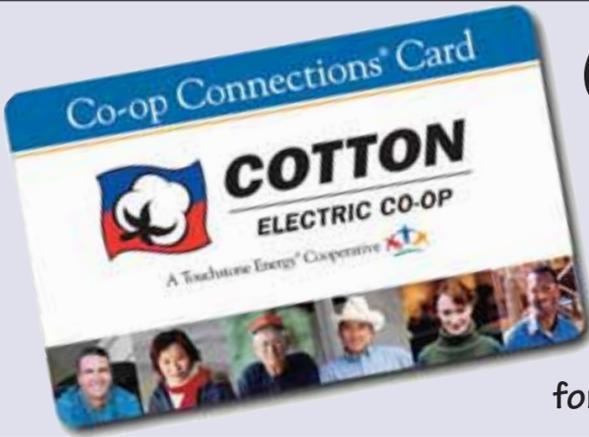


600lb Broadcast Stand & Fill Feeder MSRP \$599

300lb Broadcast with Solar MSRP \$399

Little Chingon MSRP \$2,499

Mention this ad or show your Co-op Connections Card for 10% off!



Co-op Connections Card

Local Participating Businesses • Great Member Savings!

If your business would like to participate in the Co-op Connections Program, call us at 580-875-4277.

Visit www.connections.coop for a complete list of national discounts

Redeem your discounts by showing your Cotton Electric Co-op Connections card at any of the participating businesses.

3B Industries

Free car wash token w/purchase of 10. Wholesale pricing on pressure washers and Dixie Chopper lawn mowers 580-439-8876
Locations: Comanche - 301 S. Rodeo Dr. Duncan - 1606 W. Oak & 2015 W. Elk

A&M Appliance Service

10% off
8 a.m. - 5 p.m. M-F • 580-467-1198
aandmappliance@att.net

A Touch of Bliss

Sherri Maxwell - owner
10% off store purchase
\$5 off hour or 1/2-hour massage
804 N Broadway, Marlow
Thurs-Fri. 10 am - 6 pm Sat 10 am-3 pm
580-658-9026

AA Computer Services, Inc.

20% off service, not to include services already on special
3801 NW Cache Rd #22. Lawton
580-357-4482
Mon-Fri 7:30-7:00; Sat 10:00-2:00

ABC Transmission & Motor Company

10% off any service, not to include any service already on special.
8:30 a.m.-11 a.m. & noon - 5 p.m.
2308 SW Lee Blvd. Lawton
580-353-7725

Aerola Bombus Children's Books

Educational books: Softcover, e-books, audio books and products.
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Antique Adventures, Ltd.

15% off total purchase
811 SW A Ave. - Lawton
Open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tue. - Sat.
580-351-0170

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Open new checking account, receive \$10 or 1st box of checks free.
Valid at Lawton, Duncan, Walters and Chickasha branches.
580-250-4540

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Custom screen printing & vinyl cutting
10% discount
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580-678-5786
attractivegraphicscsp@gmail.com

Billingsley Ford of Lawton, Inc.

10% off service department repairs up to \$40 per visit.
8209 NW Quanah Parker Trailway
580-510-0925

Billingsley Ford L-M of Duncan, Inc

10% off service department repairs up to \$40 per visit.
3505 NW Hwy. 81
580-255-5500

Bluff Creek Lodge

10% discount on all bookings
Eastern Stephens County
580-255-9592 • 580-470-5976
Lyndel Strain, owner

Brooks Meat Market

10% off meat purchases over \$20
1711 N. Hwy. 81, Duncan
580-255-1421 • 8:30-6 M-F; 8:30-3 Sat

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10% off MSRP on any All Season Feeders products and/or 5% discount on local guided hunts. 405-633-3122
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Cool It, Inc.

\$20 off service call
\$250 off complete system
2407 SW Lee Blvd., Lawton
580-355-1749
BobChambersHVAC.com

Cosmetic Specialty Labs, Inc.

50% off open stock products.
210 SW Texas Ave., Lawton
580-355-2182

Country Closet Resale Shop

10% off all purchases
1 mi. south of Hwy. 70 on Hwy. 81
Waurika • 580-228-2928

Cowboy Opry Music Store

10% off all purchases
300 Oak Main, Comanche
Tues. -Fri. 11-6p Sat. 10-2p
580-439-8111

Debbie's Little Books

10% off regular purchase price of personalized books.
debbieslittlebooks.com
580-492-4672 • Elgin

Edward's Family Vision

10% off of complete glasses
1619 W. Elk, Duncan, OK
Mon - Fri • 9:00-5:30
580-255-1172

Eastside Sod Farm

Free estimates and 10% discount
580-591-3360 • Lawton

Elegance & Events

Full Service Salon & Event Planning
10% off any salon service, 20% off any event planning service.
1322 S. Broadway, Marlow
Tue.-Sat. Hours Vary
580-756-0053
eleganceandevents@gmail.com

Gene Burk Auto Glass

10% off
2302 SW Lee Blvd., Lawton
580-355-3890

Horse Sense Graphics

Jamon Kelley - owner
15% off orders over \$100
580-512-7047
horsesensetradingpost@yahoo.com

Infinity Computer Systems

10% off all labor.
2322 W. Gore Blvd.
580-351-2911 • Lawton

Johnson & Johnson Locksmith and Door

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1913 NW Cache Rd., Lawton
580-355-KEYS (5397) or 580-355-8749

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Children's Consignment Lawton
FREE Admission to events & \$5 off purchase of \$25 or more.
2 Sales A Year, Spring & Fall
jbfale.com 580-656-3073

Lakeside Golf Course

\$5 green fees all day on Mon. & Tues.
Hours: 7 a.m. to dark
Walters, OK 580-875-3829

Ligon's Garden Center

10% off
301 S. Highway 81
580-470-8848 • Duncan

Linda's Carpet

Free vacuum cleaner with purchase of \$2,000 on Stainmaster carpets
4010 N. Hwy. 81 • Duncan

Nancy's Antiques

20% discount storewide
Hwy. 70, west side of railroad tracks
Waurika, OK
580-228-2575 or 228-2011

Nita's Flowers

Helen Thomas - owner
10% discount
114 N. Broadway, Marlow • 580-658-2714
Mon.-Fri. 8:30-5 • Sat. 8:30-2

On The Hill Gypsy Horses

Horse Breeding & Sales
\$100 off of breeding fee, or purchase of horse.
By Appointment: 580-641-2022 or 580-656-2475: lee@on-the-hill.net

Osage Animal Hospital

\$5 off professional examination
1500 W. Osage, Duncan • 580-255-4200
Mon.-Fri. 7:45 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Plumb Right

5% discount on services.
Elgin, OK • 580-512-3903
werplumbright@gmail.com
9am-5pm; 5pm-7am Emergency Hours

Rick Wylie Construction

5% discount on 8x10 & 6x8 storm shelters; 10% discount on 8x12 and larger.
580-656-5031 • 8:00 am - 8:00 pm
rwstormshelters@gmail.com

Ringtail USA

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Buy 12 caps or T-shirts, GET ONE FREE
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Rose's Custom LLC

10% discount on purchases over \$200
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rosescustom@yahoo.com

Shane Burk Glass & Mirror

Free mobile service in Stephens, Comanche, Grady, Jefferson, Caddo or Cotton counties or 15% off any residential or business windows or in-shop glass replacement.
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shaneburkautoglass.com

Showman's Choice

10% off Professional's Choice
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580-355-7469

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10% off all service calls, \$125 sewer camera, \$175 slab leak detection
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Southern Maid Donuts

10% off donut & pizza purchases
101 Thoma Dr. #A, Elgin, OK
Open 5 a.m. - noon & 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Tue. - Sat.
580-492-6123

Southern Trophy

10% off items in Gifts to Treasure shop
9-5 Mon.-Fri.
908 W. Main, Duncan
580-252-7866

Stephens County Humane Society

\$10.00 off adoption fee
714 Martin Luther King Blvd.
580-252-7387

Steppin' Outdoors

15% off all guides & tours.
20% off sponsorship rates.
580-450-1599
SteppinOutdoorsToday.com

Studio 17 Salon & Gifts

15% off products or retail purchases
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580-492-4744
Sharla Spencer, owner

Sue Cabelka, Realtor

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\$500 off seller's closing costs
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580-699-5566 • 580-591-3362

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Schedule an assessment and \$60 will be deducted from the cost. This is a lifetime assessment fee, no charge for further testing at our center.
2603 NW Cache Rd., Suite 2, Lawton
580-351-9100

The Branded Bear

5% discount on \$100 purchase
Medicine Park
580-529-3656

The Salt Cellar

15% off non-sale items, excluding boxed cards and gift cards
3801 NW Cache Road, #23, Lawton
9 a.m. - 7 p.m. Mon.-Sat. • 580-357-5443

The Vine & The Fig Tree

Event center with catering & tea room.
5% off Food/ Up to \$25 off in-house catering and 5% off Rentals. Regular prices only & must present card.
1304 W. Hwy. 7, Marlow
580-658-3377

Wichita Furniture

10% off new purchases
1127 NW Cache Rd, Lawton
580-355-7425
9am-6pm: Mon-Sat



Keep up with all the local and national discounts by downloading the Co-op Connections Card phone app at www.connections.coop.

Cotton Electric Co-op members get extra relief by presenting their Co-op Connections Card when getting prescriptions filled at participating pharmacies.

In 2016, members used their cards for discounts on 1,104 prescriptions not covered by insurance. A total of \$34,061.86 was discounted

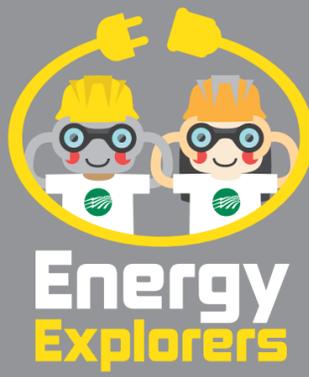
for an average savings of \$30.85 per use. The card is free to all members and can be obtained by calling 580-875-3351.

To find a participating pharmacy, call Member Services at 800-800-7616 or visit www.locateproviders.com. Type 2203OK19 into the Group field and click 'log in' to start your search.



FLIP THAT SWITCH DOOR HANGER

Save energy by turning off lights when you leave a room. You can remind friends and family to save energy with the door hanger below. Color it in, cut it out, and hang it in your house or even in your classroom at school!



LIGHTING FACT:

Residential LEDs — especially ENERGY STAR rated products — use at least 75% less energy, and last 25 times longer, than incandescent lighting.

(Source: Dept. of Energy)

How they SAY that in...

ENGLISH: Light

SPANISH: Luz

ITALIAN: Luce

FRENCH: Lumière

GERMAN: Licht

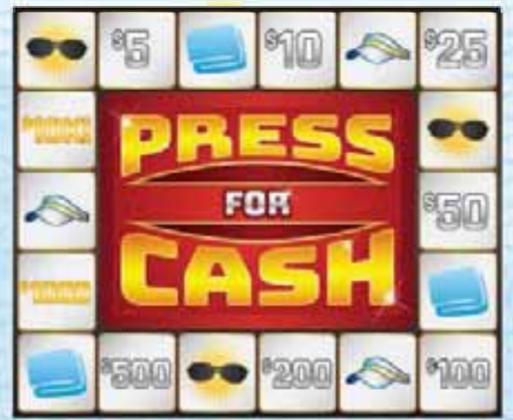
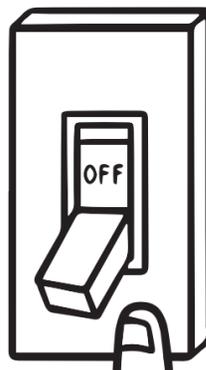


LIGHTING TIP:

How many kids does it take to change a light bulb and save some energy? Just one - YOU! LED light bulbs use lots less energy and last a lot longer than incandescent light bulbs. Change a light today!

FLIP THAT SWITCH!

Save energy by turning off lights when you leave the room.



WIN YOUR SHARE OF CASH, COMANCHE CREDIT AND PRIZES!

JULY 3 - AUGUST 27
DRAWINGS EVERY FRIDAY, SATURDAY & SUNDAY
GRAND PRIZE DRAWING AUGUST 27

Receive a drawing entry each time you earn 5 points on your Comanche Card.
Valid I.D. Required For All Promotions and Game Play



WIN \$25 COMANCHE CREDIT EVERY HALF HOUR!

Mondays
August 7 - August 28



New members get up to \$100 Comanche Credit & a T-Shirt!

See Player's Club for Details.
Valid I.D. Required

Senior Day

Every Tues. 12pm-6pm Guests who are 50+ years can receive \$5 Comanche Credit & a free meal after they earn 5 points on their C Club card.

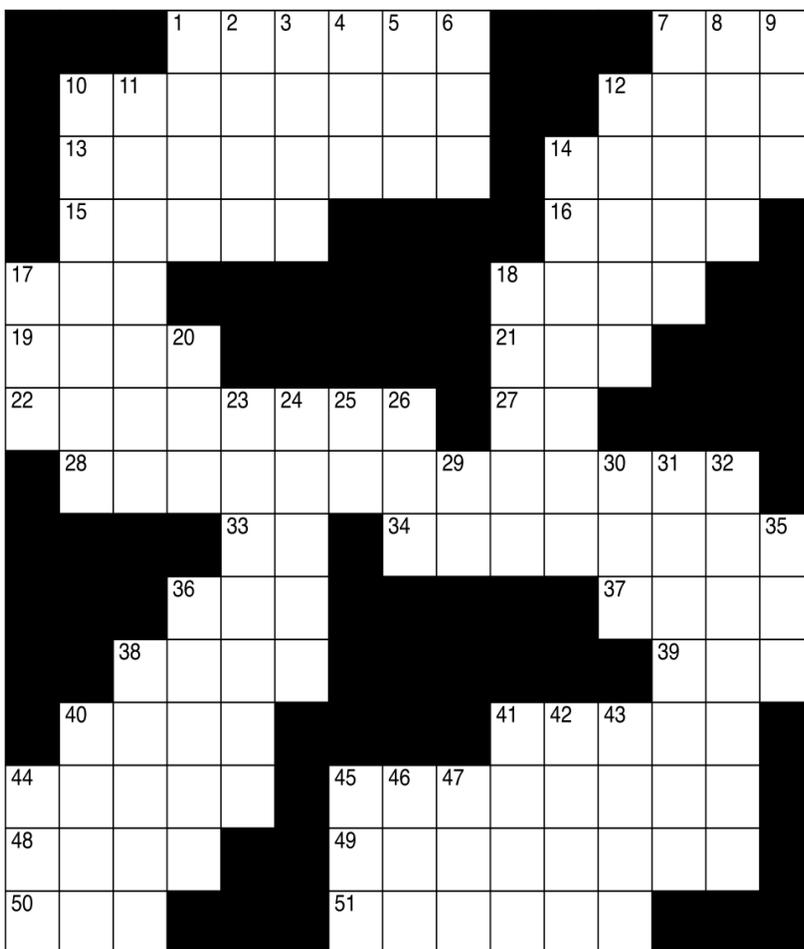
★ Over 100 ★
Gaming Machines
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Noon - 11 pm
Friday - Saturday
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Comanche Star Grill
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Noon - 10 pm
Friday - Saturday
Noon - 11 pm

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Route 3 Box 82A • Walters, OK 73572
See Casino for details. Must have valid ID.
Management reserves all rights.
©2011 Comanche Star Casino

ACROSS

1. Would
7. Pitching stat
10. Wounded
12. Guitarist Clapton
13. Penalizes
14. Female MMA fighter VanZant
15. Proverb
16. Urban gym
17. Midway between northeast and east
18. La __ Tar Pits
19. Go out to eat
21. Oral allergy syndrome
22. Where some are put
27. Spiral galaxy
28. Lethargic
33. Integrated circuit
34. Let your mind wander
36. Midway between north and northeast
37. Nomadic palace
38. Posted
39. Trouble
40. Wise
41. Make happy
44. Dog-__: worn or battered
45. One who fixes
48. Central European
49. Sleighs
50. Exponential time hypothesis
51. Puts within



DOWN

1. Typically noncoding molecules (abbr.)
2. Former Secretary of State
3. River in Belgium and
4. Unnilhexium
5. "Fall Guy" actor Majors
6. Tooth caregiver
7. Lucci character "Kane"
8. Latvian capital
9. Pet detective Ventura
10. Sporting dog
11. External genitals
12. "The Secret Room" novelist
14. Ancient wonder
17. Electronic data processing
18. Autocratic
20. Defunct European organization
23. Removed flesh
24. Indicating silence
25. Commercial
26. Chap
29. Farm state
30. Chief research officer
31. Poked holes in
32. Chutes and ___
35. What cows say
36. A desert in southern Israel
38. Isaac's mother
40. Sodium
41. Absence of effort
42. A way to articulate
43. Greek god of war
44. Midway between east and southeast
45. Run batted in
46. The longest division of geological time
47. Public broadcaster

Cotton Electric Cooperative is a not-for-profit cooperative with members who share in the ownership, construction, maintenance and prosperity of the co-op.

CAPITAL CREDITS



When a person establishes service with us, they become a member and are eligible for capital credits.

Capital credits represent a member's share of the cooperative's margins during the time they have membership.



At the end of each year, any funds (margins) remaining after expenses have been paid are allocated, based on percentage of electricity used, to the member's account.

The allocated funds are used as operating capital for system improvements and maintenance.



Annually, the board of trustees evaluates the financial condition of the cooperative to determine if we can retire capital credits. We may not retire capital credits every year.

When the board elects to retire capital credits, we calculate the amount to pay each member.



Checks are mailed to members due a retirement of more than \$5. Retirements less than \$5 are not issued a check and the allocation remains in the member's capital credit account.

ALLOCATION

An allocation is made annually for each member, based on the amount of electricity purchased. An allocation is the member's share of the net margins. The co-op sets this money aside to be used as operating capital for improvements and maintenance over a period of years.

RETIREMENT

A retirement is the amount a member receives back as a refund. It is a portion of the total allocation. When capital is no longer needed for operating expenses, it is retired. The amount paid is decided annually by the board of trustees based on the financial needs of the cooperative.



Capital credit checks are in the mail

By Karen Kaley

You may have received two items in the mail today from Cotton Electric. Capital credit checks were mailed Aug. 11, the same day as this newspaper. These checks represent your contribution toward the construction, upgrade and maintenance of Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (WFEC).

Cotton Electric is a not-for-profit distribution cooperative owned by its members who pay electric bills. Cotton Electric does not generate power but buys most of it from WFEC, a generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative.

Cotton Electric and other electric cooperatives in Oklahoma and New Mexico own WFEC. Just as Cotton Electric allocates its margins to members, WFEC allocates its margins to the electric cooperatives that own WFEC.

Revenues in excess of the actual costs of providing electric service for the year are called margins. Members' portions of these margins are called patronage capital, and are credited to the individual member's equity account in proportion to what each member contributed to the gross margin through his or her electric bills.

When Cotton Electric receives margin allocations from WFEC, it allocates those margins to the co-op members. The WFEC allocations are kept separate from the Cotton Electric margin allocations.

At both cooperatives, these margins are held in reserve for a period of time, with the capital being used primarily to construct new electric facilities, upgrade existing facilities, maintain the members' ownership and equity in the cooperative, reduce interest costs by lowering the amount of the borrowed capital, and maintain a reserve to protect against

Check tip:

Be sure to cash or deposit your capital check promptly. The checks include this notation: Check is void in 90 days. Your bank may not honor the check after Nov. 15, 2017.

storms and emergencies.

Refunds, called retirements, are made when financial conditions of the cooperative permit. Members are encouraged to keep Cotton Electric informed of any changes of address so they will receive a check if a retirement is made.

At the point Cotton receives payment from WFEC to retire (pay) any portion of the G&T allocations, Cotton Electric's board of trustees determines what to do with the G&T allocation made to you.

For the second year in a row, WFEC has retired capital credits. Cotton Electric's portion of the retirement comes to \$1,037,640.

Active and inactive members will receive a check based on the amount of electric power purchased. If the amount of the refund is under \$5, a check will NOT be issued. Instead, the funds will be carried forward and added to any amount authorized for refund the next time WFEC capital credits are issued.

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



with you all the way

Introducing Our... Elite Checking

The account that pays you

2.00%

Annual Percentage Yield* Applies to balance of \$0.00 to \$25,000.00

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- ★ Bill Pay



* Annual Percentage Yield is effective March 2017 and is subject to change without notice. Minimum to open account is \$100. When the Elite Checking qualifications are met, the interest rate on your account and corresponding annual percentage rate will be tiered. If your average daily balance is \$25,000.00 or less, the interest rate paid on the entire balance will be 1.98% with an annual percentage yield (APY) of 2.00%. An interest rate of 1.00% will be paid only for that portion of your average daily balance that is greater than \$25,000.01 but less than \$50,000.00. The annual percentage yield for this tier will range from 2.00% to 1.50% depending on the balance in the account, an interest rate of .10% will be paid for that portion of your average daily balance that is \$50,000.00 or greater. The annual percentage yield for this tier will range from 2.00% to .57% depending on the balance in the account. When the Elite Checking qualifications are not met, the interest rate on your account will be .10% and the annual percentage yield (APY) will be .10%. Rates may change after the account is opened. Fees may reduce earnings. Statement cycle requirements of 12 debit card transactions, one recurring direct deposit or electronic payment and e-statements are required to qualify for APY. Statement cycle requirement of 12 debit card transactions is required to qualify for ATM fee refunds up to \$12. Cash reward will be paid on the last day of the statement cycle upon meeting requirement of opening a new consumer savings, money market or loan account with us. Certain restrictions may apply. Contact us for full details.



August 23-26
Stephens County
Fairgrounds
2002 S. 13th St.
Duncan, OK

Entry Deadline for Exhibits August 23.

Saturday 10:00 am
Antique Tractor Show

Rodeo Friday & Saturday 8:00 p.m.

Introduction of Free Fair Queens
Friday and Saturday 8:00 pm

O.H.C.E., 4-H, Horticulture
Textiles & Science Exhibits

Livestock Judging Friday 10:00 am

Rabbit Show Friday 4:00 pm

Poultry Show Friday 6:00pm

Livestock & Horse Show Saturday starting at 8:00 a.m.

Farmhand Olympics Friday 12:00 pm

Free Gospel Singing Saturday 3-5 p.m.

Join us in the
Conference Center for
Food at the Fair
Lunch: 11am-2pm
Supper: 5pm-8pm
Homemade Pie by the slice!
Daily: **10am-8pm**

TRACTOR DRIVING CONTEST
Wed, August 23 at 6pm

CARNIVAL
Wed. & Thurs. at 6pm
Fri & Sat at 4pm

Special Thanks To Our Free Fair Sponsors & Volunteers!





Wait.
What?

Capital credits generate FAQs

Why am I getting this check?

Western Farmers Electric Cooperative has retired capital credits. This check is your portion of that retirement.

What are capital credits?

Electric cooperatives operate at cost – collecting enough revenue to run and expand the plant. When the co-op has margins left over, they are allocated back to its members as capital credits.

Why didn't I get a check?

If the amount of refund is under \$5, a check is not issued. Instead, your allocation will be carried forward and added to any amount authorized for refund the next time capital credits are retired.

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

How is the amount of the check determined?

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

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

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

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

You may still have a portion allocated to you, even though you have not been a

Cotton Electric member for a long time. Capital credit refunds over \$5 are issued to all active and inactive accounts.

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

We will publish a list of members needing to provide updated addresses in the later issues of The Current.

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

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

Still confused?

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

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

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

Community Spotlight

Plumlee crowned Ms. Oklahoma Senior America

Cotton Electric member and recording artist Dawn Anita Plumlee is very excited about her latest accomplishment. She was crowned Ms. Oklahoma Senior America 2017 at the conclusion of a pageant held late in July in Edmond.

Folks in southwest Oklahoma may be familiar with the name Dawn Anita. She set aside a recording career to raise a family in Velma, all the while continuing to sing. Eventually, she went back to the stage and has enjoyed success.

Dawn Anita has had three charted country records and has won several songwriting and performance awards, including



Dawn Anita Plumlee

Oklahoma Opry's Female Vocalist and Entertainer of the Year. In 2013, she also wrote and recorded "Gift of Life," a song aimed at promoting organ donation.

Dawn Anita captured the title of Ms. Oklahoma Senior America during

the pageant's 10th presentation. She drew on her country roots, offering her rendition of "Love Sick Blues" during the talent portion of the competition.

Dawn Anita will go on to represent Oklahoma in the national competition in October in Atlantic City. "Wish me luck!" she said.

The Ms. Senior America Pageant emphasizes and honors women who have reached the "Age of Elegance." To learn more, go to <http://senioramerica.org/>.

To catch up on Dawn Anita, find Dawn Anita Plumlee on Facebook or visit her website, DawnAnita.com.

International Festival is Sept. 22-24

Elmer Thomas Park is the site of the annual International Festival to be held Sept. 22-24. There is no admission or parking fee for this family-oriented extravaganza of fun, food, children's games and activities, demonstration artists and multicultural entertainment.

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

Find detailed information at the International Festival page on Facebook.

Honor guard serves area veterans

Several military veterans formed an honor guard in 2007 to provide services at funerals for all military veterans. The guard is made up of veterans from all

branches of the armed forces and three veterans' organizations.

The uniformed guard furnishes a 21-gun salute, plays taps and folds a flag for presentation to the family. The guard travels anywhere in Stephens, Cotton, Comanche and Jefferson counties, and has made special trips into Grady and Carter counties.

There is no charge for the service, though donations are accepted.

For information about joining the guard or securing its services, call L.D. Williams at 580-439-8244.

WMASCC offers many activities

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

For information, visit WichitaMountainSeniors.org.

Heritage Village
USDA Apartment Homes
TDD 711
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Safety training means happy endings

“It was one of those wrong place at the wrong time type of deals,” says Clint Shults. On a snowy morning in April 2016, Clint loaded a school bus with FFA students from Meeker High School. The group was heading to a competition at Colorado Northwest Community College, about 65 miles away. A heavy, wet snow was accumulating.

Clint, a long-time volunteer for FFA, drove the school bus. The FFA team’s horse judging coach, Silvia Otobachian-Smith, followed the bus in her car. The caravan travelled just seven miles when disaster struck.

Out of the corner of his eye, Clint saw a flash of snow falling off a power line and then heard the sound of a wire coiling. From behind the bus, Silvia witnessed several bursts of fire. The bus had snagged a power line just as it was falling to the ground under the weight of the snow.

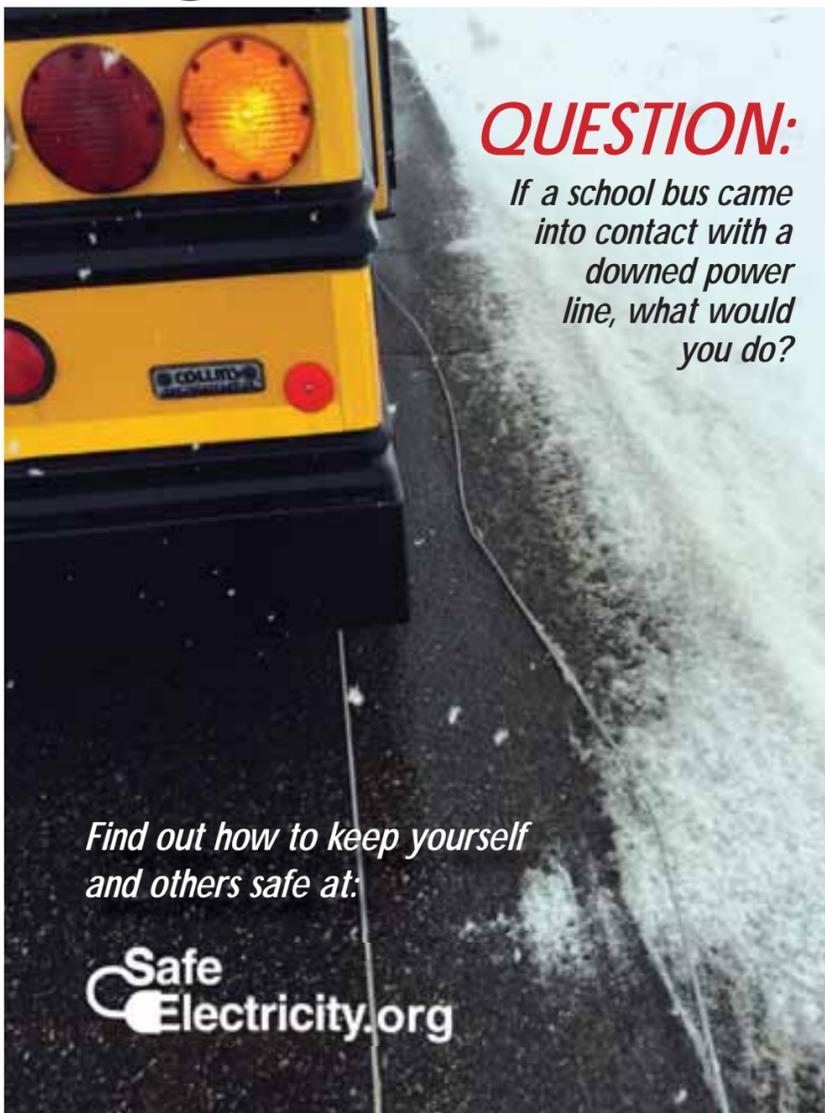
“There’s an unmistakable sound, if you’ve ever heard wire unraveling from a roll,” says Clint, “the noise of us dragging the wire across the highway and just through the air ... and then the strain of the wire as it became unraveled.”

Rather than throwing on the brakes, Clint took his foot off the accelerator and let the bus coast to a stop.

Behind the bus, Silvia’s first thought was to get out of her car and check that the students were unharmed. Luckily, a phone call from a student kept her safe. “They all started yelling at me on the phone,” she explains. “At that point, I knew we were in pretty big trouble.”

Amidst the chaos, Clint and his wife, who was also on the bus, were able to keep the students calm and call 911 to notify dispatchers of the accident. Once Clint was able to assess the situation, his next concern was whether oncoming traffic would be able to stop in time, as the bus signals had been shorted out.

John Purkey, line superintendent from White River Electric Association, and Sherriff Anthony Mazzola soon arrived



QUESTION:

If a school bus came into contact with a downed power line, what would you do?

Find out how to keep yourself and others safe at:

Safe Electricity.org

on the scene. Sheriff Mazzola says, “John Purkey got out first. He needed to secure the scene.” He ensured that the lines were de-energized and untangled from the bus and that the scene was safe before first responders moved in.

White River Electric had regularly provided training to local first responders. “We knew from this training that you don’t approach a scene because there is such a thing as step voltage, that even though the wire is on the ground as you walk into that scene, you could be stepping into different voltage variations and injure yourself,” explains Sheriff Mazzola.

The rescue took less than 20 minutes, and everyone remained safe because of knowing the right steps to take. “Everybody did everything right,” comments Sheriff Mazzola.

“The dispatcher told them not to leave the bus. Clint and his wife told everybody not to leave the bus.”

“In my opinion, a very dangerous situation was avoided because the correct steps were taken,” says Silvia. “People were patient. People communicated. Luckily, we had cell phones and help was there almost immediately.”

Afterward, the students and adult vol-

unteers were able to continue according to schedule. “We were told to get back on the bus, went on to CNCC, and competed,” shares Clint.

“Some of the kids got their names called, and it ended up being a good day in spite of what happened that morning.”

Clint and others are working with Safe Electricity to share their story so that others can learn from their experience. Safe Electricity wants you to know the steps to take to stay safe if you are in a vehicle that comes into contact with a downed line or power pole:

1. Stay calm, and stay inside the vehicle.
2. Call 911.
3. Warn others to stay away from the vehicle.
4. Stay seated, and do not exit the vehicle until utility personnel say it is okay to do so.
5. If you must exit the vehicle because it is on fire, jump clear of it with your feet together and without touching the vehicle and ground at the same time. Keeping your feet together, shuffle or “bunny hop” to safety.

For other chaperones who travel with students and might encounter a downed power line, Clint urges, “Do not tell any young person or any passenger to get off the bus.”

“Electricity is invisible, and there is no way to determine visually if a wire is energized,” explains Frank Sampson, manager of operations at White River Electric.

“Never assume that a wire has or doesn’t have electricity in it because you can’t see it. You can only see the effect of it, and it travels at the speed of light. It’s extremely destructive and exceedingly fast.”

After 26 years in law enforcement, Sheriff Mazzola knows first-hand the importance of electrical safety education. “Everybody needs to know what electricity can do, and we all need to be aware of it.”

Learn more, and see the story at Safe-Electricity.org.

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Operation Round Up fills up empty bellies

By Karen Kaley

Making a modest contribution to an organized effort really can make a big difference. For example, Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma has access to nutritious foods that can be purchased at rock-bottom prices. Through the food bank, a one dollar donation can provide as many as five meals for hungry Oklahomans.

If everyone you know donates a dollar, a lot of Oklahomans can eat.

Imagine what \$2,500 can do. Imagine how many people can be fed with nearly \$61,000.

Cotton Electric members are very familiar with the power of many small contributions coming together to have a big impact on the quality of life in southwest Oklahoma.

Every month, some 12,800 members of Cotton Electric Cooperative allow us to round their power bill up to the nearest dollar.

Some bills come out to the exact dollar and there is nothing to round up. For all

other amounts, a one-month contribution to Operation Round Up may be as little as one cent or as large as 99 cents. If a contribution was the maximum each month, it would add up to only \$11.88 after a year.

There are very few power bills that are exactly the same each month. On average, the amount rounded up is around 50 cents each month and \$6 each year.

Those amounts don't seem like much until you remember that more than 12,800 co-op members are contributing their two cents ... or 49 cents ... or 87 cents. All of those portions of dollars are pooled and set aside in an account administered by the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation (CECF).

Once a quarter, the CECF board of directors meets. As stewards of the membership's contributions, they carefully consider each and every grant application.

Since its inception in 2004, CECF has issued many grants to organizations fo-

cused on helping to feed hungry Oklahomans, particularly children.

For several years, grants totaling \$12,000 have gone to Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma supporting the Food for Kids backpack program in the Cotton Electric service territory. The most recent grant was for \$2,500 in June 2017.

Other grants have been issued to Walters Public Schools and Velma Community Outreach Center to support efforts focused on food for children. Grants to help with general food purchases have gone to Bray Community Food Pantry, Christian Helping Hands, Cotton County DHS, Temple area Food Pantry, Walters Food Pantry, Marlow Samaritans, Lawton Food Bank and Stephens County Christmas Dinner. In total, \$37,450 has been granted to these organizations.

There have also been grants for freezers, refrigerators, tables, carts and other equipment to Christian Helping Hands, Christians Concerned, Walters Food

Pantry, Central High Food Pantry, Grandfield Senior Citizens Center, Bray Community Food Pantry and Lawton Food Bank. A total of \$11,500 in avoided costs meant that much could be used to buy food.

Altogether, that's \$60,950 contributed toward the food insecure in southwest Oklahoma. According to Dave Wattenbarger, manager of regional giving for Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, one dollar can purchase six pounds of food. So, \$60,950 has helped with the purchase of 365,700 pounds of food.

And, using the \$1 equals five meals figure also provided by Wattenbarger, CECF grants have provided 304,750 meals.

Cotton Electric members have kicked in a few cents every month and made good use of the power of resource pooling. Over time, they have filled the bellies and warmed the hearts of hundreds of thousands of fellow southwest Oklahomans.



Deadline for third-quarter 2017 grant applications is Aug. 23.

Download CECF grant applications at cottonelectric.com.

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.

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Peanut butter muffins whip up in blender

A few years ago in my quest to find healthier, quick, but satisfying breakfast options, I stumbled across a recipe for blender peanut butter muffins.

Like many people, I am struggling to balance exercise, adequate and healthy food intake and keep my weight in check as I get older. I also want to start my kids' day with a healthy but hearty breakfast, and ideally something that does not take any preparation. These peanut butter muffins seem to fit.

Despite neither of my kids liking peanut butter or peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, they love these peanut butter muffins. When I mention these muffins to friends, they immediately want the recipe.

They are not the nutritional panacea or a life-saving super-food. They are simply a yummy, protein-packed, hearty, quick and easy, handheld breakfast mainstay for my family.

Here's the recipe:

- 18 ounce jar of smooth peanut butter
- 4 medium bananas
- 4 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon baking soda



Kim Bandelier, MPH, RD, LD

Food For THOUGHT

- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup semi-sweet chocolate chips (or more)
- Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.
- Put everything but the chocolate chips in a blender and blend until smooth. Then stir in the chocolate chips. Pour the batter into two 12-count muffin tins.

Bake for 10-12 minutes (or more if you prefer them well-done). Store in the refrigerator after they cool off.

I found a basic recipe on Pinterest from a site called "Tip Hero" and tweaked it over three years to the recipe above.

Here is the nutrition information, using hand calculations and not some fancy software: One muffin will have 181 calories, 6 grams protein, 12.5 grams of fat, 10.75 grams of carbohydrates.

The fat is predominantly unsaturated - mainly from the peanut butter. The carbohydrates are mainly from natural sugars.

I find with two muffins at breakfast, I am full until lunch time and have plenty of energy.

Here are some variations: Substitute cinnamon chips for chocolate chips; add a little honey if you need it to be sweeter; add some applesauce to make blending easier.

Ripe bananas work best. Regular peanut butter works best but you can use any nut butter.

I added ground flax seed once. In my opinion, that is an acquired taste and texture.

I have made them without chocolate chips. Only I will eat them that way.

You can boost the protein content by adding protein powder but you will probably have to decrease the peanut butter slightly or add some applesauce to avoid clogging up your blender.

These variations all change the nutrition profile and taste.

Notice there is no flour. I am not against flour. Flour will increase the calories and add some B-vitamins if fortified, possibly add some fiber if you are using a specialty flour. But I don't need extra calories, there's already fiber from the bananas and peanut butter, so this recipe allows me to enjoy a filling muffin on the go without busting my calorie budget.

My kids can "make breakfast on their own" by grabbing the muffins and a glass of milk from the fridge when they wake up. My husband can grab these and hit the road; no more drive-through breakfasts.

Give it a try! If you are skeptical, cut the recipe in half. You can always give them to a neighbor or take them to the office if they do not work for you and your family.

Pull together smart meals for busy families



Grilled Cheese and Pepperoni Sandwiches

Prep time: 5 minutes
Total time: 15 minutes
Servings: 4

- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 8 slices white or whole-grain bread
- 8 slices cheddar or American cheese
- 32 slices Armour Original or Turkey Pepperoni
- 1 cup roasted red pepper strips or 4 thin tomato slices (optional)

Spread butter over one side of each piece of bread. Put four slices of bread on sheet of waxed paper, but-

tered-side down.

Top each slice of bread with one cheese slice, eight slices pepperoni, 1/4 cup peppers or sliced tomato, if desired, and additional cheese slice. Top sandwiches with remaining bread, buttered-side up.

Heat large, nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add two sandwiches; cook 4-5 minutes per side, or until cheese is melted and sandwiches are golden brown. Repeat with remaining sandwiches.

Alternate preparation tip: Cook sandwiches in two batches in heated panini maker or well-oiled waffle iron 3-4 minutes.

(Family Features) Ease your way into a busy new school year with easy dishes you can prepare and serve in minutes. Time-saving and delicious dinners allow you to enjoy valuable family meals without too much time in the kitchen.

One smart way to pull together flavorful meals when you're pinched for time is to keep versatile ingredients on hand. For example, pre-sliced pepperoni is perfect for quick snacks, but it's also great for do-it-yourself pizzas, casseroles and even a fresh take on grilled cheese sandwiches. An option like Armour Turkey Pepperoni can brighten up any dish with 70 percent less fat and 25 percent less sodium than the Original variety.

Find recipes for family meals at ArmourMeats.com.

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Back-to-School **POWER** for body and mind

(Family Features) Nutritious, well-rounded meals are essential for growth and proper brain development. A complete midday meal also helps boost mental and physical power so kids can keep on learning until the afternoon bell rings.

It's not always easy to find new and appealing ideas to fuel kids' bodies and minds as they head back to school, but programs for families and educators such as the Power Your Lunchbox Pledge can help.

"Families are looking for ways to start the year on the right foot and the Power Your Lunchbox Pledge offers everything they need in one spot," said Trish James, vice president of Produce for Kids. "Families want to know their kids are receiving the right brain food to get them through the day. Our registered dietitian-approved meal inspiration, tips and ideas provide the foundation families need for success."

In addition to kid-tested, lunchbox-friendly recipe ideas, the program provides resources and lesson plans for educators who want to create activities to inspire healthy eating in the classroom. This year's program also includes a partnership with The World of Eric Carle, allowing students to win copies of his popular collection of children's books. Additionally, every online pledge results in a \$1 donation to Feeding America programs that support families and children.

Learn more about the program at poweryourlunchbox.com.

- Banana Sushi Rolls**
- 1 large (8-inch) whole-wheat tortilla
 - 3 tablespoons peanut butter, divided
 - 1 banana, peeled
 - 1 strawberry, sliced
 - 1/2 kiwi, sliced
 - 1 tablespoon shredded coconut

Lay tortilla on flat surface. Spread with half of peanut butter. Place banana on one end of tortilla and roll up. Cut into even slices and place strawberries and kiwi slices on top.

Microwave remaining peanut butter on high 30 seconds, or until melted, and drizzle over banana sushi. Top with shredded coconut.



Recipes courtesy of Produce for Kids

Brown Bear Bento Box

- 1 tablespoon soy butter
 - 3 graham cracker squares
 - 3 banana slices
 - 9 blueberries
 - variety of colorful fruit, chopped
- Spread soy butter on graham crackers. Arrange banana slices and blueberries to create eyes and noses to resemble bear

faces. In another container, add colorful fruit, such as raspberries, cantaloupe, pineapple, honeydew, blueberries and blackberries, to create a rainbow fruit salad.

Suggested Side: 1 tablespoon ranch dressing and three mini sweet peppers, sliced into strips.



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