

What's Inside



Cotton Electric Cooperative awarded \$8 million federal grant for grid upgrades to mitigate wildfire risks
Page 5



Employees recognized for their commitment to safe service
Page 9



A savory way to start holiday celebrations
Page 11

The Current

A Publication of Cotton Electric Cooperative Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

“The Current - Informing Our Members Since 1957”

VOLUME 68

December 13, 2024

NUMBER 4



Merry Christmas

WISHING YOU JOY AND HAPPINESS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON AND IN THE COMING YEAR

—THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND EMPLOYEES OF COTTON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Cooperation Among Cooperatives: Cotton Electric crews answer the call to help Georgia electric co-op

By Carli Eubank

This September, Hurricane Helene swept through the coast of Georgia, leaving behind miles of severe damage and thousands of members without power. With their bags packed and determination in tow, more than 70 lineworkers from Oklahoma exemplified the Cooperative Principle of Cooperation Among Cooperatives when they journeyed east to volunteer their time and skills to the storm-devastated region. Among those 70 volunteers were Cotton Electric lineworkers Ronnie Mansel, Scott Dennis, Keeton Sallee and Ely King.

In the first few days after Cotton Electric crews arrived in Wrens, Georgia, to assist Jefferson Energy Co-op, they spent time analyzing the damage and shadowing the lineworker, or bird dog, of that area. Once Jefferson Energy Co-op's service territory was added to their iPads, crews were then able to focus on safely and efficiently restoring power to members who had already been without power for more than 13 days, Mansel said.

Each day started before sunrise as lineworkers grabbed breakfast on their way to load equipment up onto their bucket truck and drive toward the first of many job sites. Their tasks included changing poles and transformers, putting primary wiring back up, moving trees and much more.

“Sleeping in the bunk beds and being away from family were definitely challenging, but if someone is capable of helping his or her neighbors, they should,” Dennis said. “A sight that inspired me to keep going strong was how many men and women were at the same co-op yard. There were more than 200 trucks in that parking area, and we all had one goal: to help get power back on.”

Mansel has volunteered for several mutual aid opportunities, both in state and out of state, during his time at the co-op, and treating members with kindness and respect while turning the lights back on is always his mission. He also shared how much he enjoyed visiting with lineworkers from Kentucky, Indiana and many other states when they met back at the campgrounds at the end of the day.

“I’ve helped with several major storm restorations throughout Oklahoma and in Louisiana after Hurricane Laura hit in 2020, and I’ve always loved helping people and turning the lights back on for them,” Mansel said.

Sallee shared that one of the biggest impacts he experienced was how the members showed their appreciation, offering food and beverages even though they had been without power for several days.

“I knew there were people throughout Georgia in need of help, and I was



(Pictured left to right) Cotton Electric Journeyman Lineman Ronnie Mansel, Cotton Electric Journeyman Lineman Scott Dennis, Jefferson Energy Co-op lineman Eric Patterson, Cotton Electric Journeyman Lineman Keeton Sallee, Cotton Electric Apprentice Lineman Ely King and Jefferson Energy Co-op lineworker “Snoop” Reynolds. Photo courtesy of Keeton Sallee.

happy to be able to just help however I can,” Sallee said.

King echoed what Dennis shared about how seeing so many people in one place pursuing the same goal of getting the lights back on for people they don't even know was something he had never seen in this capacity before.

“I chose to volunteer because I felt the need to help those who were going through such a terrible time, and it didn't matter if we got 10 people on in a day or 100 people, we were still

able to make a difference in the lives of those affected,” King said. “This experience made me grateful for what God has blessed me with, and seeing how thankful and appreciative everyone was to us definitely put things into perspective as to what we take for granted daily.”

Two weeks later, Mansel, Dennis, Sallee and King returned home safely, where they continue to provide safe, reliable and affordable power to our members.

Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment now being applied to bills mailed after Dec. 1, 2024, is \$0.01141 per kilowatt-hour (kWh).

On a member's average bill of 1,300 kWh, this will amount to a charge of \$14.83 on the December bill.

November 2024 Temperature Extremes

Day	High	Low	Avg.	Day	High	Low	Avg.
1	73	42	58	16	72	53	63
2	72	61	67	17	70	57	64
3	75	61	68	18	70	51	61
4	68	51	60	19	70	42	56
5	65	49	57	20	61	33	47
6	72	43	58	21	64	35	50
7	73	51	62	22	62	32	47
8	66	49	58	23	73	36	55
9	68	41	55	24	78	47	63
10	73	41	57	25	57	36	47
11	73	42	58	26	57	29	43
12	73	44	59	27	71	45	58
13	68	42	55	28	52	32	42
14	69	36	53	29	52	24	38
15	72	38	55	30	61	26	44

Source: srh.noaa.gov/oun/

Average Daily High: 68 Average Daily Low: 42

Did You Know?

Cotton Electric offices will be closed Dec. 24 and 25 for Christmas, and Jan. 1, 2025, for New Year's. Emergency calls will be answered at 580-875-3351 or 800-522-3520.

The next issue of *The Current* should arrive in mailboxes Jan. 17, 2025.

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 TheCurrent@cottonelectric.com.

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



COTTON
ELECTRIC CO-OP

Mission Statement
Our mission is to safely deliver reliable and affordable power, provide excellent member service, and improve the quality of life in the communities we serve.

From the CEO

As policy decisions are made, engagement is key

The new year will usher in a newly elected president, a new Congress, and new state legislators. Although the elections are over, the hard work continues as decisions are made that impact us and our electric cooperative. This provides an opportunity for electric cooperative members to demonstrate our collective political strength.

Grassroots advocacy and political engagement are essential for a healthy democracy. From communicating directly with policymakers and signing petitions to posting on social media and attending town halls, there are many ways to ensure our voices are heard as lawmakers shape policies that will affect our communities. When we are politically engaged, we are actively participating in the democratic process.

Political engagement starts with understanding which policies are important to our fam-

ilies, communities, and co-ops, and how those policies can affect our way of life. As members of Cotton Electric Cooperative, we know our communities best. This knowledge empowers us to make informed decisions and provide vital feedback.

Elected officials work for us, and they want to hear our feedback. When we engage directly with a policymaker – whether by sending emails and letters, attending town hall meetings, or meeting with policymakers or their staff – we are sharing our co-op story and educating policymakers on the value electric co-ops bring to local communities. It reinforces our commitment to provide safe, reliable, and affordable power while creating valuable relationships built on trust and understanding.

How can you tell your co-op story?

You play a vital role in this process, and Voices for Coop-

erative Power (VCP) is a great tool that can help you become more politically engaged. VCP is a national network of more than 1 million Americans dedicated to transforming electric cooperative communities like ours.

VCP members communicate with policymakers on the localized, community-based approach electric cooperatives take to keeping the lights on. We take a stand when policy decisions threaten our access to safe, reliable, and affordable power.

As job creators, economic drivers and, most importantly, community members, electric cooperatives play a key role in the future of rural and suburban America. More than 42 million Americans rely on electric cooperatives to power their homes, farms, businesses, industries, and schools. VCP helps ensure these voices are heard.

By becoming a member of VCP, you will receive regular



Jennifer Meason, CEO

updates on key issues that affect your electric cooperative and your community. As a member, you will have opportunities to communicate with your policymakers on those key issues.

VCP members also have access to voter resources, including guidance on how to be a Co-op Voter. For more information on Co-ops Vote, visit www.vote.coop.

Are you a member of VCP? If not, I invite you to join us at www.voicesforcooperativepower.com and encourage you to share VCP with your friends and family. Let's tell our co-op story. Together, we will make a difference.

New President
New Congress
New Governors
New Legislators

SAME WAYS TO ENGAGE

VCP Voices for Cooperative Power



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

If you're planning to purchase electronic gifts this holiday season, look for the ENERGY STAR® label, which indicates higher energy efficiency performance. Electronics that receive the ENERGY STAR® rating are up to 25% more efficient than standard products. This holiday season, give the gift of energy savings with ENERGY STAR®-rated electronics and equipment.

Source: www.energy.gov

	2024	2023
Total Amount Billed/Accrued	\$6,131,927	\$5,834,173
Cost of Purchased Power	4,507,746	3,886,278
Taxes	124,016	128,344
Total Operating Expense per Mile	1,234	1,114
Average Farm and Residential Bill	129	130
Average Farm and Residential kWh	1,042	1,013
Total Meters Billed (Farm, Residential)	19,768	19,526
Miles Energized	5,281	5,264
Density per Mile	3.74	3.71
New Service Connects YTD	372	376
Services Retired	163	168

Upcoming Deadlines for The Current	
January	
Ad Sales	Jan. 3
Classified	Jan. 3
Publish	Jan. 17
February	
Ad Sales	Jan. 31
Classified	Jan. 31
Publish	Feb. 14

The Current

Published Monthly at Walters, Oklahoma
By Cotton Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Jennifer MeasonCEO
Shane Bowers..... Vice President
Zach YoungDirector
Carli Eubank..... Communications Specialist

Cotton Electric Cooperative, Inc. Board of Trustees

Brian DeMarcus, Meers, President
Steven R. Robinson, Cache, Vice President
Tony High, Walters, Sec./Treas.
Clifford Dunham, Chattanooga, Asst. Sec./Treas.
Shan Files, Velma
Ken Layn, Marlow
Todd Clark, Duncan
Nichole Scott, Central High
Dell Farris, Comanche

"Cotton Electric Current" (USPS #134-020)
is published monthly by: Cotton Electric Co-op,
226 North Broadway, Walters, OK 73572
Periodicals Postage paid at
Lawton, OK 73501-4649

Postmaster Send #3579
To The Cotton Current
226 North Broadway
Walters, OK 73572

This institution is
an equal opportunity provider & employer.

Energy Efficiency

12 gift ideas for the tech-savvy person in your life

Finding the perfect gift for the techy people in your life can be a fun yet challenging task, especially with the pace at which technology is evolving. To make your shopping easier, here is a list of gadgets and smart devices that are sure to impress.

1. Home energy monitoring system

Help them take control of their energy usage around the house. These devices provide real-time insight into power consumption, helping homeowners identify energy hogs and ultimately reduce energy bills – perfect for the energy-conscious techie.

2. Portable power station

For the adventurer, outdoorsman, or any homeowner wanting to be prepared for emergency situations, these versatile power banks come in all different sizes and configurations. Depending on the size, you can charge multiple devices simultaneously, power laptops or even run mini-fridges. They are ideal for camping trips and storm shelters.

3. Smart bird feeders

These seem to be a popular item this season. Combining nature and technology, a smart bird feeder allows the user to enjoy birdwatching like never before. Many feature cameras that capture close-ups of visiting birds, and even use artificial intelligence to identify species.

4. Wireless charging station

Simplify their charging routine with a sleek wireless charging station. Look for models that can charge multiple devices at once, such as smartphones,

smartwatches, and earbuds. It's a clutter-free way to power up their devices.

5. Bluetooth tracker tags

Perfect for anyone who frequently misplaces items, Bluetooth tracker tags can help locate keys, wallets, luggage, or even your pets through a smartphone app. Some models also have a reverse feature to help locate your phone.

6. Connected air quality monitor

These devices track indoor pollutants, temperature, and humidity, sending real-time updates to a smartphone app to ensure a healthier living space. Most monitors are able to detect a plethora of gases including carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, and air-born particulates.

7. Smart outdoor string lights

Add a touch of ambiance to their backyard or deck with these versatile outdoor lights. They can be controlled by apps or voice commands to change colors, adjust brightness, or set lighting schedules – perfect for the techy host.

8. Laser projector

Transform their home or outdoor space into a theater with this compact and portable device. A high-quality laser projector provides a crisp picture for movie nights, gaming sessions, or outdoor screenings.

9. Heated coffee travel mug

For the coffee lover on the go try a heated travel mug that keeps their beverage at the perfect temperature. Many models are app-controlled, allowing the user to set and maintain their desired heat level from their phone.

10. Robot vacuum or mop

Save them time and effort with a robot vacuum or mop. These convenient devices can clean floors efficiently, and most are equipped with smart mapping and scheduling features.

11. Wireless speaker

A high-quality wireless speaker is a timeless gift. Look for a waterproof one with excellent sound quality and compatibility with popular voice assistants.

12. Smart plugs

Introduce them to home automation with smart plugs. These affordable devices turn ordinary appliances into smart ones. Many even offer energy monitoring for the devices they power.



Heath Morgan,
Energy Efficiency
Coordinator

This list combines some fun, practical, and innovative gift ideas. Whether you are shopping for a seasoned tech expert or someone new to the game, these gifts are sure to delight and simplify their lives.



Combine fun, practical and innovative gift ideas by shopping for any technology item from this list. Photo courtesy of MetroCreative.

Heating Degree Day and Cooling Degree Day Calendar

NOVEMBER

HDD	YEAR	CDD
287	2024	5
376	2023	16
492	2022	17

Degree days measure how cold or warm a location is by comparing the average of the high and low (mean) of the outdoor temperatures recorded in that location to the standard U.S. temperature, which is 65 F. The assumption is that we don't need heating or cooling to be comfortable when this is the outdoor temperature.

WISHING YOU A joyful HOLIDAY SEASON



Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation

CECF announces fourth quarter grant recipients

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 (ORU) 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 (CECF), a Board of Directors that meets

quarterly to consider grant applications from individuals and organizations in the area. The Board consists of Jennifer Meason, the co-op's CEO; Brian DeMarcus, president of the co-op's Board of Trustees; and three representatives from the Cotton Electric service area: Cindy Zelbst, Carter Waid and Polly Krasser.

The Board met in November to review grant applications. Grants totaling \$17,538.27 will be distributed to 10 of the applicants. Fourth quarter grant recipients include: Cache High School FCCLA, Cache Middle School, Comanche Fire Department, Douglass Eastside Senior Citizens

Center, Duncan Area Literacy Council, Empire High School, Southwestern Quilts of Valor Quilters, Sterling High School, Walters Elementary and City of Walters.

First quarter applications are due Feb. 11, 2025. The Board of Directors for CECF will meet again Feb. 25 to review applications for the quarter.

CECF grant guidelines and applications can be downloaded and completed at www.cottonelectric.com/grant-applications. Applications can also be submitted by email to zyoung@cottonelectric.com or by mail to 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572.

- Cache High School FCCLA
\$1,500 for the Bulldog Bites program
- Cache Middle School
\$1,454.57 for sensory processing equipment
- Comanche Fire Department
\$1,767 for wildland/extraction gear
- Douglass Eastside Senior Citizens Center
\$1,100 for food
- Duncan Area Literacy Council
\$1,500 for books
- Empire High School
\$1,200 for camera equipment
- Southwestern Quilts of Valor Quilters
\$2,000 for quilting materials
- Sterling High School
\$817.70 for STEM supplies
- Walters Elementary
\$3,699 for a portable evaporative cooler fan
- City of Walters
\$2,500 for a splashpad

16th annual CECF golf tournament raises funds for local organizations

By Carli Eubank

On a cool, fall day, more than 80 golfers showed their support for the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation (CECF) during the 16th annual Not-So-Summer Classic golf tournament fundraiser Nov. 25 at the Territory Golf and Country Club in Duncan. After postponing the tournament a couple of weeks prior due to weather, golfers were able to enjoy the rescheduled event.

The tournament drew 22 teams, which were divided into three flights. A scorecard playoff determined the winners in each flight.

With a score of 56, the Arkansas Electric Cooperatives team, represented by Jubal Hooker, Shane Bowers, Albert Johnson and Drew Champagne, won first place in the A flight. Representing the Dobson Fiber team and claiming second place in the A flight also with a score of 56 was Chris Hodges, Tyler Hodges, Cecil Boydston and Conner Boydston.

The winners of the B flight were Tom Ellis, Gaylan Hunt, Terry Snider and Greg Cook, representing Ellis and Buckholts Law, with a score of 63. Second place went to representatives of Preferred Sales Agency: Dave Seat, Adam Metcalfe, Zach Young and Heath Morgan, who had a score of 64.

Winners of the C flight with a score of 66 and representing Cotton County Drug were Skyler Smith, Stacey Abbe, Gordon King and Quaid Ogletree. With a score of 67, second place was awarded to Carter Waid, Floyd Wininger, Mike Ottinger and Ty Scott.

The Closest to the Pin winners were Jacob Caldwell and Albert Johnson. Johnson and Kelby Boyd also took home a prize for the longest drive.

"We would like to thank the players and contributors who took time to support this great cause, to the hole sponsors, and to the staff at The Territory who help make the tournament a success," said Bryce Hooper, Cotton Electric COO. "This is our 16th year to have this fundraiser, and we really appreciate all of the familiar and new faces here today."

Proceeds from the golf tournament will be distributed by the CECF Board to local organizations and individuals throughout the co-op's service territory.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

GOLD SPONSORS

National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation | CoBank | Hunzicker |
National Information Solutions Cooperative | Primary Utility Services

PLATINUM SPONSORS

All America Bank | Anixter/Wesco | Arkansas Electric Utility Sales |
Cotton Electric Services Inc. | City Mart | Comanche Nation |
Dobson Fiber | Duncan Regional Hospital | Ellis & Buckholts |
Hornbeek, Vitali & Braun PLLC | Powers Services | Preferred Sales Agency |
Targa | Texas Electric Coop | Tilley Group | Titan Powerline |
Utility Sales Agents of Oklahoma | Western Farmers Electric Cooperative

UNCOMFORTABLE?

Does your home have any of these symptoms?

<input type="checkbox"/> Rooms that get too hot or too cold?	<input type="checkbox"/> Dust buildup within 2 days of dusting?
<input type="checkbox"/> High utility bills?	<input type="checkbox"/> Problems with your system since it's been installed?
<input type="checkbox"/> Thermostat wars with your spouse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Anyone with allergies or asthma?
<input type="checkbox"/> High humidity in summer?	<input type="checkbox"/> AC starts and stops frequently or runs all the time, and house is still not cool?
<input type="checkbox"/> House just never seems comfortable?	
<input type="checkbox"/> There doesn't seem to be enough airflow?	

Have been told by other contractors that the problem cannot be fixed?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, we can help!

Pippin Brothers has specialists that can pinpoint and correct these problems and, in many cases, you don't even have to replace your equipment, with the solution usually being easier and costing a lot less than you may think. There is no other contractor in Lawton more qualified than Pippin Brothers at diagnosing and correcting these annoying, inconvenient, unhealthy, comfort-compromising and energy-wasting concerns. Call us today and let us make your home **Feel As Good As It Looks!** After all, your home is your largest investment and you and your family deserve to be comfortable - don't you?



Call Today:
580-248-7924
www.PippinBrothers.com

"Comfort Without Compromise"

Cable

MEAT & FOOD SERVICE

Wholesale Food Distributor
Wholesale delivery within 75 mile radius of Marlow.
Retail Store Hours:
Monday - Friday
7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



Field's Pecan Pies are \$5.99/ea!

Food Service Office Hours:
Monday - Friday, 5:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Place orders 24/7 on our mobile app
or online at cablefoodservice.com



580-255-3030

& TRUCK WASH

PASSENGER, LIGHT TRUCK, COMMERCIAL & AG

24 HOUR ROAD SERVICE

TOLL FREE 1-888-255-3031

MONTGOMERYTIREANDALIGNMENT.COM



Cotton Electric Cooperative awarded \$8 million federal grant for grid upgrades to mitigate wildfire risks

WALTERS, OK – Cotton Electric Cooperative has been awarded \$8,068,007 from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to enhance wildfire protection and resilience in the communities it serves by making critical upgrades to its electric system.

Cotton Electric is a member of a consortium of 38 electric co-ops and other rural utilities selected to receive federal funding through the Wildfire Assessment and Resilience for Networks project, or “WARN.”

“The WARN grant is a great opportunity for Cotton Electric to increase reliability and improve service quality for our membership, while also working to reduce wildfire risk in our communities,” said Jennifer Meason, Cotton Electric CEO. “We are excited to begin our program and learn from cooperatives across the country. It’s another shining example of three cooperative principles in action - cooperation among cooperatives; safety, education and training; and commitment to community.”

Cotton Electric will use its funding to make strategic improvements to the distribution grid to decrease the potential for wildfires, increases grid reliability during adverse weather conditions, and increases community engagement in the prevention of wildfires in the Cotton Electric Cooperative service territory. This will be done via utility pole inspection and replacement, vegetation and fuel-load management, adaptive protection technologies, and the replacement of aged overhead conductors and underground cables.

Led by Holy Cross Energy in coordination with NRECA Research, WARN will provide more than \$145 million in wildfire mitigation funding to co-ops across 16 states in the central and western United States to drive energy resilience in high-risk rural areas.

“Electric cooperatives are focused on leveraging innovative solutions to meet tomorrow’s energy needs,” said NRECA CEO Jim Matheson. “This infrastructure funding is an important step as electric co-ops work to harden systems against wildfires and enhance the reliability of the grid. These projects hold tremendous potential for local communities as their co-ops unlock new ways to use technology to help mitigate wildfires and keep the lights on.”

Working together, consortium members will share lessons learned and expertise and provide real world data to create an advanced analysis tool to identify the likely impacts of utility-ignited wildfires on regional electricity supplies and local communities.

WARN funding comes from DOE’s Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships program created by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.



Cotton Electric Cooperative was recently awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to assist in important upgrades to the co-op’s electrical system to enhance wildfire protection. Photo by Carli Eubank.

Email: macsbodyshop2161@yahoo.com

Mac's Body Shop & Wrecker Service

300 N 7th Street
Walters, OK 73572
Phone: 580.875.2161
Fax: 580.875.2149
After Hours Tow 580.351.7888

HOLT ELECTRIC
OVER 30 YEARS EXPERIENCE

Residential Commercial Industrial

Estimates Remodeling New Construction

24 hour Service

580-365-4147

P.O. Box 131 * Sterling OK 73567 * Lic#OK10531

CORNISH PROPERTIES

Insured & Bonded
Serving Lawton Since 1980

Commercial • Industrial
Interior & Exterior

- Drywall Finish
- Spray Painting
- Construction Management

6209 W Gore Blvd, Lawton
580-536-0575

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
Jan. 10-12

Business Hwy 287 & Hwy 81 (Wise Street),
Bowie, TX 76230
940-872-4861

Information Hours
Monday - Friday • 8am - 5pm
secondmonday@cityofbowietx.com

Event Hours
Saturday & Sunday • 8am - 5pm

www.cityofbowietx.com

FOLLOW US
2ndMondayTrade Days

Happy Holidays
from everyone at

YOUR TRUSTED CROP AND LIVESTOCK INSURANCE TEAM

Our Services
Multi-Peril Coverage for Available Crops
Annual Forage
Pasture, Rangeland, & Forage (PRF)
Livestock Risk Protection (LRP)
Crop-Hail
FSA Programs Support & Consulting

Our Mission:
We are deeply rooted in agriculture and are passionate about assisting farmers and ranchers. Protecting your livelihood protects the livelihood of everyone.

Office: 580-335-5122 – www.southwest-ag.com
111 West Grand, Frederick, OK 73542

Jan Jackson 580-335-1511	Maurissa Buchwald 580-351-8712	Jake Fillmore 580-335-1925
Daci Baker 580-779-3698	Maddy Barton 712-389-8241	Quinn Spraggins 979-229-2995

This institution is an equal opportunity employer and provider. **FSA Consulting**

Is Your Water Safe?

Give Your Back a Break...Stop Adding Salt to Your Softener

Minerals in your water form scale deposits that build up inside your pipes, water heater, shower heads, and other water using equipment like cholesterol in your arteries. These deposits significantly decrease the efficiency of your plumbing systems. Drinking water and icemakers are also negatively affected, as are health quality of water and taste. Hard water is not safe for you, your family or your home.

Benefits of a No-Salt Water Conditioning System:

- ▣ Maintain healthy calcium & magnesium levels
- ▣ No sodium added to water
- ▣ No waste water vs. up to 10,000 gallons per year with salt softeners
- ▣ No environmental discharge of salt or chemicals
- ▣ Reduces iron staining
- ▣ Extends appliance life by 50% or more
- ▣ Descals inside of pipes & water heater
- ▣ Cleaner bodies, clothes, and dishes
- ▣ 25% or more reduced detergent use
- ▣ Clothing will last longer
- ▣ Cleaner more refreshing water
- ▣ Improves water heater efficiency and thus lowers energy bills

Call Today
580-248-7924
www.PippinBrothers.com

PIPPIN BROTHERS
PLUMBING • HEATING • AIR CONDITIONING

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

Krissie Gordon
REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL
580-467-3396

TURNER AND COMPANY LLC
Mike Faulkner – Managing Broker
580-465-3571

May your holidays be merry and bright

As December kicks off, this festive time of year brings joy and warmth, but as the weather gets cooler and we spend more time indoors, the holidays can also bring increased energy use and a higher risk of electrical hazards.

As your local electric cooperative, our team at Cotton Electric cares about your wellbeing and would like to share a few practical tips to help you stay safe and efficient during the holiday season.

Safety first

Before decking the halls, always check electrical cords and light strands to make sure they aren't frayed or damaged. This can give you a peace of mind, knowing holiday lights are ready to safely brighten your home. Double check the lights used outside to make sure they're rated for outdoor use.

While festive, candles can create fire hazards and should never be left unattended. One of the best and easiest ways to safeguard your home is to test smoke alarms often. A good tip is to test them on the first of each month, so it's easy to remember. Testing smoke alarms only takes a few seconds and could save lives, so make it a habit.

'Tis the season for savings

Spending more time indoors with a few more guests in the home can really impact home energy use. By taking a few small steps to save energy during the holiday season, you can lower your bills.

Since heating and cooling makes up the majority of home energy consumption, the thermostat is one of the best places for savings. Lower it a few degrees, especially when you have family or friends stopping by. Good company brings additional warmth to your home.

Your family can also save energy by decorating with LED holiday lights. LEDs are the most energy efficient lighting options available, and they last much longer than traditional bulbs.

There's no denying one of the best parts of the holiday season is the food—not just the meals but the time we spend together in the kitchen. There are many ways to save in the heart of your home, but one of the best approaches is to cook

Tips for a Safe and Efficient Holiday Season
This holiday season, keep energy savings and electrical safety in mind.

SAVE ENERGY

- Use smaller appliances like slow cookers instead of the oven.
- Lower the thermostat when hosting friends and family.
- Decorate with energy-saving LED lights.

PRIORITIZE SAFETY

- Never leave unattended candles burning.
- Ensure all smoke alarms are working.
- When decorating, inspect all light strands and cords for damage.

with smaller countertop appliances, such as air fryers, slow cookers and toaster ovens. These handy appliances consume a fraction of the energy used to heat the oven, creating the perfect recipe for mealtime and energy savings.

From your friends at Cotton Electric Cooperative, we hope your holiday season is merry and bright. For additional advice, visit our website at www.cottonelectric.com/energy-efficiency. We're here to help you with safety and savings year-round.

Need to make a payment by phone?
Call our automated system at **1-855-940-3923**
Have your Cotton Electric account number and credit card or banking account numbers ready before making the call.

PSC PARAMORE SUPPLY COMPANY
401 E. MAIN, DUNCAN WWW.PARAMORE.COM
BUY IT - RENT IT - BUILD IT
WE RENT EQUIPMENT FOR DIY AND PRO'S ALIKE!

OUR NEW SHOWROOM HAS EVERYTHING ELSE YOU NEED! COME SEE US, THEN **BUILD IT!**
580-255-4147

RUSH CREEK VILLAGE Apartments

1, 2 and 3 Bedroom Apartments Available For Rent.
CHA, carpet & mini blinds, stove & refrigerator, washer/dryer hookups, laundry facility & playground on site. Rental assistance available for qualified applicants.
HUD Section 8 Accepted
USDA TDD 711

505 N. 5th - Rush Springs, OK
(580) 476-2655
Contact Julie
Tuesday & Thursday : 8am - 12pm

Carports, Garages, Barns, Metal Buildings

Come Check Out Our SALE!

Stop by our display yard at **Land Pros** in Duncan, across from the Stephens County Fairgrounds on South Hwy 81. Let us design and price your custom building.

BB BEST BARN
1705 S. Hwy. 81
DUNCAN, OK 73533
580-467-1501
BestBarnsandCarports.com

NO ONE BEATS OUR QUALITY OR PRICE
BestBarnsandCarports.office@gmail.com

Lawton Septic Tank & Storm Shelter

Over 25 Years Experience • Licensed, Bonded & Insured
Manufacture • Installation • Inspection • Tank Pumping • Maintenance

We manufacture and install all types of septic systems and specialize in aerobic systems.
Offer complete service or sell parts for do-it-yourselfers!
Financing available on aerobic repairs.
Mon-Fri 8am-5pm • 2401 SE 45th St., Lawton
24-Hour Service

580-248-3131

MasterCard, VISA, DISCOVER, AMERICAN EXPRESS logos.

GAMMILL INSURANCE AGENCY
CROP • HOME • AUTO • FARM • COMMERCIAL

Affordable Protection That Pays!

Acreage reporting date is January 15th for Wheat

Easy signup Professional Local Service

Josh Gammill, Agent
Amanda Smith, Secretary
580-479-5416 888-299-2767
201 W 2nd, Grandfield

Independent Insurance Agent logo.

PUBLIC AUCTION

605 SW "E" Ave, Lawton, OK 73501
Sunday, December 15th, 2024 @ 11 am
Preview: Saturday, December 14th, 2024 10 am-2pm
For photos: www.auctionzip.com Enter Auctioneer ID#17788

Scroggins Auction Service has been commissioned to offer at Public Auction contents of the Buffalo Grove Coffee Company.

ART BY: Calvert Wayne Nevaquaya art, Dallas Morgandale - Lincoln, Long wood table, Chair, Hand-made Hutch, Curio cabinets, Rolling half wall, Coffee sign and more, plus Myron Beeson art. **FURNITURE:** Couch, Futon, Footstools, Side tables, Variety of living room chairs, throw pillows. **COFFEE SHOP ITEMS:** Coffee sign, Carts, Shelving, Disposable cups, Lids, Straws, To go containers, Branded and not branded plastic and ceramic dishware, Pastry display shelves and glass displays, Glass and plastic beverage dispensers, Catering supplies, Catering display supplies, Charcuterie boards, Mason/ Ball jars, Insulated beverage dispensers, Commercial dining sets tables/chairs, Restaurant high-chairs, Childrens' wood chairs, Coffee cafe supplies, Baking supplies, 4-Salad/Sandwich prep tables, One door freezer, Merchandising cooler - single door, Worktop refrigerator, Two door under counter refrigerator, One door tall single door refrigerator, Imperial commercial freezer, United commercial freezer. **MISC ITEMS:** Two Schaeerer Ambiente commercial espresso machines, 2-Bunn bulk grinders, Multi-hopper Bunn bulk coffee grinder, 3-Bunn brewers, Coffee Carafes, Pump pots, 100 cup percolator, 5-Toddy cold brew systems, 10 gallon Brewista cold brew system, 5 gallon stainless steel cold brew system. **OTHER MISC ITEMS:** 1/4 oven, 1/2 oven and one new in box, Small pizza oven and peel, Microwaves, Panini presses, Toasters, Mobile dish dispensers Electric meat/cheese slicer w/glove, Ice Machine, Trash cans, Kegeator w/six five-gallon kegs, 2.5 gallon & 1 gallon used for nitro & cold brew 2-Nitro tanks, Tablecloths, Mugs, Gifts and Exercise Bike. **OPERATIONAL EQUIPMENT:** POS system, Xerox printer, Security cameras, Bluetooth speaker, Digital scale, Berkey water filter.

Auctioneers Message: This auction has lots of very nice items. Lots more than listed. Still going through items. You don't want to miss this one!! **Terms & Conditions:** Announcements made day of sale supersede any previous advertisements. Everything sells AS-IS Where Is! **Buyers MUST** provide a copy of SALES TAX PERMIT day of sale to avoid sales tax. **Terms & Conditions of Sale:** Cash, Personal Check & Company Check accepted with positive ID.

**Scroggins Auction Service
Parker Scroggins - Auctioneer
580-656-4416**

CESI lab renovation increases efficiency and production

By Carli Eubank

Members may recall an article around this time last year about new equipment being installed at Cotton Electric Services Inc. Today, CESI continues to maintain its commitment to safety and efficiency thanks to the completion of their test lab renovations. With an upgraded glove-and-sleeve-testing machine and an additional dryer, CESI staff are now even better equipped to ensure safety when they test and ship high-voltage equipment across the country.

A combination of parts for the previous machine becoming obsolete and an increase in orders led CESI Supervisor Eric Woods to recognize the need to upgrade testing equipment to efficiently keep up with demand.

“We can definitely see the difference in technology from when the first piece of equipment was replaced eight years ago to now,” Woods said. “Today, we use touchscreens to adjust machine settings, and we will have a quicker turnaround for any maintenance that needs to be done on the equipment. Another benefit is that we are able to test new personal protective equipment (PPE) that requires higher voltage – something that we couldn’t do with the old machine.”

As part of the upgrade, Woods also anticipated an increase in demand for direct current voltage testing and included the ability to do that with the new equipment, while keeping the option for alternating current voltage testing. With the electric vehicle (EV) market rising, CESI staff recently began to complete more orders from car dealerships needing PPE tested with direct current voltage for employees working on EVs.

“Whenever we started the planning to redesign the testing labs years ago, I wanted to do it knowing that we were going to make the space more efficient,” Woods said. “With this new equipment, we are continuing to see an increase in production and improvement in our workflow, and it’s been such a blessing.”

With the increase in the number of orders to be filled, the recent renovation of improved testing equipment and technology will help CESI continue its mission of providing safety to employees across the nation.

For more information about CESI, visit www.cottonservices.com.



The upgraded glove-testing machine will help CESI staff complete orders more efficiently. Photo by Carli Eubank.

STORM PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST:

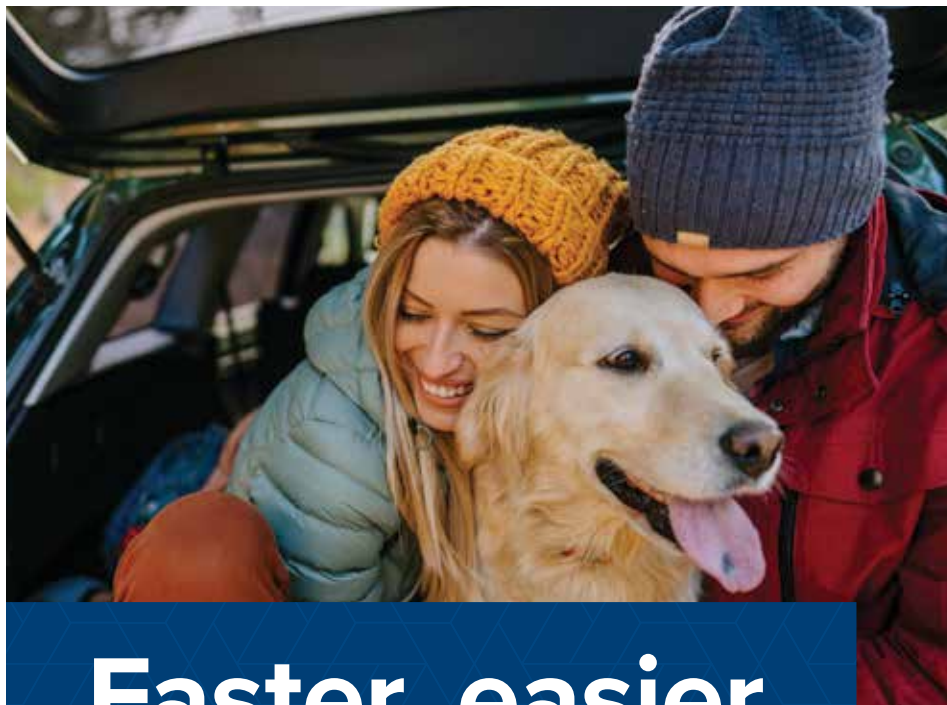
FLASHLIGHT

BATTERIES

GENERAC WHOLE-HOME GENERATOR



Exclusive to co-op members
Contact Heath Morgan for details at 580-875-3351



Faster, easier auto loans.

Our loans can give you the flexibility to negotiate a cash price so you can hit the road faster!

We offer competitive loan rates, an easy application and timely decisions. Contact me today or apply online!



Matthew Daniel
Consumer Lending Sales Manager
(580) 215-2731
mdaniel@arvest.com
NMLS# 1176287

arvest.com/auto

ARVEST

Loans subject to credit approval. Member FDIC

YOUR FIGHT IS OUR FIGHT!

We embrace new and innovative treatments that emerge each year in the fight against cancer! Our doctors and nurses are cancer specialists. Our staff is highly trained to support you as a patient. You will not fight alone.

We encourage you to get routine cancer screenings. Early detection improves outcomes and saves lives.

Hope & Healing RIGHT HERE AT HOME



ALTUS
1200 E. Broadway St.
Altus, OK. 73521
580.379.6000



LAWTON
104 NW 31st St.
Lawton, OK. 73505
580.536.2121



DUNCAN
2465 N. Whisenant Dr.
Suite 100
Duncan, OK. 73533
580.251.6600



CHICKASHA
2222 W. Iowa Ave.
Chickasha, OK. 73018
405.222.9222

Altus • Lawton • Duncan • Chickasha

CANCER CENTERS
of Southwest Oklahoma

A SERVICE OF COMANCHE COUNTY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

For more information, visit our website
CCSWOK.COM

De Hart
Air Conditioning
Heating since 1920
ENGINEERING SERVICE & CONTRACTING

5755 N. Highway 81, Duncan, OK
580-252-2205
www.dehartair.com



30% Federal Tax Credit for Geothermal Systems

30% Federal Tax Credit EXTENDED Through 2032!

Call us today for more information! 580-252-2205



Cotton Electric Co-Op Rebates Available On: *16 Seer, 17 Seer, 18 Seer(+) Air Source Heat Pumps. *New Water Heaters And Mini-Splits. *New Geo-Thermal Systems & Replacement Systems.

Dehart Air Conditioning offers maintenance plans to keep systems healthy!

*Rebates Available in many OMPA Member cities *Restrictions apply

Agriculture Tractors

**Bush Hog Mowers
Spartan Mowers
Trailers**



3555 US Hwy 81 - Duncan

Construction Equipment

**Forklifts
Attachments
Implements**



- **Parts** **580**
- **Service** **255-3891**
- **Financing**

Contact us today for all your construction, farm, and lawn mower equipment and parts needs. We also offer delivery, disposal, pickup, pre-season inspection, and other services.



0% FOR 72 MONTHS¹ + UP TO \$6,000 CASH BACK²
OR
UP TO \$16,000 CASH BACK²

Now through December 31 on all 2023 and select 2024 mid-range tractors.

NEW HOLLAND **VALUE BONANZA**

0% FOR 60 MONTHS¹ + UP TO \$3,200 CASH BACK²
OR
UP TO \$8,000 CASH BACK²

Now through December 31 on all 2023 and select 2024 Discbine[®] disc mower-conditioners.

NEW HOLLAND **VALUE BONANZA**

0% FOR 60 MONTHS¹ + UP TO \$4,500 CASH BACK²
OR
UP TO \$11,000 CASH BACK²

Now through December 31 on all 2023 and select 2024 Roll-Belt[™] round balers.

NEW HOLLAND **VALUE BONANZA**

KEYSTONE TRACTOR

10% OFF SINGLE PARTS PURCHASE
(PARTS ONLY, EXCLUDING NETWRAP)

EXPIRES 12/31/2024
LIMIT ONE PER CUSTOMER PER MONTH

KEYSTONE TRACTOR

10% OFF LABOR AND PARTS IN SERVICE SHOP

EXPIRES 12/31/2024
LIMIT ONE PER CUSTOMER PER MONTH

KEYSTONE TRACTOR

FREE HANDHELD STRING TRIMMER AND BLOWER WITH PURCHASE OF ANY NEW ZERO TURN MOWER

EXPIRES 12/31/2024
LIMIT ONE PER CUSTOMER PER MONTH

KEYSTONE TRACTOR

\$150 ZERO TURN MOWER SERVICE
INCLUDES OIL CHANGE, OIL FILTER, AIR FILTER, BATTERY LOAD-TEST, LUBE POINTS, AND INSPECTION

EXPIRES 12/31/2024
LIMIT ONE PER CUSTOMER PER MONTH

0% FOR 72 MONTHS¹ + UP TO \$3,000 CASH BACK²
OR
UP TO \$8,500 CASH BACK²

Now through December 31 on select compact tractors.

NEW HOLLAND **VALUE BONANZA**

UP TO \$1200 INSTANT REBATE
ON SELECT MOWERS
Rebate Starts at \$500

SPARTAN MOWERS

Learn More at SPARTANMOWERS.COM/SALESEVENT

0% FOR 72 MONTHS¹ + UP TO \$3,000 CASH BACK²
OR
UP TO \$8,500 CASH BACK²

Now through December 31 on all 2023 and select 2024 compact tractors.

NEW HOLLAND **VALUE BONANZA**



580 - 255-3891
3555 US Hwy 81
Duncan



¹For Commercial use only. Customer participation subject to credit qualification and approval by CNH Industrial Capital America LLC. See your participating New Holland dealer for details and eligibility requirements. Eligible equipment limited to dealer inventory in stock. Previous retail sales are not eligible. No payments until January 1, 2025. Down payment not required. Offer good through December 31, 2024, at participating New Holland dealers in the United States. Not all customers or applicants may qualify for this rate or term. CNH Industrial Capital America LLC standard terms and conditions apply. This transaction will be unconditionally interest free. ²For commercial use only. See your participating New Holland dealer for details and eligibility requirements. Cash back applied at time of sale. Offer is nontransferable. Offer ends December 31, 2024. Offer subject to change or cancellation without notice. ©2024 CNH Industrial America LLC. All rights reserved. CNH Capital and New Holland are trademarks registered in the United States and many other countries, owned by or licensed to CNH Industrial N.V., its subsidiaries or affiliates.



Co-op Life

It's a year-end tradition at Cotton Electric to honor Board Members and employees for their years of service.



Todd Clark
5 years



Prestin Green
5 years



Case Hurst
5 years



Ely King
5 years



Joe Moore
5 years



Brady Stapp
5 years



Jeremy Stewart
5 years



Dillon Wiygul
10 years



Bobby Shortt
20 years



Stephanie Christman
25 years



Scott Dennis
25 years



Kim Johnson
25 years



Ronnie Mansel
30 years

Employees recognized for their commitment to safe service

Safety is the focus of everything we do at Cotton Electric Cooperative. It's even in our mission statement: to "safely deliver reliable and affordable power" in the communities we serve.

As Cotton's Safety and Loss Control Director, Jarrod Hooper coordinates all safety policies, procedures and training. His focus on safety is echoed by CEO Jennifer Meason and supported by the cooperative's Board of Trustees.

"Some may say it's keeping the lights on, but I say safety is job No. 1 for everybody at Cotton Electric," said Hooper.

Providing electric service requires equipment ranging from computer keyboards to large digging augers. 85 Cotton Electric employees carry out tasks as varied as pushing reams of old documents into a paper shredder to riding a bucket 60 feet in the air to repair a high-voltage line. Every piece of equipment

and every task presents a potential accident, yet Cotton Electric employees have a pretty good record of safe work that extends over quite a bit of time.

That is an important accomplishment, so important that once a year the co-op recognizes the employees whose safe work records have passed five-year increments.

In 2024, 17 Cotton Electric employees achieved those five-year marks for a combined total of 170 years of accident-free service.

Employees recognized include Danielle Quickle, Heath Morgan, James Apriesnig, Conner Daniel, Shayne White and Jacob Lawler, who have each worked five years with a safe work record. Greg McComber, Larry Williams, Larry Crowell, Quaid Ogletree, Zachary Smith and Ryan Noland have worked safely for 10 years, while Justin King, Cody Pennington and Shelly Seht have a 15-year safe



working record. Mike Ottinger has worked safely for 20 years, and Scott Crew has a 25-year safe working record.



Employee of the Year

Larry Crowell
Cotton Electric Journeyman Lineman



Cotton Electric Journeyman Lineman Larry Crowell grabs equipment from bucket truck at a job site near Duncan. Photo by Carli Eubank.



Cooperative Spirit Award

James Apriesnig
Cotton Electric General Accounting Supervisor



Leadership in Health/Safety

Scott Dennis
Cotton Electric Journeyman Lineman

Community Spotlight

If you would like your community event listed in the January issue, please submit information by calling 580-875-3351 or send an email to TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com by Jan. 3. Only events occurring after Jan. 17 will be published in the next issue.

Editor's Note: We recommend checking for cancellations with local sources before attending any event.

Local festive shopping experience

Join the Lawton Farmers Market for their An Enchanted Christmas Evening. This festive event is the last day to shop with local vendors. The event is scheduled from 4-8 p.m. Dec. 18. at the Lawton Farmers Market. For questions or more information, visit www.lawtonfarmersmarket.com.

Community holiday dinner

Enjoy a free holiday dinner, sponsored by local organizations, at the Stephens County Holiday Dinner. Attendees can enjoy the dinner in person or there will be a carryout option. Volunteers and donations are welcomed. The event is scheduled from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 21 at the main building of the Stephens County Fairgrounds. For questions or more information, call 580-656-1758.

Holiday in the Park

Celebrate the holidays with family-friendly events at Lawton's Holiday

in the Park. Throughout December, Elmer Thomas Park will be completely decorated with colorful light displays for the holiday season. Check out the Winter Rink, movie nights, train rides, holiday concerts, food trucks, vendors and much more. For questions or more information about the event, call 580-355-3541.

Food pantry open once monthly

Walters Community Food Pantry is open from 8-11 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month. The pantry is located in the old City Hall, 131 1/2 W. California St in Walters. Pantry organizers try to provide a two-week supply of basic staples to anyone with identification and proof of Cotton County residency. Monetary donations may be sent to Food Pantry, c/o Paul Metcalfe, 211 E. Colorado St., Walters, OK 73572. For questions or more information, call Roger Noland at 580-591-6826.

Blessings Boutique open monthly

Marlow First United Methodist Church opens its Blessings Boutique from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. every first and third Tuesday of the month. Clothing donation drop-off days are Tuesdays. For questions, more information, or to make other arrangements, donors can call the church at 580-658-2765.

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Cotton Electric member Alice McGuire decorates her home with Christmas lights each year in memory of her oldest son, who her and her family lost in 2019. She also shared that Christmas was his favorite time of the year.

Enter your "best shot" in our Photo of the Month contest. The theme for January is Family Time! Entries can be emailed to TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com or mailed to The Current, 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572. Winners will receive a Cotton Electric prize.

The Current

2025 Publication Dates

January		February		March	
Ad Sales Deadline	Jan. 3	Ad Sales Deadline	Jan. 31	Ad Sales Deadline	Feb. 28
Classified Deadline	Jan. 3	Classified Deadline	Jan. 31	Classified Deadline	Feb. 28
Publish Date	Jan. 17	Publish Date	Feb. 14	Publish Date	Mar. 14

April		May		June	
Ad Sales Deadline	Mar. 28	Ad Sales Deadline	May 2	Ad Sales Deadline	May 30
Classified Deadline	Mar. 28	Classified Deadline	May 2	Classified Deadline	May 30
Publish Date	Apr. 11	Publish Date	May 16	Publish Date	June 13

July		August		September	
Ad Sales Deadline	July 4	Ad Sales Deadline	Aug. 1	Ad Sales Deadline	Aug. 29
Classified Deadline	July 4	Classified Deadline	Aug. 1	Classified Deadline	Aug. 29
Publish Date	July 18	Publish Date	Aug. 15	Publish Date	Sept. 12

October		November		December	
Ad Sales Deadline	Oct. 3	Ad Sales Deadline	Oct. 31	Ad Sales Deadline	Dec. 5
Classified Deadline	Oct. 3	Classified Deadline	Oct. 31	Classified Deadline	Dec. 5
Publish Date	Oct. 17	Publish Date	Nov. 14	Publish Date	Dec. 19

Classifieds: \$5 for non-members & subscribers

To place a classified ad, email classifieds@cottonelectric.com or call 580-875-3351.

Subscriptions: \$10 annually

REAL ESTATE & AUCTION CO.
 Todd Robertson, Owner / Broker / Auctioneer
1705 S. Hwy. 81 - Duncan, OK
580-252-3880
www.FarmsRanchesLand.com

"WE SELL LAND AND *everything* ON IT"
 Meet Our Real Estate Professionals . . .



Todd Robertson Owner/Broker Auctioneer
Tammy Vaughn Broker Associate
Cace Robertson Realtor Associate
Jennifer Wolston Realtor Associate
Jessica Parker Realtor Associate
Caitlin Paxson Realtor Associate
Allison Bray Realtor Associate
Tony DeCarlo Realtor Associate
Tabitha Williams Realtor Associate
Mikayla Franklin Realtor Associate

Let Land Pros Work for You! 40 years Experience
 Farms / Ranches
 Homes / Recreation
 Commercial Equipment
 Business Liquidations
 Online & Live Auctions

LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL MARKETING.
 IT IS OUR GOAL TO PROVIDE THE VERY BEST COUNSEL, ADVICE AND SERVICE POSSIBLE FOR ANY OF YOUR AUCTION AND REAL ESTATE NEEDS.

Fight the Flu-Get Your Flu Shot!
 Monday - Friday
 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

 Velma Family Care | 404 W Main St | Velma, OK
 580-444-2630
 Michelle Vannoy, APRN-CNP

Duncan

A 66 Hardware Company
 3209 N Highway 81
 Duncan, OK 73533
(580) 255-3500

Raw milk not worth the risk



Kim Bandelier, MPH, RD, LD

Food For THOUGHT

Before milk pasteurization, raw milk contributed to serious and widespread disease and illness. Infectious diseases related to ingestion of raw milk included tuberculosis, typhoid, diphtheria, and brucellosis. In addition, bacteria found in raw milk caused diarrhea, vomiting, fever, and headaches, sometimes resulting in serious or fatal bacterial infections

in children and older adults. The practice of pasteurizing essentially eliminated the threat of infectious pathogens and drastically reduced, if not eliminated, harmful bacteria in our milk supply.

Pasteurization of milk involves heating raw milk to high temperatures for small amounts of time to destroy dangerous pathogens and reduce the number of bacteria that contribute to illness and spoilage. Invented by Louis Pasteur in the mid-19th century to eliminate the spoilage of wine and beer, pasteurization of milk in the United States became widespread in the 1920s, resulting in drastic reductions of milk-related foodborne illnesses and death.

Over the past 20 years, interest in raw milk has increased. Advocates for raw milk purport advantages in nutritional content and positive impact on immunity, allergies, asthma, and digestion. The differences in nutritional content are minor and do not justify the risk of illness from ingesting raw milk. The Centers for Disease Control currently advises against consuming raw milk to build immunity



Interest in raw milk has increased but there are diseases and illnesses connected to the product before it's pasteurized. Photo courtesy of MetroCreative.

due to the risk of falling ill or dying from other pathogens and bacteria. The effects of consuming minimally processed milk (not raw) on allergies, asthma, and digestion remain under scientific investigation.

If the science does not convince you, consider a study of real-world outcomes authored by Koski and colleagues, published in *Epidemiology & Infection* in 2022. The researchers examined the impact of loosening state laws related to distribution of raw milk on the occurrence of foodborne illnesses linked to

raw milk. Not surprisingly, states that had eased restrictions on the distribution of raw milk had higher rates of milk-related foodborne illness between 1998 and 2018 versus states that maintained restrictions. Of note, milk-related foodborne illness was more frequent in states that allowed retail distribution versus states allowing farm-only distribution (meaning you must go directly to the farm to purchase raw milk). In Oklahoma, raw milk can only be purchased directly from the farm where it is produced.



Only the best for brunch

(Culinary.net) Nearly nothing is better than a perfectly planned brunch. This delicious, sweet recipe could be the cherry on top of your brunch bash.

As you see your friends and family members take their first bites, you will see their faces light up with delight as they devour this Cranberry Strata. It's made with fluffy, baked French bread, smooth cream cheese, sweet and tangy maple syrup and, of course, dried cranberries.

This recipe is easy to make and even easier to eat. With only a handful of ingredients and just a few simple steps, this dish is one you can quickly whip up when you're in a pinch.

Plus, the end result will have you and brunch goes asking, "Why is this so good?" It's wholesome, rich and delicious. With two layers of bread sandwiched around layers of cranberries and cream cheese, this dish is almost certain

to be a new brunch favorite.

Start by mixing eggs, maple syrup and milk together in a bowl. Then in a baking dish, add a layer of French bread and top it with chunks of cream cheese. Spread the cranberries on top.

Then layer on your second sheet of French bread. Next pour your egg mixture over top of everything, making sure the bread is absorbing the flavors. Top with a dash of cinnamon and bake.

Pull it out of the oven and serve warm. You will have a gooey, creamy, melt-in-your-mouth strata on your hands.

This dish is wonderful for brunch, however, it is versatile enough to be served as a family dessert, scrumptious breakfast or treat on a cold, winter day.

Between the dairy, grains and sprinkle of fruit, this dish is a star for any occasion throughout the year.

For more recipe ideas for any occasion, visit Culinary.net.

Cranberry Strata

- 8 cups crusty French breadcrumbs
- 1 package (18 ounces) cream cheese
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 6 eggs
- 2 1/4 cups milk
- 1/3 cup maple syrup, plus additional, for serving (optional)
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon or nutmeg

In greased, 2-quart, rectangular baking dish, arrange about 4 cups bread pieces.

Cut cream cheese into 8-10 slices and arrange over bread chunks. Sprinkle cranberries over bread chunks. Top with

remaining bread pieces.

In medium bowl, beat together eggs, milk and 1/3 cup maple syrup. Pour over bread. Sprinkle with ground cinnamon or nutmeg.

With back of spoon or spatula, lightly press down to saturate bread with egg mixture. Cover and chill up to 24 hours in refrigerator.

Heat oven to 350 F. Bake, covered, 45 minutes. Uncover and bake 20 minutes.

Let stand 10 minutes. Serve warm and topped with maple syrup, if desired.



A savory way to start holiday celebrations

(Culinary.net) It's the holiday season and your family can feel the cheer as loved ones fill their appetizer plates and excitement fills the air as gifts are being placed beneath the tree.

Someone asks, munching away near the table, "Wow, how did you make this?" In your mind, you think, "It was too easy."

These Savory Cheese Balls are not only simple to make but perfect for any holiday get-together or celebration. They're fun to create and even more enjoyable to dive in to once finished. Texture and color are the name of the game with this recipe. The result is a beautiful array of red, gold and green, all on one plate.

Start by rolling cream cheese into balls and mixing up three bowls with powerful flavors to create the three different colors. The "green" bowl gets parsley,



thyme, rosemary and, of course, some garlic, just for an extra kick of seasoning. The "gold" ball calls for caraway seeds, poppy seeds and garlic. Finally, the "red" ball includes cranberries and pecans.

Simply roll each cream cheese ball around gently until it's coated. It doesn't get any simpler than that. Display the array of cheese balls on a festive plate for something equally cheery and heavenly. Serve the plate with crackers, fruit or vegetables for complementary dipping options.

Find more recipes and holiday fun this season at Culinary.net.

Savory Cheese Balls

Servings: 6-12

- 2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese
- 2 tablespoons caraway seeds
- 1 teaspoon poppy seeds
- 2 cloves garlic, minced, divided
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
- 2 teaspoons thyme leaves, chopped
- 1 teaspoon rosemary, chopped
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries, chopped
- 2 tablespoons pecans, chopped
- crackers (optional)
- fruit (optional)
- vegetables (optional)

Cut each cream cheese block into three squares. Roll each square into ball.

In small bowl, combine caraway seeds, poppy seeds and half the garlic.

In second small bowl, combine parsley, thyme, rosemary and remaining garlic.

In third small bowl, combine cranberries and pecans.

Roll two cheese balls in seed mixture, two in herb mixture and two in cranberry mixture.

Cut each ball in half and serve with crackers, fruit or vegetables, if desired.

Punch up your holiday beverage menu

(Culinary.net) This time of year is all about food and sweet desserts, but don't forget to quench guests' thirst with a seasonal sip. This Christmas Cranberry Punch offers a slightly less sweet take on traditional punch so you can add a touch of tart to the beverage cart. Visit Culinary.net to find more delicious holiday recipe ideas.

Christmas Cranberry Punch

Recipe courtesy of "Cookin' Savvy"

- 1 package fresh cranberries
- 1 can pineapple chunks
- 3-4 rosemary twigs
- 6 cans lemon-lime soda, divided
- 64 ounces cranberry juice
- 20 ounces orange pineapple juice
- 1 orange
- rosemary sprigs in each hole of silicone muffin pan or ice tray. Cover with 1 can lemon-lime soda and freeze.
- Chill remaining soda, cranberry juice and orange pineapple juice overnight.
- In punch bowl, mix remaining soda, cranberry juice and orange pineapple juice. Slice orange into 5-6 slices. Add lemon-lime soda ice cubes, handful of cranberries and orange slices. Serve.

The night before, place four cranberries, two pineapple chunks and a few

the ED bray store

7503 E. HWY 29
580-658-5211
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

DAILY LUNCH SPECIALS
Dine In - Carry Out - Call Ins Welcome

RESTAURANT Mon.-Sat. 6 AM-2PM
STORE Mon.-Sat. 6 AM-8PM
Sunday 7 AM-2PM Sunday 7 AM-8PM
Call-ins and Take Out (7 Days a week) 2PM-6PM

FRONTIER Equipment

2301 S. Hwy 81
Marlow, OK 73055
580-475-8879

Skid Steer Grapples, Augers,
Mowers, Forks, Etc.

SHOWMAN'S CHOICE

FOR ALL YOUR HORSE TACK & SHOW SUPPLY NEEDS.

HOURS MON-FRI 8:00-5:30
SAT 10:00-2:00

1205 SW SHERIDAN RD
LAWTON, OK 73505
580-355-7469

FIND US ON FACEBOOK!



COTTON

ELECTRIC CO-OP

HOLIDAY FUN WORD SEARCH

Can you find all the words associated with holiday fun in the puzzle below? Use the word bank to check your work.



WORD BANK

Jingle bells Santa Claus Snowman
Candy cane Mittens Hot Chocolate



N	H	C	H	P	B	D	H	S	V	G	Z	H	T	M
A	C	C	F	Z	Z	A	T	F	N	V	D	Q	Z	Y
M	H	L	V	Y	M	J	N	P	D	E	T	V	F	S
W	P	W	H	F	W	I	H	K	S	C	T	G	B	K
O	Z	K	D	Z	L	N	O	K	K	H	Q	T	C	F
N	F	I	O	U	R	G	T	F	C	L	P	E	I	L
S	S	V	S	U	A	L	C	A	T	N	A	S	C	M
Z	C	V	P	C	E	E	H	R	P	W	U	A	Z	Z
F	C	F	J	C	H	B	O	G	C	Y	N	G	V	E
G	M	V	X	D	L	E	C	V	N	D	T	S	F	W
Y	A	X	V	N	U	L	O	H	Y	V	C	L	U	A
H	G	V	L	L	X	L	L	C	M	J	M	C	I	U
P	J	Y	F	E	R	S	A	Q	E	Y	G	H	C	A
D	W	O	R	D	T	N	T	Y	H	X	Q	L	E	S
U	W	H	R	U	E	V	E	B	Y	B	F	L	W	R







HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE ENERGY EXPLORERS!

GRAHAM AUCTIONEERS
CONSTRUCTION • HEAVY EQUIPMENT • OIL FIELD • FARM EQUIPMENT • CATTLE

405-403-4303
mgramamauctioneers.com

Western Oklahoma
Statewide County Surplus
Equipment Auction

Elk City Convention Center, Elk City, OK
March 7th - 8th 2025

Items from Oklahoma Counties, Companies and Private individuals.
Advertising deadline is Feb 1st.
Consignments welcome till March 1st.

For More Information:
www.mgramamauctioneers.com

RE/MAX
1941 W ELK, DUNCAN, OK 73533
580-252-7800

OUR TEAM CAN MEET YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS

Bryan Fisher 580-251-1195	Brenda Knabe 580-251-0278	Karl Jacobs 580-467-4915
Shorty Brown 580-467-1468	Venessa Swanson 580-775-7468	Melody Herrington 580-656-3023

Each RE/MAX office is independently owned and operated

Audiology & Hearing AID of Duncan

"Serving Duncan Since 1995"

HEARING EVALUATIONS
HEARING AIDS
HEARING AID SUPPLIES
ALL BRANDS REPAIRED

We Accept Insurance
Pack of Batteries, \$3
Resound Dealer

Cynthia Reidenbach - Hearing Aid Tech
Matt Campbell - M.S., CCC-A
AUDIOLOGIST

Hearing Evaluation
Hearing Conservation
Assistive Listening
a
HEARING AIDS

580-252-9005

2126 N HWY 81, STE 26B • CHISHOLM MALL, SOUTH ENTRANCE

Toll Free: 1-800-259-2384 Bus: 580-228-2383
Fax: 580-228-3290

Eck Drug & Gift

HealthMart
PHARMACY

For all your prescription needs!

Dana "Biff" & Valerie Eck 101 S. Main
Doctors of Pharmacy Waurika, OK 73573

7		9						8
						5		4
	3		2		8			7
			1		5		3	
					9			
4				6			5	
3			8	5				9
	8							5
		6		9	2			

Level: Advanced

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

M&M Trailer Service, LLC

Is Your Trailer Road Safe?

580-658-6510
280276 W. HWY 7, Marlow, OK
mmtrailerservice@yahoo.com

HITCHES • Gooseneck • Receiver • 5th Wheel •

See us for all your trailer parts, hook-up & flooring needs!

Authorized dealer for
Shelby Trailer Flooring

For Inquiries:
mmtrailerservice@yahoo.com



•Repairs, Maintenance •Brakes, Lights, Wiring
•Sand Blast & Paint •DOT Inspections •Hook-ups
•Floors- Shelby X-Lug, Tongue & Groove, Plank or Wood

COOP

For all of Your
Farming and Ranching Needs

Fertilizer
Chemicals
Feed & Seed
Farm Supplies

Your Co-op can blend and apply either
Dry or Liquid Fertilizer

Call and Schedule your Needs-

Walters Co-op

580-875-3345

We Appreciate Your Business

**Thank You,
Thank You,**

Thank you to all of our loyal customers for voting us
**#1 Furniture Store 4 years in a row
 and Best Mattress Store for 3 years!**



**FOR A LIMITED TIME WHILE SUPPLIES LAST
 WICHITA FURNITURE
 HAS A SPECIAL FOR YOU!**

When you purchase any Serta Queen Mattress
Add Queen adjustable base for only \$399

When you purchase any Serta King Mattress
Add King adjustable base for only \$599

To ALL Past and Future Customers
THANK YOU!
 Serving Southwest Oklahoma for 45 Years




lawtonsfurnitureleader.com 1127 NW Cache Rd
 Hours: - Monday - Saturday 9:00 am - 6:00 pm



DON PRATER DOZERS

Building Farm Ponds & Private Lakes
 In the Cotton Electric Service Area
 "Wealth is not measured in dollars."



-Farm Pond and Lake Construction-

- Fence Rows • Building Pads •
- Land Clearing • Dredging • Pond Repair •

Serving the Southwest Area
 Bulldozers, Trackhoe Scrapers & Loaders



Call Bruce At- 580-641-1952




Hilliary

INTERNET • PHONE • TV

**Always
Innovating**

(580) 529-5000
HILLIARY.COM

because every community matters