

The Current

A Publication of Cotton Electric Cooperative Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

“The Current - Informing Our Members Since 1957”

VOLUME 58

August 11, 2014

NUMBER 1

Safety first

Drills, education sessions part of co-op’s culture

By Karen Kaley

*Mayday! Mayday!
This is Unit 88 at 99-99-2-14. We’ve had an electrical contact. Victim is unconscious. Send an ambulance.*

Accidents happen. Live long enough and one will happen to you or someone with you.

When you need help dealing with a really serious accident, you will call for help. Will you remember to give all the necessary information for the right kind of help to find you?

*Repeating: Mayday! Mayday!
This is Unit 88 at 99-99-2-14. We’ve had an electrical contact. Victim is unconscious. Send an ambulance.*

At the most horrific moments, when a colleague or friend has been injured or taken ill, when seconds count, will you know what to do? Will you know how to render aid that will help the victim quickly and effectively?

Climb up, tie him off, cut his belt and lower him to the ground. If someone else is with you, he or she can begin CPR immediately. Otherwise, get back down and administer aid until help arrives.

With training sessions and practice drills, the answer can be yes.

Transfer control of the basket to the lower part of the truck. Lower the basket and tilt it toward the ground. Climb off the truck, go around to the basket and pull the victim out by the safety belt or by grabbing him or her under the arms.

Many of Cotton Electric’s employees have daily tasks that make them more likely to encounter hazardous situations.

They strap on hooks and climb poles or go up as high as 60 feet in truck baskets to work around power lines. They hoist transformers, use chain saws on tree branches and operate heavy equipment.

They tramp around in undeveloped areas that may be swampy, or grown over with tall grass and weeds concealing trenches. They are exposed to the wild Oklahoma weather and unpredictable dogs, killer bees and crazy goats.

They could get hurt.

Accidents and health emergencies also happen in more mundane settings. Accountants have heart attacks, secretaries feel faint, and writers trip over their own feet.

The key to a positive outcome in all of these situations is making safety a priority with strong policies and regular training.

Larry Phillips, safety director for Cotton Electric, has scheduled a dozen safety meetings for Cotton Electric employees during 2014. Some will feature topics and drills pertaining only to those exposed to more hazardous situations. Some topics will be covered at two sessions so employee schedules can be staggered and everyone will get the training.

See Rescue, Page 8

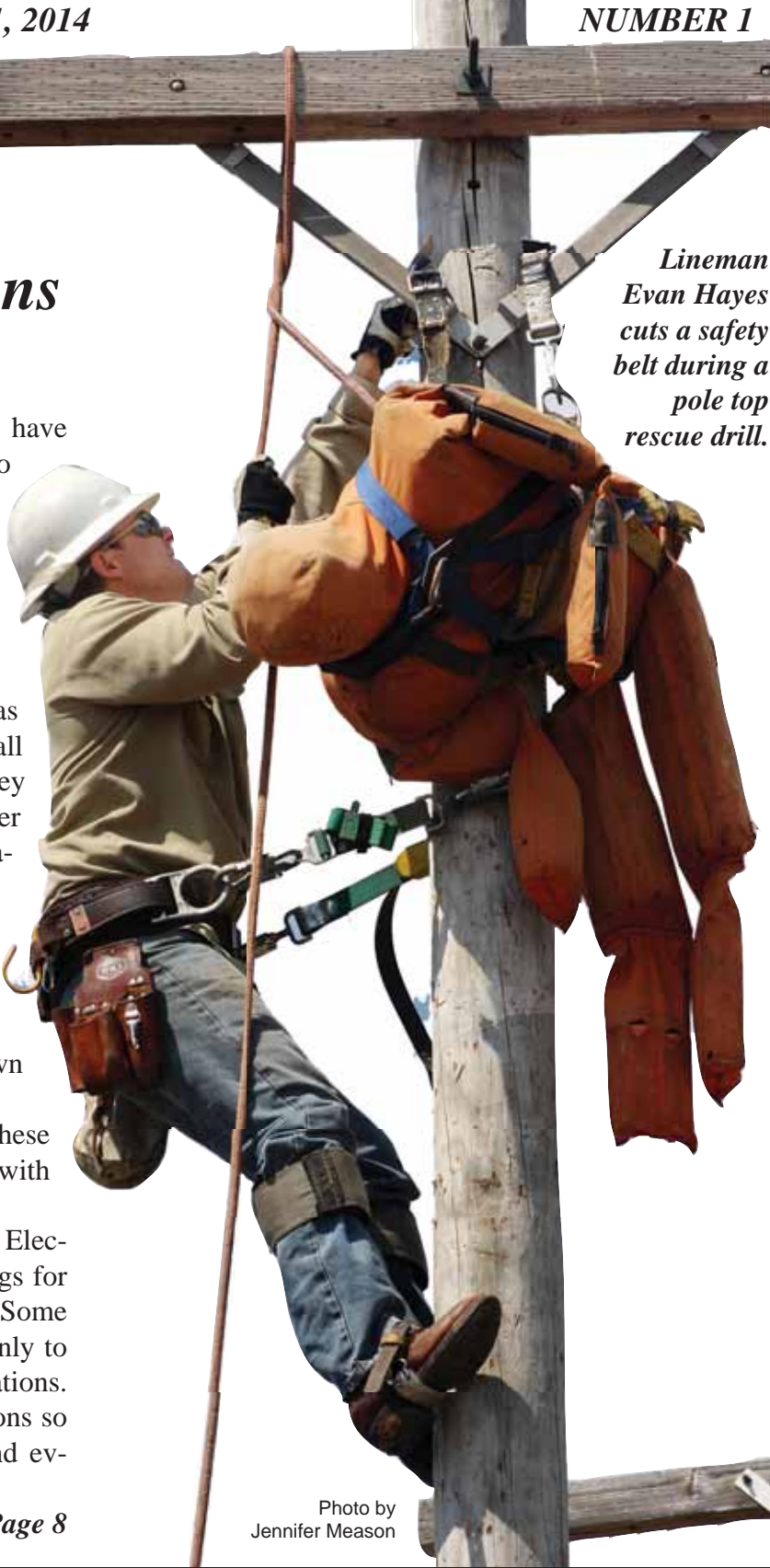


Photo by
Jennifer Meason

Meetings set for CEC Districts 2, 6, 8

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

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

Each trustee is a co-op member who represents one district, the area in which he or she lives. Terms are staggered in such a way that only three trustees are up for election each year.

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



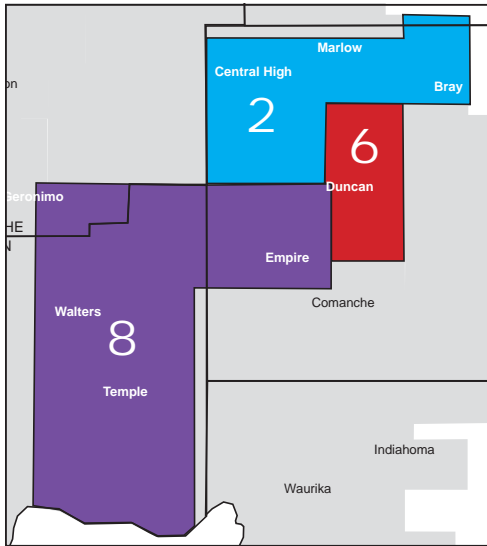
KEN LAYN
represents District #2



TOMMY JONES
represents District #6



DEWAYNE HIGH
represents District #8



This year, the meeting schedule is as follows:

District 2: Aug. 26 in the Life Center at First Baptist Church of Marlow

District 8: Sept. 4 at Cotton Electric Community Center in Walters

District 6: Sept. 9 at Stephens County fairgrounds in Duncan

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

for quicker registration and makes the holder eligible for an attendance prize.

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

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

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

Trustees who are elected at the district meetings will take office immediately following the annual meeting and will serve a three-year term. The Cotton Electric Cooperative annual meeting will be Sept. 25 at Great Plains Coliseum in Lawton.

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

Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment (PCA) applied to bills mailed after Aug. 1 is \$0.01088 per kWh.

On a traditional bill, average use of 1500 kilowatt hours (kWh) would include a PCA charge of \$16.32 on the August bill.

On a MyChoice account, PCA is added to the base rate of \$0.088923 per kWh, making the rate appear to be \$0.998 from July 17 through Aug. 18.

July 2014 Temperature Extremes

Day	High	Low	Avg.	Day	High	Low	Avg.
1	93	73	83	16	81	64	73
2	88	70	79	17	72	62	67
3	87	69	78	18	72	63	68
4	95	66	81	19	86	61	74
5	98	72	85	20	95	65	80
6	98	73	86	21	99	73	86
7	104	70	87	22	100	75	88
8	103	69	86	23	102	71	87
9	94	74	84	24	99	72	86
10	101	73	87	25	103	70	87
11	98	71	85	26	104	69	87
12	101	70	86	27	108	71	90
13	104	66	85	28	85	71	78
14	95	77	86	29	86	69	78
15	88	72	80	30	84	67	76
Source: srh.noaa.gov/oun/				31	81	68	75
Average Daily High: 94				Average Daily Low: 70			

Did You Know?



The Cotton Electric business offices will be closed on Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 1.

Emergency calls will be answered at 580-875-3351 or 800-522-3520.

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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The next issue of The Current should arrive in mailboxes Sept. 8, 2014.

From the CEO

Copper theft drives power costs up

Have you ever had your bicycle stolen? I have. It happened about 50 years ago and I'm still traumatized. My world suddenly changed – and shrank. No longer was I the cool, mobile 11-year-old I perceived myself to be. In an instant, I was back walking to ball practice, Scout meetings and, worst of all, living through the humiliation of walking to school!

The walking part hurt my pride but the real pain came from someone stealing something I had worked and paid for. In the early 1960s, pop bottles brought 2 cents each, and I had paid 15 bucks for that bike. That's 750 bottles!

It's amazing the impact certain events can have on impressionable minds. Since that day, I've never had much use for a thief – pure and simple.

As a member/owner of Cotton Electric Cooperative, I know you work hard for your money. Most of you realize that the amount of your bill is based on what it cost to produce and deliver electrical power. When someone steals from the cooperative, expenses increase and



Warren Langford, CEO

so does your power bill. Cotton Electric has no stockholders, just owners. So, when someone steals or vandalizes cooperative property, they are stealing directly from you!

Your distribution plant is valued at over \$123 million. We serve in the rural areas of eight counties and are prime targets for copper thieves. The damage these people do to your property is amazing. It is also very dangerous. Thieves may not understand they are risking their lives by taking copper from substations or poles. Distribution voltage is dangerous and carries a potentially deadly charge.

At another Oklahoma cooperative, copper thieves were responsible for more than \$1 million in damage to a substation in 2012. The metal they were trying to steal became energized and caused an explosion. Two men nearly lost their lives over \$100 worth of scrap metal.

In New Mexico recently, a man was found dead beneath a power pole. Apparently, he had been trying to cut copper wiring from a live transformer.

Here at Cotton, you pay around \$50,000 annually to replace the copper ground wires stolen from electric poles. Because copper theft cannot be insured against, you pay the full cost to replace and repair the stolen equipment.

Law enforcement officials have been helpful in our efforts to curb copper theft. We are routinely summoned to identify cooperative property thieves are trying to sell. Sheriff's officials work with recycling centers to determine which scrap metal is stolen and which is not.

Our employees are always trying different ways to deter theft. We attach unique ID numbers to our equipment, and our linemen are experimenting with different ways of installing pole grounds. The intent is to make metal difficult to remove and sell.

I ask you to take copper theft personally and help eliminate this costly crime. At the same time, I ask you to be careful. If you see someone pulling ground wires from poles or someone suspicious in a substation, please remember the follow guidelines:

- Never enter or touch equipment inside a substation; stay away from power lines and

anything touching a power line.

- If you notice anything unusual, such as an open substation gate or hanging wire, call us immediately.
- Never confront anyone. If you see someone around Cotton Electric's facilities who shouldn't be there, give us a call.
- Help spread the word about the deadly consequences that can result from trying to steal copper.
- Let it be known that, when caught, copper thieves are prosecuted.

As a member/owner, you work hard to pay your bills. If needed, most of us would still sell pop bottles to make ends meet. This is a huge, expensive problem that will take a united effort to solve.

Please remember that people who steal copper, or even a bicycle for that matter, have a common one-word description – THIEF!

Oh by the way, my bike was a used, gold, 20-inch, Sears Spyder. It came complete with high-rise handlebars, banana seat, balloon tires and sissy bar. If you hear of anything, give a call. After all these years, I'm still looking ...

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS



The new EPA rules will charge YOU, not your PHONE.

The reliability of American energy is being threatened.

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD
ACTION.COOP

Don't get lost in the EPA's shuffle

Six hundred pages plus another 1,000 of supporting documents. That's the length of the latest proposal from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). It would amend the Clean Air Act (only 465 pages) to limit carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from the power plants on which we rely today.

Besides reading the actual rule, a lot also has been written about its legality, feasibility and complexity. Lost in the shuffle of thousands of pages is the impact on people. How much will electric bills increase? Will manufacturers relocate? How many jobs will be lost? Which power plants will be forced to shut down?

These are difficult questions. But they're important questions.

At Cotton Electric Cooperative, we work hard to keep your electricity affordable and reliable. That's why we're asking the EPA for answers to these and many other questions.

We don't want you to get lost in the shuffle. We put our members first. We advocate for you. We see you every month paying your bill at the office. We work with you. We know when times are tough. We often live next door.

After all, you govern us. Our board members and community leaders are one and the same. We're as local as any organization and we like it that way.

That's why we keep reminding the bureaucrats in Washington, D.C., that the rules they write have an impact in the real world – where we live. That's why we've encouraged everyone to take 30 seconds to sign up at www.Action.coop and tell the EPA we cannot afford these regulations.

Please raise your voice. Don't get lost in the shuffle.

Together, we can tell the EPA that support for the

environment and a true all-of-the-above energy policy are not mutually exclusive.

Together, we can talk about our energy-efficiency programs.

We can talk about how Western Farmers Electric Cooperative, the generation and transmission cooperative that we purchase our power from, already incorporates wind generation to power your homes. We can talk about how we did this without any mandates. We can talk about how we did this because it's the right thing to do.

Together, we'll remind regulators and lawmakers that the impact new rules and laws have on people should be their first thought, not their last.

And we have a big family, with more than 900 electric cooperatives in the country backing us up.

We have a great and positive story to tell. We can tell the story together. And it won't even take 1,600 pages.




COTTON
ELECTRIC CO-OP

Mission Statement

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

June 2014 Operating Stats			
	2014	2013	
Total Amount Billed/Accrued	\$6,305,822	\$4,746,242	
Cost of Purchased Power	4,651,520	3,940,285	
Taxes	115,600	97,563	
Total Operating Expense Per Mile	1,195	1,063	
Average Farm and Residential Bill	154	119	
Average Farm and Residential kWh	1,271	1,361	
Total Meters Billed (farm, residential)	18,230	18,062	
Miles Energized	5,141	5,130	
Density Per Mile	3.55	3.52	
New Service Connects YTD	170	184	
Services Retired	90	121	

TheCurrent

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

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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

Community Spotlight

If you would like your community event listed in the September issue, please submit information by Aug. 26 by calling 580-875-4255 or send an email to info@cottonelectric.com.

Two farmers markets in Lawton

A farmers market hosted by the Southwest Growers Association is held from 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Saturday through October at the Comanche County Fairgrounds, 920 S. Sheridan Road, Lawton.

For information, visit Lawton Farmers Market on Facebook.

Another Lawton farmers market is from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays and 4 to 7 p.m. Wednesdays at the Fairmont Creamery, 411 SE Larrance Street.

7 p.m. Aug. 12 in the Worley Center at Great Plains Tech Center in Lawton. There is no admission fee and the meeting is open to the public.

The event will feature entertainment from award-winning singer and songwriter Kevin Davis of Walters and from cowboy poet Straw Berry of Cordell. LeRoy Jones of Mountain View will share a historical paper at the gathering.

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

UW Follies kicks off campaign

United Way Follies is a kickoff event for United Way Stephens County’s 2014-15 fundraising campaign. Fun and follies begin at 6:30 p.m. Aug. 15 at the Simmons Center in Duncan.

Entertainment will include singing, dancing, skits and an improv group. Local restaurants will offer a “Taste of the Town.”

Tickets may be purchased by calling the United Way office at 580-255-3648.

Berline band to play in Marlow

World-class bluegrass fiddler Byron Berline and his band will display their unique talents during for the final installment of the Downtown Concert Series in Marlow.

Take your lawn chairs and be prepared to hear some great music at 6 p.m. Aug. 15 at the Downtown Gazebo and Stage, 317 W. Main.

For information, call the Marlow Chamber at 580-658-2212.

Concert benefits Empire school

A benefit concert for Empire Schools will begin at 6 p.m. Aug. 16 at the Empire football field. Featured performers will be Chance Anderson, Hijacker Hollow Band and the Chase Sanford Band.

Empire band will offer concessions. Admission will be \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids 8 and under. Other dona-

Community closet needs donations

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

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

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

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

LCT auditioning for ‘Oliver!’

Lawton Community Theatre opens its 63rd season with “Oliver!” Auditions are scheduled for 7 p.m. Aug. 11 and 12 at the John Denney Playhouse, 1316 NW Bell Avenue, Lawton.

The presentation is a musical, and those auditioning must have a prepared song and be dressed for dancing. Accompaniment will be provided. Performances are Oct. 3-5 and 9-12.

For information, visit LCT-OK.org.

SWOKHS plans annual meeting

Southwestern Oklahoma Historical Society will hold its annual meeting at

Photo of the Month



This shot of Shyann Bingham and Derek Davis about to plunge into a cool pool is the winner of our “Stay Cool” August photo contest. The photo was submitted by Cotton Electric member Tamara Bingham of Walters.

Enter your “best shot” in our Photo of the Month contest. Theme for Septemeber is Back to School. Entries can be emailed to info@cottonelectric.com or mailed to The Current, 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572. Winners will receive a Cotton Electric prize package of CEC goodies.


tions will be accepted at the gate. Proceeds will help rebuild the athletic field house.


For information, call the Empire Volunteer Fire Department or David Hunt at 580-656-4829.

Soloist featured in ‘Four Seasons’

Violinist Peter Wilson will be featured soloist when Lawton Philharmonic Orchestra presents Vivaldi’s “The Four Seasons.” Written nearly 300 years ago, the beloved and technically astounding set of four concerti depict the seasons of the year.

Performance is set for 8 p.m. Aug. 23 at McMahon Memorial Auditorium. Tickets may be purchased by calling 580-531-5043 or by visiting lawtonphil.com.





YOUR ELECTRICITY ISN'T SOMETHING WE TAKE LIGHTLY.

Before you switch on the lights, we've already put up the poles, connected miles of wire and flipped more than a few switches of our own. All to make sure your life is always “on.” Learn more about the power of your co-op membership at TogetherWeSave.com.



Sign up & be entered to win!

Conserving energy on peak usage days helps Beat the Peak.

When Cotton Electric determines that a peak situation exists, participating members will be notified by email or text message. On peak days, you can conserve energy and help hold down power costs.

How would you like to be notified? ☐ Email ☐ Text message

Email address: _____

Cell phone number: _____

Cell phone carrier: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Include form with a payment or mail it to Cotton Electric, 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572. This information can also be emailed to info@cottonelectric.com.

Monthly prize drawings will be held July – September

Members who sign up for Beat the Peak alerts will be eligible to win FREE energy efficiency kits. Sign up today at our website! www.cottonelectric.com

Brown gets things started for new Cotton members

By Karen Kaley

Brenda Brown’s two years as Membership Representative makes her a bit of a newbie among Cotton Electric employees. New is no problem for her, though. In fact, she specializes in new.

When a person contacts Cotton Electric’s headquarters in Walters about setting up a new member account, Brenda will be his or her new best friend as they go through the process together.

It is indeed a process. It usually takes several phone calls and a trip to the co-op headquarters or the office in Duncan. There is quite a bit of information to be exchanged, paperwork to fill out, records to check and fees to collect.

Brenda has to do most of the talking, but she doesn’t mind.

“I really like visiting with people and I get to meet nearly all of the new members who come through the Walters office.”

Her side of the conversation is mostly to educate the new member about equipment, membership policies and payment options Cotton Electric offers.

She will ask a lot of questions. The first one is, “What is the meter number at the location?”

It is not unusual for that first question to stop the process before it ever really gets started.

“I *must* have the meter number to set up a new account,” Brenda said. “It is an essential piece of information and I can’t set up an account without it.”

Most new members don’t know the number or how to find it. So the educating begins.

“A meter number can be found on the face of all Cotton Electric meters,” Brenda will explain. “There are several numbers there, but we are looking for one or two letters followed by five numbers. On a residential meter, the number is large and in the lower third of the face.”

Once the member has the meter number, the process starts up again. Brenda collects more information: Name, address, Social Security number, phone numbers and emergency contact numbers.

The next step involves the first form the member has to sign. This authorizes Brenda to check the member’s utility payment history, which will determine the need to collect a deposit and how much.

A clean history will mean no deposit is required. Other histories may indicate collecting a deposit. The amount of the deposit is a percentage of average use at the location tied to the meter number.

Deposit amounts vary but are usually more than \$200 and often considerably higher. The deposit is returned to the member after 12 consecutive months of on-time power bill payments.

However, coming up with a few hundred dollars at a time when a member is dealing with other moving expenses, can be a problem.

That problem is another opportunity for Brenda to offer new information.

“I am so glad Cotton Electric offers MyChoice,” she said. She described MyChoice as a prepay option that, among other things, helps a new member overcome the challenge of a high deposit.

MyChoice accounts are non-traditional power accounts. There is no deposit, no monthly bill, no specific date to pay for electricity and no late fee. Money is placed in the account before the energy is used and the balance of the account goes down as power is consumed.

The member is notified by email, text message or phone call when the balance is running low or power is about to cut off because of a zero balance. There are many ways to add money to the account, which will turn power back on within an hour.

Members can track the account on a mobile device with the SmartHub app. The app also provides a great deal of information such as energy consumption and current outside temperature. It has a link to a payment portal so the member can add to the account balance at any time.

Brenda said new members opting for MyChoice have a few fees to pay and are required to start with a \$50 balance in the account. It usually costs around \$100 to get the account up and running.

“After that,” she said, “it’s all up to the member. They can make payments whenever they want in amounts that work for them.”

Once Brenda gets the new member set up in a traditional or MyChoice account and has collected his or her signature on various forms, she presents the newcomer with a welcoming packet containing a Co-op Connections Card, a Member Handbook and other information about the co-op.

She does a bit of computer entry and filing and she has completed the process of adding a Cotton Electric member. As she finishes, her phone will ring and she will have a ready reply for the caller:

“I’m moving into your area and I need to get the electricity turned on. How do we start?”

She will reply with a question: “Do you have the meter number?”



Employee Spotlight

Brenda Brown



Brenda Brown helps new members through the process of setting up electric service with Cotton Electric. She said the meter number is vital to the process. The meter number can be found on the face of all Cotton Electric meters, as shown below.



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With a ClimateMaster ® Geothermal Heat Pump System, you get tax credits, utility rebates, and save 40% - 60% on your energy bill. ClimateMaster uses geothermal energy to tap the constant temperature of the earth, keeping your home comfortable year around. Best of all, a new system usually pays for itself in about five years and is a cleaner choice for the environment. If you’re ready to uncover extra cash each month, call your local ClimateMaster dealer today.

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Cotton Electric efforts keep our communities bright



Kaitlyn Metcalfe
Walters High School

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

Recently, I ran across a notable line that read, “God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and then He created linemen to distribute it.”

After reading this, I thought to myself that a catchy line like this one surely has to reflect a worthy establishment. In this case, the establishment is Cotton Electric.

The local cooperative does indeed distribute light, and it also does many other beneficial things, such as abiding by the Seven Cooperative Principles and putting them into practice. Cotton Electric ably represents the fifth cooperative principle concerned with education, information, and training. Part of that education includes teaching us young members about the cooperative itself, explaining in their educational materials how Cotton Electric came to be.

Yes, God created light and man, but what happened after that? Luckily, He blessed man with the ability to gain knowledge and understanding. As a result of this gift, historical figures were able to study the mystery of electricity, eventually cracking its code. This revolution led to the creation of the light bulb, changing the way humans live for the better.

By the 1930s, most people in urban areas had electricity, but, for the dwellers of rural areas, having electricity was a rare commodity. According to the article “Rural Electrification,” “[P]rivate utility companies, who supplied electric power to most of the nation’s consumers, argued that it was too expensive to string electric lines to isolated rural farm-

steads.”

Fortunately, God also gave us the capability to make wise decisions, and in 1935 under the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Rural Electrification Administration was created. The job of the REA was simple – bring electricity to rural areas. C.W. Cox, a citizen of Walters, saw great potential in an REA, so he took action. With the help of many other Walters natives, Cox began the journey of establishing a rural electric cooperative in the growing town of Walters, Oklahoma. Since the original date of incorporation, Sept. 15, 1938, Cotton Electric has purposefully followed the Seven Cooperative Principles to ensure that its members and employees are fully satisfied with its rural services.

In 1974, the generation of wholesale power and the building of a coal-fired generating plant resulted in an energy crisis due to those construction costs. Before this crisis, increasing electric rates was not necessary. As you may imagine, the sudden rate increase posed a challenge for Cotton Electric members. To minimize this challenge, Cotton Electric directed educational and informational efforts toward conservation and energy efficiency to help members live with rising utility costs. Despite this temporary crisis, Cotton Electric practiced the cooperative principles, specifically the fifth, Education, Training, and Information. Consequently, Cotton Electric regularly sends a select group of teens from its service area to Washington, D.C., and eighth-graders to the Youth Power Energy Camp every year. The teens that are chosen to travel to Washington, D.C., are granted an opportunity of a lifetime as they get to learn about our country and enjoy themselves as well. At Energy Camp, students have the privilege to

develop leadership skills, watch safety demonstrations, and participate in other learning activities. Both of these are great opportunities for young people to learn about rural electrification and leadership.

Because Cotton Electric is concerned with education, it designed a program known as Operation Round Up. This program provides financial assistance to individuals and organizations. Voluntary contributions from participating co-op members are collected when their monthly bills are “rounded up” to the next highest dollar. The money collected from this foundation is given out as grants to worthwhile community programs and many of the grants are given to educational associations. Over the past nine years, the foundation has issued 304 grants, and nearly one-third have gone to schools and organizations benefiting youth. Operation Round Up has strengthened and continues to strengthen the educational systems in our service area.

Cotton Electric also provides information for its members. The Current, a full-size newspaper, focuses on people and activities of southwest Oklahoma. Although this newspaper is located in Walters, the award-winning paper reaches out to 15,000 residents each month. The Current presents its recipients with information concerning community, safety, and even domestic tips for around the house.

The city of Walters takes pride in being the home of such a beneficial cooperative. Cotton Electric has helped develop all of our rural communities over the years and continues to do so through its determination to educate, inform, and train not only its employees but its members, as well. Through this process, this electric cooperative actively keeps our communities bright each and every day.

TRUTH BE TOLD, YOUR ELECTRICITY COMES FROM PEOPLE POWER. Thankfully, there’s one energy source that co-op members can always depend on – the hard-working dedication and efficiency of your electric co-op linemen. Learn more about the power of your co-op membership at TogetherWeSave.com.



TOGETHERWESAVE.COM



Get an A+ in Back to School Savings.

Earn extra credit with Cotton Electric’s Co-op Connections Card. We’ll help you save on all the back to school basics from backpacks and apparel to pencils and paste.



Find all the ways to save at

Connections.coop



COTTON
ELECTRIC CO-OP

To pack or not to pack – a back-to-school question

I must admit, I struggle at the beginning of every school year, trying to decide if I should forgo school lunch and pack lunches for my kids.

For some parents, it’s a no-brainer – they think back to what they were served at school and vow that their kids will fare better.

My hesitation is a combination of lack of time, a kid who will not eat peanut butter or sandwiches, and my preoccupation with food safety – will the cold food stay cold enough; the hot food hot enough?

Another thought that crosses my mind is how much school lunch has changed from when I was in school.

The USDA has strengthened the nutrition rules to which school lunch programs participating in the National School Lunch Program must adhere. In 2012, new standards were released to increase the offer-



Kim Bandelier, MPH, RD, LD

Food For THOUGHT

ings of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, provide the appropriate portion sizes and calories by age, fat-free or 1 percent milk, and reductions in saturated fats, trans fats, and sodium. Schools have until the 2014-2015 school year – this year! – to comply.

On a macro-level, the new

standards seem to be working. Preliminary research shows that fruit and vegetable intake is increasing and plate-waste – kids throwing the fruits and vegetables away – is unchanged or less than before.

On a micro-level, not every school has implemented these standards. The only way to find out is to visit your child’s school, have lunch, and ask questions.

So back to the original question: Should you pack your child’s lunch, or let him or her go through the school-lunch line? Here are some other questions to help you decide:

- Will you pack healthier food than is offered at your school?
- Does your school offer healthy options that your child will or can eat?
- Does your child really eat the lunch that you pack?
- Do you offer healthy op-

tions at breakfast and dinner that make up for any nutritional gaps your child may experience at lunch?

Packing a lunch for your child is a personal choice, although some parents must pack their child’s lunch because of food allergies or dietary restrictions. If that does not describe you, use the questions above to evaluate the food situation at your child’s school.

If you still can’t decide which way is best, sometimes pack and sometimes do school-lunch. Talk to your child about what foods you want him or her to choose when going through the line. Provide them with high-quality breakfasts and dinners at home.

For information on what and how to feed your child, visit <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/kids/ParentsEducators.html>.

Classroom success begins with breakfast

Nutritious dairy foods give kids an essential boost

(Family Features) Dairy and breakfast go hand in hand. With so many types of milk, cheeses and yogurts available, it’s easy to find breakfast combinations that set the curve for success as the kids head back to school this fall.

Children who eat a morning meal perform better in the classroom and have better overall nutrition. Research shows that kids who eat breakfast have better

memory, attention and behavior, and score higher on tests.

Dairy also gets an A-plus for nutritional and economic value. Dairy delivers a unique package of nine essential nutrients in a variety of tasty and affordable options. For example, one 8-ounce glass of milk delivers calcium, potassium and vitamin D and costs only about 25 cents.

Recognizing the important role

breakfast and dairy foods play for school children and their success in the classroom, dairy farmers and milk processors nationwide have organized the Great American Milk Drive, a Feeding America program to deliver gallons of milk to hungry families who need it most.

Find more kid-friendly breakfast nutrition tips and recipes at www.DairyMakesSense.com.



Fruit Salsa Yogurt Parfait

Servings: 8
Prep time: 15 minutes

- 1 can (15 ounces) peach slices in juice
 - 1 can (8 ounces) pineapple chunks in juice
 - 2 peeled and chopped kiwis
 - 1 cup chopped strawberries
 - 2 tablespoons brown sugar
 - 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 - 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
 - 1 carton (32 ounces) non-fat vanilla yogurt
- Drain peach slices, discarding juice. Drain pineapple chunks, reserving juice. Chop peaches and pineapple.
- Toss peaches, pineapple, kiwi, strawberries, brown sugar, spices and reserved pineapple juice in

Fruity Splash Smoothie

Servings: 2 Prep time: 5 minutes

- 1 cup fat-free milk
- 5-7 large, unsweetened frozen strawberries
- 1 medium banana, cut into chunks
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 3/4 cup orange juice
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

Combine all ingredients in blender; blend until smooth and creamy. Pour in glasses.

Note: For frozen fruit pops, pour leftover smoothie into small plastic cups. Cover cups with plastic wrap, insert stick and freeze.



medium bowl.

Layer 1/2 cup yogurt with 6 tablespoons of fruit salsa in each of eight parfait glasses or dessert dishes. Serve immediately.

UNCOMFORTABLE?

Does your home have any of these symptoms?

- ❑ Rooms that get too hot or too cold?
 - ❑ High utility bills?
 - ❑ Thermostat wars with your spouse?
 - ❑ High humidity in summer?
 - ❑ House just never seems comfortable?
 - ❑ There doesn’t seem to be enough airflow?
- ❑ Dust buildup within 2 days of dusting?
 - ❑ Problems with your system since it’s been installed?
 - ❑ Anyone with allergies or asthma?
 - ❑ AC starts and stops frequently or runs all the time, and house is still not cool?
- ❑ Have been told by other contractors that the problem cannot be fixed?

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

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PUBLIC AUCTION

August 16, 2014 10:00AM
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Marlow, Oklahoma

Gary Criswell Auction Service & Real Estate, Inc. has been commissioned by Mr. and Mrs. Kelly (Robert and Lorene) to offer at Public Auction their Home, House and 2 Acres with Improvements located in the Bray Area and their Personal Property situated at 2708 South Highway 81, in Marlow, Oklahoma.

Parcel 1 - Real Property consists of a nice 3 Bedroom Brick Home (Approximately 3,057 Square Feet) with a Large Living Room with Fireplace, Dining Room, Kitchen with Island and Dining Area, Mud Room with Pantry, Utility Room, Full Bath with Jetted Tub, Full Bath and Half Bath.

Additional Improvements include Built-In China Cabinet, Pace Setter Windows with the exception of 2 Windows on the West, Metal Facia and Soffit, the Roof is Approximately 3 years old, Deck Garden and a 2 Car Garage.

Improvements also include a STEEL TECH Metal Building, 30'x40' (built in 2003) with concrete floor and electricity, Sheet Metal Barn. All situated on a nice lot - 301'x922', fenced and cross-fenced (Approximately 6.38 Acres) with 301' Frontage on Highway 81.

Parcel 2 - Real Property consists of an older 3 Bedroom Frame House (Approximately 1,260 Sqaure Feet) with a Living Room, Kitchen with Dining Area Combination, Pantry, Washer and Dryer Hookup in Dining Area, Full Bath and Half Bath. All situated on 2 Acres (209'x 418') with Street Frontage on Morrison Road. **Directions:** From Highway 29 East, go South on Morrison Road 5-1/2 Miles. The Real Property is situated on West side of Road. **This is a Project House.**

Personal Property includes Household Furnishings, Glassware and Collectibles, Vehicles, Farming Equipment, Shop Equipment and a YERF DOG - Go Cart with 5 Horse Power Gasoline Motor.

Pickups: 2005 Ford F-150 LARIAT, 4x4, Automatic, All Power, with Leather Interior and Running Boards, 2001 DODGE RAM 2500 Pickup with Cummins 24 Valve TURBO DIESEL, 4 Wheel Drive, Automatic, All Power and a 1986 Chevrolet S-10 TAHOE with a 6 Cylinder Engine.

Farm Equipment includes 1997 John Deere 5200 Tractor (3353 Hours) with a 520 John Deere Front End Loader, HESSTON 3600 Brush Hog - 6', TUFLINE Box Blade with Rippers, WOODS DIXIE CUTTER Brush Hog-5', Tractor Auger with 6" and 8" Augers and a JOHN DEERE Model B-12 Row Grain Drill - Serial Number 5411 (old).

Trailers: PJ. TRAILER MFG. Gooseneck Trailer - tandem axle - 22' long, Stock Trailer - tandem axle - 15' long, Utility (Lawn mower) Trailer (8.2'x5.1') and a LOAD HOG Trailer - 2 Wheel with Dump Bed.

Lawn Equipment: John Deere Riding Lawn Mower - Model Z 425B (23 HP) with EDGE Mower - 48", CRAFTSMAN Weed Trimmer - 22" (6 HP), TROY BILT Roto Tiller - Rear Tine and a SPRAY BOSS Sprayer.

Shop Equipment: MILLER - Thunderbolt AC/DC Electric Welder, CAMPBELL HAUSFELD Air Compressor - 26 Gallon - 150 PSI, CUMMINS Floor Drill Press - 16 Speed, CRAFTSMAN Table Saw - 10", CRAFTSMAN Radial Arm Saw, RYOBI Miter Saw, PRO TECH Bench Grinder - 3/4 HP and an EXCELL Power Washer - 2600 PSI.

Collector Car: 1975 Plymouth Scamp - 6 Cylinder, with 1972 Plymouth Front End, New Seats - Motor and Transmission Refreshed. Restoration not complete.

Consignment: 1978 DEL MAGIC 16' Tri Hull Boat with a 1982, 115 Horse Power Motor on a Dilly Trailer. The Boat is currently tagged.

Directions: From Highway 81 at the Lawton/Duncan "Y", Go North on Highway 81, 1-1/4 Miles. From Marlow, go South on Highway 81 1-1/4 Miles. The Real Property situated on the East side of Highway.

Terms of Sale: 10% Earnest Money on Real Property on the day of Sale. Balance due at Closing upon delivery of Title and Deed. Personal Property - Cash, Personal or Company Check accepted. Positive I.D. required. Buyers Must provide Auction Company a copy of Sales Tax Permit to avoid Sales Tax.

Preview of Real Property and Personal Property will be held Friday afternoon, August 15, 2014 from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Announcements made day of sale supersede all other advertisements. This is a good Sale. Please plan to attend this Public Auction.

Auctioneer's Note: Mr. and Mrs. Kelly are relocating out of state (Jacksonville, Arkansas). This is a nice Home with Great Curb Appeal and many Improvements in a good location. Parcel 1 and Parcel 2 will be offered at Public Auction from the 2708 South Highway 81 Home Site at 10:00 AM Sharp! The Vehicles will sell at 12 o'clock (High Noon). The Real Property will be offered "As-Is-Where-Is." Mr. and Mrs. Kelly reserve the right to accept or reject the final bid. Stephens County Abstract will serve as the Closing Agent on the Real Property.

Gary Criswell Auction Service & Real Estate, Inc.
580-255-8162 - 806 West Main - Duncan, OK - 580-467-2248
(Auctioneer/Broker) email: garycriswell@cableone.net (Cell Phone)

Michael Sanfello, left, is ready to slide over to the ABC Transmission driver's seat as his parents, Debbie and Mike Sanfello, opt to ride shotgun more often.

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ABC Transmission services will keep your transportation humming along

Fifty years and going strong, the folks who own ABC Transmission in Lawton have plans to take the business through the next several decades.

When he established the business in early 1964, Sal Sanfello chose a name that would give his newest automotive repair shop a prominent spot in the phone book. Sal passed away later that year, and his 19-year-old son, Mike, stepped in.

Mike had been raised in the business. His first job was adding pink dye to transmission fluid that was the same color as motor oil in the 1950s. Over time, he learned to care well for cars and customers.

He also raised another generation in the business. Mike and Debbie Sanfello have four children, and their youngest son, Michael, is well versed in the mechanics of modern vehicles.

As a teen, Michael took auto mechanics in high school. He would ace class projects covering things he had learned from his father and gathered more expertise about electrical systems that have become standard in late-model cars.

As a result, Michael is certified by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence for working on brakes, steering and automotive suspensions.

He is ready to slide over to the ABC Transmission driver's seat as his father opts to ride shotgun more often.

The family predicts a smooth transition over the next few years as ABC Transmission passes from the elder Mike to the younger Michael. There will be only a few changes.

While the Sanfellis intend to provide top quality automotive service in Lawton for another generation, they would like to do it in a building that is better suited to the shop's needs. So, there is a For Sale sign in front of 2308 SW Lee Boulevard.

"That sign is misleading," Debbie said. "The building is for sale but the business is not going away."

"We're going to be in Lawton for a long time."

ABC Transmission may put them first in the phone book, but the name does not say it all. While both generations are experts at servicing domestic transmissions, many local businesses and individuals trust their vehicles to the Sanfellis for so much more.

"We do more than just transmissions," Debbie said. "We do all kinds of auto repair ... everything but body work and upholstery."

ABC Transmission offers all types of maintenance required to keep a car or truck running smoothly for a very long time. In addition to servicing a transmission every 30,000 miles, regular oil changes, tire rotation and alignment and brake service are among the many things Mike, Michael and Harold

Keown can do to keep a vehicle in top condition.

If a minor or major repair is needed, ABC Transmission is the place to go. The experts start with a "road test inspection" and have computers to retrieve the complete message from modules causing those blinking dashboard lights.

The staff offers an estimate and follows up with a full explanation of repair options and actual costs once the exact problem is identified.

They know transportation is important and work hard to have a vehicle back to its owner quickly. Most repairs are finished within a week and backed by a 12-month, 12,000-mile guarantee.

Debbie said, "Our goal is to offer quality work at a reasonable price and treat our customers fairly."

Among the policies at ABC Transmission is a promise to meet or beat by 10 percent any written estimate from another auto repair shop. Cotton Electric members showing a Co-op Connections Card will receive a 10 percent discount on any service that is not already on special.

ABC Transmission is open from 8:30 to 11 a.m. and from noon to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. To keep a vehicle running at its best, give them a call at 580-353-7725 to schedule a visit.

Program that number into your phone. ABC Transmission will be around for a long time – perhaps another 50 years!

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Avoid Expensive Errors When Paying for College

It's just about Back-to-School time again. If you have young children, you might be hustling them to the store for backpacks and binders. But if you fast-forward a few years, you can envision driving your kids a little farther — to their college dorms. And when that day comes, you'll want to be financially prepared. So you'll want to avoid making costly mistakes when preparing for, and paying, those big bills. Here are some of the most common of these errors:

Not saving enough — Only half of all families with children under 18 save any money for college, according to a recent study by Sallie Mae, the country's largest originator of federally insured student loans. You might find it easier to save for college if you automatically move a set amount each month

from your checking or savings account to a college savings vehicle.

Not considering vehicles with growth potential — The same Sallie Mae study found that more parents use a general savings account than any other method of saving for college. But since most savings accounts these days pay only a minimal rate of return, you will have trouble getting the growth potential you need to achieve your college savings goals. Consider working toward your college savings goals by investing in a vehicle specifically designed for college, such as a 529 plan or a Coverdell plan. There are differences between these plans, such as contribution limits and tax treatments, but both allow you to invest for growth potential. As with any investment account, there are risks in-

involved, including market risk.

Stopping your savings once your children are in college — Unless your children plan to take an awful lot of credits, they're not going to finish college in just one year. Consequently, you'll want to keep investing in your plan or other college savings vehicle while your children are in school.

Taking out 401(k) loans — Your employer may allow you to take out a loan against your 401(k) to help pay for college. But this may not be a good idea for two reasons: First, when you remove money from your 401(k) — even if you plan on eventually paying it back — you will slow the potential accumulation in your account, thereby depriving yourself of resources you will eventually need for retirement. Second, should you leave

the company, you might have to repay the loan within a limited number of days.

Not using available tax credits — Depending on your income, you might qualify for the American Opportunity tax credit, which is worth up to \$2,500, provided you spend at least \$4,000 on college expenses. Check with your tax professional to see if you qualify for this credit and how to most effectively incorporate it. And be careful you don't waste the credit, because you may not be able to use it and your plan distributions at the same time.

Paying for college can be challenging — but if you can avoid making the above mistakes, you've got a better chance of getting your kids through school without derailing the progress you'd like to make toward your other financial goals.

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Journeyman lineman Terry Foster uses the lower controls to operate lower and tilt the boom and basket of a utility truck. Once equipment is on the ground, Foster can “rescue” a dummy during an annual co-op safety drill.

Rescue drills designed to ensure safety

Continued from Page One

“Fire extinguisher, fire prevention and evacuation plans are what we’ll go over in August,” Phillips said. “That will be good information that pertains to the general employee population, so we’ll all get that training.”

He said some of the topics are dictated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Cotton Electric employees will learn about blood-borne pathogens, hazard recognition and how to be informed about hazardous materials in the workplace.

Some sessions cover topics specific to the electric utility industry. In addition to discussing accidents from around the state, Phillips and other employees will talk about close calls when something might have happened but did not.

“Describing these incidents helps enhance awareness of potential hazards,” Phillips said. “Co-op policy encourages reporting close call incidents.”

Phillips credits co-op policy with keeping Cotton Electric employees safe.

“We really have a great support group in our management and board. The board of trustees has established strong safety policies,

and our CEO, Warren Langford, is very safety conscious.”

Langford and all of the rest of the employees will handle a fire extinguisher next month. The hands-on training will be a first for some, a refresher course for others. In the future, employees will meet CPR Annie, a manikin for practicing resuscitation methods.

All employees likely to be in the field go through basket rescue drills once a year. Along with line workers, engineers, meter technicians and warehousemen go through the steps.

They make the mayday call then climb onto the back of a truck. They switch control of the basket and boom to the lower panel. They lower the basket and tilt it. They climb down and reach into the basket to pull the 180-pound adult-sized practice dummy out.

Pole top rescue drills are required for all linemen, the only employees trained to climb a pole. The drill begins with the same mayday call.

The line worker makes his or her way up the pole to throw a rope over a cross arm or drive a screwdriver into the pole to loop it over. The other end is tied around the dummy’s chest. After

its safety belt is cut with a knife, the dummy is lowered to the ground.

Phillips said linemen must complete the pole top rescue in less than four minutes during the annual drill.

“Most Cotton Electric linemen can do it in less than three minutes,” he said.

The focus on safety through training and drills are well worth the time and effort. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, line workers are in the nation’s seventh most deadly occupation behind loggers, fishermen, pilots, roofers, steel workers and trash collectors.

Since 2009, the nationwide average is 15.6 deaths or injuries to electrical workers because of contact with energized power lines or equipment.

But none of those figures come from Cotton Electric.

Phillips said, “The safety culture over the last two decades at Cotton Electric has made a difference.

“We have had no electrical contact accidents in nearly 20 years and I can recall only four contact incidents in the 40 years I have worked for Cotton.”

That’s a pretty good record.



Photo by Jennifer Meason

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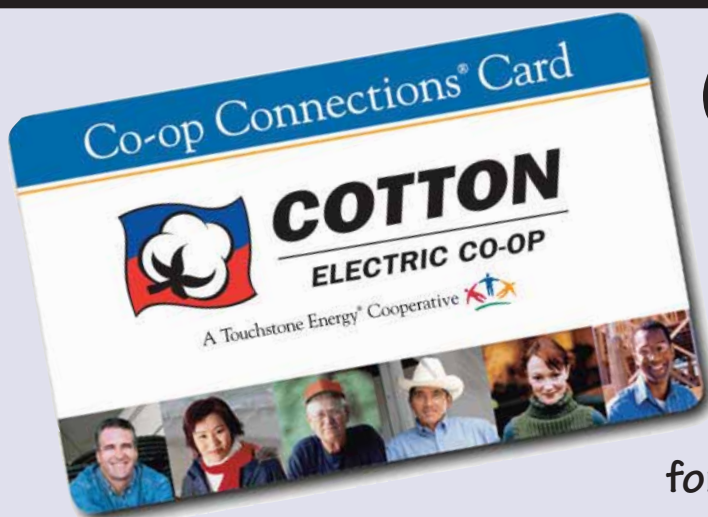
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Keep up with all the local and national discounts by downloading the Co-op Connections Card phone app at connections.coop.

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

In 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. Type 22203 into the Group field and click 'log in' to start your search.





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of the water I shall give him,
shall never thirst again."



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ANY MEMBER
123 ANY STREET
ANYTOWN, OK 00000

WHAT IS THIS?

Capital Credit allocation explained below

PCA Factor: 0.000000 Invoice #: 0000

Bill Codes	
R -Regular Bill	I -Inactive with Balance
M -Minimum Bill	K -KVA Minimum
E -Estimated Bill	N -New Account
F -Final Bill	X -Changed Meter
P -Prorated Bill	A -Average Monthly Pay
CR -Credit Balance	

Your Capital Credit Allocation for 2013 is \$00.00. The amount shown on this invoice cannot be applied to your energy bill.

2013 capital credits allocated

Capital credits for accounts active in 2013 have recently been allocated.

Please note, however, that credit to an individual account is **not a refund**, and the amount **will not** be applied to a member's power bill.

Cotton Electric is a not-for-profit cooperative owned by its members who pay electric bills. Revenues in excess of the actual costs of providing electric service for the year are called margins.

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

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

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

How Do Capital Credits Work?

Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues, called margins, are returned to members in the form of capital credits.

5

Your co-op notifies you of how and when you'll receive your capital credits retirements.

1

Your co-op tracks how much electricity you buy and how much money you pay for it throughout the year.

4

When the co-op's financial condition permits, your board of directors/trustees decides to retire, or pay, the capital credits.

3

Your co-op allocates the margins to members as capital credits based upon their use of electricity during the year.

2

At the end of the year, your co-op completes financial matters and determines whether there are excess revenues, called margins.

Electric co-ops have retired \$11 billion to members since 1988.

Source: National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation

AUCTION

Saturday, September 13th, 10 am

High's Auction & Real Estate will be offering at public auction the following described real estate:

160 Acres and improvements located in the NW S24 T2S R9W, Stephens Cnty OK

To be offered in 2 tracts, then combined.

Tract 1: Rt. 3 Box 153, Comanche Ok: Home, Shop, Corrals on 30 acres.


Tract 2: 130 adjoining acres, fences well maintained, all utilities available

Directions: From Hwy 81 in Comanche, OK go 8 miles West on Hwy 53 to Corum, then 1/2 mile north to property.


Auctioneers note: You may wait a lifetime to find such an excellent combination of amenities. Excellent improved quarter with pipe fencing, energy efficient home, well water, shop and working corrals.

Seller: Randy C. Montgomery

Tract 1: Rt. 3 Box 153, Comanche, Ok 2254 square feet of living area, 1 story, 3 bed 2 bath brick home. Steel roof, tiled floors, textured walls, Anderson thermal windows, geo-thermal heat and air, storm cellar, pipe fencing, well water, wind generator, total electric home. Central vac system, pellet stove, 40 x 80 barn/shop, corrals, 2 ponds, excellent view, paved roads.



Tract 2: 130 Acres joining tract 1. Boundary and cross fencing in excellent condition. Improved Bermuda and Blue Stem grasses, 3 ponds, N2740 Rd to the West and Dr. Pepper Road to the North, both paved. Immediate possession of tract 2 upon closing.



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Dewayne High

Rick High

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Early Detection Saves Lives!

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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women worldwide.

Nearly 160,000 Americans die of lung cancer each year.

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

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



QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

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

Category 1

You are between 55 and 74 years of age

You are currently a smoker or have quit in the last 15 years

You have a 30+ pack-year* history of smoking

Category 2

You are between 50 and 74 years old

You have a 20+ pack-year* history of smoking

You have one additional lung cancer risk factor (not to include secondhand smoke exposure)

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

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

Call to schedule a screening

1-877-231-4440 to see if you qualify.

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Open those HVAC vents

By Trent Marlett

When I visit a member's home, we walk around the house and talk about everything that can raise energy use and then we discuss ways to improve or lower power consumption.

We often come to a room that isn't being used and the door is closed. Usually, the homeowner is proud of this energy-saving measure of not air conditioning rooms that aren't in use by closing the AC vents and shutting the door.

The logic makes sense. Why heat and cool a room that isn't being used? If I close the vent and the door, won't the rest of my house will be cooler or warmer?

I get it. I thought this way myself before I became Cotton Electric's Energy Efficiency Coordinator.

I've done some research and have learned this practice does just the opposite – it doesn't save energy and has the potential to cause damage to the central HVAC unit.

HVAC systems are designed for each specific house – the whole house. Things like square footage, cubic volume, orientation of the home, windows, and much more are all factors that determine the proper size of a balanced system that will heat and cool a home efficiently.

When we close off rooms and vents, we are creating a system that is no longer a balance of supply air and return air. That's the least of the problems.

A central HVAC system will have one of two types of blower motors. Newer, more efficient motors are variable speed motors, able to run at much lower speeds. This will save energy when the system determines the airflow of the house doesn't need to be comparable to a jet engine.

The other type is a single-speed, give-it-all-you-got blower motor and is more typical in older homes.

Both motors are designed to blow against a certain amount of pressure inside the ducts. When a register is closed and the air inside the duct cannot escape into the house, the pressure in the system goes up.

In the variable speed motors, an increase in pressure tells the system that the house isn't getting enough airflow. The motor goes into the second stage, causing it to run a lot harder to compensate, which increases energy use.

In the older motors, the increase in duct pressure actually causes the motor to slow down. This creates a lower airflow to the rest of the house, which leads to comfort issues because the conditioned air is having a hard time getting to rooms in use. In turn, the unit will run longer to satisfy the thermostat that tells the unit to shut off once the house is the desired temperature.

Also, most ductwork in attics and crawlspaces is improperly sealed, allowing a lot of conditioned air to escape. When we increase the air pressure in the ducts by closing off registers, we increase the amount of air escaping from leaky areas in the ducts.

Think of a water hose with a tiny hole in it. When the hose is free-flowing, there is a small amount of water leaking through the hole, but kink that hose up and the amount of water coming out of the hole increases dramatically.

Continued on next page

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ACROSS

- Derived from senses
- Extemporaneous
- Japanese religion
- Body louse (slang)
- Most adroit
- Formatted electronic data
- An alternative
- 3rd largest whale
- 6th tone
- Gentlemen
- Car mechanics group
- Breakfast pastry
- Where one sits
- Oh, God!
- Scientific workplace
- No seats available
- MN 55120
- Assistance
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Reconstruct
- Russian ruler
- Female Muslim quarters
- Radioactivity unit
- Window glass
- Atomic #18
- Consume
- The golden state
- Mosquito disease
- Authoritatively ordered
- Yielding
- On all sides
- Br. romantic poet
- Cruel vocal quality

DOWN

- Irritated state
- Sea eagle
- Fish capturing devices
- An informal photograph
- Old English
- Competes
- Pressed a shirt
- Averse to others
- Mother of Apollo
- Radio frequency
- Have already done
- Baseball championship playoffs World ____
- Snakelike fishes
- Br. slang for sleep
- Telegraphic signal
- More scarce
- Step excavation of ore
- Envision
- A gelling agent in foods
- Impatient expectancy
- Civil Rights group
- 3rd largest Balearic island
- Mama's partner
- Head gesture
- Moved to music
- N. & S. of the new world
- Discern the written word
- Thigh of a hog
- Mures river city
- Crew member
- Liang weight units
- ___ Angeles
- Adrenocorticotropin
- Mend a sock
- Shallowest Great lake
- Gadidae fish
- Area floor coverings
- Point midway between NE and E
- "You know" in Canada



Keep registers open, even in rooms you are not using. Your HVAC system will run more smoothly and actually save energy.

Continued from previous page
The blower unit also exchanges heat by means of the heat exchanger. Heat is either dumped into the exchanger, or collected from it, depending on the season.
If airflow drops, the amount of heat exchanged drops, too. When this happens, the heat exchanger gets either way too cold or way too hot.
If it's too cold, it could freeze up completely; too hot and it could blow the exchanger. That would be very

costly to replace.
It's also hard on the compressor. When airflow is reduced and pressure is increased, all of the refrigerant may not evaporate properly. Any remaining refrigerant can make its way back to the compressor.
If you're wanting to replace a compressor, this is a good way to do it.
Long story short, leave those air registers in unused rooms wide open. You can feel proud of the mayhem you're avoiding and energy you're saving.

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Deadline for third-quarter 2014 grant applications is Aug. 27. Download CECF grant applications at CottonElectric.com.
Operation Round Up is a voluntary program and members may opt out at any time by calling or sending a letter or email stating the account holder's name, account number and the request to be removed.

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