

The Current

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Summer kicks off at Energy Camp

Eight young teens represent Cotton Electric at 4-day outing

By Karen Kaley

Summertime is camp time for many young people. Band and vocal music camps sharpen musicianship, science camps study local flora, fauna and creepy crawlies, and ball camps hone athleticism.

So what can YouthPower Energy Camp be? Sponsored by Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives (OAEC), can it be an intense study of mom and dad’s electric company?

How many eighth-grade students would want to be a part of that?

As it turns out, past Energy Campers had told younger siblings and friends all about what a great time they had and encouraged them to apply.

A few dozen children of Cotton Electric members applied for the eight camperships offered by the co-op. Each wrote about why he or she wanted to attend and came to the co-op headquarters in Walters for an interview.

Four boys and four girls were selected to represent Cotton Electric at the 2014 camp. Toby Denny, Randall Higdon and Kassidy Randall, are students at Chattanooga High School. Devin Mitchell of Comanche is a student at Empire, and Kimberly Spoonemore of Waurika attends Comanche Middle School. Shalyn Bowles of Geronimo is a student at Walters Middle School. Cy Ulloa and Naomi Robinson attend Indianola Public Schools.

YouthPower Energy Camp is always the Tuesday through Friday after Memorial Day. It is always the first gathering of the season in Canyon Camp, near

Hinton. Campers representing co-ops throughout the state are always nervous about this new place with new people.

The canyon is deep enough that there is little or no cell phone service, so the 90-plus 14-year-olds had no trouble focusing on the activities planned by OAEC coordinator Jennifer “Spike Momma” Dempsey. She had help from camp counselors, some 17 co-op employees including Cotton Electric’s Trent Marlett and Karen Kaley.

It took only a few hours for the campers to discover that Energy Camp is not just about energy and electric cooperatives. It is also about expending energy.

Sessions where the group gathered to hear about life before electricity, the role of a co-op board member or manager and the formation of the Coke and Candy Co-op traded off with time to swim, shoot hoops and play horseshoes.

A post-dinner round of No Brains Olympics had campers running, jumping, bending and stretching before gathering indoors again for a rousing Energy Battle, a trivia contest of electricity-related topics discussed in the afternoon interspersed with pop culture questions.

The expending of youthful power of mind and body had campers ready to rest when they headed to cabins that first night. The happy exhaustion was just the beginning.

Rain during the night meant soggy paths from cabins to dining and gathering halls, but kept tem-

peratures pleasant the second day of camp. The morning activities included electric safety and high-voltage demonstrations, strapping on belts and hooks to climb poles and donning hard hats and safety harnesses for rides 60 feet up in the buckets of utility trucks.

Braver souls went for a swim after lunch, while others played volleyball or went with counselors for hikes to the top of the canyon for a bird’s-eye view of the camp.

Next was a trip to Celebration Station in Oklahoma City. Each camper was given a handful of tokens to play arcade games and had wristbands allowing unlimited access to miniature golf, go-carts and bumper boats.

Back at camp for the evening, the group elected nine Coke and Candy Co-op board members, one of whom was a Cotton Electric camper, Randall Higdon.

The CCC board then interviewed those wishing to be hired as the co-op’s manager. They selected Toby Denney, another camper sponsored by Cotton Electric. He was also declared Camp King on the final morning.

The last full day of camp featured morning and afternoon sessions of communication and team-building activities. Camp manager David Combs and his wife, Jodie, led different groups through low ropes courses about halfway up the canyon.

The day culminated with a pizza party and dance.

See Campers, Page 12



2014 Energy Campers representing Cotton Electric include, from left, Kimberly Spoonemore, Randall Higdon, Kassidy Randall, Devin Mitchell, Cy Ulloa, Naomi Robinson, Shalyn Bowles and Toby Denny.

Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment (PCA) applied to bills mailed after June 1 is \$0.01713 per kWh. On a traditional bill, average use of 1500 kilowatt hours (kWh) would include a PCA charge of \$25.70 on the June bill. On a MyChoice account, PCA is added to the base rate of \$0.088923 per kWh, making the rate appear to be \$0.1061 from May 17 through June 18.

May 2014 Temperature Extremes

Day	High	Low	Avg.	Day	High	Low	Avg.
1	74	33	54	16	87	49	68
2	78	37	58	17	79	57	68
3	92	39	66	18	87	58	73
4	99	45	72	19	94	66	80
5	101	50	76	20	98	67	83
6	97	61	79	21	95	66	81
7	92	63	78	22	93	65	79
8	87	63	75	23	83	66	75
9	83	56	70	24	82	66	74
10	94	54	74	25	83	63	73
11	92	69	81	26	85	62	74
12	78	54	66	27	78	63	71
13	68	49	59	28	87	62	75
14	74	41	58	29	91	61	76
15	80	37	59	30	87	64	76
				31	88	66	77

Source: srh.noaa.gov/om/
Average Daily High: 87 Average Daily Low: 57

Did You Know?

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

The July issue of The Current should arrive in mailboxes on July 14.

Contact Us

Do you have a story idea for The Current or do you need to place an ad? If so, let us know. We can be reached at 580-875-3351 or by email at info@cottonelectric.com. You can also drop us a line at Cotton Electric Current, 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572.

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More news at cottonelectric.com

From the CEO

We can learn from energy history

My parents grew up during the Great Depression and I have vivid memories of their stories about the difficult times. Besides the economic hardships, there was a terrible extended drought. When I close my eyes, I can still hear the tales of the thirsty cows bawling for water.



Warren Langford, CEO

We are in another dry period now. The hot temperatures along with little rain are very concerning. In the 1930s, people accepted 10-year dry periods as just a part of nature. Today, opinions vary about the change in weather patterns. Many wonder if droughts are really cyclical, or could they be caused by global warming?

I went to the Oklahoma Water Resources Board website to get a history of the precipitation trends in Oklahoma. This doesn't make our lives any better, but it appears droughts are normal. The website indicated the pattern of rainfall in Oklahoma is dominated by 10-year cycles of alternating wet and dry periods.

History tells us that droughts and floods should be expected. This doesn't mean the concerns about global warming should be ignored. In our lifetime, there is evidence to show that these changes in weather cycles are becoming more severe. On May 6 of this year, the National Climate Assessment and Development Advisory Committee issued its report, the 2014 National Climate Assessment. They have concluded that evidence exists that from the top of the atmosphere to the depths of the oceans, the planet is warming.

According to the report, this warming has been driven primarily by human activity and the burning of fossil fuels over the last half-century. Antarctic ice core samples illustrate that atmospheric CO2 levels have risen by nearly 40 percent since the Industrial Revolution, with half of that rise occurring in the last three decades. The fact is, there is a growing number of scientists saying human activity is contributing to changes in our climate. No matter what our personal opinions are, there's way too much at stake to do nothing.

My job at this cooperative is to provide electrical power at the lowest possible rate. We all know that reducing CO2 emissions will be paid for by ratepayers. What's concerning is the affordability and effectiveness of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) plan to reduce CO2 emissions.

In June of 2013, the EPA was directed by the present administration to issue proposed CO2 pollution standards and guidelines for existing power plants. On June 2 of this year, the EPA's "Clean Power Plan" was revealed. The goal is to reduce CO2 emissions 30 percent by 2030. The details of the plan have not been explained and I'm not sure how this goal can be achieved. Carbon capture and storage has not been proven, so all we can do is make existing plants more

efficient, most of which has already been done.

The most important thing we need to do is make sure this regulation doesn't threaten system reliability and affordability. While agreeing with the purpose, the real effectiveness of this plan is in question. Keep in mind the EPA's sole instructions are to reduce CO2 emissions. In reality, the financial impact is secondary, even the United States Supreme Court said so. If rules force us to use only natural gas, emissions will be reduced, but at what cost, and what effect will it really have?

This plan needs time for careful and thorough consideration.

Global warming and climate change is a universal political issue. Even though they are beginning to show concern, China, Germany, Russia and India continue to expand their coal generating resources. Is it even possible to get to a worldwide agreement that would prohibit coal as a generating fuel? If not, will U.S. efforts at CO2 reduction have any effect at all? These are things that ratepayers need to know. As the United States moves away from coal, and power bills increase, we need to make sure the cost of reducing CO2 emissions does not exceed the benefit.

Let's review some more history. In 1978, the perceived natural gas shortage prompted Congress to amend the existing National Energy Act. This amendment prohibited natural gas as a fuel source for any new generating plant. The financial impact of the mandate was not considered. The cost of building new coal plants was passed to ratepayers, and Cotton Electric members saw a 13 percent increase in power bills.

Building new generating plants is the most expensive thing this industry does. Because we couldn't expand existing power plants (much less expensive) in 1978, new ones had to be built. This is what I see happening now. If we are again forced to switch generating fuel sources, the price of the new plants will be at ratepayers' expense. As in 1978, the true benefit is unknown.

History tells us that a more practical approach should have been taken. Careful analysis in 1978 would have shown that all of the costs and expenses could have been avoided.

Today's CO2 emission problem is real, and I agree there is too much at stake to do nothing. It's important we don't repeat a mistake. We should take a more practical approach to achieve real environmental goals in a manner that makes economic sense.

Any new regulation should be based on results of a true cost/benefit analysis. The United States accounts for about 15 percent of the world's emissions. We cannot unilaterally solve the carbon problem.

Help me urge Congress to intervene and make sure the EPA takes a logical, conservative, phase in approach to climate change. This approach should include proven solutions such as consumer con-

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servation and efficiency. These types of programs have helped co-ops reduce CO2 emissions from power plants by 10 percent in just seven years.

I would like to think that my economic sacrifice in the form of higher power bills would be of some benefit. History has shown that ill-conceived governmental energy policies have little effect and are very expensive to ratepayers. If you agree, we must act now. Once the EPA's energy course is set, there is absolutely no turning back.

We have asked for, and have been granted 120 days to analyze the plan and respond. This will allow time to evaluate the implications of the EPA proposal and provide meaningful comments to the agency.

The congressional delegation from Oklahoma has always been very supportive in our efforts to address this serious problem. Please write, email or call and ask them for their continued support in regard to EPA proposals. Make the EPA hear your voice by going to www.action.coop and asking for a common sense solution in controlling CO2 emissions.

Today, when I look at the water levels of our ponds, lakes and reservoirs, I think of my parents. Farmers are being forced to sell cattle, and all of us wonder when this drought will end. History tells us that dry spells come and go and I take comfort in that. History also warns us about past mistakes. It's our responsibility to take action and make sure they are not repeated.

The Current

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COTTON
ELECTRIC CO-OP

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

April 2014 Operating Stats		
	2014	2013
Total Amount Billed/Accrued	\$5,277,124	\$4,596,666
Cost of Purchased Power	4,056,179	3,453,272
Taxes	117,341	92,787
Total Operating Expense Per Mile	1,088	934
Average Farm and Residential Bill	116	105
Average Farm and Residential kWh	933	1,039
Total Meters Billed (farm, residential)	18,158	18,056
Miles Energized	5,137	5,137
Density Per Mile	3.53	3.51
New Service Connects YTD	98	122
Services Retired	67	92

Community Spotlight

If you would like your community event listed in the July issue, please submit information by July 1 by calling 580-875-4255 or send an email to info@cottonelectric.com.

Farmers market on Saturdays

A farmers market hosted by the Southwest Growers Association is held from 8 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.

International Festival in the works

Planning is underway for the 35th annual International Festival scheduled for Sept. 26-28 in Lawton. Vendors have until June 20 to contact the Arts and Humanities Division at 580-581-3470 or 581-3471.

Festival meetings are open to the public and begin at 6 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month at the Lawton Public Library. Information is available at CityofLawton.ok.us/lahc/lf.

Good eats at Pork in the Park

Pork in the Park is a chance to show off grilling skills on June 20 and 21 in Medicine Park. Chicken, pork ribs or shoulder or beef brisket can be cooked up for cash prizes. Details and entry forms are at MedicinePark.com.

Duncan Lions rodeo is June 26-28

Duncan Noon Lions will present the 34th annual open rodeo at 7:30 nightly June 26, 27 and 28 in Claud Gill Arena, just south of the Stephens County fairgrounds.

Admission price at the gate is \$8 for adults and \$3 for children.

Proceeds from the event are used in Stephens County to promote vision conservation, provide scholarships and support other local charitable efforts.

Bikers ready for Tour of Wichitas

Tour of the Wichitas Bike Ride leaves Fort Sill at 8 a.m. June 28 and takes riders through Fort Sill and the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. See TouroftheWichitas.com for information and ride maps.

Duncan Founder's Day is June 28

There are several activities planned in Duncan to celebrate Founder's Day on June 28. They include:

5K run – Registration and packet pickup begins at 7 a.m. at Fuqua Park.

A one-mile fun run begins at 7:30 and the USATF-sanctioned 5K run starts at 8. Event is a fundraiser for the Oklahoma chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

Queen crowning and home tour – Stephens County Historical Museum crowns the Founder's Day queen at 10:30 a.m. in Antique Marketplace Tea Room. Historical home tours begin at 1 p.m.

Foreman Prairie House open house – Events recognize Duncan's birthday, when the first train came through in 1892.

Ham operators plan weekend event

Satisfy your curiosity and get questions answered about ham radio operations in general and in southwest Oklahoma, storm spotting communications, or how to get a ham radio operator's license during a special weekend event hosted by Cheyenne Social Club (W5CSC).

Take a lawn chair and be prepared to learn observe and have fun from 9 a.m. June 28 to noon, June 29 at Wichita Ridge at Waurika Lake. The event is open to the public and may be of special interest to Scouts, FHA, FAA and other youth groups.

For information, call Wade at 580-606-0455.

All-class reunion for Bray-Doyle

All former and current Bray and Bray-Doyle students and teachers should mark June 28 on their calendars as the date of the All-Classes Reunion. The event will be from 4 to 7 p.m. in the Bray Community Center.

Finger foods and drinks will be provided at the come-and-go reception, where classmates can visit and catch up with old friends.

In addition to a \$5 attendance fee, there will be a silent auction and a raffle of a handmade quilt. All proceeds will go to the Bray-Doyle Scholarship fund.

Information is available by calling or texting Marie Whaley at 580-656-0868 or sending her an email at mariewhaley@cableone.net.

Marlow Class of '64 plans reunion

Marlow High School Class of 1964 will hold a 50-year reunion on July 5. Help is needed in locating classmates Ruth Allen, Bertha Bullard, Frances Gibson, Charilene Hice, Roger Hill, Lary Kershaw (Kingsley), Ladonna Pigg and Judi Rutledge.

Planners are also looking for help

Photo of the Month



Jayli, Aiden and Colby traveled from Fairview to Lawton to wave Old Glory and watch the Armed Forces Day Parade with their grandparents, Cotton Electric members Trisha and Darrell Nightingale.

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

putting on the event.

To share information about the classmates listed above or to offer assistance, call Anna Lee (Daubenspeck) Fourmentin at 580-606-0886 or Phyllis (Cartwright) Cullum at 580-658-6540.

Arts Explosion for all age groups

Arts Explosion 2014, Chisholm Trail Arts Council's annual weeklong summer arts program, features workshops for all age groups.

A day camp for students who have completed fourth, fifth and sixth grades, will be 8:30 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. July 14-18 at the Stephens County fairgrounds. Students will have the opportunity to enroll in six offered classes registration fee is \$65 for students registering before July 14, and \$75 for those registering on the first day of camp.

Teens from 13 to 18 years old can sign up for a trio of sessions that will run from 2 to 8 p.m. July 14-16. Registration is \$45 in advance or \$55 on the first day.

Adult programs will be from 6:30 to 8 p.m. July 14, 15 and 17. Registration fee is \$25 per class or \$60 for all three.

Brochures describing all workshops can be downloaded at Chisholm-TrailArts.com.

The week ends with a Friday night exhibition of finished projects. Family and friends can admire the works of art from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the fairgrounds.

For more information concerning Arts Explosion or any other CTAC program, call 580-252-4160 or email director@chisholmtrailarts.com.

More Community Spotlight on Page 4

4th of July Independence Fireworks Night Sky Backyard BBQ Burgers Hot Dogs Beach Ocean Sand Sunshine Outdoors Patriotism Declaration Duty Armed Forces Freedom America United States Birthday Baseball Parade Celebrate Family Friends Concerts Crowds Festivities Firecrackers Holiday Flag Old Glory Stars & Stripes Heroes Tradition All-American Country Nation Summer Swimming Pool Union Valor Military Refreshments Rockets Red White Blue Symbol Liberty Life Happiness 4th of July Independence Fireworks Night Sky Backyard BBQ Burgers Hot Dogs Beach Ocean Sand Sunshine Outdoors Patriotism Star Declaration Duty Armed Forces Freedom America United States Birthday Baseball Parade Celebrate Family Friends Concerts Crowds Festivities Firecrackers Holiday Flag Old Glory Stars & Stripes Heroes Tradition All-American Country Nation Summer Swimming Pool Union Valor Military Refreshments Rockets Red White Blue Symbol Liberty Life Happiness 4th of July Stars & Stripes

Stars, Stripes and Savings

This Fourth of July, let Cotton Electric's Co-op Connections Card help you save on all of your holiday needs from fireworks to the flag. Feel free to celebrate life, liberty and the pursuit of savings.

Find all the ways to save at

Connections.coop



COTTON
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WE ALL HAVE A JOB TO DO. When it comes to using energy wisely, no job is too small. But some are pretty high up. Yet when every co-op member works together, it's a job that comes with countless benefits. Learn more about the power of your co-op membership at TogetherWeSave.com.



COTTON
ELECTRIC CO-OP

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Cooperative says it all



*Kristian Cárdenas
Lawton High School*

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

Eight months ago, my family made the seven-hour drive from San Antonio, Texas, to our new home at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Although I had lived at Fort Sill when I was 3, I was returning with very little knowledge of the area. All that I knew was that Oklahoma was home to several Native American tribes, Carrie Underwood, and the biggest rival of my favorite college football team, the Texas Longhorns. (Sorry OU fans, but I bleed burnt orange and white!)

Until recently, I certainly was not familiar at all with Cotton Electric Cooperative. However, I have come to be impressed by the diverse ways this cooperative serves the area. My most compelling realization was that Cotton Electric Cooperative and I both aspire to have concern for the community, which is the seventh principle for all cooperatives.

As an Army brat who has moved eight times in my 17 years, I have had the opportunity to observe the needs of multiple communities. Most recently, for example, while my father was stationed in Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, I worked with warriors with burn wounds and raised money to provide goods for the wounded soldiers. Thus, learning that Cotton Electric Cooperative is also involved in reaching out to its communities was an understanding that touched my heart.

The word Cooperative in Cotton Electric Cooperative says it all. It means people

coming together to use a resource, share in decision-making and profits, finding a way to help the community grow and become better. This idea reminds me of the Warrior and Family Support Center at Fort Sam Houston. The purpose of this facility is to assist the families of wounded warriors who are being treated at Brooke Army Medical Center. It offers food, a movie theater, video games, beach volleyball court, and anything one can imagine to help alleviate the stress of having a loved one undergoing difficult rehabilitation. This center came to be through the generous donations given by politicians, famous celebrities, companies, and other philanthropists. Such a project is clear evidence of what can happen when people come together to help others.

In its 76-year history, Cotton Electric Cooperative has proven itself to be a reliable, trustworthy organization. It certainly is essential in providing the electrical power that lights up our Christmas trees, warms our houses on bone-chilling days, and keeps us cool during exhausting heat waves. Most importantly, it keeps our iPhones, computers, tablets, etc. operating.

In the spirit of cooperation, Cotton Electric Cooperative began a program called Operation Round Up in 2004. This program gave all members the opportunity to make a difference in their community.

This is how Operation Round Up works: A member's electric bill is rounded up to the nearest dollar and the extra change is put into a fund to raise money for community needs. For example, if my bill is \$56.60, I would actually pay \$57. As Cotton Electric Cooperative trustee, Ronnie Bohot, has stated in The

Current, "My one penny can't do much, but put with all the others it can do a lot." The result of Operation Round Up program has been the establishing the CECF (Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation).

So why is this foundation important?

Since its inception in 2004, more than \$700,000 has been distributed by the CECF to 225 organizations. Among these organizations are volunteer fire departments, schools, seniors, youth programs, public safety, and individuals. Because co-op members have come together, 4-year-olds at the Marlow Head Start program have learned to tidy by using cabinets bought through a CECF grant. Children visiting Kiddie Land are safer, thanks a fence surrounding the park. Delta Nutrition can now serve affordable hot meals to seniors, and a Chattanooga school gymnasium has new energy-efficient lighting, thanks to a nearly \$3,000 grant. Volunteer fire departments have received over \$200,000 in grants for needed equipment, making them more capable of fighting fires and other natural disasters.

People Taking Care of People is an appropriate motto to describe what Cotton Electric Cooperative represents in Southwest Oklahoma. Not only does this efficient business provide affordable electricity to its members, but it also involves them in the admirable and worthy endeavor of supporting local communities in a myriad of ways. Cotton Electric Cooperative has definitely been successful in reaching out to the community.

As my favorite poet, Ralph Waldo Emerson, has stated: "To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded."

Community Spotlight

Walters Rodeo begins with parade

All individuals, horse riders, clubs and organizations are encouraged to walk, ride a horse or drive a float in the annual rodeo parade kicking off the Walters Round-Up Club Rodeo and Comanche Homecoming Pow Wow.

Parade lineup begins at 4 p.m. Thursday, July 17, at Broadway and Nevada for all entries except riding clubs, which will gather at Nevada and Sixth. Judging for floats, Best Dressed Cowgirl, Cowboy, Indian Girl and Indian Boy, and Best Decorated Bicycle will be during the hour before the parade kicks off at 5 p.m.

The rodeo begins at 8 p.m. nightly, July 17-19, at the Max Phillips Rodeo Arena west of town.

The pow wow, held July 18-20 in Sultan Park, features numerous dances and contests for all age ranges. For information, call 580-492-3240.

For parade information, call 580-875-3335. For rodeo information, call 580-252-6670.

Dehydrator set for July 26

The 24th annual Dehydrator is a bicycle ride with varied mile routes. Riders leave at 7 a.m. July 26 from the Simmons Center in Duncan.

Entry fees are \$25 per person, \$40 per tandem team, non-refundable. A free T-shirt goes to the first 500 entries. A \$5 late fee will be assessed on entries after July 19.

For information and registration forms, visit the-dehydrator.org.

Velma plans 124th Old Settlers Picnic

The Old Settlers 124th Annual Picnic will be at Humphrey Park in Velma. Festivities kick off with a ranch rodeo at 7:30 p.m. July 30. Activities will continue through Aug. 2.

A rodeo will be held at 7:30 each night. Team roping slack begins at 9 a.m. July 31 and steer tripping is at 1 p.m. Aug. 1. The final day begins with a parade at 11 a.m., rodeo at 1 p.m.

Admission is free to all events, including the dance featuring a live band Friday and Saturday nights.

For information, call Chad Cowan at 580-444-3726.

Historical society meeting open to public

Southwestern Oklahoma Historical Society will hold its annual meeting at 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.

What Can Vacations Teach You about Investing?

Summer is almost here — which means it's officially vacation season. You may be looking forward to "getting away from it all," but, as you know, vacations actually require a fair amount of planning. And it might surprise you to learn that some of the efforts required for successful vacations can impart some valuable lessons in other areas of your life — such as investing.

Here are some vacation-related moves that you may want to transfer to the investment and financial arenas:

- **Secure your home.** If you're going on vacation for a week or so, you may need to take some steps to safeguard your home: stopping your mail and newspaper, putting on a timer to turn on lights, alerting your neighbors that you'll be out of town, and so on. But while it's important to secure your home today, you will

also want to help ensure it will be there for your family in the future, should anything happen to you. That's why you'll want to maintain adequate life and disability insurance.

- **Know your route.** If you are driving to your vacation destination, you will want to plan your route beforehand, so that you can avoid time-consuming delays and detours. And to reach your financial goals, such as a comfortable retirement, you will also want to chart your course — by creating an investment strategy that is designed to help you work towards those goals based on your specific risk tolerance, investment preferences and time horizon.

- **Keep enough gas in the tank.** As you set out on a road trip, you need a full tank of gas in your car, and you'll have to keep refueling along the way. And to "go the

distance" in pursuing your financial goals, you will need to have sufficient "fuel" in the form of investments with reasonable growth potential. Without a reasonable amount of growth-oriented vehicles in your portfolio, you could lose ground to inflation and potentially fall short of your objectives — so, over time, you may need to "refuel" by reviewing your portfolio and rebalancing if necessary.

- **Protect yourself from getting burned.** If your vacation plans include a stay at the beach, you'll need to protect yourself and your family from the hot sun — so make sure you're all using sunscreen. When you invest, you can also get "burned" if you are not careful — especially if you are inclined to chase after "hot" investments. By the time you hear about these so-called sizzlers, they may already be cooling off, and, even more importantly,

they just might not be appropriate for your goals and risk tolerance. Instead of becoming a "heat-seeking" investor, focus your efforts on building a diversified array of quality investments appropriate for your needs. If you only own one type of financial asset, and a downturn hits that asset class, your portfolio could take a big hit. But by diversifying your holdings, you can help reduce the effects of volatility. Keep in mind, though, that diversification, by itself, can't guarantee profits or protect against loss.

As we've seen, some of the same principles that apply to creating a vacation may also be applicable to your investing habits. So, put these principles to work to enjoy a pleasant vacation — and a potentially rewarding investment experience.

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Marlow, OK
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Sweet job

CESI's family-friendly atmosphere works well for Tracy Lindsey

By Karen Kaley

Tracy Lindsey would like to set the record straight: Her job does not involve cotton candy.

Tracy and her young daughters were discussing a friend's high school graduation recently.

"The girls were asking what year they would graduate. As the conversation went on, I said I didn't know what I would do when they all graduated."

Jacie, 9, suggested getting a job. Tracy pointed out that she has a job.

Lexie, 5, said, "You need to get a real job."

Apparently, Avery, 3, had no opinion about her mother's occupation, but Jenna, 6, chimed in.

"Yeah. You just make cotton candy at Cotton Electric."

Well ... no.

Tracy works for Cotton Electric Services, Inc., often abbreviated to CESI, usually referred to as Services by employees of its parent company, Cotton Electric Cooperative. CESI is a test lab, where other co-ops, municipalities and others in electrical businesses

send rubber goods to be inspected and tested for flaws that compromise the protection they provide.

CESI receives dozens of containers each week, some small and containing as little as a single pair of rubber gloves, some large and filled with gloves, sleeves, blankets and line hose. Tracy began working part-time for CESI in 2004, helping to sort through the shipments.

Everything has to be unpacked and carefully logged in. Tracy's first few years on the job was to create paperwork listing size, color, voltage rating and brand of each item. The papers follow each shipment through the testing procedure of washing, visual and mechanical inspection, date stamp and re-packing.

Tracy took a brief hiatus from CESI about five years ago.

"I had quit after baby number three, but they called and asked me to come back."

She accepted the invitation because CESI offered the flexibility she needed to keep up with her toddlers.



Employee Spotlight

Tracy Lindsey



"This is a good place to work," she said. "It's right here in town and family-oriented."

Family-oriented is a key factor. Tracy and her husband, Michael, also a Walters native, stay pretty busy raising four daughters. Between school, homework, basketball and softball, the couple needs the support provided by an understanding employer.

Eventually, Tracy took on the full-time position as office manager. She is still doing paperwork, processing accounts payable and accounts receivable information, preparing payroll for the lab's three part-time workers, and ordering products that are sold to CESI customers.

Tracy answers the phone and answers questions as best she can.

"Sometimes I have to hand the phone to (lab supervisor) Eric Woods to answer the more technical questions."

One answer she can provide easily. At least once a week, a Cotton Electric member needs directions to the co-op office to pay a power bill. She sends

them east on Colorado and a couple of blocks north.

"All I can figure is their GPS must bring them here."

Tracy still helps out in the lab, writing up orders and occasionally hanging gloves in the machine that runs voltage testing.

She said the service provided by the CESI test lab is very important.

"We could possibly save someone's life by finding flaws in personal protection equipment.

"We take our job seriously. We are proud of what we do. We work hard to make sure the products we test are safe for Cotton employees and those in other places."

So ... no cotton candy?

Tracy laughed. "I don't know where they got that idea. They have quite the imagination.

"They know better. They have been to the lab and have seen we clearly don't make cotton candy.

"But, I guess making cotton candy sounds more interesting to little girls."

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The future is bright at Duncan Opticians. Shop owner Cindy Edwards is looking forward to her son, Nate, joining the business next year when he completes optometry school. Eye exams and corrective lens prescription-writing will make Duncan Opticians a one-stop shop for basic eye care.



Duncan Opticians
10% discount on complete set of glasses (frames & lenses)



If he's not too busy napping, Harley is available for belly rubs and scratching behind the ear.

Duncan Opticians clearly a great choice

By Karen Kaley

You have a choice. When it comes to prescription eyewear, many people realise their choices begin with where to have a vision prescription filled.

"You do not have to get your glasses at the doctors office," Cindy Edwards said. She is one of the opticians at Duncan Opticians on the south end of Elk Plaza shopping center at the intersection of U.S. Highway 81 and Elk Avenue in Duncan.

She explained, "A vision prescription can go anywhere, just like a prescription for medication. Prescriptions belong to the patient, who can then choose where to have it filled."

The prescription comes from an optometrist, a medical professional who provides primary eye care such as routine exams, or an ophthalmologist, a physician with an emphasis in medical and surgical eye care. An optician specializes in making and adjusting glasses that help the customer get the best style and fit for a prescription.

Duncan Opticians has hundreds of frames to choose from in all colors, shapes, and prices. Style choices range from simple and functional to bright and blingy.

After choosing frames, there are choices to make about the lens material and style of lenses. Lenses can be tinted, clear, or treated with coatings to resist scratching or reduce glare.

The store also carries ophthalmic sunglasses, sport glasses and safety glasses.

Certified by the American Board of Opticianry, Edwards can take a look at a current prescription and give you a good idea of how those lenses are going to look in different types of frames.

Many of the glasses are made on site, usually within a day, unless they require a special order lens or a coating that is done elsewhere.

A one-stop shop, Duncan Opticians carries cases, chains and cleaning solution and cloths. There are non-prescription products such as swim goggles, sunglasses, and PC Peekers, which are magnifiers that slip between corrective lenses and the eye to make it easier to see a computer screen.

Duncan Opticians accepts major credit cards and Care Credit, a credit card for medical expenses which offers six-month financing with no interest. They will file insurance claims with most insurers and often remind customers that eyeglasses are an acceptable expense for those using a Section 125 cafeteria plan or flexible spending account.

Any Cotton Electric member purchasing a complete set of frames and lenses can get a 10 percent discount by presenting a Co-op Connections Card.

Edwards offers a bit of education before sending a happy customer on his or her way.

"Don't wipe dry eyeglass lenses with anything; always get them wet to clean them," she said, pointing out the scratch-resistant coatings are not scratch proof.

"Whatever is on your dry shirt tail or handkerchief will scratch a lens, just like it would scratch the paint on a car."

The only scratching that should happen at Duncan Opticians is under the chin of Harley, Cindy Edwards' big dog. He may interrupt his nap in the

back and come up to the front of the shop to sprawl in the sun for yet another nap and perhaps a belly rub.

The Edwards family has owned Duncan Opticians since 1985. The current friendly staff includes Edwards, Jordan Billingsley, and Cindy Allred.

Nate Edwards plans to join his mother in the business next year when he completes optometry school. He is looking forward to adding his optometry practice to Duncan Opticians.

His tagline for the store is: Let our vision help yours.



In order to make eyeglasses with a precise fit for Cotton Electric member Charles Mullins, Cindy Edwards uses a pupillometer to measure the distance between his eyes.

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Simple Savings

Don't get your electric bill caught in a spin cycle! When doing laundry, use cold water. Here are a few more tips for saving energy in the laundry room:

- Don't overdry clothes – 50 minutes often works best for a full load.
- Use the moisture sensor feature on your clothes dryer if it has one. This option shuts down the dryer when clothes are dry.
- Remember to check your lint filter each time before you run a load to help your dryer run more efficiently.
- The most energy-efficient way to dry clothes is with solar power. Use a clothesline during warmer months and let sunlight and breezes dry clothes naturally.
- Want to beat the heat? Run appliances like dishwashers and dryers late in the evening to keep heat they give off from affecting your comfort.
- Make sure your clothes dryer is properly hooked up to boost energy efficiency. The vent hose should be connected tightly and free of kinks.
- Is your washing machine more than 10 years old? According to the U.S. Department of Energy, families can cut related energy costs by more than a third and water costs by more than half by purchasing a clothes washer with an ENERGY STAR label.

Wash away the high cost of summer laundry

By Trent Marlett

Well, summer is here and so is the heat. I always seem to get a whole lot dirtier in the summer, or at least it feels that way. So, I tend to wash more clothes this time of year.

Here are some simple ways to offset the energy consumed by washing and drying clothes during summer.

Unless we are dealing with oily stains on our clothes, the warm or – even better – cold setting on our washing machines will generally do a fine job of cleaning. By simply switching the wash cycle from hot to warm, the U.S. Department of Energy states that we can cut energy use by half on a load of clothes. If we wash in cold water, we can even do much better. Sometimes this does require using a cold-water detergent, though.

Another tip is to wash and dry full loads, running the machines less often than when we do lots of smaller loads. Also, try to dry towels and heavier

cottons in a separate load from lighter weight clothes. Heavy towels make it a lot harder for lighter clothes to dry.

Make sure to clean the dryer's lint screen after every load to improve air circulation and prevent fire hazards.

If at all possible, hang clothes outside and use the summer heat and wind to dry clothes. A typical clothes dryer uses from 4,000 to 6,000 watts. The clothesline uses zero!

Another good idea is to make sure the dryer vent is not clogged. If it is stopped up, it is a fire hazard in addition to causing the dryer to use a lot more energy and run longer.

Finally, for long-term savings, consider replacing old washers and dryers with Energy Star-labeled ones. Energy Star washers clean clothes using 50 percent less water and 37 percent less energy than standard washers.

So, remember these tips to save energy and dollars when hot weather means having to wash more clothes.

2013 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report COTTON COUNTY RURAL WATER DISTRICT #2

We're very pleased to provide you with this year's Annual Drinking Water Quality Report. We want to keep you informed about the excellent water and services we have delivered to you over the past year. Our goal is and always has been, to provide to you a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. This report shows our water quality and what it means.

Our water source is from wells located about 10 miles west of Walters, and 12 miles west of Lawton. An analysis of contamination susceptibility of our source water has been done. The analysis showed that our water's susceptibility to contamination is HIGH. This plan is available for viewing in our office. Information such as potential sources of contamination is listed in the plan.

If you have any questions about this report or concerning your water utility, please contact David Rodriguez at (580) 875-2027. We want our valued customers to be informed about their water utility. If you want to learn more, please attend any of our regularly scheduled meetings. They are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm at 229 N. Broadway in Walters Oklahoma. Cotton County Rural Water #2 routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. This table shows the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1st to December 31st, 2013. (Some of our data may be more than one year old because the state allows us to monitor for some contaminants less often than once per year.) All drinking water, including bottled drinking water, may be reasonably expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. It's important to remember that the presence of these contaminants does not necessarily pose a health risk.

WATER QUALITY DATA TABLE

The table below lists all of the drinking water contaminants we detected for the calendar year of this report. The presence of contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this table is from testing done in the calendar year of the report.

In this table you will find many terms and abbreviations you might not be familiar with. To help you better understand these terms we've provided the following definitions:

- Non-Detects (ND) - laboratory analysis indicates that the constituent is not present.
- Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l)
- Parts per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter (ug/l)
- Parts per trillion (ppt) or Nanograms per liter (nanograms/l)
- Parts per quadrillion (ppq) or Picograms per liter (picograms/l)
- Millirems per year (mrem/yr) - measure of radiation absorbed by the body.
- Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU) - nephelometric turbidity unit is a measure of the clarity of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.
- Action Level (AL) - the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
- Treatment Technique (TT) - A treatment technique is a required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
- Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) - The MCL is the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
- Maximum Contaminant Level Goal - The MCLG is the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.
- Picocuries per liter (pCi/L) - picocuries per liter is a measure of the radioactivity in water.

WATER QUALITY DATA

Contaminant	Violation Yes/No	Highest Level Detected	Range Detected	MCL	MCLG	Likely Source of Contamination
Radiochemical Contaminants						
6. Gross Beta (pCi/L)	No	5.075	0-5.075	50	0	Decay of natural and man-made deposits
7. Gross Alpha (pCi/L)	No	5.075	0-5.075	15	0	Erosion of natural deposits
8. Combined radium 226/228 (pCi/L)	No	0.373	0-0.373	5	0	Erosion of natural deposits
9. Uranium (pCi/L or ug/l)	No	1.8	0-1.8	20.1 pCi/L Or 30 ug/L	0	Erosion of natural deposits
Inorganic Contaminants						
11. Arsenic (ppb)	Yes	13.8	12.4-13.8	10	0	Erosion of natural deposits; runoff from orchards; runoff from glass and electronics production wastes
17. Chlorine (ppm)	No	0.8	0.3-0.8	MRDL = 4	MRDLG = 4	Water additive used to control microbes
26. Nitrate - NO ₃ (ppm) (as Nitrogen)	Yes	15.5	0-15.5	10	10	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits

Radiochemical Contaminants:

- (6) Gross Beta. Certain minerals are radioactive and may emit forms of radiation known as photons and beta radiation. Some people who drink water containing beta and photon emitters in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.
- (7) Gross Alpha. Certain minerals are radioactive and may emit a form of radiation known as alpha radiation. Some people who drink water containing alpha emitters in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.
- (8) Combined Radium 226/228. Some people who drink water containing radium 226 or 228 in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.
- (9) Uranium. Some people who drink water containing uranium in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer and kidney toxicity.

Inorganic Contaminants:

- (11) Arsenic. Some people who drink water containing arsenic in excess of the MCL over many years could experience skin damage or problems with their circulatory system, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.
- (17) Chlorine. Some people who use water containing chlorine well in excess of the MRDL could experience irritating effects to their eyes and nose. Some people who drink water containing chlorine well in excess of the MRDL could experience stomach discomfort.
- (26) Nitrate. Infants below the age of six months who drink water containing nitrate in excess of the MCL could become seriously ill and, if untreated, may die. Symptoms include shortness of breath and blue-baby syndrome.

Inadequately treated water may contain disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites, which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches.

While your drinking water meets EPA's standard for arsenic, it does contain low levels of arsenic. EPA's standard balances the current understanding of arsenic's possible health effects against the costs of removing arsenic from drinking water. EPA continues to research the health effects of low levels of arsenic which is a mineral known to cause cancer in humans at high concentrations and is linked to other health effects such as skin damage and circulatory problems.

Nitrate in drinking water at levels above 10 ppm is a health risk for infants of less than six months of age. High nitrate levels in drinking water can cause blue baby syndrome. Nitrate levels may rise quickly for short periods of time because of rainfall or agricultural activity. If you are caring for an infant you should ask advice from your health care provider.

The table shows that our system uncovered some problems this year. The duration of the violation was January 2013 through December 2013 the potential adverse health effects are Some people who drink water containing arsenic in excess of the MCL over many years could experience skin damage or problems with their circulatory system, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer. Infants below the age of six months who drink water containing nitrate in excess of the MCL could become seriously ill and, if untreated, may die. Symptoms include shortness of breath and blue-baby syndrome. We are correcting this by 2015-2016.

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water before we treat it include:

- *Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations and wildlife.
- *Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining or farming.
- *Pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture and residential uses.
- *Radioactive contaminants, which are naturally occurring.
- *Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbiological contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. Cotton County Rural Water # 2 is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

MCLs are set at very stringent levels. To understand the possible health effects described for many regulated contaminants, a person would have to drink 2 liters of water every day at the MCL level for a lifetime to have a significant increased risk of having the described health effect.

Nitrates: As a precaution we always notify physicians and health care providers in this area if there is ever a higher than normal level of nitrates in the water supply.

The following is the Spanish translation for 'This report contains important information about your drinking water. Get someone to translate for you or talk to someone who understands it well.' Este informe contiene información importante acerca de su agua potable. Haga que alguien lo traduzca para usted o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

In our continuing efforts to maintain a safe and dependable water supply it may be necessary to make improvements in your water system. The costs of these improvements may be reflected in the rate structure. Rate adjustments may be necessary in order to address these improvements.

Thank you for allowing us to continue providing your family with clean, quality water this year. In order to maintain a safe and dependable water supply we sometimes need to make improvements that will benefit all of our customers. These improvements are sometimes reflected as rate structure adjustments. Thank you for understanding. Please call our office if you have questions.

"We at Cotton County Rural Water #2 work around the clock to provide top quality water to every tap", said David Rodriguez.

Is Your Water Safe?

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

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Volunteers from electric cooperatives throughout the state gathered for the 2014 Special Olympics held in Stillwater recently. Demonstrating Concern for Community, a cooperative principle, Cotton Electric volunteers included CEO Warren Langford, left, Jennifer Kriz, Ty Logan, Quaid Ogletree, Cassie DeMarcus and board member Brian DeMarcus. Langford, at right, goes back year after, and said he gets more than he gives from this very rewarding experience.



Download CECF grant applications at cottonelectric.com. Deadline for third-quarter 2014 grant applications is Aug. 27.

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.

Second-quarter CECF grants announced

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

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

The funds are pooled and administered by the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation, a board of directors that meets quarterly to consider grant applications. The board consists of Warren Langford, the co-op's CEO; Tim McCary, president of the co-op's board of trustees; and three representatives from the Cotton Electric service area: Carly Douglass, Danny Marlett and Carter Waid.

The board met June 4 to review 14 grant applications. Grants totaling \$17,509 will be distributed to eight of the applicants. Second-quarter grants include:

- Comanche County Memorial Hospital Ambulance Department will use a \$2,500 CECF grant toward the purchase of an ambulance cot to be used in a vehicle stationed in Cotton County.
- Fiesta in Fuqua will use a \$500 CECF grant to purchase school supplies to be distributed during the Aug. 9 event.
- Girl Scouts of Western Oklahoma will

use a \$2,000 CECF grant to ensure more girls in the Cotton Electric service area are able to have a Girl Scout camping experience during Summer 2015.

•Meers Volunteer Fire Department is in the final weeks of completing a building expansion project. A CECF grant of \$4,409 will cover the expense of a fire alarm system.

•Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma will distribute a \$3,000 CECF grant among schools in the Cotton Electric service area that are participating in the Food for Kids backpack program.

•Stephens County Crime Stoppers will promote safe communities with signage and a software program funded by a \$1,100 CECF grant.

•United Way of Southwest Oklahoma will use a \$2,000 CECF grant toward the purchase of portable equipment to make presentations throughout the region it serves.

•Friends of Waurika Public Library will supplement its summer reading program with lunch for an average of 50 children each weekday during summer. A \$2,000 CECF grant will fund a portion of the lunches.

CECF has awarded grants totaling more than \$762,800 since the foundation was established in 2004.

Applications for third-quarter grants are due by Aug. 27. Downloadable applications are available at CottonElectric.com.



Water strider, submitted by Grandview School



Velvet ant, submitted by Marlow Middle School

Area schools win in Ugly Bug contest

Grandview School and Marlow Middle School were lucky winners of the 17th annual Ugly Bug Contest, sponsored by the Oklahoma Microscopy Society. Each school received a high-quality optical microscope for their school and a visit from scientists who were involved in making the images. The scientists brought along some cool electrical and optical experiments to show the students.

The Ugly Bug Contest began in 1997 as a component of the Oklahoma Microscopy Society's outreach program called SCOPE. The goal of SCOPE as well as the Ugly Bug Contest is to "promote the awareness and usage of microscopy, as its own science, as an element of scientific literacy, and as a tool for stimulating scientific curiosity and discovery."


Each year, every school in the state is invited to enter the Ugly Bug Contest, in hopes of winning the microscopes and other microscopy learning materials offered as prizes.

Students collect, identify, and write a life history of their bugs. Bugs collected must be native to Oklahoma. The ugly bugs are submitted to the Oklahoma Microscopy Society, where they are photographed in an electron microscope. Winning bugs are selected by the society.

Dr. Jin Nakashima from the Oklahoma Microscopy Society visited each of the winning schools to present them with optical microscopes in honor of their winning "ugly" bugs: a Velvet Ant selected by Marlow Middle School and a Water Strider selected by Grandview School in Comanche.

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Got dairy?

Say yes to calcium, protein, vitamins, minerals

June is National Dairy Month, celebrating a nutritious part of a healthy diet.

From cheese, to yogurt to milk and sour cream, there's a lot of variety in this food category. The definition of a "dairy food" is anything made from milk and fluid milk products.

Dairy foods are best known for their contribution of calcium to the diet, but they can also provide protein and vitamins and minerals that contribute to better health. Choose dairy to fill nutritional gaps and add flavor to foods.

Many dairy products provide nutrients critical to health. Most dairy foods contain calcium, protein, potassium, and are often fortified with vitamin D.

Calcium and vitamin D are essential for building bones and teeth in kids and for maintaining bone mass in adults.

Potassium helps maintain a healthy blood pressure. Studies show that diets containing low-fat and no-fat dairy foods improve bone health and blood pressure.

It is important to opt for low-fat or non-fat dairy products most of the time. Dairy foods come from animals, and in their full-fat form are high in saturated fat.

Opting for low-fat or non-fat dairy products does not decrease the amount of calcium, vitamin D, protein, or potassium you are getting from dairy products, it just eliminates the saturat-



Kim Bandelier, MPH, RD, LD

Food For THOUGHT

ed, unhealthy fats.

The exception to this rule is if you are aging and are trying to avoid weight loss. Especially for seniors who eat less as they get older and struggle to keep weight on, low-fat and full-fat dairy foods are actually great ways to add calories and avoid unhealthy weight loss.

There are individuals who cannot tolerate dairy products – either at all or only in small quantities.

If you have a milk allergy, your body reacts to the protein in milk and other dairy products. A true milk or dairy allergy is very dangerous and can result in reactions ranging from hives to anaphylactic shock.

If you are lactose intolerant, your body lacks the enzyme lactase that digests lactose, the sugar in milk. Lactose intolerance usually results in mild to severe GI discomfort, and can be handled by avoiding foods that contain lactose – dairy foods and anything made with dairy – or by taking the enzyme lactase before meals containing dairy.

Individuals who cannot eat dairy products should take supplements or consume fortified foods to make up the nutrient deficits.

For more information about dairy foods, visit <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy.html>. You will find recommendations for how much you should consume, and how to fill the nutritional gap if you do not consume dairy foods.



Boost your backyard barbecue

(Family Features) This summer, skip the trips to expensive steakhouses and entice neighbors to your backyard with the mouthwatering aroma of sizzling steaks. Award-winning grilling pros Chris Lilly and Tuffy Stone lend their expertise to help you create the most flavorful and tender steaks.

According to ten-time world champion pitmaster Chris Lilly, a hands-off strategy is the secret to a perfectly seared steak. No matter what doneness level you're aiming to achieve, resist the urge to flip steak more than once. This allows the exterior of the meat to crisp while the inside cooks evenly all

the way through. Searing over high heat also helps to seal in flavor Lilly says, unlike gas grills charcoal can easily achieve temperatures of more than 800 degrees Fahrenheit to enhance the flavor profile of your steak.

For more recipes, tips and tricks visit www.grilling.com

Grilled New York Strip with Virginia Bacon Brown Butter Sauce and Balsamic Drizzle

- 1 1/2 inch thick cut New York strip steak
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt and freshly cracked pepper
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 strips of thick cut Virginia bacon, sliced in strips
- 1/2 cup balsamic vinegar

Season both sides of steak with salt and pepper. Allow steaks to sit for 30 minutes at room temperature.

For butter sauce, take 1 tablespoon each of butter and bacon, and sauté in pan to render fat out of bacon, browning and crisping it. Drain fat from pan, leaving bacon. Add remaining 1 tablespoon of butter to sauté pan with ba-

con and brown butter over high heat.

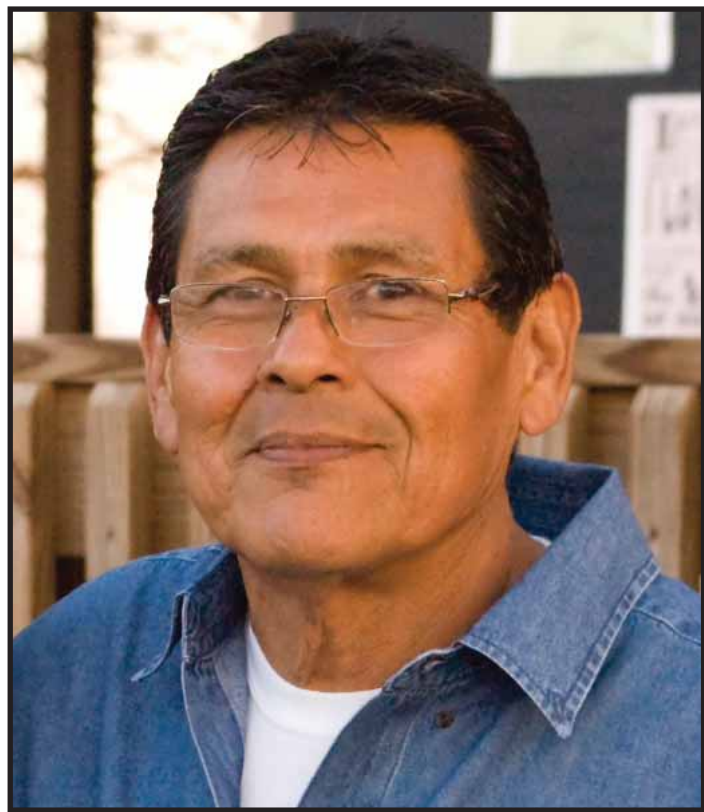
For balsamic drizzle, place vinegar in sauce pan and reduce to 1/4 cup or until it coats spoon.

Set up fire for direct grilling with Kingsford charcoal. While grill heats, remove steaks from refrigerator to come to room temperature.

When briquets are burning hot, pour coals into bottom grill and place grate on top. Once grill has reached 700°F, place steak on grill and cook for approximately 6 minutes, then flip. Cook approximately 6 minutes more and then flip again. Cook for about 5 minutes more, flip and cook until steak reaches an internal temp of 126°F for medium rare steak.

Allow steak to rest for 5 minutes. Spoon bacon brown butter sauce over steak and drizzle with balsamic reduction. Serve hot.

Re-Elect Ed Eschiti, Commissioner, District #1, Cotton County



Proven leadership is evidenced by accomplishments. You know me, my name is Ed Eschiti. I am currently the county commissioner for District 1 of Cotton County. I would like to share with you what my county staff and I have been able to accomplish in the last three years.

My first few weeks in office, our county was hit by a very large snow storm. It took my team one week to clear the residential drive entrances to my constituents' homes and one and a half weeks to clear the county roads.

I have aggressively been updating the District 1 county barn. My crew and I have redone the back room and the office which houses our phone systems, filing system and computers. Now we have a safe place to store our county information as well as a climate-controlled place for lunch and breaks.

Since I took office in January of 2011, we have had only one industrial accident during the snow storm of 2011. That morning, we had a safety talk as we do every Monday morning. We cover equipment use and safety, personal safety on the job site and proper use of legs, back and body during the course of the week.

One of the greatest areas of management in the district is the supervised use of Department of Corrections labor. For instance, from February of 2011 to May of 2013, we spent \$1,733.14 to pay D.O.C. workers and saved the county \$105,600 in labor costs. Our men from the D.O.C. worked with heavy equipment loading, packing, grading and running a back hoe to assist us in the "Faulk Store Road Project" and the "5 Mile Project". Another significant achievement was the donation from the Comanche Tribe, in the amount of \$27,204.21, to help with the "Faulk Store Road Project".

Former Sheriff Paul Jefferies and myself were able to retire the existing note on two county patrol cars with the assistance of a donation from the Comanche Nation of \$16,198.25.

I brought to the attention of the Comanche Nation Housing Authority that there were unpaid taxes as far back as 2006. We collected \$14,274.56 for the county with the assistance of the Comanche Nation Housing Authority.

Spraying weeds, cutting trees, grading roads, removing and replacing tin horns, digging ditches and general maintenance of county equipment are all a part of our daily duties.

You will find listed below some interesting facts about Cotton County's current team of commissioners:

The county has spent \$147,000 on 1 1/2" Crusher Run rock, which equates to 24,633 tons or 1,643 truckloads since August of 2012.

The county process for new bridges takes about five years from beginning to end. We completed two bridges that were in process at the time that I took office; Bridge #1097 (9 miles west on Highway 5), which began in December of 2009, and the CIRB Bridge (north of the elevator), which began in April of 2009. The total cost for both bridges was \$2,473,400. We also have two more bridges in the works that are estimated to cost \$1,306,217.

We have completed two special projects. The first project was the ground work at the Walters Public School, where the new elementary school building and the Vo-ag building sit. Our offices helped to save the school over \$60,000 in labor and equipment costs in preparing the dirt work for the foundation.

The second project was assisting the city of Walters in preparing the foundation for the new culverts at the Walters Co-op Elevator. We unloaded six 20,000-lb. culverts and readied them to be place in the drainage ditch on the east side of the Co-op.

At the present time, my district has a standing agreement to work with the City of Walters and the Walters Public Schools on any projects that may require our equipment or expertise. My district has also purchased approximately \$184,000 worth of fuel to date.

We cleaned up the yard (District equipment yard) and sold \$9,000 worth of scrap metal for the county.

As an ongoing update, we were able to purchase the following equipment:

- Dodge Pickup
- Dodge Pickup
- Dodge Ram Pickup
- JD Tractor/Loader
- Tractor w/Loader
- Grader 670G
- Loaders/Backhoe
- Wood Chipper
- Viking Trailer
- Texas Brag Trailer
- Rotary Cutter
- Mower
- Shredder

We spent \$572,089.98 on equipment between 2011 and present.

The achievement from which I will receive the most satisfaction will come to pass this July. With vision, determination and lots of help from the ambulance board, we are securing a contract with Comanche County Memorial Hospital for not only the voters of Cotton County District #1, but for all the citizens of Cotton County. This should be the goal of all county officials, to work together for the good of all of our citizens.

It has been a very challenging term, with many unexpected twists and turns, but the county employees and I have risen to the occasion. A good leader, leads by example.

When you vote, vote for continued leadership, which is looking to be progressive and upgrade District #1 in Cotton county. Vote Ed Eschiti, commissioner.

Paid Advertisement by Ed Eschiti

SUMMER ENERGY EFFICIENCY: Myth vs. Fact

Myth #1: When I'm not home, keeping my air conditioner at a lower temperature throughout the day means it doesn't have to run harder to cool my home when I return.

FACT: To save energy, set your thermostat to a higher temperature during the day, and lower it when you return home.

Myth #2: Closing vents on my central air conditioning system will boost efficiency.

FACT: Closing vents can cause the compressor to cycle too frequently and the heat pump to overload. You'll also use more energy.

Myth #3: Time of day doesn't matter when it comes to running my appliances.

FACT: Time of day does matter when running electrical loads. For example, take advantage of the delay setting and run your dishwasher at night to avoid peak times of use and save energy.

Myth #4: Bigger is always better when it comes to cooling equipment.

FACT: Too often, cooling equipment isn't sized properly and leads to higher electric bills. A unit that's too large for your home will not cool evenly and might produce higher humidity indoors.



Know the facts during peak season

June 20 marks the beginning of Cotton Electric Cooperative's annual Beat the Peak program. Beat the Peak is a voluntary program designed to help members lower their power bills by using energy more efficiently and by reducing the energy consumed during peak periods when prices are higher.

There are two major factors that affect the price of electricity: the price of fuel such as coal or natural gas needed to generate power, and the demand for power. The demand for electricity in Oklahoma is greater in the hot summer months between the peak period hours of 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

To meet the demand for power needed at peak usage times, electric suppliers must produce the power themselves or purchase it on the market. The costs are greater during peak time when demand is high.

These higher costs are reflected in the power cost adjustment applied to the monthly bill for the cooperative. Cotton Electric launched Beat the Peak as a way to help take control of higher power costs. Here's how it works:

When the cooperative determines that a peak situation exists, participating members will be notified by email or text message. Members will be asked to help conserve en-

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

By Jennifer Meason

ergy by turning off lights or appliances that are not needed.

Participating members will also be asked to adjust their thermostats a few degrees, delay the use of major appliances such as dishwashers, washing machines, clothes dryers and postpone hot water use.

"The more participating members we have, the better for the cooperative in general," said Warren Langford, CEO for Cotton Electric.

"Prices are very high during peak periods and that increases the power cost adjustment on every member's bill. If we all become more energy aware and make a few modifications, we can make a difference."

Members who sign up for the program will be entered into prize drawings for energy efficiency kits. To sign up for the program, please visit our website at www.cottonelectric.com.

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Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge is in the No. 1 spot on the TravelOK.com list of the 10 most beautiful places to visit in Oklahoma.

Oklahoma has many great destinations

With the summer travel season upon us, many Oklahomans are making plans for their summer vacations. I would encourage Oklahomans to look in our own backyard and explore all that Oklahoma has to offer this summer. All ages and all travel enthusiasts can find something of interest here at home!

You can get a great perspective on Oklahoma's diverse terrain by visiting one of our 35 state parks. From the highest point in Oklahoma at Black Mesa, to the southeastern corner at Beavers Bend, there are a variety of venues located all across the state. Whether you like to camp or if you would rather stay in a cabin or lodge room, there is a wide range of options for groups of all sizes.

Privately-owned concessions at many parks offer a variety of entertaining activities for guests on and off the water. Family-oriented venues in some parks include miniature golf, snow cone stands, bumper boats, trains, canoes, kayaks and water sports.



Lt. Gov. Todd Lamb

If you love the lake but don't own a boat, you can still enjoy fun on the waves. Marina operations in several parks offer fishing boats, houseboat and personal watercraft rentals, gas docks, ship stores and slip rentals. With so many activities available at state parks, everyone in the family can find an activity they are interested in and all will have a great time.

By staying in Oklahoma to vacation this summer, families will get more bang for their buck. Instead of paying for pricy airline tickets, you can stretch your dollars by enjoying many affordable options right here at home. Plus, by staying in Oklahoma, you make an impact on our economy. Tourism in Oklahoma is big business: in 2012, tourism generated \$7.1 billion dollars for the state's economy.

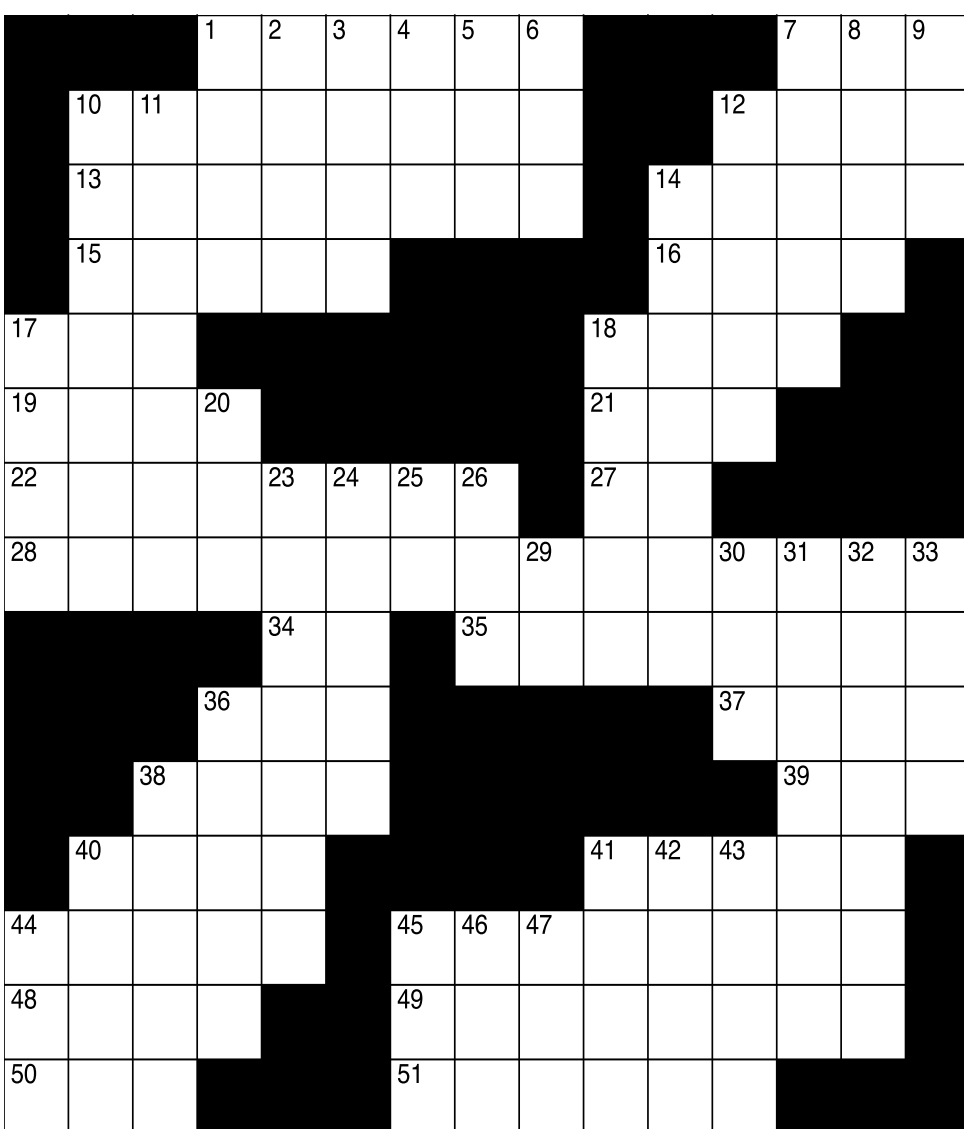
Vacation planning is made easy by visiting Oklahoma's official travel website - www.TravelOK.com. There are options to search by Festivals and Events, Family Activities, History and Heritage, Road Trips, Arts and Culture, and many more. Each option allows a search for exactly what you are looking for and gives you helpful hints and suggestions to help you find the perfect trip for you and your family.

On www.TravelOK.com, you can also order guides and brochures to help plan your road trip. Two of the most popular guides are the Travel Guide and the Outdoor Guide. These publications feature attractions from across the state and will help you plan a memorable Oklahoma vacation.

As always, my office is open and ready to help you in any way we can. I am excited to hear your ideas on how we can increase economic development across the state. Feel free to visit our website at www.ok.gov/lrgovernor, or call our office at 405-521-2161.

ACROSS

1. Missouri River tributary
7. Orange-brown African antelope
10. Access steps
12. Scottish word for gutter
13. Oiled whetstone
14. Tranquility
15. Indian rat snake genus
16. Competent
17. Premier ___ Wine
18. Carbamide
19. Belongs to "2001" computer
21. Campaign commission
22. Lives without oxygen
27. Blue Hen school
28. Herb-grinding tools
34. "Fast Five" star's initials
35. Does not pay debts
36. Word element meaning life
37. Town of 1993 Texas siege
38. Prohibitions
39. Cardboard box (abbr.)
40. Hillside (Scot.)
41. Yemen capital
44. Plural of 40 across
45. Cloths showing needlework skills
48. Settled a debt
49. Cause annoyance in
50. Million gallons per day (abbr.)



DOWN

1. Pale (archaic)
2. ___ Marie Presley
3. Bachelor of ___
4. Deuce
5. Light brown color
6. Vision organ
7. Australian bear
8. A single occurrence
9. Stinging insect
10. High voice
11. About title
12. Medieval fiddle
14. Marched in a procession
17. People of Southeast Asia
18. Hoopoe bird genus
20. Unit of a tennis match
23. Steep-sided valleys
24. China's largest ghost town
25. Undergraduate degree
26. Finish
29. 1st state
30. South by west
31. Tea wagon
32. Lactaid enzyme
33. British prep school
36. Blatted
38. Woven pigtail
40. Boast
41. Saliva
42. Countertenor
43. Close by
44. Beats per minute
45. Tiny drink
46. Macaws
47. Married woman



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Randall Higdon gets soaked on a bumper boat ride.

Campers have 'amazing' week

Continued from Page One

DJ Ray Opalka selected the first two songs, and the rest of night was filled with requests. The first karaoke campers chose was "Don't Stop Believin'," a power ballad more than twice as old as those singing.

Again, the day closed with happy exhaustion. A few tears were shed that evening and the next morning as campers realized they would be leaving soon.

Strongman Kaleb Wright presented the last demonstration at 2014 Youth-

Power Energy Camp, showing how all people have the power to overcome problems.

The campers wrote notes to the cops, their parents and themselves on that final morning. "Amazing" was the most popular description of the experience.

Random campers were asked throughout the four days, "Is Energy Camp all you thought it would be?"

The enthusiastic answer was always the same: "It's so much more! I don't want it to end!"

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At left, Cy Ulloa carries a bucket of water to the front of the line during No Brains Olympics.

Below, Kassidy Randall focused on a few arcade games when Energy Campers visited Celebration Station.



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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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Clockwise, from top: Energy Camper Toby Denny takes a ride in the bucket of a utility truck. Devin Mitchell gets help strapping on lineman's gaffs or hooks that will help him climb a utility pole. Shalyn Bowles is promoted to princess during a communication game at Energy Camp. More photos on Page 24.



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Farm to You

Interactive display leads kids along nutrition's path

By Karen Kaley

Young people are bombarded with information and advice – some good, some bad. It takes a little creativity to plant and nurture a good message so it can grow to have a profound, possibly lifelong impact.

Poor eating habits and sedentary lifestyles among Oklahoma's youth indicate the need to put some creativity into educating children on the importance of eating healthy and being physically active.

It is also important for children to know where food comes from and how their food choices and personal care habits are related to their health.

"Eat your grains and vegetables" and "Drink your milk" are good pieces of advice. In Oklahoma, we can take that a step further and point out that many of those healthy foods come from nearby.

"Brush and floss your teeth" and "Get plenty of exercise" are important, too. We hear it all our lives, but it helps to know why.

Some Oklahoma schoolchildren are learning these things from "Farm to You," an interactive, walk-through display geared toward kindergarten through sixth-grade students. The exhibit features 10 stations that take the students from the farm and through the body.

In early May, Stephens County students at Bray, Empire, Velma-Alma and Mark Twain Elementary visited the 10 stations that make up the Farm to You agricultural and health adventure: Farmer Pete's Garden, Pete's Chicken Coop, Pete's Dairy Farm, Pete's Fields of Grains, Mouth, Stomach, Small Intestine, Muscle, Bone and Skin.

Farm to You is a collaborative effort of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, Oklahoma State University's Department of Nutritional Sciences, Oklahoma State Department of Health and Southwest Dairy Farmers.

Lisa Taylor, a registered dietitian, serves as the state coordinator for Farm to You. She said the various stations are designed to reinforce the MyPlate guidelines developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"The first four stations are the agricultural part of the Farm to You exhibit," she said on a recent walk-through of the 40-foot by 40-foot exhibit.

Groups of 10 students spend about six minutes at each station while volunteers talk about growing fruits and vegetables, the protein derived from cows and chickens, how much milk a cow will produce and the abundance of wheat grown in Oklahoma.

The hands-on nature of the exhibit offers the chance to harvest a garden's



Velma-Alma Elementary School students harvest items grown in the garden portion of the Farm to You exhibit.

bounty, collect eggs, milk a cow and feel the difference between grains of wheat and barley.

How nutrients are used by the body are explained when the children enter the mouth of the interior stations. After discussing ways to care for teeth and gums, the kids look over a model of a mouth, one side healthy, one side plagued with gingivitis and tooth decay.

They travel to the stomach and learn about how different nutrients benefit different body parts. Portion size is demonstrated with a deck of cards representing meat, a baseball for cereal and a computer mouse for pasta.

Students move through a villi-lined passage to the small intestine where they handle a length of rope and learn that moving it too quickly or too slowly symbolizes problems in waste elimination. They learn the importance of fiber and are told to "poop along" to the next station.

At the muscle station, they hear about the heart and get to compare the feel and weight differences between muscle and fat.

The discuss bones at the next station, filling in holes with blocks representing milk, cheese and ice cream.

At the skin station, they discuss the protection offered by helmets and sunscreen. They form a double line and

children in one line have their palms dusted with talcum powder before shaking the hands of those in the other line. A black light helps them see how germs can transfer from one hand to another.

"The importance of the information available in this exhibit can be found in the major health issues prevalent in our target audience," Taylor said.

"Children in kindergarten through sixth grade don't normally consume enough fruits and vegetables. They often have excessive calorie consumption and low physical activity levels which contribute to being overweight. Being overweight as a child increases the risk of developing diabetes and cardiovascular disease later in life.

"This age group also has a high prevalence of dental decay, low consumption of milk and dairy foods and high rate of smoking among adolescents and teens.

"Eating habits and lifestyle practices develop early in life, so it's important to promote a healthy lifestyle at an early age. The Farm to You exhibit does just that."

More information about Farm to You is available at www.farmtoyou.okstate.edu, or by contacting Taylor at 405-713-1125, or lisa.a.taylor@okstate.edu.



Velma-Alma Elementary School students try their hand at milking a cow in the dairy segment of the Farm to You exhibit.



Farm to You exhibits demonstrate the benefits of good nutrition such as a healthy mouth and the drawbacks of poor nutrition such as gum disease and dental cavities.

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