

# The Current

A Publication of Cotton Electric Cooperative Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

“The Current - Informing Our Members Since 1957”

VOLUME 57

April 14, 2014

NUMBER 9

Tiara Amantine



Shayla Barber



Hunter Telford



Kristian Cárdenas



## YOUTH TOUR



Dylan Sheffield



Cheyna Cooper



Kaitlyn Metcalfe



Jamie Ellsbury



Alexis Matallana



Sara Hawkey



# Youth Tour a matter of principle

By Karen Kaley

There are utility companies and then there are electric cooperatives. Owned and controlled by the people who use them, electric cooperatives follow seven basic principles that have nothing to do with profit and everything to do with sustaining quality service at an affordable price.

The seven principles encourage spreading the word about the cooperative difference and to engage the communities it serves. To keep the cooperative message vibrant, co-ops reach out to younger people in a variety of ways.

For 50 years, Cotton Electric has participated in the Rural Electric Youth Tour Contest. All high school

juniors within the service area are eligible to participate. All of today's young people are all of tomorrow's leaders, and we hope to nurture future leaders in the co-op world.

The topic of the 2014 contest was, “The Seven Cooperative Principles.” Students from 10 schools turned in 100 essays. The top 25 authors came to the co-op headquarters in Walters for an interview round, and the top 10 were invited to recite their essay during a banquet in March.

Students competing in the final round included Sara Hawkey and Hunter Telford, both of Central High; Alexis Matallana, Kristian Cárdenas, Cheyna Cooper and Tiara Amantine, all of Lawton High; Shayla Barber of

Marlow High; Dylan Sheffield and Jamie Ellsbury, both of Ryan High; and Kaitlyn Metcalfe of Walters High.

Their speeches focused mainly on the principles of education, training and information; cooperation among cooperatives; and concern for community. Their research had turned up examples of Cotton Electric carrying out these principles.

They discovered the co-op's efforts to provide education and information about conservation and energy efficiency during the energy crisis of the 1970s.

They pointed out that Cotton Electric actively educates its members and employees, thus ensuring the co-op will move forward, develop in a posi-

tive manner and enjoy public support.

They found that Cotton Electric makes a difference in the communities it serves through the Operation Round Up program, which has supported volunteer fire departments, schools, senior citizens, youth programs, public safety and individuals for the past 10 years.

They noted the support the co-op provides through gross receipts taxes and actively participating in community organizations.

After the speeches, it was clear the 10 finalists had learned a great deal about Cotton Electric and cooperatives in general. It was up to the judges to make the final decisions.

See Top 4, Page 10

### Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment now being applied to bills mailed after April 1, 2014, is \$0.00148 per kWh.

On a member's average bill of 1500 kilowatt hours (kWh), this will amount to a charge of \$2.22 on the April bill.

### March 2014 Temperature Extremes

Day	High	Low	Avg.	Day	High	Low	Avg.
1	49	24	37	16	54	32	43
2	24	11	18	17	60	25	43
3	27	8	18	18	76	45	61
4	52	19	36	19	63	34	49
5	50	32	41	20	74	28	51
6	54	29	42	21	78	44	61
7	73	33	53	22	57	47	52
8	54	36	45	23	52	31	42
9	62	34	48	24	70	25	48
10	78	27	53	25	60	34	47
11	86	47	67	26	58	42	50
12	60	31	46	27	82	56	69
13	68	26	47	28	61	47	54
14	73	39	56	29	72	33	53
15	62	51	57	30	81	37	59
				31	87	56	72

Source: srh.noaa.gov/oun/  
Average Daily High: 63 Average Daily Low: 34

### Did You Know?

Need to make a payment by phone? Have your Cotton Electric account number and payment information handy when you call our automated system. The number is 1-855-730-8711.

The next issue of The Current should arrive in mailboxes on May 12, 2014.

### 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*

# Smart grid means smart members

Thomas Edison started it all. His Pearl Street Station in Manhattan was the first central station power plant in the United States. It generated and delivered electrical power to 85 customers beginning in 1882.

His delivery system was simple. Just a few poles topped with conductor running parallel to existing streets and alleys. Service drops to customers' homes completed the process. Mr. Edison's grid design was simple – and brilliant. After all these years, modern electric grid systems still use his basic concepts.

There have been miraculous inventions since 1882. We now have planes, antibiotics, TVs, computers and the internet. We've sent men to the moon, have air conditioning in our homes and fluoride in our water.

Over the years, continual improvements in technology have led to expected improvements in lifestyle. Today we *expect* to have better electric service.

In 1882, outages were frequent, lengthy and accepted. Not so in 2014.

For the first 50 years of Cotton Electric's existence, em-



Warren Langford, CEO

phasis was on making power available to everyone in the service area. As time passed, improved reliability became the main concern.

Spans between poles became shorter, stronger conductor replaced old copper lines and more lightning arrestors were installed. Cotton made a determined effort to remove trees from the right-of-way. There has been a marked improvement in service quality, but there is more to do.

A few years ago, I first heard the terms "smart meter" and "smart grid." Generally, this means the ability to operate the electric grid remotely. For example, when a line switch needs to operate in order to restore power, we send a crew to perform the task manually. Using today's technology, coupled with a reliable communication system, this task could be done from our headquarters. The result would be improved service because of shorter outage times.

If we were able to communicate reliably, we could be proactive in other service quality areas. It's conceivable our grid could become "self-healing."

Real-time monitoring equipment is available that can anticipate and alert us to potential

problems. A smart grid would rapidly isolate problems to avoid the spread of outages. Today's technology allows us to monitor amperage, remotely raise or lower voltage and better control line loss.

These are all issues that contribute to the quality of your electric service.

Our system uses existing power lines as a communications link. For many years, Cotton Electric has had the capability to read meters remotely. This works, but not well enough. Interference from electrical distribution equipment is tremendous. In order to achieve our goals, a more reliable way to "talk" to our equipment must be designed.

Options are limited in rural Oklahoma. It's important to develop a communication system that is reliable, gives us options and achieves our goals. This new system will probably include fiber optics, microwave and radio technology.

Getting a true functional smart grid in place will take time. We will implement what we can afford and always allow room for expansion. The goal is to have equipment in place that will reduce outage time. Streamlined operation of our electric system will make us more efficient and ultimately

reduce cost.

With smart grid technologies deployed all the way to the home, monthly energy consumption can be broken down as to how the power was used. Members will know exactly how much it cost to roast a turkey. Perhaps someday, reminders can be sent when lights are left on accidentally.

As generating cost continues to rise, it's important that members have tools necessary to help control use patterns. Real-time information about consumption and power cost will be critical.

Your cooperative board continues to make life simple. Employees are instructed to provide quality electric service at the lowest possible rates. In 2014, this means incorporating a better communication system as a way to improve electric service. It's easy to see that the real benefit of a smart grid will be better service and, more importantly, better informed members!

According to today's standards, Thomas Edison's Pearl Street Station could be considered "dumb." I'm sure he would take exception to the term and I don't really mean it. One thing is certain, his design can be improved upon. It just took us 132 years to figure out how.

## Cotton Electric offers HVAC Tune-Up Rebate program

When was the last time you had your home's HVAC system tuned up? If it has been a few years, this is a good time to have an HVAC contractor inspect, service and clean it.

Typically, tune-ups on cooling systems that have been neglected for a few years can provide as much as 15 percent energy savings. Just as a tune-up for your car can improve gas mileage, a yearly tune-up of your cooling system can improve efficiency and comfort. Plus, an annual tune-up can increase the life of the system.

In conjunction with our Beat the Peak program, Cotton Electric is offering a rebate of up to \$75 per home (50 percent of the cost of your tune-up, excluding repairs, up to \$75) for members who get a tune-up for their HVAC system. In order to qualify, the following guidelines must be met:

1. Must be a Cotton Electric Cooperative member.
2. Rebate is not available for new construction.
3. A completed Rebate Application is required. Application forms are available at the Walters and Duncan offices, or by calling 580-875-3351. Ask for Mike Stephens or Trent Marlett.
4. Application must be signed and dated by both the member and a licensed and bonded HVAC contractor.
5. Member must submit a dated, itemized invoice as proof of service completion from a qualified contractor. Failure to provide required information will result in denial of rebate.
6. Rebates are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis until program funds have been depleted.



- ✓ Check thermostat settings, wiring, and other electric parts and connections
- ✓ Inspect air filters
- ✓ Test AC and furnace starting capabilities
- ✓ Test safety controls
- ✓ Clean and adjust blower components
- ✓ Measure temperature difference
- ✓ Measure volts/amps on AC and furnace
- ✓ Lubricate all applicable parts
- ✓ Check temperature calibration and adjust, if needed
- ✓ Check AC evaporator coil, clean if necessary
- ✓ Clean AC condenser coil
- ✓ Clean AC condensate drains
- ✓ Check thermostat operation

7. Rebate not valid on gas-fired furnaces.
  8. Rebate limited to one tune-up per home annually.
  9. HVAC tune-ups must be completed by June 20, 2014. Rebate applications must be received by June 30, 2014.
- Give us a call at 580-875-3351 for details on our Pre-Cooling Season HVAC Tune-Up Rebates.

**Tune-Up Checklist:**

- Tune-ups must be performed by a qualified service professional and must include the following criteria:
- ✓ Check and correct unit's refrigerant pressure and tubing

## The Current

Published Monthly at Walters, Oklahoma  
By Cotton Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
Warren Langford..... CEO  
Jennifer Meason..... Vice President of Marketing  
Karen Kaley..... Editor  
Jennifer Kriz..... Display Advertising  
Logann Pennington..... Classified Advertising

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"Cotton Electric Current" (USPS #134-020)  
is published monthly by: Cotton Electric Co-op,  
226 North Broadway, Walters, OK 73572  
Periodicals Postage paid at  
Wichita Falls, Texas 76307-9998

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

### February 2014 Operating Stats

	2014	2013
Total Amount Billed/Accrued	\$5,844,590	\$4,806,056
Cost of Purchased Power	4,545,258	3,428,990
Taxes	121,913	99,294
Total Operating Expense Per Mile	1,170	931
Average Farm and Residential Bill	165	131
Average Farm and Residential kWh	1,733	1,251
Total Meters Billed (farm, residential)	18,102	17,987
Miles Energized	5,137	5,138
Density Per Mile	3.52	3.50
New Service Connects YTD	39	57
Services Retired	25	29



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**Mission Statement**

Our mission is to be the leader in providing the most reliable and innovative electric system, with affordable rates, through the positive, enthusiastic and professional use of its resources and people.

# Community Spotlight

If you would like your community event listed in the May issue, please submit information by April 29, by calling 580-875-4255 or send an email to [info@cottonelectric.com](mailto:info@cottonelectric.com).

## Hulen VFD plans annual meeting

Hulen Volunteer Fire Department will hold its 2014 Annual Meeting at 7 p.m. April 17 at Hulen Methodist Church, 13702 SE Baseline Road.

The purpose of the meeting will be to elect directors, read financial statement, and conduct such other business as may come before the membership.

## Passion play set for Saturdays

"The Prince of Peace" Passion play begins at 8:30 p.m. April 19 at the Holy City of the Wichitas in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. The performance is expected to end around 10:45 p.m., and is broadcast on 88.5 FM.

Admission to the nation's longest-running Easter Passion play is free. For information, visit [TheHolyCityLawton.com](http://TheHolyCityLawton.com).

## CCAC hosts arts, crafts fest

Cotton County Art Council will host its annual Art Festival April 19 at the Comanche National Community Center east of Walters. Glen Thomas of Oklahoma City will serve as judge for the 2014 event.

Information and entry forms are available on the Cotton County Art Council's Facebook page or by emailing [calfinator@yahoo.com](mailto:calfinator@yahoo.com).

## Main Street Duncan plans cruise

Cruising down Main Street in Duncan is just part of the fun planned for the sixth annual Cruisin' the Chisholm Trail Car Show set for April 19 and 20. Rain dates are April 26 and 27.

Tailgate parties and a burnout competition are set for 6 p.m. Friday.

Festivities continue Saturday with live music and a Cruisin' With Kids show open to bikes, trikes, wagons, power wheels and 4-wheelers. Car entry judging begins at 11 a.m., and trophies will be presented at 3 p.m. Best in show will be awarded \$500.

For information, call Main Street Duncan at 580-252-8696.

## Fish fry benefits Loco VFD

Loco Volunteer Fire Department is having an all-you-can-eat fish fry from 5:30 until 7 p.m. April 26 in Loco. Dinner will feature fried fish, coleslaw, beans and dessert. Drinks will be provided.

Proceeds from the event will go toward repairs to the fire department building and a new tanker truck. While there is no set price for the dinner, your generous donation will be appreciated.

## 'Other Desert Cities' ends BMP year

Blue Moon Productions closes the season with "Other Desert Cities," a drama about a family at odds over politics and painful, long-buried secrets.

The adult-themed performances will be April 25 and 26 and May 2 and 3 at Goodwill Adult Daycare Center Auditorium, 923 NW Hilltop Drive in Lawton.

Reservations for the 7 p.m. dinner buffet must be made at least 48 hours in advance by calling 580-591-6730 or visiting [BlueMoonLawton.org](http://BlueMoonLawton.org). Walk-ins are welcome for the performances that begin at 8 p.m.

## Countyline Baptist notes 100 years

First Baptist Church of Countyline has served eastern Stephens County, including Velma, Alma, Ratliff City and Claud for 100 years. All are invited to a remembrance, celebration and revival April 30 through May 3.

There will be special music each night of the revival. Brother Monte Dean will be guest evangelist. Services start each night at 6:30 pm.

A cookout in the parking lot and fellowship hall is planned for 4:30 p.m. May 3.

For information, call Brother Sid Bazzrea at 580-467-1927 or 580-856-3240.

## Boots & Bling Scoot taking entries

Early registration has opened for the fifth annual Comanche County Boots & Bling Scoot on June 7 in Medicine Park. A one mile Fun Run begins at 8:30 a.m. and 5K Color Run follows at 9 a.m.

Entry fees are \$20 for the Fun Run

# Photo of the Month



"God sure does a great job at painting," Scott Smith said of the fiery sunset he captured in Jefferson County. Smith is a Cotton Electric member in the Empire area. His photo was selected to represent our April photo theme, Blessings. "Sunsets like that are a blessing to witness. You kinda forget what's going on in the world and can slow down and take it all in."

Enter your "best shot" in our Photo of the Month contest. Theme for May is Mom. Entries can be emailed to [info@cottonelectric.com](mailto: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.

and \$30 for the Color Run. Early registrants are guaranteed a t-shirt. Entry fees go up \$5 after May 1. All proceeds benefit the American Cancer Society.

Interested participants can register online at [www.signmeup.com/99278](http://www.signmeup.com/99278) or between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at the American Cancer Society office, 1320 NW Homestead Drive in Lawton.

Those interested in volunteering making a donation to the event can call E'Lise Spencer at 580-585-7490 or Amber McNeil at 580-574-9343

For more information, visit the Facebook page [www.facebook.com/ccbandb](http://www.facebook.com/ccbandb) or email [bootsnblingscoot@gmail.com](mailto:bootsnblingscoot@gmail.com).

## Spring Carnival set for LETRA

Spring Carnival is an afternoon of activities for the whole family at Lake Elmer Thomas Recreation Area campground. The fun begins at noon and runs through 4 p.m. May 3.

Participants can test marksmanship at the Wild West Shootout or see if he or she has what it takes to conquer the strength and agility station. Friends

can challenge each other to a Silly War or get groovy and artistic at the Tie Dye Tent. Carnival foods include popcorn, hot dogs and cotton candy.

There are various costs for tie dye and food, but admission to the carnival is free.

For information, call 580-442-5858.

## Arts for All Festival runs May 9-11

For 40 years, the Arts for All Festival has been southwest Oklahoma's largest and most popular cultural event, drawing people from Oklahoma and Texas for a weekend filled with art, entertainment and tantalizing foods. The festival is a cooperative effort of businesses, civic organizations and hundreds of volunteers who support and encourage the arts. All profits are contributed to the participating arts organization of Arts for All Inc.

The 2014 Festival will be May 9 through 11 in Shepler Park, near downtown Lawton. The park is on Gore Boulevard between 4th and 5th Streets. For information, visit [ArtsForAllFestival.org](http://ArtsForAllFestival.org).

More Community Spotlight on Page 4

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# Wounded Warriors benefit from Moneka run

It's time to register for the second annual Moneka Trail Run, which will be held May 10 at Waurika Lake. Proceeds from this event benefit the Wounded Warrior Project, which hopes to foster the most successful, well-adjusted generation of wounded service members in our nation's history.

Sponsored by the Waurika Chamber of Commerce, the Moneka Trail Run features a 5-kilometer competitive race and a 1-mile walk on a course at Waurika Lake. There will be age groups and gen-

der divisions for the 5K run, with awards going to overall winners and winners in age groups.

The preregistration period in which participants are guaranteed an event T-shirt ends April 21. Registration is possible by visiting [MonekatrailRun.com](http://MonekatrailRun.com) and participants can also register on race day.

Registration fee for the 5K race is \$30, while fee for the 1-mile walk is \$20. After April 15, fees increase by \$10. Late registration does not include an event T-

shirt but limited quantities will be available \$15 on race day. Race day registration and check-in begins at 8 a.m., with the race beginning at 9 a.m.

Entry forms can be picked up and dropped off at Eck Drug & Gifts, First Bank & Trust, First Farmers National Bank, and Beaver Lumber. Those registering by mail should send a completed form and a check made payable to Moneka Trail Run to: Moneka Trail Run, P.O. Box 114, Waurika OK 73573.



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# Community Spotlight

## Fancy Sue featured at SMQG quilt show

Fancy Sue on the Chisholm Trail is the 2014 quilt show sponsored by Stitching Memories Quilt Guild from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. May 9 and 10 at Stephens County Fair & Expo Center in Duncan.

More than 150 quilts, including Quilts of Valor for the wounded warriors, will be on display. Visitors can purchase chances on the Fancy Sue on the Chisholm Trail raffle quilt, see demonstrations and win door prizes. A coffee can raffle includes an Ott floor light, Oliso iron, a wooden quilt rack and a basket of fat quarters.

The Stephens County 4-H will provide food, and the OHCE groups will serve desserts all day.

Admission is \$5 for adults, children are free.

## Horse Club plans spring trail ride, poker run

Duncan Lake Horse Club is having its Spring Trail Ride and Poker Run on May 10 and 11 at Duncan Lake. Fee is \$20 per rider with an optional \$5 Poker Run hand. Children 12 and under are free.

Saturday features several events. The long ride will leave the lake pavilion at 10 a.m. and participants may want to bring a sack lunch. The short ride leaves at 1 p.m.

Saturday evening's potluck meal starts at 5 p.m. The club will provide the meat.

Breakfast will be provided Sunday morning with a ride leaving immediately after.

Negative Coggins required. Camping and trail fees should be paid to the City of Duncan. For information about the ride, call 580-475-7190 or visit [duncanlakehorseclub.com](http://duncanlakehorseclub.com).

## Memorial weekend fest set in Hobart

The sixth annual Gen. Tommy Franks Leadership Institute Celebration of Freedom is set for May 23-24 in Hobart. This Memorial Day celebration recognizes what past and present military members have done to protect our nation's freedom.

The musical festival format will offer five free concerts on three stages, including a Battle of the Bands, quilt show and Arts on the Square. Participants can take part in Oklahoma's largest silent auction, enjoy the Bar-B-Q Cook-off and parade, watch the fly-in and stick around for the 6:30 p.m. concert with headliner Bo Bice of "American Idol" fame.

For information call the Gen. Tommy Franks Leadership Institute & Museum at 580-726-5900 or visit [CelebrationOfFreedom.com](http://CelebrationOfFreedom.com).

## 'Man of La Mancha' closes LCT season

"Man of La Mancha" is the final show of the 2013-14 Lawton Community Theatre season. This award-winning staple of American musical theater

features the classic song, "The Impossible Dream." It is the passionate and poignant tale of Don Quixote, a noble knight on a holy quest to find compassion not for him, but for others.

Performance dates will be June 6-8 and 12-15 at Lawton Community Theatre, 1316 NW Bell Avenue.

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

## Domino tourney benefits RS cheerleaders

A fundraiser Domino Tournament has been set for June 7 at the Vimy Ridge Fellowship Hall in Rush Springs, 5.5 miles east of the flashing light on U.S. Highway 81.

Registration will be from 8 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and play will commence at 10 a.m. A consolation tournament will follow the main tournament.

Entry fee is \$5 each or \$10 per team. Payback will be \$200 to first place and \$100 to second place.

The event will include a silent auction and raffle on gas tickets. Breakfast, lunch and other concessions will be available.

Proceeds benefit the Rush Springs cheerleaders, who will use the funds for safety equipment, scholarships and uniforms. For information, call LaDonna Sanders at 580-656-2449 or Garry or Cathy Jackson at 580-467-6076 or 470-9390.

## Food pantry open second, fourth Saturdays

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

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

For information, call 580-591-6826.

## Rocketeers launch

Red River Rocketeers (RRR) has a new launch location. Wolfe Field is in the Bray area, southeast of Clear Creek Lake. A map to the site is posted on the RRR website, [RRRrocketeers.homestead.com](http://RRRrocketeers.homestead.com).

RRR, a sport model rocketry club based in Duncan, hosts rocket launches when the weather permits. Next launch is planned for noon on April 26.

All RRR launches are open to the public. No model rocket is required. Rockets are available for newcomers to launch.

Club meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month in the Electronics and Aerospace Technology classroom at Red River Technology Center in Duncan.

For information about the group, its meeting and launch dates, visit [RRRrocketeers.homestead.com](http://RRRrocketeers.homestead.com).



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# Improve Your Own 'Investment Environment'

On April 22, we celebrate Earth Day — a day devoted to education and action on environmental issues. As a citizen of the world, you may have a keen interest in protecting your physical surroundings. And as someone trying to reach long-term financial goals, such as a comfortable retirement, you're probably also interested in improving your investment environment.

So here are a few suggestions:  
• Respond to environmental factors. Over the past few years, we've had a favorable investment climate, marked by low inflation, low interest rates and generally strong corporate profits. And investors who have taken advantage of this positive environment have, for the most part, been rewarded. But things can change, so it's always a good idea to understand the current investment environment, as it may affect your investment choices. For

example, if it seems likely that long-term interest rates are going to rise significantly, you might need to review your long-term bond holdings, as their price would be negatively affected by a rise in rates.

• Nurture your investments. One area of environmentalism involves planting seeds or saplings and nurturing them to maturity. You can do the same thing with investments — and a good way to nurture them is to give them time to grow in all investment climates. But how long should you hold these investments? You might heed the advice of Warren Buffett, one of the world's most famous investors, who says this about his investment company: "Our favorite holding period is forever." It takes patience to follow the buy-and-hold strategy favored by Mr. Buffett — and it also requires the discipline necessary to keep investing through the inevitable downturns you will encounter. But over

the long term, your perseverance may well be rewarded.

• Avoid "toxic" investment strategies. Unfortunately, many human activities are bad for the environment. Similarly, some investment strategies are "toxic" for your prospects of success. Consider the pursuit of "hot" stocks. They sound inviting, but, by the time you hear about them, they may have lost their sizzle — and in any case, they might not be right for your needs. Here's another "poisonous" investment strategy: trying to "time" the market. If you're always jumping in and out of the market, looking for "low" points to buy and "high" points to sell, you'll probably be wrong most of the time — because nobody can accurately predict highs and lows. Even more importantly, you may find yourself out of the market during the beginning of a rally, which is when the biggest gains tend to occur.

• Diversify your "species" of investments. Drawing inspiration from Earth Day, the United Nations has designated 2011–2020 as the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity. And, just as preserving the diversification of species is important for life on Earth, the diversification of your investment portfolio is essential for its health. By owning a variety of investments — stocks, bonds, government securities, certificates of deposit and so on — you can help protect yourself from downturns that primarily affect just one asset class. (Keep in mind, though, that while diversification can reduce the effects of volatility on your holdings, it can't guarantee profits or protect against loss.)

Earth Day happens just once a year — but the lessons of environmentalism can help you, as an investor, for all the days and years ahead.

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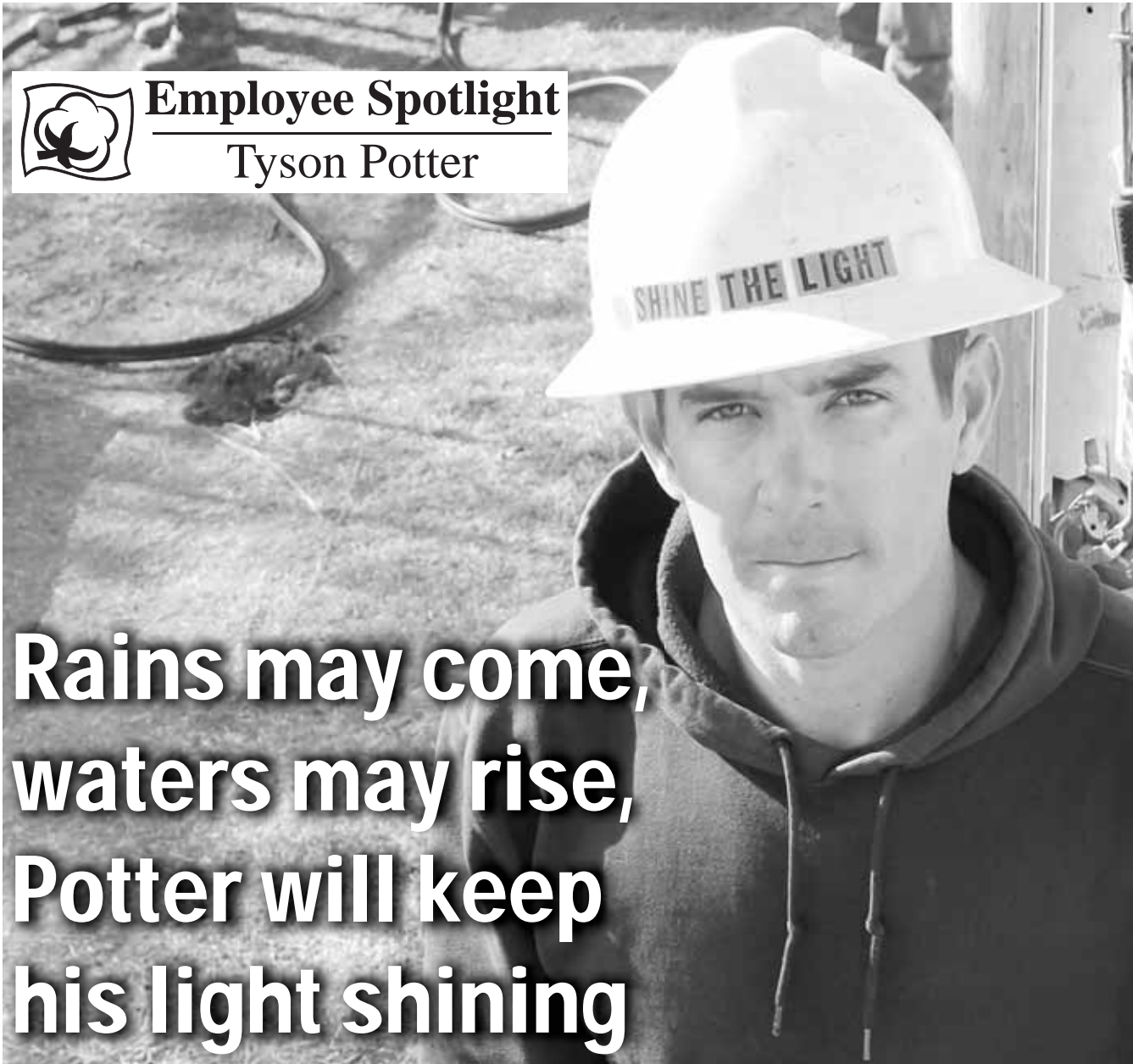
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**Employee Spotlight**  
**Tyson Potter**

**Rains may come, waters may rise, Potter will keep his light shining**

By Karen Kaley

Electricity is all around us, yet it runs through our lives unseen. We take it for granted, know it's always there.

We pay dearly if we go through the motions, unconscious of how much of it we use. We feel as though we can't live without it when it is suddenly unavailable.

For Tyson Potter, there is a strong parallel between electricity and faith. The journeyman lineman is keenly aware of an unseen force that surrounds him, shining a light to guide him along his life's path.

It started as the Walters native was following a course he chose after high school. He earned an associate's degree in criminal justice at Redlands Community College with thoughts of becoming a game warden and working in the outdoors he loves.

An inner voice, quiet as a whisper, changed his mind. Another round of education at Cameron University would earn him a bachelor's degree in kinesiology with a thought toward coaching and running a physical education program in a school.

Again, he felt dissuaded, partly because of a class required for completion of the degree.

"I waited until the very last semester to take speech. I was terrified of speaking in front of people," Potter recalled.

He was able to strengthen his outer voice. He listened more closely to that inner voice. He explored yet another path revealed during that class on weekends, taught by Jennifer Meason, Cotton Electric's vice president of

marketing and subsidiary services.

She remembered Potter had worked summers on the co-op's construction crew. She told him about a position coming open in line operations.

Potter wasn't sure what to do. "I just prayed on it and waited."

In January 2008, a month after he graduated, Potter heard from another voice. This time it was Brian Jones, Cotton Electric's operations superintendent, offering him the job.

"It was pretty simple work – just shovel, tamp and do what you're told. I was just excited about doing that and being outside," he said.

There was something else. "I just knew it was a meant-to-be type of deal."

Potter soon began his third round of education, working toward and earning his journeyman lineman's certification.

"I've been able to work a little bit with all of the linemen on the west side of our service territory and some with the people on the east side. I'm really impressed with their knowledge," he said of the linemen guiding him through the electrical learning experience.

Along the way, he met another mentor who helped him focus on that inner voice. Potter credits Roger Noland, a lineman who is now employed elsewhere, with teaching him about line work and about the Lord and what the Bible has to say.

"It changed my personal Christian walk," Potter said. "Before then, it was almost like I was just going through the motions."

He tapped the pocket of his hoodie, indicating the Bible he carries everywhere, and said, "I have grown a lot, spiritually. I have more confidence in myself and my beliefs.

"My everyday goal is to glorify the Lord. I hope that the way I live and way I act on the job reflects Jesus."

Another item always with him on the job is his hard hat, personalized in a way that seems to illustrate the parallels in his life. Black letters on yellow squares spell out "Shine the light" on the front while "Jesus is Lord" is the message on the back.

Speaking of both things, Potter said, "I don't want to take shortcuts, do things the easy way.

"Linemen can't just go through the motions. That's when accidents happen."

He went on to explain, "That's when you get off track in anything. Monotony can cause you to miss things and slip ... bad things can happen, whether in personal life or on the job."

Potter is starting another educational cycle, this time moving him toward becoming an ordained minister. He feels confident about this journey.

He credits the Lord with having his path cross with people who brought him to Cotton and then to the ministry.

"I was terrified to take speech, but I ended up passing and doing well. After that, I met Roger and now I am standing up in front of a congregation.

"This is what I'm supposed to do. I am where I'm supposed to be."

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# Cotton Electric launches new design for website

If you've visited our website lately, you've probably noticed some changes to the layout and design of CottonElectric.com. Cotton Electric employees have worked to revamp the site in a manner that improves your online experience.

Based on our website statistics, we could see an increasing number of our members were using smart phones and tablets to visit the site. With the previous design, accessing the website on a smart phone or tablet could be challenging.

Our goal for the redesign was to create a website that was easy to navigate no matter what type of electronic device was being used. The redesigned site has been optimized for mobile platforms so that you can easily and quickly access a mobile version of the site on your smart phone.

Our website statistics also showed that the top pages were View/Pay My Bill and Outage Information. The mobile site design highlights these two pages as well as a Contact Us button. We have also included an updated ver-

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

By Jennifer Meason

sion of the outage map and the direct phone number for Cotton Electric's pay-by-phone system.

These popular areas are also featured on the full version of the website that can be viewed using a tablet or desktop computer. The full site offers much more information about Cotton Electric, Residential and Commercial Accounts, Energy Efficiency, Member Services and the Operation Round Up program.

The revamped website and the introduction of the pay-by-phone system are the first of several service improvements Cotton Electric will roll out during 2014. We'll put information about each new development in The Current and on our website.

The website will continue to evolve as we update it with news and information. If you have suggestions for additions to the website, please contact Jennifer Meason or Karen Kaley at 580-875-3351. We value your input.



Cotton Electric recently unveiled a new design at CottonElectric.com. The new design on the home page features links to the most frequently visited pages on the site. The revamp is one of many changes the co-op plans to launch during 2014 in an effort to improve member service.



## Stay safe during stormy season

Beware. Spring can usher in more than April showers. Now through the summer months, thunderstorms can quickly roll in and tornadoes can touch down, often during the afternoon and evening hours, according to researchers at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Severe Storms Laboratory.

Follow these tips from NOAA and the American Red Cross to keep you and your home safe when tornadoes and severe thunderstorms come your way.

- Prepare for high winds by removing diseased and damaged tree limbs.
- Listen to local news or National Weather Service broadcasts to stay informed about tornado watches and warnings.
- If in a mobile home, immediately head to a sturdy shelter or vehicle. Mobile homes, especially hallways and bathrooms, are not safe places to take shelter during tornadoes or other severe winds.
- Designate a family meeting place for shelter during and after a storm. If possible, go to your home's basement, a small interior room, or under stairs on the lowest level. Also, have a battery-operated weather radio handy along with emergency supplies.
- Unplug your electronics. Avoid using electrical equipment and corded telephones.
- Remember that there is no safe place outside during a severe storm. If you are caught in a storm while on the road, the American Red Cross urges drivers to turn their headlights on, try to safely exit the roadway, and park. Stay in the vehicle with your seat belt on and turn on the emergency flashers until the heavy rain ends. If thunder and lightning is occurring, avoid touching metal or other surfaces that conduct electricity in and outside the vehicle.
- Move or secure lawn furniture, trash cans, hanging plants or anything else that can be picked up by the wind and become a projectile.
- Stay safe after a storm. Remain indoors at least 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder. Also, stay away from downed power lines and avoid flooded areas, power lines could be submerged and still live with electricity. Report them to Cotton Electric at 580-875-3351 or 800-522-3520 immediately.

## Shop local with Co-op Connections Card

For many of us, southwest Oklahoma is the only place we have ever called home. Just like you, Cotton Electric Cooperative has deep roots in our community. Those roots are strongly supported by the small businesses that boost our local economy.

One of the ways that your co-op supports small businesses is through the Co-op Connections Card Program. It's a free benefit for Cotton Electric members. With the card, you can save on lots of things, from oil changes to dining out and just about everything in between. What's more, the Co-op Connections Card is accepted at nearly 23,000 busi-



nesses nationwide.

If you are not familiar with the Co-op Connections Card program, you don't know about more than 60 local discounts available to Cotton Electric members.

You can save 10 percent on purchases at American Scents in Duncan and Southern Maid Donuts in Elgin. More great deals can be found at Nancy's Antiques in Waurika, Medicine Creek Gallery in Medicine Park, and Lawton Im-

aging in Lawton. A complete list of all local deals is on Page 11.

But that's not all; there are many more opportunities to save. To search for discounts or to find out more about your card, visit CottonElectric.com and click on the Co-op Connections Card link.

If you have misplaced your Co-op Connections Card, call us at 580-875-3351 and we will send you a new one.

Whether you are running errands or enjoying a night out, remember to shop local and save – all you have to do is show your card at participating retailers. It's just another member benefit brought to you by Cotton Electric.

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# Diet, exercise are controllable breast cancer risk factors

In March, researchers from the International Prevention Research Institute in Lyon, France, reported results of a study on breast cancer risk and physical activity. They looked at data from 37 studies that collectively included more than 4 million women.

When compared to women who were not physically active, women who were more physically active reduced their breast cancer risk by 12 percent. The reduction in risk was present regardless of age or if the exercise resulted in weight loss.

Results did vary by tumor type and were not true for women who were taking hormone replacement therapy.

However, given that physical activity is a relatively low-cost way to prevent a costly and life-altering medical condition, researchers see this information as important for all women to consider.

The list of risk factors for breast cancer is extensive (visit <http://www.cancer.org/cancer/breastcancer/detailedguide/breast-cancer-risk-factors>), but basically there are risk factors that you cannot control and ones that you can control. Those that you can control include diet and exercise.



**Kim Bandelier, MPH, RD, LD**

## Food For THOUGHT

*Physical activity is shown to aid in breast cancer prevention. Combined with a diet focused on fruit, vegetables and whole grains, activity can help maintain a healthy weight.*

This recent study supports the recommendation to get more physical activity to decrease your breast cancer risk. Specifically, the researchers suggest getting more than one hour of physical activity per day.

That may seem overwhelming if you think of carving out a solid hour or more from your schedule. Howev-



er, if you build physical activity into several parts of your day, it is not an unachievable goal.

Capitalize on opportunities for exercise several times a day – 15 to 30 minutes in the morning, 15 minutes at lunch, and 15 to 30 minutes in the evening.

As far as diet is concerned, there are

no magic foods. A general healthy diet is recommended for breast cancer prevention.

Focus on fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Stick to lean meats and incorporate vegetable-based proteins and fish often. Limit saturated fats; focus on healthy mono- and poly-unsaturated fats found in fish, nuts, seeds and plants.

Limit alcohol consumption. The risk of breast cancer increases at more than one alcoholic drink per day.

Although the results of this new study were compiled without regard to weight loss, maintaining a healthy weight is still important. If you are overweight, working toward an hour or more of physical activity per day will go a long way to helping you achieve your weight goals, and you get the added benefit of decreasing your risk of breast cancer.

The full study abstract can be found at <http://www.ecco-org.eu/Events/EBCC9/Abstract-search.aspx?abstractid=9805>. More information about breast cancer prevention can be found at <http://www.cancer.org/cancer/breastcancer/detailedguide/breast-cancer-prevention>.

# Boost breakfast with easy ways to increase fiber intake



Photo courtesy of Getty Images

(Family Features) Despite all the talk today about nutrition, the majority of adults are still lacking important nutrients in their diets. A key example is fiber and convenient, nutritious options, such as ready-to-eat breakfast cereal, can help fill the fiber gap and provide other important nutrients at the same time.

Less than one in 10 Americans get the recommended amount of fiber in their diets. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agriculture Research Service, Americans' average intake of dietary fiber is low – only 15 grams per day. This compares to the Institute of Medicine's recommendation that women need 25 grams per day and men should get 38 grams per day.

Recent research shows part of the reason for this fiber gap is because most people think they are already eating the recommended amount of fiber. In fact, 56 percent of Americans

think they are getting enough fiber in their diet when, in reality, less than 10 percent are meeting the recommendations.

Studies also show that fiber may be beneficial in reducing the risk of many lifestyle-related diseases and has been associated with maintaining a healthy weight and digestive system.

Fortunately, you can easily increase fiber intake and take advantage of these health benefits by starting your day with a fiber-full ready-to-eat breakfast cereal.

Research from the USDA shows food companies are making positive changes to enhance the nutrition profile of ready-to-eat cereals. According to the study, fiber in breakfast cereals from major manufacturers increased 32 percent, while sugar and sodium decreased 10 percent and 14 percent, respectively, between 2005 and 2011.

"A 32 percent increase in fiber is a great way to help people fill their fiber

gap," said Lisa Sanders, Ph.D., registered dietitian, director global nutrition and scientific affairs at Kellogg Company.

To get the best fiber boost, look for cereals that are a good or excellent source of fiber (3 or 5 grams, respectively). Generally, most of us think of bran cereals, shredded wheat and wheat flake cereals. But many of our favorites have more fiber than you think. Kellogg, for example, offers more ready-to-eat cereals that are a good source of fiber and include eight grams of whole grains than any other U.S. food company.

In addition to ready-to-eat breakfast cereal, round out your daily diet with other fiber-rich foods, such as beans, nuts (especially almonds, pecans and walnuts), berries and crunchy vegetables. Nuts and berries are also a great addition for breakfast cereal to pack an even bigger morning fiber punch.

Want to find out if you're getting enough fiber in your diet? Convenient tools also are available to help you track your fiber intake, such as Kellogg's Fiber Tracker mobile app, which can be found at <http://www2.kelloggsnutrition.com/fiber-tracker-mobile>.

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Deadline for second quarter 2014 grant applications is May 21.

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.

# Residence offers right situation for certain challenges

By Karen Kaley

"This is so much nicer than the other one," Michelle Fuller said. "It has double locks, it's easier to move, easier to clean ..."

Patty Winger chimed in.

"This is great. You've got lots of extra space, a table to pull out for charting, there are bumper guards and no sharp edges, the bolts are recessed ...

"It's got all the bells and whistles!"

Fuller pulled out the deep drawers and showed off a set of carefully labeled files. She demonstrated the ease of finding all of the right things in the right amount for the right person.

"It's a wonderful cart," Fuller enthused.

"Yes," Winger agreed, "we all did a little happy dance when we heard we got the grant."

The reason for celebration was a new medication cart purchased for Duncan Community Residence with a \$2,500 grant from Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation.

Fuller is the assistant administrator at the Residence. She and other staff members are medication aide technicians, trained and certified in the proper procedures to dispense medications. They had worn out an older cart.

Winger is a registered nurse who serves on the Residence board of directors and prepared the CECF grant application.

"This is a great partnership between some great organizations. Cotton Electric's members obviously care about the community and its citizens," Winger said, praising the way Operation Round Up provides help.

Like many non-profit agencies, Duncan Community Residence has a very tight budget covering operating expenses and little else. Financial support comes from United Way of Stephens County and the McCasland Foundation, donations from churches, civic groups and individuals and the nominal residential rates.

The Residence can house as many as 25 people of very limited income whose situation puts them in a very particular state of need. Each adult

has an emotional, physical, mental or social handicap chronic enough to require continuous monitoring and management, but not severe enough to live in a nursing home or other type of institution.

More often than not, managing each condition is dependent upon medication dispensed in the right dose at the right time. Many of the residents' conditions are such that he or she cannot reliably self-medicate, thus the need for the Residence staff and the new medication cart.

Longtime chief administrator Brian Wolff said the Residence traces its origins to a traditional, privately owned boarding house. The sudden death in 1975 of the proprietress left several men instantly homeless.

Duncan Community Residence is aptly named because it is the community's solution to the problems faced by those men.

Over time, the Residence has grown, moved to its current location in a handsome building on west Main Street and evolved to meet changing requirements of state and local oversight organizations.

Wolff said the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse requires a certification process for the Residence. The facility must meet 100 standards during two annual visits, one announced and another unannounced.

The standards are reasonable and the Residence has had no trouble meeting them over the past 25 years.

"We have maintained an exemplary status for years and years," Wolff said.

In fact, the facility has achieved a certification with distinction, for meeting all 100 standards at inspections over the past four years.

He said one of the bonuses for that distinction is a refund of the \$100 annual application fee. That sum may not seem like a lot, but Wolff pointed out that \$100 will take care of one whole meal for all of the residents.

The Residence provides three daily meals in addition to laundry service, medication monitoring and money management assistance. Attendants



Michelle Fuller, left, assistant administrator for Duncan Community Residence, Brian Wolff, chief administrator, and board member Patty Winger are very pleased with a medication cart funded by a Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation grant.

are on duty around the clock and staff arranges for activities such as shopping excursions, birthday celebrations and transportation to physicians, dentists and Red River Technology Center for haircuts from students in the cosmetology classes.

Willingness to use student barbers underscores the mission of most non-profits with limited resources.

"Sometimes we have to be creative and use services wherever we can find them," Wolff said.

He said the Residence is always looking for ways people can help. Donations of towels, twin bed sheets and the laundry soap to clean them are just

a few suggestions.

"Some of the furnishings in the dormitory are starting to show their age. We could use newer dressers, night stands and bed frames."

A long-term goal is to build an endowment fund to make the Residence more self-sufficient and less dependent on ever-shrinking grants and governmental funds.

"We are looking for 200 gifts of \$5,000. We think that would do it."

For information about Duncan Community Residence, visit their website at DuncanCommunityResidence.com. The site includes an email link to inquire about ways to help.

**PLANT SALE**  
 Walters Church of the Nazarene's Teen Fundraiser  
 Friday, April 25 9am - 6pm  
 Sat, April 26 9am - Sold Out  
 Corner of Missouri & Broadway St., Walters, OK  
 ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you...  
 Job 12: 8a

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 Find all the ways to save at **Connections.coop**  
 Co-op Connections Card, COTTON ELECTRIC CO-OP, COTTON ELECTRIC CO-OP, A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



# CECF announces recent contributions

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

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

The funds are pooled and administered by the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation, a board of directors that meets quarterly to consider grant applications.

The board consists of Warren Langford, the co-op’s CEO; Tim McCary, president of the co-op’s board of trustees; and three representatives from the Cotton Electric service area: Carly Douglass, Danny Marlett and Carter Waid.

The board met March 12 to review 17 grant applications. Grants totaling \$18,022 will be distributed to nine of the applicants. Third-quarter grant recipients include:

- Big Pasture Schools will use a \$750 CECF grant to purchase playground equipment for handicapped students.

- The Town of Chattanooga will use a \$2,000 CECF grant to complete a street signage project.

- Cotton County 4-H will purchase an icemaker for Cotton County fairground building using a \$4,322 CECF grant.

- Empire Public Schools will use a \$2,000 CECF grant for a work station in the science lab.

- Stephens County Humane Society will purchase a monitor for post-operative spay and neuter patients with a \$1,500 CECF grant.

- Temple Elementary School will purchase electronic tablets and accessories with a \$1,200 CECF grant.

- Velma-Alma FFA & 4-H Boosters will put a \$5,000 CECF grant with other funds to build an ag building on the school premises.

- Walters Food Pantry will restock the shelves with a \$1,000 CECF grant.

- Walters Senior Citizen Center will purchase vinyl flooring with a \$750 CECF grant.

CECF has awarded grants totaling more than \$745,000 since the foundation was established in 2004.

Applications for second-quarter grants are due by May 21. Downloadable applications are available at CottonElectric.com.

## Summer Classic set for June 30 at Territory

Golf enthusiasts have a great opportunity to spend a day on an 18-hole championship course while helping to raise funds to help organizations and individuals throughout southwest Oklahoma.

The sixth annual Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation (CECF) Summer Classic will be June 30 at The Territory Golf and Country Club in Duncan. The tournament is held to raise awareness of CECF and to generate funds for Operation Round Up (ORU).

ORU is primarily funded by Cotton Electric Cooperative members who “round up” their monthly bill to the nearest dollar. The funds are administered by CECF, which meets quarterly to



Sixth Annual CECF

### Summer Classic

consider grant applications. Since its inception in 2004, CECF has awarded more than \$745,000 to volunteer fire departments, youth, senior citizen and public safety organizations, schools, communities and individuals throughout the Cotton Electric service area.

Registration for the four-person

scramble will begin at 7:30 a.m. with a shotgun start at 8:30. The registration fee of \$600 per team will include range balls, cart, and a meal following the round.

Individual, team and door prizes will be awarded.

To enter, players’ names and handicap or average scores can be faxed to 580-875-3101. Deadline for entries and fee payment is Monday, June 16.

Two levels of hole sponsorship are available. Hole sponsors who also enter a team receive a \$100 discount on entry fees.

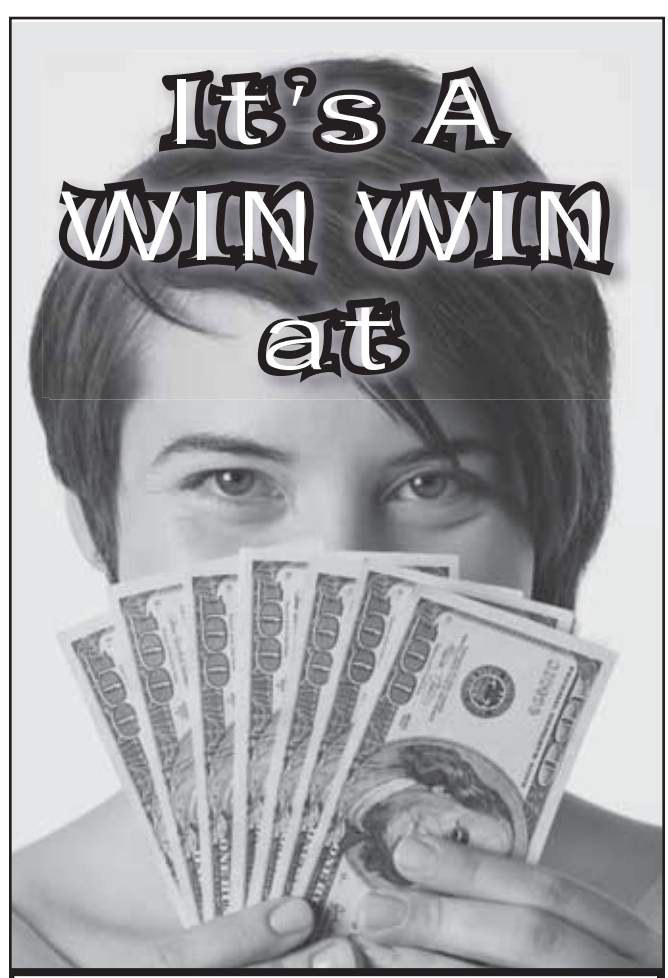
For information about the scramble or becoming a sponsor, call Bryce Hooper at 580-875-3351 or email bhooper@cottonelectric.com.

#### ACROSS

1. A braid
5. Print errors
11. Any of 3 avatars of Vishnu
12. Odor masking toiletry
16. Abba \_\_, Israeli politician
17. An enlisted person
18. Any speed competitor
19. Manitoba hockey team
24. The Bay state
25. Trees with conelike catkins
26. Central area of a church
27. 2 year old sheep
28. Interpret written words
29. Greek goddess of youth
30. Bullfighting maneuver
31. Shapes
33. Decreased
34. Fly
38. Unbelief
39. Traditional Hindu rhythms
40. Yemen capital
43. Prayer leader in a mosque
44. A sheep up to the age of one year
45. Soldier in an airborne unit
49. What a cow chews
50. K particle
51. 50 cent pieces
53. Trauma center
54. 2011 Stanley Cup winners
56. Inner bract of a grass spikelet
58. The Show-Me State
59. Self-immolation by fire ritual

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10			
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56		57				58				59			
60					61	62				63			
			64							65			

60. Offshoot interests
63. Amounts of time
64. Salty
65. Guinea currency 1971-85
13. Carrier’s invention
14. Banes
15. Catastrophe
20. Atomic #77
21. A note appended to a letter
22. Licks
23. Adam’s wife
27. Counterbalance
29. Brokeback star’s initials
30. Golf score
31. Manuscripts (abbr.)
32. Old English
33. Pod legume
34. Upper arm muscle
35. Japanese warrior
36. Oh, God!
37. A Scottish cap
38. Expresses surprise
40. Carbon particles
41. 4th cognomen
42. “Joy Luck Club” actress Irene
44. Holds
45. Favorable factors
46. Bird enclosure
47. Act of pay for usage
48. St. Francis of \_\_
50. Aussie bear
51. Day-O singer’s initials
52. One of the six noble gases
54. Apiary inhabitants
55. Proboscis
57. “Titanic” star’s initials
61. Lincoln’s state
62. Atomic #28



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# Top 4 speeches earn Youth Tour slots

*Continued from Page One*

That task was carried out by Keith DeVaughan, marketing and member services representative for Caddo Electric Cooperative; Mike Flanagan, Cotton County associate district judge; and Pamela Varner, Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service educator and director for Cotton County.

Tiara Amantine and Cheyna Cooper will represent Cotton Electric at the Leadership Summit in January 2015. In addition to a day of training and discussions designed to broaden leadership skills and interact with like-minded peers, each student will receive a \$250 college schol-

arship. At the conclusion of the training, students and their parents will be treated to an event such as a Thunder basketball or Barons hockey game.

The top four won an all-expense paid one-week trip to Washington, D.C., in June. They are Shayla Barber, Kaitlyn Metcalfe, Alexis Matallana and Kristian Cárdenas.

During their trip of a lifetime, they will join more than 1,500 other students, educators and cooperative employees and follow itineraries filled with activities from the moment they arrive until they day they fly back home.

The students will have an opportunity to visit with Oklaho-

ma's congressional delegation and learn about government, the cooperative form of business and the business of rural electrification. The students will become more familiar with the historical and political environment of the nation's capital through visits to monuments, government offices and cooperative organizations.

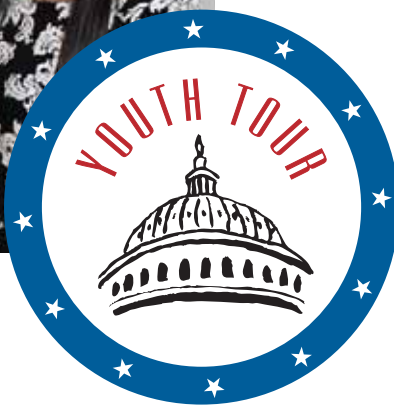
Because four bright teens learned, wrote and spoke well about the guiding principles of cooperatives, they have earned a valuable educational opportunity. They represent one of Cotton Electric's many investments in the future of the communities it serves.



Tiara Amantine and Cheyna Cooper will represent Cotton Electric at the 2015 Leadership Summit. Both are juniors at Lawton High School.



Winners of the 50th annual Rural Electric Youth Tour contest sponsored by Cotton Electric Cooperative are, from left, Shayla Barber of Marlow, Kaitlyn Metcalfe of Walters, and Kristian Cárdenas and Alexis Matallana, both of Lawton High.



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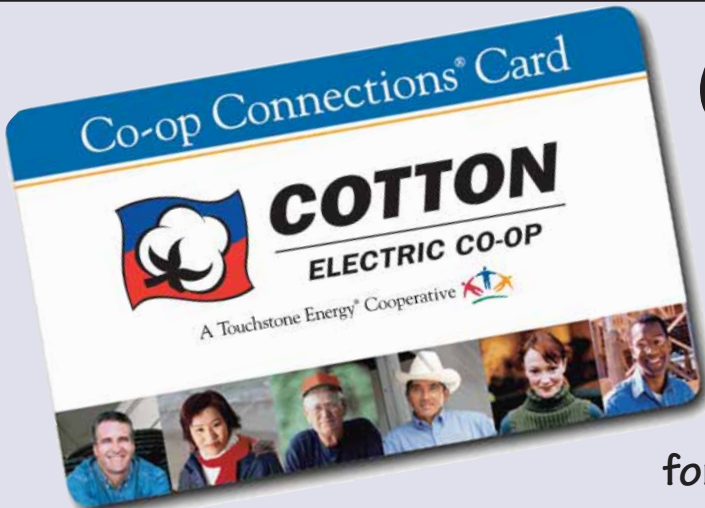


**EVERY MEMBER HAS A VOICE. EVEN THE ONES WHO CAN'T YET SPEAK.**

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

Visit [www.connections.coop](http://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.

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Sherri Maxwell - owner  
10% off store purchase  
\$5 off hour or 1/2-hour massage  
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Thurs - Sat. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
580-658-9026

**AA Computer Services, Inc.**  
20% off service, not to include services already on special  
901 SW Lee Blvd. Lawton  
580-357-4482 Mon-Fri 8-5

**ABC Transmission & Motor Company**  
10% off any service, not to include any service already on special.  
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**Aerola Bombus Children's Books**  
Educational books: Softcover, e-books, audio books and products.  
10% off online orders - Code CE2011  
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**American Scents Made in USA**  
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580-475-0055

**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

**Arvest Bank**  
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**Attractive Graphics**  
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580-678-5786  
attractivegraphicscsp@gmail.com

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babyglamandmamato.com

**Billingsley Ford of Lawton, Inc.**  
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Cotton Electric Co-op members get extra relief by presenting their Co-op Connections Card when getting prescriptions filled at participating pharmacies.

In 2013, members used their cards for discounts on 1,715 prescriptions not covered by insurance. A total of \$42,690 was discounted for an average

savings of \$24.89 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](http://www.locateproviders.com). Type 22203 into the Group field and click 'log in' to start your search.



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\*Payments of \$129 per month on a new Kubota ZG124E based on sales price of \$4,499 at \$0 down, 0% A.P.R. for 36 months. \*\* Payments of \$176 per month on a new Kubota Z725 based on sales price of \$8,287.12 at \$0 down, 0% A.P.R. for 48 months. \*\*\* Payments of \$233 per month on new Kubota BX1870 based on sales price of \$13,809 at \$0 down, 0 % A.P.R. for 60 months. \*\*\*\* Payments of \$344 per month on new Kubota L3200DT Package based on sales price of \$20,489 at \$0 down, 0 % A.P.R. for 60 months. Financing available from Kubota Credit Corporation, U.S.A., 3401 Del Amo Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503, subject to credit approval. Payments include implements, set up, and do not include delivery, or local taxes where applicable. Some exceptions apply. Offer expires 3/29/14. See dealership for details and other low-rate finance options.

### 2013 Gross Receipts Tax by School Districts

District	Cotton & WFEC Taxes	Cotton miles of line	Geronimo	Grandfield	Grandview	Indiahoma	Lawton	Marlow	Ringling	Rush Springs	Ryan	Sterling	Temple	Terral	Velma	Walters	Waurika	Totals:
Apache	31,595.34	4.51	47,943.03	43,386.14	46,455.08	60,741.99	39,911.82	53,217.60	79,034.52	120,878.68	38,626.76	60,065.82	56,580.76	15,931.06	272,214.50	178,570.88	94,738.36	2,357,771.34
Big Pasture	56,147.98	244.49	162.85	188.92	113.46	146.10	123.21	231.73	25.65	149.27	120.06	164.50	235.48	69.37	507.09	299.21	235.77	5,149.02
Bishop	264.10	1.15																
Bray	82,070.41	133.14																
Cache	106,638.76	289.59																
Central	86,741.33	235.41																
Chattanooga	183,461.57	335.18																
Comanche	198,115.69	308.61																
Davidson	21,238.43	33.45																
Duncan	80,480.18	193.25																
Elgin	117,214.48	306.07																
Empire	78,920.49	237.04																
Fletcher	48,225.86	26.90																
Flower Mound	333.00	1.45																
Fox	3,913.29	17.04																
Frederick	54,113.43	9.07																

## Cotton Electric, WFEC contribute more than \$2.3M to area schools

There are many advantages to being a member of an electric cooperative, including the significant positive impact it can have on your community. Take taxes, for example.

It's hard to think of taxes in a positive way, but schools in the Cotton Electric Cooperative service area get a big boost each year from the gross receipts tax paid by its members. On a percentage basis, electric cooperatives contribute more tax dollars to local school districts than do other utilities.

In Oklahoma, a 2 percent gross receipts tax on revenue at both the wholesale and retail level is levied upon electric cooperatives in lieu of ad valorem tax. All but 5 percent of that goes directly back to school districts in the areas they serve.

Investor-owned utilities pay ad valorem taxes instead of a gross receipts tax. Only 58 percent of this tax goes to school districts within which they

own property. Municipal utilities contribute no tax money to public schools in Oklahoma.

The Oklahoma Tax Commission oversees the apportionment of the gross receipts tax. The amount paid to each school is based upon the number of miles of power lines that Cotton Electric Cooperative and Western Farmers Electric Cooperative have in each school district.

WFEC, Oklahoma's largest locally-owned power supply system, is a generation and transmission cooperative owned by 22 distribution cooperatives, including Cotton Electric.

In 2013, more than \$2.3 million was distributed among the 31 schools served by CEC and WFEC. The table above shows the miles of line serving each district and an estimation of amounts contributed through the 2013 gross receipts tax.

## ESTATE AUCTION SATURDAY, APRIL 26TH, 10 A.M.

LOCATION: From Cookietown, OK: 2 miles East on Highway 5A, then 1.5 miles North to sale. WATCH FOR SIGNS!!!

To settle the estate of Keith Hooker, High's Auction & Real Estate has been commissioned to sale the following items at public auction. Registration and equipment preview begins at 8:00 am

#### TRACTORS, TRUCKS, IMPLEMENTS

J.D. 9220 '03 quad range RW9220H011174, 3800 hrs  
J.D. 4455 w/duals, Koyker 565 loader, 6381 hrs, J.D. 8450 '94 Quad range RW8450H002434, Case 930 w/3 pt., Kubota M4030 SUM40-231703 w/bush hog 2425 FE loader

#### WORK TRUCKS & GRAIN TRUCKS:

'97 Dodge w/hay fork, '65 Chevy grain truck w/18' steel bed, '70 Chevy C60 grain truck w/steel bed, '96 4WD 1 ton Chevy w/welding bed

#### IMPLEMENTS, AUGERS ETC.

Landoll 6230 tandem disc/like new: 62F1203136 Model 6230-30, J.D. 680 (36') plow #N00680X001963, McFarlane 35' harrah, 30' field cultivator, Great Plains solid stand double disc drills, 11 Shank Laney Ripper, Laney 10' land leveler, 7 shank big ox, J.D. 8350 drill w/ fertilizer box, double disc 8" spacing, 20' spring tooth, 15' Krause offset disc, J.D. 330 disc (salvage), Moalboards, 4, 5 & 6 bottom, J.D. 400 rotary hoe, J.D. 613 mower, Westfield drill fill auger (good condition), several grain augers, Versatile Noble 5 x 5 big sweep plow w/roll harrah, Sunflower 25 shank plow w/anhydrous hitch, Krause 14' hoeme, multiple livestock panels

#### BALERS, HAY EQUIPMENT, STOCK TRAILERS, WELDERS, POLARIS RANGER, SHOP EQUIP. ETC.

J.D. 568 Megawide baler w/net wrap E00568X358474, J.D. 705 hydraulic Twin Rake E00705X300058 (like new), 1431 New Holland discbine, New Holland 144 84047 hay inverter, New Holland 315 Hayliner square baler, 5 bale hay trailer, Polaris Ranger 500, Shop built gooseneck trailer w/rubber floor, Bumper-pull cover-top trailer, 16 x 6 car trailer, Tandem axle 500 gal diesel trailer, Portable loading chute, 200 gallon boomless Wyley sprayer, Danuser post hole digger w/2 augers 8" & 12", Overhead fuel tanks, 5000 gallon tank, 3 point hay forks, Pickup beds, New & used chisel points and sweeps, Feeders, power washers, E-Z fence roller, Big 20 miller welder, head chute, tools, baler twine (stinger 110 twine), t-posts, box blades, hay squeeze, bucket, many more items too numerous to mention.. Auctioneers note: Several quality and like new equipment items to be sold.



Registration begins at 8 am: preview day of sale. See you at the auction!!

#### Auctioneers/Brokers

Dewayne High 580-875-6500  
Rick High 580-591-2781  
Brett High 580-591-2779

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Attention Golfers!

Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation will host its 6th Annual Summer Golf Classic on June 30 at The Territory Golf & Country Club in Duncan.

We are now taking team entries. Hole sponsorships are still available. Proceeds from the event will go to Operation Round Up.

To sign up your team, call Bryce Hooper at 580-875-3351.

First 30 teams accepted. Teams must be signed up and paid by June 16.

Entry fees are \$600 per team.  
cottonelectric.com

# At home in Velma

## Exchange students embrace lifestyle of small-town southern Oklahoma

By Karen Kaley

"It's all about world peace."

Pam Nichols was talking about why she is passionate about the International Student Exchange (ISE). She is regional manager for the not-for-profit organization,

"Opening our hearts and homes to a young person sends a message overseas that we care about other countries," Nichols said.

Hosting an international exchange student is reaching out to a stranger, opening your home, offering a safe place for him or her to learn about you, your family, your language, your community, your country.

Nichols said the exchange program was established by the federal government to foster better relations with other countries. Building bonds of understanding with young people is an investment for both sides of the relationship.

"Exchange students are future leaders from other countries," she said.

The students are usually high achievers. They are screened for academic and English language proficiency before acceptance into the program. Their parents and educators must vouch for their maturity.

Their families must be able to bear the cost of travel, insurance, fees, clothing and incidentals for the student while abroad.

In exchange, the host is expected to provide room and board and care for the student as though he or she were a family member. Also very carefully screened by ISE, hosts can be single or married, with or without children of their own.

The rewards are great.

"Anyone who decides to do this will not regret it," Nichols said.

She knows what she's talking about. The Nichols family has hosted 18 students over the past 14 years, and Pam Nichols claims them all.

"They are my kids, their kids are my grandkids."

It is hard not to feel that way, she explained. "They live with you, see your good days and your bad days."

The students come to feel the same way. They keep in touch.

"Our phones were ringing, we had text messages from around the world asking if we were OK after the tornadoes last spring."

Participation in the program opens doors for the students. Nichols listed a Ukrainian ambassador to Japan and a Macedonian ambassador to Switzerland among the alumni. Many were preferred employees during the recent Olympics in Russia. Certifications of completion in the program increase their chance of acceptance at universities.

That is all because they have had "hands-on" cultural training. They have immersed themselves in the culture of the host country, the host community, the host family.

"We are so lucky to be in Velma," Pam Hekerman said.

Charles Beclard nodded his head in

agreement and added, "We are lucky to be placed with the families we have."

The 18-year-olds have been in eastern Stephens County since August.

Hosted by Cotton Electric members Jeff and Debbie Sanner, Pam is the daughter of Anita and Ben Hekerman of Heesch, Netherlands.

Hosted by Cotton Electric members June and Alan Roberts, Charles is the son of Elisabeth Mertens and Didier Beclard of Brussels, Belgium.

They each did research and went through the process of applying to come to "one of the main countries of the world," Charles said.

The process was challenging, Pam said. "We had to tell everything about ourselves, make photo books, tell our interests and motivations for coming. We had to get letters from our schools and parents ..."

In Charles' case, he had to convince his mother, who was worried about him being so far away. He also worked during the summer to raise funds to make the trip.

They are very glad the Sanners and the Robertses opened their homes. As a result, Charles and Pam say some remarkable things about where they have landed.

"What do I like about Oklahoma? The sunsets," Pam said.

"I like the small town. There is always stuff to do. The people are really nice. I have a lot of new friends."

Charles echoed her thoughts, saying he was used to having large buildings all around in his hometown.

"Here, there are huge fields and beautiful sunsets. I like Velma, I like the whole spirit of the town."

The town and the school have embraced them. The students spoke over each other trying to convey this.

"It's just a good atmosphere. They cheer us on in sports. It is totally different from things we did in our hometowns."

Charles said, "Be sure and put in there we have Bitta. She takes care of us."

Rebecca "Bitta" Humphreys is one of many Velma-Alma High School students who have helped the newcomers with their experience. Foreign exchange students are not allowed to drive in the U.S., but Bitta has made sure Pam and Charles have a way to get around.

In addition to playing on V-A sports teams, the two have participated in community projects. They raised the most money in the annual Heart Association event and were named king and queen. Pam was named second runner-up in the recent Miss Velma-Alma pageant.

When Pam Nichols was describing what ISE does, she said, "We help make students' dreams come true."

To hear Pam Hekerman and Charles Beclard talk about it, the program succeeds.

"The experience is awesome. It is one of the best years of my life."



Belgian Charles Beclard and Pam Hekerman of Netherlands are spending their senior high school year as Velma-Alma students.

## Interested in learning more about ISE?

To learn more about International Student Exchange, visit its website at [www.iseusa.com](http://www.iseusa.com).

If you are considering becoming a host family and have questions, call Pam Nichols at 855-232-7988.

If this sounds like a great organization to work for, Pam Nichols would

like to talk to you. "I'm looking for some good self-motivated people in Oklahoma or north Texas to work with ISE. There is training required, they work from home and must have a computer with Internet access. It does not cost anything to start and there are opportunities for bonuses."

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- Rebate program** – Members can receive rebates when they install energy efficient heat pumps and water heaters.
- MyUsage.com** – Track daily energy consumption to identify the benefits of lowering usage and be alerted to spikes that may indicate a problem.
- TogetherWeSave.com** – Find out how the little changes add up to big savings.
- MyChoice** – Control times and methods of power bill payment while saving money – no deposits or late fees.
- Beat the Peak** – Sign up for alerts on high consumption days and participate in conservation measures during peak demand hours.

Find out more by visiting [cottonelectric.com](http://cottonelectric.com) or calling 580-875-3351 or 800-522-3520.

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## Tree Planting Chart

Remember to plan for the growth of the tree you plant.

**No-Planting Zone**  
15 feet from center of pole outward for a 30-foot zone

**Power Line Right of Way**

- Trees planted at 50 feet
- Trees planted at 35 feet
- Trees planted at 25 feet

Area 3 - Large Trees	Area 2 - Medium Trees	Area 1 - Small Trees
40-45 feet from lines	35 feet from lines	25 feet from lines
Oak, Elm, Hickory, Maple, Pine, Sweet Gum, Poplar, Sycamore, Pecan, Cottonwood	Bradford Pear, Magnolia, Ornamental Cherry, Fir, Spruce	Dogwood, Redbud, Grape Myrtle, Crabapple, Japanese Maple, Holly

**WARNING**  
A tree that reaches into the No-Planting Zone as it matures will have to be trimmed by Cotton Electric crews.

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Trees are an asset to your property and home but they also can be a power line's worst enemy. Strong winds, storms, and heavy ice can topple trees or shatter branches that pull down power lines and cause outages. If you are planning to plant trees on your property, make sure not to plant them directly under or within at least 25 feet of power lines for short trees, and at least 35 feet away for medium-sized trees, 40 to 45 feet for large trees. Shrubs, hedges, and other plants should be kept clear of electric towers and poles. Remember to Call Okie, 1-800-522-OKIE, before you dig.

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## Spring tune-up keeps HVAC in top form

By Trent Marlett

Spring is that wonderful time of the year when winter is gone and summer isn't quite here. Energy bills become very comfortable compared to those from the harsh winter we just experienced. It is time to just enjoy these few months of nice weather.

One way to get the most out of this time of year is to take advantage of a rebate program Cotton Electric offers for a limited time. The 2014 Spring HVAC Tune-Up program is designed to help members get heating and cooling systems ready for summer.

There never really is a good time for a heating and cooling system to quit on us, but we definitely don't want it breaking down in the

heat of the summer. A spring tune-up can ensure a cooling system will run the best it can when you need it most. "Don't fix it if it ain't broke" does not apply in this situation. An HVAC system is too important to put off repairs. The longer we wait, the harder – and often more expensive – it can be to fix problems. A tune-up by a qualified technician will identify any problems that need to be addressed before it's too late. We use air condition-

ers to keep comfortable in our homes. Without an annual tune-up, our HVAC systems develop efficiency problems that make it harder to do so. A tune-up will make sure your HVAC system is operating at peak efficiency. A system could consume as much as 15 percent less energy after a tune-up. Annual system maintenance can add years to the life of equipment. Systems that are poorly kept will not last near as long as systems that are regularly maintained.

Here's the best reason to take advantage of the nice weather and get your HVAC system tuned up: Cotton Electric members could get a rebate of up to \$75. For details, see the story on Page 2 or give us a call at 580-875-3351



# LAND AUCTION

## Friday, April 25th, 10 am

Property to be sold: 160 Acres m/l located in the NW S10 T3S R10W of the I.M. Cotton County, Ok. Seller: J.W. & Sue Thompson

Sale Location: From Walters, Ok go East 5 miles on Hwy 53 to the Junction of 53/65, then South 3 miles on Highway 65, then 1/2 mile west to property. WATCH FOR SIGNS!!

Auctioneers note: Mr. & Mrs. Thompson have decided to down-size and have commissioned High's Auction & Real Estate to sale this attractive farm. Do not miss a great opportunity to acquire an excellent quarter, well located and fenced with plenty of stock water. Possession of the farm, including the 2014 wheat crop shall be transferred at closing.

- Good fencing all borders
- 1/2 minerals owned to transfer
- All weather county roads on North and West side
- Pond, native and improved grass, trees
- 17 Acres wheat crop to transfer
- 2014 Estimated taxes: \$152.57
- Possession upon closing

For additional pics, maps etc. see [www.highsauction.com](http://www.highsauction.com)

Terms: Buyer to provide 5% of purchase price day of sale with balance due at closing. Closing to be held within 15 days of sale date. Personal checks accepted with proper i.d. Seller to provide clear and marketable title. Sale is not subject to buyer financing contingencies. Property sold as is where is. Title opinion, lender fees, appraisals or any required surveys are the responsibility of the buyer. Abstract to be certified to date. Announcements day of sale supersede previous advertising.

For additional information regarding this sale you may contact:  
Rick High: 580-591-2781  
Ok brokers license #114968

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Contact High's Auction & Real Estate Service for all of your real estate needs. See website for all upcoming auctions and private listings.

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