

December 15, 2014

NUMBER 5

It's that time of year when memories are made and traditions live on as you gather to celebrate this joyous season. We wish you the merriest of Christmases and the happiest of New Years.

The Board of Trustees and Employees of Cotton Electric Cooperative



Temperatures plunge, energy use rises

By Karen Kaley

It seemed like winter blew in a bit ter season. early this year. And, boy, did it hit hard: One day, the high was 83 de- use usually arrives in December. That grees, next day, it was 43. The low that day was 30, the first of 10 days when the low temperature was at or of Oklahoma's wacky warm winter below freezing.

Brrrr! Makes me cold just thinking about it.

That 53-degree temperature swing meant some of us switched from air conditioning to heating within the account, either through CottonElecsame 24 hours. And, even though the tric.com or on a smart phone app. desired temperature setting on the thermostat was not changed, we still used more electricity on the cold day than on the hot day.

some people, but simple math proves it out.

outdoor temperature difference on the warm day. However, on the cold day, outdoor temperatures was as much as 42 degrees.

went up for the beginning of the win-

A bill reflecting November power first winter bill is a sometimes a surprise, particularly if it arrives on one days.

Some Cotton Electric members were not surprised because they saw it coming. Those members were monitoring daily power use through a SmartHub

Examples of SmartHub app information from the second week of November are shown in three images on this page. One screenshot compares This doesn't always seem right to the blue bars of daily energy consumption at one member's house to black lines illustrating average out-Let's say a thermostat was set at 72 door temperatures. Two more illustraon both the warm day and the cold tions show energy use during the beday. That means the HVAC system ginning of the 10-day cold snap, one had to compensate for an 11-degree as a snapshot and the other with more detail.





It takes a lot more electricity to heat a house by 42 degrees than it does to cool it by 11 degrees.

peratures were freezing or below in November. That means a lot of heat

The first screen a member sees in the difference between indoor and SmartHub, below left, is labeled Usage Analysis and shows a few days' use in color-coded boxes. Days of low energy use have bright green headers while high energy use days have bright red headers. The numbers in each box There were 15 days when low tem- represent electricity consumption in kilowatt-hours (kWh) for each day.

The screen can show power use was generated and a lot of power bills during more than the past few days.

hub Usage Analy	rsis	4		C RELOAD
Daily Usage (in l	kWh)			
Sat, Nov 8	Sun, Nov 9	Mon, Nov 10	Tue, Nov 11	Wed, Nov 12
24	50	36	40	68
This Week's Usa	-			
Last Week's Usa				
Current Billing F	Period			

Swiping the boxes to the right acti- cents per kWh and see at a glance this days' use.

Here is some more math: During November, the power cost adjustment was a charge of \$0.01073 that was added to Cotton Electric's residential rate of \$0.088923 for a total charge of \$0.099653 per kWh.

To simplify, we can round that to 10

vates a carousel displaying more past member used about \$3.60 worth of electricity on Nov. 10 and \$6.80 two days later. The total for the five days shown would be about \$26.40.

> Selecting This Week's Usage, This Year's Usage, Current Billing Period or any of the other links on the landing page first brings up a bar and See Remember, Page 12

VIEW GRAPH **Billed Usage** Tue Oct 14, 2014 - Sat Nov 15, 2014 Nov 8 24 kWh (54°F) Peak Usage: 68 (Nov 12) Low Usage: 24 (Nov 8) Nov 9 50 kWh (54°F) Average kWh Usage: 42.33 Total kWh Usage: 1396.96 36 kWh (65°F) Nov 10 Weather Nov 11 40 kWh (36°F) Average Temperature: 57 °F **High Temperature:** 90 °F Nov 12 68 kWh (29°F) 25 °F Low Temperature: Nov 13 66 kWh (30°F) Nov 14 54 kWh (31 °F)

Power Cost Adjustment Calculated	N	ovem	ber 2	014 Te	emperat	ure E	Extrei	nes	Did You Know?	Contact Us	What's Inside
The power cost ad-	Day 1	High 62	Low 32	Avg. 47	Day 16	High 41	Low 21	Avg. 31		Do you have a story	Operating Stats2
justment applied to bills	2	67	46	57	10	40	17	29	will be closed Dec. 24		- p
mailed after Dec. 1,	3	69	53	61	18	54	19	37	and 25 for the Christmas	do you need to place an	co op 1 (c w 5
,	4	67	48	58	19	62	22	42	holiday and on Jan. 1,	ad? If so, let us know.	Community3
2014, is \$0.01328 per	5	61	43	52	20	65	29	47	2015, for the New Year	,	Co-op News4
kWh.	6	69	39	54	21	64	43	54	holiday.	We can be reached	News 5-13
	7	71	35	53	22	64	53	59	Emergency calls will	at 580-875-3351 or	
On a member's aver-	8	67	38	53	23	66	42	54	u	by email at info@cot-	Crossword9
	9 10	77	36 40	57	24	61	34	48	be answered at 580-875-	tonelectric.com.	Recipes14-15
8	10	83 43	40 30	62 37	25 26	56 60	33 31	45 46	3351 or 800-522-3520.	You can also drop us	Capital Credits17
hours (kWh), this will	10	43 31	24	28	20 27	53	30	40		a line at Cotton Electric	Classifieds 18-23
amount to a charge of	12 13	37	24 24	31	27	71	32	42 52	The next issue of The		
\$19.92 on the December	14	38	21	30	29	77	41	52 59	Current should be deliv-	Current, 226 N. Broad-	More news at
bill.	15	56	31	44	30	76	30	53	ered on Jan. 20, 2015.	way, Walters, OK 73572.	cottonelectric.com
	Source	: srh.noaa.	gov/oun/						cica on bain 20, 2015.		

Average Daily High: 60 Average Daily Low: 34

Current **S** News

From the CEO Peace is the true gift of Christmas

Throughout history, the changes and struggles of modern man have been well documented. It seems every generation has had to endure wars, famine and drought.



Warren Langford, CEO

Plagues and natural disasters dot the timeline of man's existence on Earth.

I sometimes wonder if things have gotten better. Over the centuries, life spans have doubled and travel is much easier. Heck, we can even fly, and with today's GPS stuff, it's impossible to get lost! But in reality, life remains a struggle.

We survive today the way man has since the beginning of time. We survive because we have hope. Hope is a motivator and gives us something to look forward to. When we are sailing through a stormy period of our

lives, we all hope the boat stays afloat.

Throughout the ages, many incidents have occurred that give us reason to hope. This is the time of year when we reflect on one of them.

There are historical records of a celestial event that appeared in the eastern sky around Dec. 25, 4 B.C. There was a bright light, or star, that shown over the town of Bethlehem. This event was so unusual, it must have been a spectacular sight

for anyone who saw it. Some scholars in astronomy say the light came from a comet or supernova (exploding star). Biblical records say the star was uniquely designed by God for a very special purpose.

Prophets had long predicted the birth of a savior. It was this hope that drew three very educated men to follow the star and verify the birth of someone who would reverse the effects of our sins.

On Dec. 25, 2014, we are go-

ing to remember that miracle. We will gather with family and friends and give thanks for our blessings. We will be reminded of a long-ago event that gave us more than just newfound hope. It gave us faith. We have faith that the light of that long-ago star still shines within us and that we are all forgiven.

Mankind has always hoped for a better life. I think we all seek an inner sense of contentment, regardless of life's circumstances. We all look for joy in the midst of unhappiness. Through the miracle of Christmas, hope first transforms into faith, and finally, into what we are truly searching for – peace. What a gift!

On behalf of the employees and board of trustees of Cotton Electric Cooperative, we hope you find true peace and have a merry Christmas.

Cooperatives were local before local was cool

By Adam Schwartz

Whether you travel across the country or prefer to stay close to your hometown, one thing you may be noticing is the emphasis on "Buy Local" campaigns. This is based on one simple fact: It's important to community.

The Small Business Administration and the research firm Civic Economics estimate that dollars spent at a locally owned business stay in the community more than three times longer than money spent at "Big Box" stores, headquartered far away from your hometown. This means your community wealth is more likely to grow by shopping locally.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

principle.

The fourth of our Seven Cooperadependence. And that is defined as follows: Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If the coop enters into agreements with other organizations or raises capital from external sources, it is done so based on terms that ensure democratic control by the members and maintain the cooperative's autonomy.

This will allow us to continue to

trolled locally, allowing us to serve our efforts to support other local your needs, is a critically important businesses, schools and civic organizations.

You can be sure that Cotton Elecsupport businesses that support our tive Principles is: Autonomy and In- tric will not be moving our operations to Mexico or China, as so many other corporations do. We began right here in southwest Oklahoma, and we plan on being here for a very long time. You can take that to the bank, or better yet, the credit union - as all credit unions are financial cooperatives. As always, we welcome your participation and suggestions about how we can improve our locally owned and con-

Learn About Co-ops It's a Matter of PRINCIPLE

The Rochdale Principles

Co-ops deliver electricity, sell produce, provide loans, and arrange for housing, health care, and more. But despite these differences, they all have one thing in common—seven cooperative principles:

- Voluntary and Open Membership
- Democratic Member Control
- Members' Economic Participation

Consumer cooperatives, like Cotton Electric Cooperative, have always known this. We were formed in 1938 by people in this commuworship and live in this community.

A common expression among cooperators is, "If you've seen one coop, you've seen one co-op." While there are many similarities between co-ops, the fact that we are con-

be the self-help organization envi- trolled services. sioned by the founders of the modern cooperative movement.

nity to serve the people that work, stay a co-op it is vitally important firm that helps co-ops succeed. He we stay close to you, our members, is an author, speaker and a memberto ensure we are continuing to respond to your needs. This could be through increasing energy-efficiency programs, offering renewable sources of energy and continuing coop.

Adam Schwartz is the founder of In other words, for the co-op to *The Cooperative Way a consulting* owner of the CDS Consulting Coop. You can follow him on Twitter @adamcooperative or email him at aschwartz@thecooperativeway.

- Autonomy and Independence
- Education, Training, Information
- Cooperation Among Cooperatives
- Concern for Community

Learn more at www.go.coop.

Cooperative Enterprises Build a Better World

A message from America's Electric Cooperatives



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Be merry and bright, but don't let your holiday lights shine all night. Save money on your electric bill by installing a light timer for your decked-out home. It can help lower your electric bill and reduce energy consumption. Use a manual timer plugged into an electrical outlet to automatically turn lights on and off as scheduled.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

COTTON
ELECTRIC CO-OP
Mission Statement
Our mission is to be
the leader in providing
the most reliable and
innovative electric
system, with afford-
able rates, through the
positive, enthusiastic
and professional use
of its resources and
people.

October 2014 Operating Stats

_	0	
	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
Total Amount Billed/Accrued	\$5,562,016	\$4,723,287
Cost of Purchased Power	4,126,090	3,578,690
Taxes	117,265	106,821
Total Operating Expense Per Mile	1,209	956
Average Farm and Residential Bill	123	106
Average Farm and Residential kWh	1,000	922
Total Meters Billed (farm, residentia	1) 18,264	18,122
Miles Energized	5,149	5,130
Density Per Mile	3.55	3.53
New Service Connects YTD	303	314
Services Retired	129	166



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News

Community Spotlight

If you would like your community event listed in the January issue, please submit information by Jan. 5 by calling 580-875-4259 or send an email to info@cottonelectric.com.

Christmas dinner offered for all

Designed to offer a traditional meal and fellowship for those who might be alone or unable to cook, Christmas dinner will be served to any and all from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Christmas Day at Stephens County fairgrounds.

Carryout meals will also be available. Volunteers will deliver some meals. Carryouts and deliveries should be arranged in advance by calling 580-255-3231.

Simmons Center notes 25 years

Touted as "the jewel of Duncan," the Simmons Center will mark a milestone with a Silver Anniversary Gala beginning at 6 p.m. Jan. 8, 2015. The event will celebrate the past, present and future of the one-of-a-kind complex.

For details and ticket pricing, visit SimmonsCenter.com or call 580-252-2900.

Cox's Store VFD plans meeting

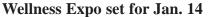
Annual Meeting for Cox's Store Volunteer Fire Department will begin at 7 p.m. Jan. 8, 2015, at the fire station. Offices for re-election are president, treasurer, and member-at-large.

Refreshments will be served and the public is invited.

Magic Lantern offers classic films

Magic Lantern Film Society of Cameron University screens DVD presentations of classic films each month in the CETES Conference Center, Room Β.

The Jan. 9 offering will be "The Age of Innocence," the story of a 19th-century man's attempt to aid his prospective wife's divorced cousin, a woman to whom he is strongly attracted. The 1993 film, directed by Martin Scorcese, features Daniel Day-Lewis, Michelle Pfieffer and Winona Ryder in starring roles.



Health screening returns to the 6th Annual Community Wellness Expo set for 7 a.m. through 2 p.m. Jan. 14 at the Great Plains Coliseum, 920 SW Sheridan Road, Lawton.

Screening includes measurement of height, weight, waist circumference, blood pressure, LDL cholesterol, lipid profile and A1C (glucose). A 6- to 8-hour fast is recommended. Participants must be 18 or older.

For information, call Sharleen Gerhers at 580-355-3541 or email sgehers@lawtonfortsillchamber.com.

LCT presents Ephron comedy

Proving that a great show is always in fashion, Lawton Community Theatre presents "Love, Loss, and What I Wore." Writers Nora and Delia Ephron use our love of clothing and accessories to create an evening of funny and often poignant stories.

Performances are set for Jan. 16-18 and 22-25, 2015, at John Denney Playhouse, 1316 NW Bell Avenue.

For information, visit LCT-OK.org.

Trail Dance returns for tenth year

The 2015 Trail Dance Film Festival takes place at the Simmons Center, 800 Chisholm Trail Parkway, Duncan, with secondary venues at the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center, 1000 Chisholm Trail Parkway.

Exhibition of films for the general audience begins Jan. 23 and continues throughout the following day, leading up to the Golden Drover Awards Show. The ceremony will recognize the films that stood out to festival judges. There is also an opportunity for members of the audience to vote on their favorites.

Tickets for the Trail Dance Film Festival can be purchased at the Simmons Center or at the event. Admission to the awards show is free.

For information, call Anthony Foreman, 580-467-8519, or visit Trail-DanceFilmFestival.com.

Photo of the Month



We had so many great submissions in our December HOLIDAY photo contest that we decided to highlight two. The photo above features Rheagan, 5, and Charli, 4, the youngest daughters of Cotton Electric members Jamie and Amanda Slate of Duncan. The photo below shows 9-week-old Lee Wade Gammill, son of Cotton Electric members Josh and Talia Gammill of Chattanooga.



Enter your "best shot" in our Photo of the Month contest. Theme for January is BIRTHDAY. 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.



There is no admission charge, but donations are accepted. For information about the society, or to see a schedule and synopsis of films, visit Cameron.edu/magiclantern.

Outlaw ride benefits Marlow prom

Bull riding enthusiasts won't want to miss the Outlaw Ride for Pride bull event on Jan. 10. Doors open at 6 p.m. and bull riding begins at 7:30 p.m. at the Stephens County Fair & Expo Center in Duncan.

Proceeds from the \$1,500-added event go to the Marlow After-Prom Extravaganza. Tickets can be purchased from any parent of a Marlow High School junior or senior, or at is \$70 per day with a cleaning deposit Frontier Feeds or Kay's Gifts & More of \$50. Call Julie McKinney at 580in Marlow or Crutcher's in Duncan.

Food pantry open twice monthly

Walters Community Food Pantry is open from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month.

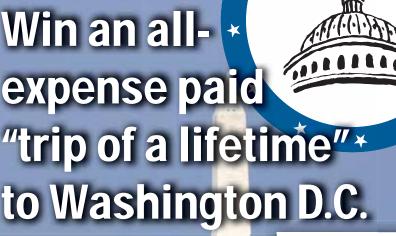
The pantry is in the old City Hall, 131 1/2 W. California Street.

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

For information, call Roger Noland at 580-591-6826.

Community Center available

Need a good, clean place for your next family reunion, business luncheon or party? Central High Community Center is available. Rental fee 641-2974.



Travel with other teens from across Oklahoma on the **Rural Electric Youth Tour** June 12-18, 2015



is for COTHPOWER EDERGY CAMP Eighth-Graders! Join us at the beautiful Canyon Camp near Hinton, where

you'll experience the exciting world of rural electricity.

ECTRIC CO.O

Volleyball, Swimming and Hiking Safety Demonstrations **Operate a Cooperative** Trivia Contest

Call 580-875-3351

for details.

Check with your English teacher or counselor for details, or call us at 580-875-3351



Fresh air duct unnecessary in total electric mobile homes

By Trent Marlett

Everyone loves fresh air, and our homes need a certain amount of it so the air inside doesn't become stale and create indoor air quality issues.

Newer homes are being built very tight and sometimes require some way to get fresh air into the home. Older homes would almost be considered very leaky because of the way they were built to get fresh air.

I could go on and on about properly sealing a leaky house and getting enough fresh air or how to get fresh air with an almost too tight of house. But, today I want to talk about something I come across quite often when performing energy audits for Cotton Electric members: Fresh air in a mobile home and how it drives up the energy usage.

Most mobile homes are built the exact same way because some group of people put together codes on building mobile homes to make them safe for occupants. Often, the unit isn't built specifically for being total electric nor as one that uses gas heating. This means that a total electric mobile home combustion. Electric furnaces, on the other hand, bers and it made a significant improvement in enmay have an unnecessary element: a fresh air intake do not. duct.

with louvered doors. An open furnace sits in the

Did you know?

Heating your home accounts for up to 48 percent of your utility bill. A few tips to help you save:





middle of this closet. The louvered closet acts as its own return system.

When inspecting a mobile home, I always open these closets. I look up and, every time, there it is, a duct coming out of the ceiling that goes all the way through the roof.

That duct is meant for combustion air in gas furnaces. When the central HVAC system comes on, it pulls fresh air through the louvered closet doors and from outside through the duct.

A gas furnace needs fresh air to ensure proper

So, if you have an electric furnace and a fresh-1air Almost all mobile homes have a furnace closet intake in the closet, the system pulls in whatever the or no cost. air temperature is outside.

Imagine how much harder the system has to work to heat up 25-degree air coming in through the duct in the middle of the night in winter. Just opposite happens in summer, when the system works to cool off 100-plus degree air from the duct.

I have talked to a lot of heat and air contractors and building science professionals and they agree that this duct combined with an electric furnace is not necessary and can make the unit work very hard. They also say that a mobile home is usually leaky enough to get plenty of fresh air in the home.

So, if you have an electric furnace – and that is very important to do this only with an electric unit and not gas - you can simply fold the duct into itself and tape it up thoroughly with foil duct tape. Another solution is to cut the duct at the ceiling and use sheetrock to seal it off completely.

Eliminating the duct will save a lot of energy. I cannot find research to show how much potential savings one can get from doing this, but I can tell you that I have made the recommendation to memergy use.

Plus, almost anyone can do this and often at little

Merry Christmas and enjoy the savings.

Renters can fight winter chill of high bills

By Abby Berry

Bureau, 33 percent of Americans many lease agreements forbid major alterations to rental properties.

But don't worry, renters! Consider using these low-cost, energy-efficient tips from Cotton ing is to make sure your water Electric Cooperative to improve the efficiency of your home this winter.

Hot savings

Heating the home typically makes up about 48 percent of your utility bill. Set your thermostat as low as is comfortable in the winter - Energy.gov recommends 68 degrees Fahrenheit to boost energy efficiency.

During the winter months, take advantage of heat from sunlight. Open draperies and shades dur-

from the outside with a tight-fit- ergy and last several times lon-According to the U.S. Census ting cover, available at your lo- ger than incandescent light bulbs, cal home improvement center or saving money on energy bills lease their homes. Unfortunately, hardware store. This keeps heated and replacement costs. Practicing air from escaping outside. If de- energy-efficient habits is another sired, you can remove the win- great way to reduce energy use. dow unit during winter months to Always turn off your lights when prevent energy loss.

> Another way to save on heatheater is set at the lowest comfortable setting. Have you experienced scalding hot water when taking a shower? If so, it's likely that your water heater is set too high – which is a waste of energy. Older models of water tanks are often not insulated, which can be easily remedied by covering them with an insulating jacket.

Bright ideas

Lighting is one of the easiest places to start saving energy, and savings are not strictly limited ing the day to allow natural light to winter months. Try replacing to heat your home. Remember to a few of your most frequently close them in the evenings as the used light bulbs with ENERGY

leaving a room.

Other ways to save

Leasing an older home or apartment? Odds are you have singlepane windows and old or missing caulk. Don't let the winter chill seep indoors! Apply caulk around window frames, sashes and door panels to combat air leaks. Also, be mindful when using electronics at home. Unplug devices when not in use, and use smart power strips to save on energy use. To learn more ways to be energy efficient around the home, visit TogetherWeSave.com.

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Coopera-



Caulk and seal windows to avoid air leaks.

Visit Energy.gov for more ways to save!

panes become chilly.

more than \$65 a year in energy Va.-based service organization Does your home have window costs. ENERGY STAR-qualified for the nation's 900-plus consumair conditioning units? This win- compact fluorescent light bulbs er-owned, not-for-profit electric ter, remember to insulate the units (CFLs) use 75 percent less en- cooperatives.

temperature drops and window- STAR-qualified lights, and save tive Association, the Arlington,



Seek to Balance 'Risk Tolerance' and 'Required Risk'

cial goals. To help achieve these goals, you may need to invest — and when you invest, you'll need to take on some risk. But the more you understand this risk, and the better you are at managing it, the greater your potential for staying invested for the long term.

these terms:

is essentially your comfort level with taking risk. For example, if you have a high tolerance for risk, you may be comfortable investing aggressively. Conversely, if you tend to be risk-averse, you might lean more toward more conservative investment vehicles that offer greater protection of principal.

• Required risk — While the term "required risk" may sound odd, it is actually

Like everyone else, you have finan- an integral component of your ability to amount of risk you are going to need to which means you may be able to reasoninvest successfully. Basically, your required risk is the level of risk necessary to help you achieve your investment goals. The higher the return necessary to reach those goals, the more potential risk you'll need to assume.

As you invest, you'll need to balance To begin with, then, take a look at these two aspects of risk. For example, what might happen if you have a low risk • Risk tolerance — Your risk tolerance tolerance, leading you toward "safer," low-growth investments, but your goal is to retire early? For most people, this goal requires them to invest in vehicles that offer significant growth potential, such as stocks. And, as you know, investing in stocks entails risk — specifically, the risk that your stocks will lose value. So in this situation, your risk tolerance — the fact that you are risk-averse — is going to collide with your required risk level, the

take (by investing in stocks) to achieve your goal of early retirement.

When such a collision occurs, you have two choices. First, you could "stretch" your risk tolerance and accept the need to take on riskier investments in exchange for the growth potential you will require. Your other choice is to stay within your risk tolerance and adjust your ultimate goal — which, in this example, may mean accepting a later retirement date.

Obviously, this is a personal decision. However, you may have more flexibility than you might have imagined. For instance, you might feel that you should be risk-averse because you have seen so many fluctuations in the financial markets. But if you have many decades to go until you retire, you actually do have time to recover from short-term losses,

ably handle more volatility. On the other hand, once you're retired, you won't have as many years to bounce back from market downturns, so you'll have less "risk capacity" than you did when you were younger.

In any case, by balancing your risk tolerance and your required risk level and by understanding your risk capacity - you can be better prepared to take the emotion out of investing. When investors let their emotions get the better of them, they can make mistakes such as chasing "hot" stocks or selling quality investments due to temporary price drops. By having a clear sense of what risk really entails, however, you may be able to avoid costly detours — and stick with your long-term investment strategy.

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Lynn Bailey



Lawton teacher 2014 SKIE winner

Megan Veldhuizen is the winner of the annual Statewide Touchstone Energy Cooperatives SKIE (Supporting K20 Innovative Educators) Award. The Lawton teacher and her school were awarded cash prizes for outstanding use of technology in the classroom

Selected from six regions across Oklahoma, Veldhuizen was one of the regional winners of the 2014 SKIE Award, receiving a \$500 cash prize. Her selection as the statewide winner was revealed at the University of Oklahoma's K20 Center's Innovative Learning Institute early in November.

As overall SKIE winner, Veldhuizen will receive an additional \$1,500 award and a \$2,500 technology grant for Woodland Hills Elementary in Lawton.

SKIE winners effectively displayed a record of outstanding application/integration of the K20 Center IDEALS (Inquiry, Discourse, Equity, Authenticity, Leadership and Service). They also demonstrated excellence in teaching using technology and modeled instruction that is both engaging and effective for students.

Veldhuizen teaches first grade at Woodland Hills Elementary. In the classroom, her innovation centered on Discourse, to bring about collaboration and effective brainstorming for her students.

Mark Faulkenberry, manager of marketing and communications for Western Farmers Electric Cooperative, presents Lawton teacher Megan Veldhuizen with the 2014 SKIE Award.

ticipation with district committees, chairing the Science Fair, Leadership team, and the W.I.S.E school improvement team.

The SKIE Award has been made possible by a \$90,000 donation from Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, and honors teachers or groups of educators who use technology to transform their classroom When she isn't teaching, Veldhuizen enjoys par- instruction.

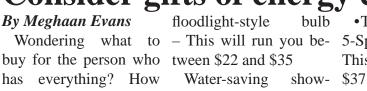
Youth Tour, Energy Camp deadlines Jan. 16

Cotton Electric Cooperative has a pair of opportunities available for students in the service area.

Area juniors can submit a 600word essay on the topic "Life in rural southwest Oklahoma without Cotton Electric Cooperative" for a chance to participate in the annual Rural Electric Youth Tour.

rounds: Essay submission, interview and oral presentation of the ton, D.C., for a week in June.

Another summer opportunity



•The Delta Arias This will run you around

consume gy-efficiency tips along Supplement your gift or weather strips, and ergy-saving gift! All of •Glacier Bay 1-Spray these products are avail-Box hardware stores, so get to shopping. From energy-efficient holiday!



The contest features three a short paragraph about why the sic details of the contest have entrant would like to attend the been distributed to area English 2015 Youth Power Energy Camp and Ag teachers and counselors. essay. The top four entrants win the last week of May at Can- The registration deadline for enan expense-paid trip to Washing- yon Camp in Red Rock Canyon, tering the both contests is Jan. 16, southeast of Hinton.

Information packets with Youth is available for eighth-graders Tour and Energy Camp contest contests, contact Trent Marlett whose parents are Cotton Electric rules and regulations, entry forms, at 580-875-3351 or by e-mail at members. This contest requires cooperative information and ba- tmarlett@cottonelectric.com.

2015.

For information on any of the



ノレンレント PUBLIC AUCTION

Saturday, January 17, 2015 - 10:00AM 415 West Cherokee Marlow, Oklahoma Variety of Fixtures and Building Materials

Gary Criswell Auction Service & Real Estate, Inc. has been commissioned by Marlow Missionary Baptist Church to offer at Public Auction a large variety of Fixtures and Building Materials. Church Note: Marlow Missionary Baptist Church is going to demolish the Brick Building at 415 West Cherokee because of structural and other problems in order to make room for a new Church Building. The building materials will be offered at Public Auction on January 17, 2015. The Church is presently meeting in the building behind the brick building. We welcome visitors

Auction includes: Doors, Windows, Light Fixtures, Cabinets, Paneling, Heating Units and Air Conditioning Units, Gutters, Brick (if interested) and Church Pews (10).

Terms of Sale: Personal Property - Cash, Personal or Company Check accepted. Positive I.D. required. All checks shall be made payable to Marlow Missionary Baptist Church.

Preview of Church Building: will be held Friday afternoon January 16, 2015 from 1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Announcements made day of sale supersede any and all other advertisements.

Auctioneer's Note: This is a great opportunity to purchase Fixtures and Building Materials. If Brick are sold, Buyer has 60 days to complete the demolition process. All proceeds from Public Auction will go to Marlow Missionary Baptist Church. Please plan to attend this Public Auction.

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

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Consider gifts of energy efficiency GO UNDERGROUND. bulb

Wondering what to - This will run you be- 5-Spray Showerhead -

about a gift for an envi- erheads are also a great Providing your family

ClimateMaster®Geothermal

member or friend? This Americans of energy efficiency.

By Meghaan Evans

favorite if you do. Gifts a concern when giving some of these products.

LED light bulbs are the efficiency in your home. From indoor bulbs for lighting and hanging fixtures to outdoor lighting, such as flood lamps and even decorative lighting strands – there's an LED bulb for everyone.

LED lighting used to be deemed as expensive, but prices have gone down significantly in recent years. Here are some top-rated options for energy-efficient lighting that makes everything bright!

•GE Reveal 60 Watt Equivalent Bulb - This will run you around \$18 •Cree TW Series 60 Watt Equivalent Bulb - This will run you between \$9 and \$16

•Sylvania's Ultra HD

ronment-friendly family gift option. On average, and friends with enerholiday season, Cotton over 3 billion gallons of with a gift is also a great Electric urges you to water daily. Switching to option. For example, did consider giving the gift a water-saving shower- you know that one of the head could save a family best ways to save energy This doesn't mean that of three up to \$631 per in your home is to turn you have to go out and year in costs and could off all of your electronic replace your aunt's re- reduce water consump- devices? Try a Trickfrigerator or your grand- tion by over 2,600 gal- leStar Motion Sensor ma's washer and dryer - lons per year. Lack of Power Strip, which costs though you may be their water pressure can be around \$30. of energy efficiency can this gift, so here are a with caulking supplies be as simple as filling few examples of showtheir stockings, or cre- erheads that save water, before you know it, you ating a gift basket, with but not at the expense of will have the perfect enwater pressure.

easiest way to increase Hand Shower-This will able online and at Big run you around \$13 •The Delta 1-Spray your lamps, recessed Water-Saving Shower- all of us here at Cotton head – This will run you Electric, have a happy, around \$16

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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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Current **W** News

Daniel uses technology to make members' lives easier

"Automation helps us

"Always, always, our

been making sure mem-

bers get accurate bills.

With automation, we

can stay on top of our

accounts and have faster

response time in what-

Last winter, computers

and Tonya's experienced

eye proved valuable. Af-

ter a long spell of very

see unusually high read-

"When I saw the

amounts on those bills, I

representatives. I asked

them to go out and check

some of the meters, to

"I wanted to be sure

out that I had already

taken steps to ensure

The readings were cor-

rect, power consumption

was high and it was be-

cause of the weather,

Cotton Electric employ-

ees patiently explained

Many members signed

"Our members are

much more aware of en-

to surprised members.

a result.

verify the readings.

were accurate.

create accurate bills in a

timely fashion.

By Karen Kaley

Trying to get Tonya Daniel to agree to an interview was like trying to nail ielly to a tree. But, once I got this particular cat herded into my office, she had plenty of good information to share, mostly about technology.

this December. She and Wayne Daniel have been married 25 years. They have three daughters: ing. Randi Miller is married to Brian. Their sons are Jace, 7, and Jaxon, 5. Another grandchild will arrive in May. Maegan Daniel lives in Oklahoma City while Chelsea her parents and helps out on the family farm.

cle, Tonya will be marking another anniversary. her 23rd with Cotton Electric. From day one, she has been interacting with the co-op's members and their power bills, first as a switchboard operator, then as a billing clerk and now as a customer service supervisor.

It's always been about work on it. numbers for Tonya account numbers, meter numbers, payment amounts. She memorized extension numbers when she first started answering the co-op's minutes. main phone. She held her hands about 15 inches apart when describing a big panel filled with unmarked switches, each a phone connection to other employees.



Between calls, Tonya worked through hundreds of payments received in the day's mail. She separated daily re- number one priority has ceipts by color in order Tonya is celebrating to record current cycle payments, preventing possible disconnections. It was time-consum-

> "Everything was fig- ever task we work on." ured by hand and recorded on index cards. Adjustments may have taken an hour," she said.

After a couple of years, cold days, she started to Tonya moved to the bill-Daniel still lives with ing department where ings in the billing cycles her tasks were similar she oversees. Immedibut more involved. She ately, she took steps to As you read this arti- keyed in service orders make sure the readings and payments, and still took customer calls.

> responsibili-Her ties grew to include the picked up the phone and month-end balancing of called our field meter accounts.

> "It took one or two days to balance at the end of the month. Sometimes I had to go to a back room with all my when I mailed those bills papers and calculator to

"There was a ton more they were correct." paper," she recalls.

Not so much now.

"Computers forced the switch from paper. They do all the calculating in which Tonya and other

"It is no longer necessary to sort payments by cycle, because the computers record them in- up for use monitoring as stantly," Tonya said. And, that's a good thing.

sode," she said.

up to the subject when members, the better we discussing advances in can serve them. Updated technology and how it phone numbers and admembership.

"Technology gives our members more options in how they manage their power use and how they pay for it."

She is a big cheerleader for SmartHub, a recent addition to services the co-op offers. In addition to use monitoring, SmartHub allows members to make payments and receive notifications in a variety of ways.

"We can reach them via phone call, email. text message ... however they want."

Tonya pointed out the technology helps her serve members better, particularly when it comes to communication, and had a special request of the membership: Please update your

ergy use since that epi- contact information.

helps the Cotton Electric dresses make it easier vide the best quality of for us to communicate."

She gave an example: "Maybe a member has had an outage and we need to call back to make this cooperative. sure his or her power came back on. We can't know that we are doing call if we don't have a everything we can to good number."

Her statement about "The better informa- serving the members is Tonya really warms tion we have about our a mantra for Tonya and the rest of the co-op employees.

> "We are here to proservice for the members. We want them to have the best options so they get the best value from

> "We want them to make their lives easier."







Frontier Feeds Kay's Gifts & More in Marlow Contact any Marlow Junior or Senior Parent Bull Riding Starts at 7:30pm Doors open at 6:00pm Stock Contractors: F-F Rodeo Stock Rafter 7 Dwight Frick Brady Roach low, OK Cache, OK **UTC Ranch** Mike & Kelly Sellers Duncan, OK ,500.00 Added Books open 1-2-15 Proceeds go to Marlow After-Prom Extravaganza

Tonya Daniel, always willing to try something new, climbed up on a planter to pose next to old lettering on the Cotton Electric headquarters.

Thankful for our member owners who work in acres, not hours.

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Bill Date

01/05/15

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AMERICAN S

Cotton Electric 2015 Billing Cycles in red on a Cycle 3 bill and in green

The information below is a complete listing of 2015 Billing and Past Due dates Cotton Electric Cooperative members.

Billing is staggered in cycles each month. Some members are billed in Cycle 1, others in Cycle 2, etc. The cycle number is listed to the right of the color-coded address on a bill. In other words, the address is written

Black Bill

Past Due

Date

01/26/15

02/02/15 03/02/15 04/06/15 05/04/15 06/01/15 07/06/15	02/23/15 03/23/15 04/27/15 05/25/15 06/22/15 07/27/15	02/09/15 03/09/15 04/13/15 05/11/15 06/08/15 07/13/15	03/02/15 03/30/15 05/04/15 06/01/15 06/29/15 08/03/15
08/03/15 09/07/15 10/05/15	08/24/15 09/28/15 10/26/15	08/10/15 09/14/15 10/12/15	09/07/15 10/05/15 11/02/15
11/02/15 12/07/15	11/23/15 12/28/15	11/09/15 12/14/15	11/30/15 01/04/16
Cycle 3 -	– Red Bill	Cycle 4	- Green Bill
Bill Date	Past Due	Bill Date	Past Due
	Date		Date
01/19/15 02/16/15 03/16/15 04/20/15	Date 02/09/15 03/09/15 04/06/15 05/11/15	01/26/15 02/23/15 03/23/15 04/27/15	Date 02/16/15 03/16/15 04/13/15 05/18/15
02/16/15 03/16/15 04/20/15 05/18/15 06/15/15 07/20/15 08/17/15	02/09/15 03/09/15 04/06/15 05/11/15 06/08/15 07/06/15 08/10/15 09/14/15	02/23/15 03/23/15 04/27/15 05/25/15 06/22/15 07/27/15 08/24/15	02/16/15 03/16/15 04/13/15 05/18/15 06/15/15 07/13/15 08/17/15 09/21/15
02/16/15 03/16/15 04/20/15 05/18/15 06/15/15 07/20/15	02/09/15 03/09/15 04/06/15 05/11/15 06/08/15 07/06/15 08/10/15	02/23/15 03/23/15 04/27/15 05/25/15 06/22/15 07/27/15	02/16/15 03/16/15 04/13/15 05/18/15 06/15/15 07/13/15 08/17/15

Early Detection Saves Lives!

FREE Lung Screening For High Risk Individuals

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

- Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women worldwide.
- Nearly 160,000 Americans die of lung cancer each year.

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

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

QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

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

Category 1

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+ packyear* 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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* The rate may change after the account is opened. The annual percentage yield (APY) is accurate as of 11/6/2014. The minimum to open the account is \$100.00. The minimum balance to earn the APY is \$50.00. Interest is compounded quarterly. Fees could reduce earnings. Please call 580-252-8070 for more details.

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FDIC



When you clean up after the holidays, take time to get your financial house in order.

Don't forget year-end financial checklist

By Allison Goldberg

The end of the year can be a hectic time with holidays, gatherings and more happening all at once. It's easy to put aside your finanhere's a quick financial checklist the end of the year.

401(k). The maximum salary deferral limit for 401(k) plans in 2014 is \$17,500, while those who are age 50 and older may contribute up to \$23,000 per year. If you make contributions on a pre-tax basis, you may be able to increase your contributions and lower your current year tax liability. Contributions must be made by payroll deduction by December 31, so speak to your employer's human deferrals.

Take your required minimum annual physical and eye exams, www.budgetsimple.com. distribution (RMD), if you your bi-annual dental exam and haven't already. If you turned any specialist appointments you tion, like your net income and 70.5 years old before 2014, you need. must take the RMD from your 401(k) by December 31 unless taged 529 college savings plan. you're still working for that employer. If you don't take your tax deduction or credit, while the RMD, the penalty is a federal tax beneficiary of the plan will be of 50 percent on the amount you should've taken. Contact your tax college tuition, fees, room and advisor for additional information. to reflect your current goals. Reassess your time horizon, transfer tax apply. goals and risk tolerance, then adjust your portfolio accordingly. If financial goals you set at the be- vice arm of the nation's 900-plus these remain the same, rebalance ginning of the year. If you made consumer-owned, not-for-profit your portfolio back to your origi- resolutions related to your financ- *electric cooperatives*.

year.

cial health during busy times, but tion. Have you had any life changes in the past year? The birth of a you may want to consider before child or grandchild? A marriage ment? Knowing where you stand **Contribute more to your** will, each insurance policy, each retirement account and anything else that transfers by beneficiary designation names the appropriate beneficiary or beneficiaries and that the allocations meet your ward your 2014 goals, plan your wishes.

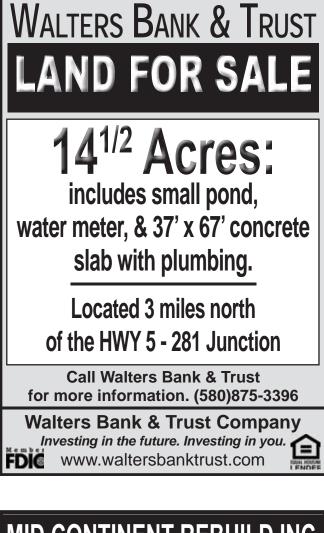
Get your annual physical and take care of other health necessities. Your health benefits likely reset on January 1. Make the most of both your benefits and your flexible spending account (FSA), resources or payroll department if you have one, by scheduling its in mind. If you've not made to find out how to increase your and going to the appointments a budget before, there are many you might be delaying, like your online tools to help you, such as

nal investment allocation, since es, review your adherence to or market performance may have progress toward the guidelines moved over the course of the past or goals you created for yourself. Did you reach the goals and ad-**Review beneficiary informa-** here to the guidelines? Are they worth keeping in place for next year? Do they require adjustor divorce? Confirm that your in relation to your goals will help you create a financial plan for 2015.

> Set financial goals for 2015 and prepare your 2015 budget. After assessing your progress togoals for 2015. If you kept a budget in 2014 or have credit or debit card accounts that track how you spend your money, use these tools to evaluate how and when you spend, then plan a 2015 budget that keeps your goals and hab-You will need basic informarecurring expenses, to get started. You might be surprised at the financial discipline you find when you see your income and expenses in black and white.



SQUARE DANCE LESSONS @ Wilson School, 102 NW 17th, Lawton. Starts Jan. 13 and 15 First two lessons FREE! Call 580-512-7876 or 580-355-0480.



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* Alternator * Starter

Contribute to a tax-advan-In many states, you will get a able to use the money tax-free for board, as well as other qualified expenses. Contributions must be **Reallocate your investments** made by December 31. Federal

Here's to a healthy and financially-saavy 2015!

Allison Goldberg writes and edits employee benefits-related materials for the Insurance & gift tax and generation-skipping Financial Services Department of the National Rural Electric Review your progress on the Cooperative Association, the ser-

Generator * Forklift



Stop Paying New Prices SAVE TODAY!

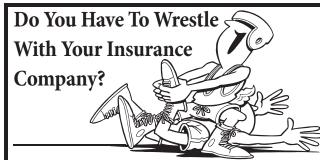
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Put the strength of a solid performer behind you. Call us now for a free, no obligation, price quote assessment of your current insurance needs.



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 <u>YES</u> to any of these questions, we can help!

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



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Bundle up for winter storms

By Abby Berry

Are you ready for winter's cold grasp? Snow and ice are inevitable when dealing with winter storms, but being prepared can make a world of difference. Cotton Electric Cooperative recommends the following tips to help you prepare for wintery blasts.

Winterize your home

Winter storms wreak havoc on your home. By winterizing your living space, you'll be prepared for extreme cold and hazardous conditions.

Remember to maintain and inspect heating equipment and chimneys every year to ensure they're working safely and properly.

Caulk and weather strip doors and windows to make the most of your heating system.

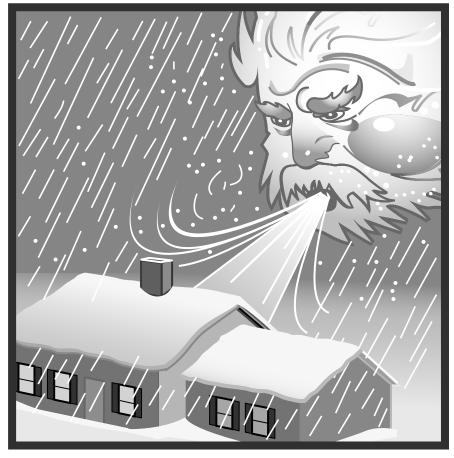
Freezing temperatures often cause water pipes to burst. Remember to insulate pipes with plastic. Allow faucets to drip durpipes.

dows for better insulation. You lons per person. can also cover windows with the cold out.

Make sure everyone in your how to use it properly. House social security cards. Bank acfires occur more frequently durto use alternative heating meth- hand. ods that may not be safe.

Prepare a winter survival kit

Severe winter storms often bring heavy accumulation of Stay warm and safe ice and snow, which can lead to



on hand is a smart idea.

Food: Store food that does not insulation or newspapers and require cooking, such as canned crackers, goods, dehydrated ing extreme cold to avoid frozen meats and dried fruit. Keep a large supply of water on hand. Consider installing storm win- Ready.gov recommends five gal-

Medication: Be sure to refill all plastic (from the inside) to keep prescriptions in the event of a major power outage.

Identification: Keep all forms family knows where the home's of identification handy, such as fire extinguisher is located and driver's licenses, photo IDs and count information and insurance ing winter months, as people tend policies are also good to have on

> Other items: First Aid Kit, blankets, flashlight, battery-powered radio and extra batteries.

If an outage occurs, you should tive Association, the Arlington, downed power lines and extend- plan for an alternate heating Va.-based service organization ed outages. Cotton Electric crews source. A fireplace, propane for the nation's 900-plus consumwill work hard to restore power, space heater or wood-burning er-owned, not-for-profit electric but having a winter survival kit stove would be sufficient. Fuel cooperatives.

and wood-burning heating sources should always be vented, and make sure carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are working properly. Always practice extreme caution when using alternate heating sources.

If you decide to use a portable generator during an outage, make sure it is placed outside the home for proper ventilation. Be careful not to overload the generator. Use appropriate extension cords that can handle the electric load.

Follow these tips, and your family will stay warm in the event of a power outage. For more information on preparing for winter storms, visit www.ready.gov.

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Coopera-



New Year's Eve **Giveaway!**

Win a share of over \$3,600 in New Year's cash & Comanche Credit. Get one entry for every 25 points earned from Dec. 26-31. Selected winners will win tons of Comanche Credit and one lucky winner will walk away with \$2,015 cash at midnight. Special bonus drawings through 1 a.m. Comanche Star will stay open until 2 a.m. to celebrate the New Year with you.



Make Your Holiday Deal:

Win your share of over \$6,000 in prizes Dec. 1 - 21. Earn one entry for every 100 points earned during the contest period. All participants will be eligible to earn double entries on Sundays.

Drawings will be held on Friday and Saturday nights from 6:30pm to 11pm . Be one of 10 winners drawn each night and we will give you an envelope with a prize inside. You can either accept your prize or test your luck and return it for another random prize. The hopper will be emptied every Saturday night and new entries will begin for next week's drawings.

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Wichita Furniture

10% discount on new purchases

Wichita Furniture can fill your home in style

By Karen Kaley

Service comes from a smiling, familright thing. If that item is not in stock, appliance repair shop in Walters. Mom or Pop or some other family member or faithful employee knows ed selling new appliances, then TVs, just how to get it for you.

Now, Mom and Pop stores may evoke the image of a smallish place, but that is not the case at Wichita Lawton. Sprawling over a city block, the 30,000-square-foot showroom is backed up by a 25,000-square-foot warehouse.

by Mom and Pop — or Grandmom and Grandpop as we have come to know them — Chris and Glenda Martin. Theirs is a great success story that Oklahoma. In fact, it starts at Cotton Electric in Walters.

spent eight years on appliance repair Mom and Pop stores are the best. for Cotton Electric members. The coop eventually phased out the service, iar face helping shoppers find just the but Martin continued to offer it in his

> One thing led to another: He startthen recliners. He moved the shop down the street and opened a full-line days. furniture store.

Thirty-four years later, the Martins' Furniture, 1127 NW Cache Road in furniture store has expanded, moved to Lawton, and become a regular "family affair" as Chris puts it.

Glenda runs the day-to-day operations and Chris oversees the business And, yes, it is owned and operated end. Son Eric helps out with sales when possible, and even tiled the showroom floor during a recent remodel.

Daughter Carisa also had a hand in begins right in the heart of southwest the decor, painting colorful murals in the children's furnishings area. She helps with sales, too, and helps her During the 1970s, Chris Martin other brother, David, wrangle the five



Glenda and Chris Martin, owners of Wichita Furniture, have 34 years' experience in the furniture business.

invoke the store's slogan, "Are you smarter than a 4th grader? Then hurry to Wichita Furniture for great deals on quality furniture and appliances," as the stars of the store's popular televi- chase affordable. sion commercials.

large selection of furnishings and appliances that will suit just about any taste or budget. Wichita Furniture carries a full line of furnishings in all colors and styles, from rustic to elegant.

Chris said there are at least 75 living room sets in the west showroom. Recliners for one or two, some with cup holders, line up along one wall and major appliances and TVs occupy a large corner toward the back.

The entry showroom is packed with dining sets, and there are separate showrooms to the east for adult and children's bedroom sets. The adult sets range from massive to sleek. The ments every day," Glenda said. delightful children's area features bunk beds, trundle beds and stair-step ings to suit our customers." dollhouse beds.

Further east is yet another showroom filled with rustic furnishings of wood and leather.

Each arrangement in every show- can see that.

grandsons on commercial-filming room is embellished with lamps and decorative items, offering a complete Ty, Jake, Connor, Colton, and Calin setting to imagine in one's own home.

> Glenda expressed pride in how the knowledgeable staff helps customers. She mentioned a finance team that has a variety of ways to help make a pur-

Chris said the 75/25 price match The large family is dwarfed by the represents a guarantee for his customers.

> "We believe we have the largest and lowest-priced selection of furniture within 75 miles of Lawton. We will match any advertised price and give the customer an additional \$25."

> Cotton Electric members can present their Co-op Connections Card to get a 10 percent discount on a new purchase.

> Wichita Furniture also guarantees delivery within 24 hours to all points within the Cotton Electric service area and beyond.

> "Our delivery team gets compli-

"They deliver and set up the furnish-

Whether looking for one small item to decorate your home or to furnish an entire house, Wichita Furniture is the place to go. Why, even a fourth-grader



Grandsons Ty, Jake, Connor, Colton, and Calin are often the stars of commercials for Wichita Furniture.



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Tackle holiday messes with these tips

getting your home ready for company to managwithout the extra stress.

Coryanne Ettiene, home and lifestyle expert at Kitchen Living with Coryanne. "But all of this merriment can bring about a lot of messes and more cleaning for the busy host."

Tips for spick and span spaces

Ettiene offers up these

(Family Features) This in the corner may be and other natural-stone let the disinfectant do guests arrive.

ing the many messes surfaces. Often servthat come with a packed ing as the base camp home, there are several for holiday entertaincleaning tips to help you ing, the kitchen deserves enjoy the fun at hand some extra attention. For kitchens with granite "The holiday season and other natural-stone offers up an abundance surfaces, use an effecof get-togethers," said tive cleaner, such as the Granite Gold three-part system of cleaning, seal- With so many famthe party to ensure that it looks cleaner – and finpreparation.

glittering tips for tidying so you your door, those holiday ing Wipes, which kill

holiday season, create a something you overlook counters will see plenty the job," Ettiene said. welcoming environment each day but should be of spills and messes. A "After that, rinse with for your guests. From straightened before the properly sealed stone potable water and concounter will help make **Prep vour kitchen** clean-up easier because the seal will prevent liquids from penetrating the ral-stone counters, make surface. "Wipe up those sure you're using a safespills and messes right on-stone cleaner." away," Ettiene warns. "If a stone counter isn't guest items. Make sure properly sealed, that liquid will soon turn into a stain and an eyesore."

Attack the germs. ing and polishing before ily members and friends stopping by to wish you a happy holiday, it ger-print free – for lon- is essential to keep the ger and it's safe for food kitchen hangout clear of impression for entering germs. To do so, clear Manage holiday de- your kitchen surface of a coat closet, designate cor. From the tree in debris and apply a con- a special area on a guest your living room to the venient product, such as room bed or trunk for wreath on Granite Gold Disinfect- such belongings. can keep your holly jolly decorations can create bacteria and won't harm cleaning take away from home in guest-approved a mess in your living sealed stone surfaces. the many joys of the spaces. Have a helpful These wipes are great season. For more clean-Act like a guest. A tool on hand, such as a to keep on hand so you requires close attention the glitter, pine needles they occur. "An impordisinfectant is to let it sit Have a plan for com- on the surface for at least pile of old magazines many homes, and granite the residue right away;

tinue with your normal cleaning routine. For granite and other natu-

Clear a space for other areas of your home are accommodating to guests. If your coat closet is full of items, clear some space for visitors to hang their coats, hats and other accessories. Keeping this area free of clutter is a great first guests. If you don't have

Don't let the stress of ing tips and tricks, visit www.granitegold.com/ stone-care-blog/.





order this season:

properly cleaned home lint roller, to clean up can wipe away spills as to the details. Before and other tiny messes in tant reminder about any you get out the duster minutes. and cleaning solutions, look through each room mon spills. The kitchen five minutes for it to take with a visitor's eye. That is a common hangout in effect. Don't wipe away







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Remember: When you turn up the heat, you turn up your power bill

Continued from Page One

comparison for that time period. This is because the outdoor temperature has in your home.

the right end of the graph shows the the night sets in. black marker indicating that warm day in November floating above the is just one of the valuable tools found blue bar of relatively low energy use. The black lines and markers plunge reminders, make payments and conthe next few days and the blue bars tact Cotton Electric with the app. Best rise significantly.

Tap the view details link in the upper right corner of the temperature/ through CottonElectric.com and as energy use screen and you get information about peak, low and average Apple and Android devices. Members consumption along with more information about temperatures, as shown number to get started. in the bottom right screenshot on the front page.

All of this daily use information in Walters or Duncan.

can help make a monthly bill more of line graph, an energy use/temperature a managed amount and less of a surprise. When a member sees energy consumption rising, it can serve as a the greatest influence on your HVAC reminder to pull on a sweater instead system, the biggest energy consumer of bumping up the thermostat, to open draperies on sunnier winter days and In the example shown on Page One, close them back up when the chill of

> Information about daily energy use in SmartHub. Members can get billing of all, it's free.

> SmartHub is available online a smart phone app compatible with will need a Cotton Electric account

Needing help setting up? Call us at 580-875-3351 or come by our office



Cotton Electric member Turner Hall of Marlow, left, took the GoGoGeo Challenge this fall while attending a ball game in Stillwater. His participation registered him in a drawing held recently and Bryce Hooper, director of marketing and economic development for Cotton Electric, presented Turner with a Yukon cooler.

Find out how the little changes add up to big savings at TogetherWeSave.com.



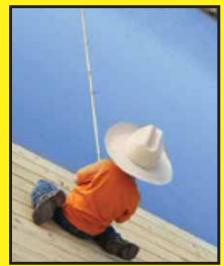
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It's a year-end tradition at Cotton Electric to honor employees for their years of service.







Warren Langford 40 years



Norman Condit 40 years



Jeff Simpson 35 years



Joyce Adams 30 years



J.P. Goode



Karen Holt

Employee of the Year Sam Gonzalez



Sam Gonzalez was at a loss for words when he was named 2014 Employee of the Year was recently. He collected a plaque and other awards, turned to the gathering of fellow employees and said a simple, "Thank you."

Employees were asked to describe how a person they nominated went above and beyond in his or her job, showed integrity and honesty in the workplace and provided excellent customer service.

Gonzalez calibrates meters for the Cotton Electric system. His nominator pointed out that Gonzalez is solely responsible for meter accuracy and takes this task very seriously. He is quick to assist fellow employees and will "dig through piles of meters to retrieve a reading ... and never complains."

"Sam has a job that is often times thankless," the nomination said, explaining that people never call to express gratitude for making sure a meter is accurate. Instead, he is asked to retest meters coming in question and "will look for any flaw that may be of disservice to the members."

"He does his job to the best of his ability and with a smile on his face. Sam is not only a good employee but also a teacher for those around him." Congratulations, Sam!





Tracy Lindsey 5 years

Dana Brady 5 years





Calorie counts coming to restaurants, vending machines

News

Current **Q**

Calorie information is coming to a restaurant and vending machine near you, whether you want it or not.

Earlier this month, the Food and Drug Administration issued two final rules regarding food labeling in restaurants and vending machines. Restaurants and retail food establishments that are part of a chain of 20 or more stores, and vending machine operators who own or operate 20 or more vending machines, will be required to post calorie information.

Restaurants will have to post the information on the menu. Vending machine owners/operators will have to post the calorie information next to the vending item.

These rules came about as part of people understand that their favorite the Affordable Care Act.

Research has shown mixed reviews on the effectiveness of posted nutrition information on health. A metaanalysis published in the July 2014 issue of the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics looked at reasonable first step and doesn't re-17 studies where the effect of calorie quire recipe alteration. Another benlabeling on calorie intake was examined. The results did not reveal a decrease in calorie intake unless study subjects were given a reference of how many calories they should eat in tarily made their nutrition informaa meal or a day.

quire only that the calorie information of the food item or restaurant dish be posted. There is no requirement for a daily value." Appropriate calorie inreference value.

While it seems that the new rules got is affected by a myriad of factors. it only partially correct, there could be some benefits that come about as a current restaurant foods, many of result of bringing the calorie content them are more than half of the referof restaurant foods to the forefront. If ence value, meaning 1,000 calories eat less of it and, in the end, eat fewer based on the information presented.





restaurant foods are high in calories compared to other choices, they can choose to order differently or demand that restaurants find lower calorie ways to make the same dish.

Cutting back the portion size is a efit could be an increase in healthier, lower-calorie options in both restaurants and vending machines.

Some restaurants that have voluntion available post a reference value The new rules from the FDA re- for calories. Most use 2,000 calories, probably because that is what the food labels use when calculating "percent take varies from person to person, and

Looking at the calorie amounts of



of calories.

Given it takes anywhere from three tasty, lower-calorie food options. to five hours walking two miles per hour to burn 1,000 calories, this should

If you are going to eat higher-calorie

or more. In one eating episode, you calories. Most of the time, choose rescould eat half of your daily allotment taurant items with fewer calories. Patronize restaurants that offer healthy,

It's going to take more than posting calories to curb the obesity epidemic. be a wake-up call for most Americans. It is a step in the right direction, but it still requires the consumer to take perfoods, control the portion size so you sonal responsibility to make changes

Delighful ham dishes warm up winter

(Family Features) While winter brings chilly temperatures and longer nights, there's nothing that can bring a family together like a warm meal.

In the hopes that everyone has a meal to share with loved ones, coun-



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try music star Kimberly Schlapman of Little Big Town, has teamed up with Smithfield, encouraging others to lend a ham to those in need.

For more information. www.Smithfield. visit com/LendAHam.

Ham and Apple Butter Biscuit Sandwich

Servings: 6

Cheddar Bacon Biscuits:

- strips Smithfield Thick Cut 8 Bacon
- cup onion, small dice 1
- 2 cups flour
- tablespoon baking powder 1
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- cup buttermilk 1
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted
- cup Cheddar cheese, shred-1 ded

Granny Beck's Apple Butter:

- tablespoons unsalted butter 2
- 3 pounds assorted apples, peeled, cored and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 3 cups apple cider Zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon allspice

Sandwich:

- 3 tablespoons butter
- tablespoons light brown 3 sugar
- 3 tablespoons maple syrup
- slices Smithfield Hickory 6 Smoked Spiral Sliced Ham, sliced in half

recipe below)

6 cheddar bacon biscuits, sliced in half (recipe below) 10 ounces arugula

Preparation

For the Cheddar Bacon Biscuits:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Cook bacon until crispy. Remove from pan and drain on paper-lined tray. Remove all but mer, partially covered and stirring 1 tablespoon of bacon fat and re- occasionally for about 1 1/2 hours serve.

To remaining bacon fat, add onion and saute until caramelized, about 5 minutes.

In a large bowl combine flour, baking powder, salt and paprika. Mix to blend then make a well in the center of the bowl and add buttermilk, butter, bacon, onions and cheese.

spoon until dough is combined. It will be wet and sticky.

Using a 1/2 cup measure portion the batter onto a baking sheet, leaving an inch or so around each biscuit.

Brush some of the reserved bacon fat on the top of each biscuit. Bake in oven until biscuits are golden brown and a toothpick in- butter on the side.

Apple butter (store bought or serted in the center of one comes out clean, 20 to 22 minutes.

> For Granny Beck's Apple Butter:

In a dutch oven over medium heat melt butter and add apples. Cook until apples are slightly soft about 5 minutes. Add cider, lemon zest and juice, cloves, cinnamon and allspice. Bring to a boil, and reduce heat to a simmer. Let simto 2 hours until it is reduced and thickened. Mash mixture with a potato masher until uniform. Let cool before serving.

For the Sandwich:

Preheat grill or grill pan to medium high.

In a small pot over medium heat, melt butter, brown sugar and Mix gently with a wooden maple syrup until sugar dissolves. Brush mixture on ham and grill slices until charred, about 1 to 2 minutes per side. Baste the ham with more maple syrup mixture.

> Spread apple butter on the halved biscuits and top with grilled ham and arugula. Top with other half of biscuit to make a sandwich. Serve with more apple

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December 15, 2014





Pies Ryley Dumas, Empire

Kool Kat's Key Lime Pie

1/4 c. boiling water 2 6-oz. containers Key Lime Pie yogurt 1 pkg. lime gelatin

2 8-oz. containers Cool Whip

Pour the boiling water and the gelatin into a bowl and whisk until all gelatin is dissolved. Add the lime juice and let it cool down to room temperature. Add the 2 containers of Key Lime Pie yogurt and one container Cool Whip; whisk together thoroughly. Spoon the mixture into graham cracker crust and smooth out. Let chill for 2 hours. Remove pie from fridge, slice into pie Pour slowly over batter layer. Do not 2 T. honey slices and top with a spoonful of Cool Whip. Serves: 8.

The 2014 Stephens County Cook Off featured 14 categories. Some of the winning recipes were published in the November issue of The Current. *Here are the remaining recipes.*

Main Dish Casseroles Carson Baker, Central High

Chicken and Dumpling Casserole

3-4 c. chicken, cooked & shredded 2 c. chicken broth 1/2 stick butter 1 can cream of chicken 1 c. self-rising flour 1/2 t. dried sage 1 c. milk

Salt & pepper to taste

Cook and shred chicken or shred a rotisserie chicken. Heat oven to 400 degrees. Place butter in 9X13 pan and melt in oven. Spread chicken over butter evenly. Whisk together flour and milk. Pour over chicken. Whisk together broth, soup and seasonings. stir any layers! Bake 35-40 minutes 2 c. mango nectar, chilled until top is golden. Serves: 8.



Beverages **Riley Dumas, Empire**

Candy Corn Punch

1 c. boiling water 1 c. Cool Whip 1 pkg. lemon gelatin Candy corn 3 1/2 c. orange soda, chilled

Pour the boiling water into a large bowl and stir in gelatin until dissolved. Stir in the mango nectar, then pour whole mixture into a tall ¹/2-gallon glass pitcher. Cover and chill for $1 \frac{1}{2}$ hours until it has thickened, but not set. Remove pitcher from refrigerator and pour orange soda into pitcher gently. Mix 1 cup of Cool Whip with 2 tablespoons of honey, then gently spoon it on top of the drink. Top Cool Whip with pieces of candy corn.

Right before serving, stir it together and ladle into cups. Serves: 8.

Salads

Carson Baker, Central High

Mexican Cornbread Salad

1 pkg. Fiesta Ranch dip mix

2 cans pinto or kidney beans, rinsed & drained

- 1 c. mayo
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 c. sour cream
- 2 cans corn, drained

1 pkg. Mexican combread, prepared 1 pt. grape tomatoes, sliced or chopped

1 chipotle pepper in adobo

10 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled

1 can chopped green chilies



into large bowl or trifle dish. Layer 2 c. Mexican blend shredded cheese green chilies, beans, bell pepper, corn, Combine dressing mix, mayo and dressing mixture, then tomatoes, basour cream. Chop chipotle pepper con, remaining crumbled cornbread,

All Other Desserts Kolten Bethune, Central High

Chocolate Delight

- 1 pkg. Oreo cookies, reg. size
- 1 large Hershey's candy bar
- 1 lg. instant chocolate pudding mix
- 1 container Cool Whip

Crumble Oreos in the bottom of dish. Crumble Hershey's candy bar over cookies. Prepare pudding as instructed on box. Pour the prepared pudding over the crumbled cookies. Chill for 2 hours or until set up. Spread Cool Whip over the top. Serves: 12.



finely and stir into dressing; set aside. cheese, and green onion. Chill before Crumble half of the cooled cornbread serving.

Cakes

Carson Baker, Central High

Coconut Cream Cake

1 box white cake mix (plus ingredients for cake)

1 8-oz. tub frozen whipped topping, thawed

1 can cream of coconut

1 8-oz. pkg. coconut

Prepare and bake cake according to box directions for a 9X13 pan. Remove from oven and while still warm, poke holes all over the top with a large fork. Open cream of coconut and stir. Pour over warm cake coating evenly. Let cake cool completely. Frost with whipped topping then top with coconut. If you like, you can toast coconut on a sheet pan first. Keep refrigerated. Best if cake can set several hours before serving. Serves: 12.

Soup, Stews, Chili Nicole Mullica, Bray-Doyle

Chili Mac Soup

 $1 \frac{1}{2}$ lb. ground beef 4 c. hot water 1 lg. onion, chopped 1 16-oz. can tomatoes, chopped 1 t. garlic powder 1 8-oz. can tomato sauce 1 t. salt 2 T. chili powder 2 t. pepper 1 1/2 c. uncooked elbow macaroni

Brown beef with onion, garlic powder, salt and pepper in skillet. Stirring until beef is crumbly; drain. Add hot water, tomatoes, tomato sauce and chili powder and pour into large soup pot; mix well. Bring to a boil. Add macaroni, reduce heat, simmer for 5-10 minutes or until macaroni is done. May add 116-ounce can drained brown beans, if desired. Serves: 6-8.

Brownies & Cookies Chris White, Central High

Chocolate Chip Blondies

1/4 c. butter, softened 1/4 t. baking soda 1 c. light brown sugar, firmly packed 1/4 t. salt 1 large egg 1/4 c. white chocolate chips 1 t. vanilla extract 1/4 c. milk chocolate chips 1 c. all-purpose flour 1/2 c. pecans, chopped

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and grease bottom of an 8x8 baking pan. Beat the butter and brown sugar with an electric mixer, set on low, until well blended. Beat in the egg and vanilla. Mix the flour, baking soda and flour in a small bowl. Add the flour mixture to the butter mixture; beat until just blended. Stir in the white chocolate chips, milk chocolate chips and pecans. With floured fingers, pat the dough into the prepared pan. Bake until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean, about 25 minutes. Let cool 10 minutes and then cut into 12 bars. Serves: 12.



Appetizers:

Cameron Freeman, Teen Leaders

Marinated Cheese

1 8-oz. block sharp Cheddar 3 cloves garlic, minced 18-oz. package cream cheese 12-oz. jar diced pimento, drained Marinade: 1 t. sugar 1/2 c. olive oil 3/4 t. dried basil 1/2 c. white wine vinegar 1/2 t. salt 3 T. chopped fresh parsley 1/2 t. freshly ground pepper

Combine all marinade ingredients in a jar; cover tightly and shake vigorously. Set aside. Make sure cheeses are well-chilled.

Cut block of Cheddar in half lengthwise; then cut crosswise into 1/4 inch thick slices. Repeat with cream cheese slices. Arrange cheese squares alternately in a shallow baking dish, standing slices on edge. Pour marinade over cheese slices.

Cover and refrigerate at least 8 hours. Transfer cheese slices to serving platter, spoon marinade over cheese slices. Serve with assorted crackers.





2015 Publication Dates

Januar	y	Februa	ry	March	L
Ad Sales Deadline	Jan. 5	Ad Sales Deadline	Feb. 2	Ad Sales Deadline	Mar. 2
Classified Deadline	Jan. 8	Classified Deadline	Feb. 5	Classified Deadline	Mar. 5
Publish Date	Jan. 20	Publish Date	Feb. 17	Publish Date	Mar. 16
April		May		June	
Ad Sales Deadline	Mar. 30	Ad Sales Deadline	April 27	Ad Sales Deadline	June 1
Classified Deadline	Apr. 2	Classified Deadline	April 30	Classified Deadline	June 4
Publish Date	Apr. 13	Publish Date	May 11	Publish Date	June 15
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July		Augus	t	Septemb	Der
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Ad Sales Deadline	2	Ad Sales Deadline	Aug. 3	Ad Sales Deadline	Sept. 7
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Cotton Electric seeks addresses for returned capital credit checks

Capital credit checks amounting to est known valid address for the member. \$300.000 were issued recently to people Checks addressed to members listed here and businesses listed here.

A refund of capital credits demonstrates how a not-for-profit electric cooperative works. Annually, money over and above the cost of operations and other necessary expenses and reserves is declared margins. When the board of trustees determines that a portion of those margins can be refunded, members who contributed to those margins receive a share.

A share of the capital credits was allocated among active and inactive members and a check was mailed to the lat-

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Ainsworth, Crystal Aldridge, Joe M Alexander Jr. Charles Allen, Cathy A Allen, Jeffrey Allen, Tommy D Almendarez, Carrie Ambrose, M Anderson, A Archer, Ted R Arledge, Alta Arnett, Truman R Ashworth, William W Ast, David Auble, Ronald E Auld, Debra S Austin, Ola Averitt, Ita Ayres, Larry

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Cotton Electric Cooperative needs help finding the people listed here. If you see a name on the list that you recognize and if you have information about a current address, please call 580-875-3351 or email info@cottonelectric.com.

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