

The Current

A Publication of Cotton Electric Cooperative Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

“The Current - Informing Our Members Since 1957”

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NUMBER 1



Come on out! Annual Meeting is Sept. 27 in Lawton

Pull out your calendars, Cotton Electric members, and put a big red circle around Sept. 27. That’s the day for the 2018 Annual Membership Meeting.

On that Thursday, come to the Great Plains Coliseum at 920 SW Sheridan Road in Lawton. Starting at 5:30 p.m., members can turn in registration slips – the top right corner of this page.

Next, we’ll treat you to a barbecue dinner and all the fixin’s, cooked up by Adventures in Catering of Mustang.

There will be time to stroll around the venue and visit many points of interest. Cotton Electric employees will have booths set up for members to gather information about our vegetation management program, home energy evaluations and how to report a power outage.

Co-op Connections partners will be on hand, too. All Cotton Electric employees will be present, so be sure to take advantage of this opportunity to put a face with a voice on the telephone, to voice a concern or learn more about what the co-op does for its members.

The co-op’s Board of Trustees, composed of members representing nine districts, will be on hand as well.

A new feature for the Lawton site this year is a photo booth, complete with props to make it look as though you and your friends and family are in the basket of a utility truck.

A children’s area will include kids’ goodies, bounce houses and entertainment from Star Spangle the clown. Kids can also fill out registration forms for prize drawings at the end of the evening.

There will be adult goodies, too. Each registered member will get a gift ticket to exchange for one gift bag containing a limited edition cap and other surprises.

The business meeting required by the co-op’s bylaws begins at 7 p.m. on the dot. Board President Ronnie Bohot will call the meeting to order and other board members will present reports. CEO Jennifer Meason will also address the membership.

When all cooperative issues have been discussed and the business meeting is adjourned, prize drawings will be held.

Food, fun and prizes. What a great way to spend the evening. We hope to see you there!

The official annual report on the income and expenses of the cooperative is included in this issue of The Current. The report includes financial information pertaining to the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation and a recap of gross receipts taxes paid by the co-op.



Membership benefits include discounts

By Danielle Quickle

In my very short time working at Cotton Electric Cooperative, there have been two things that I have noticed to be our top priorities: safety and our members.

As part of our efforts for member engagement, Cotton Electric provides a booth at the Lawton Home and Garden Show each spring and the Stephens County Free Fair each summer.

Members have the opportunity to stop by the booth to meet some of our employees, ask questions about energy efficiency and pick up some Cotton Electric goodies. One of the goodies we always have for our members is the Co-op Connections card.

The Co-op Connections card offers co-op members product and service discounts at participating retail businesses. In turn, participating local businesses



benefit from increased customer traffic, and from promotion in co-op communications, such as the list on Page 13.

Each member is entitled to a free card that can be used for themselves or for immediate family members. Simply show the card at participating local and national businesses to receive a variety of discounted prices.

Perhaps one of the most popular discounts the card offers is the healthy savings.

By using your Co-op Connections card, you will receive a 10 to 85 percent discount on prescription drugs at more than 60,000 national and regional pharmacy chain stores including CVS, Walgreens, Walmart, Target and more. Cotton Electric members have saved more than \$600,000 in prescription discounts since the program began in April 2008.

The card cannot be used in conjunction with insurance. However, you can use your card for products and services not covered by your insurance plans.

Discounts are also available for dental and vision care, hearing aids, lab work and imaging and chiropractic treatments.

Get ahead of the holiday season shopping with your Co-op Connections card. Members can save by online shopping at more than 3,000 retailers.

Vendors like Walmart, Best Buy, Target and Bass Pro allow members to earn

cash back with every purchase.

Take discounts on the go with savings on hotels, car rentals, entertainment and dining.

It would be impossible for me to list every single discount the Co-op Connections card has to offer. An easy way to discover all the ways to save is to visit Connections.Coop\CottonElectric and HealthySavings.Coop where 32,000 discounts are made available for you.

Search “Co-op Connections” in the App Store or Google Play to download your free app and have access to all of your savings anytime, anywhere.

Can’t find your card or never received one? No problem, contact us at 580-875-3351 or info@cottonelectric.com. We will provide you with a card, answer any questions you may have and make sure you are getting the most out of your membership.

Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment now being applied to bills mailed after Sept. 1, 2018, is (\$0.01690) per kWh.

On a member’s average bill of 1250 kilowatt hours (kWh), this will amount to a credit of \$21.13 on the Sept. bill.

August 2018 Temperature Extremes

Day	High	Low	Avg.	Day	High	Low	Avg.
1	93	61	77	16	97	73	83
2	96	67	82	17	102	73	88
3	100	69	85	18	92	75	84
4	100	73	87	19	90	71	81
5	101	74	88	20	89	67	78
6	101	68	85	21	90	63	77
7	103	71	87	22	92	70	81
8	93	73	83	23	102	71	87
9	96	69	83	24	102	73	88
10	98	68	83	25	102	72	87
11	94	69	82	26	100	74	87
12	87	66	77	27	102	76	89
13	78	70	74	28	103	78	91
14	95	68	82	29	102	74	88
15	96	72	84	30	102	72	87
				31	102	73	88

Source: srb.noaa.gov/oun/
Average Daily High: 97 Average Daily Low: 71

Did You Know?

The SmartHub app provides access to your Cotton Electric account via your mobile device. Manage payments, notify member service of account and service issues and check your power use all at the touch of a button. The next issue of The Current should arrive in mailboxes on Oct. 9, 2018.

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.

What’s Inside

Operating Stats	2
Co-op News	2-3
Community	4,12
Co-op News	5-6
Puzzles	7
Recipes	8-9
Co-op News	10-11
Classifieds	14-19

More news at cottonelectric.com

CLIP OUT AND BRING TO ANNUAL MEETING

BE SURE TO LEAVE NAME LABEL ATTACHED

From the CEO

Resiliency means many things to co-op

Resiliency of the grid is one of the most popular concepts being talked about in the electric industry today. This concept recently made headlines in the wake of Hurricanes Irma and Maria, which caused extraordinary damage to Puerto Rico’s electric grid resulting in the longest sustained outage in U.S. history. Lack of resilience became the go-to phrase to describe Puerto Rico’s grid. Here in Oklahoma, what does grid resiliency mean for you? Resiliency is many things – it’s reliability in your electric service, it’s our ability to efficiently restore your power, it’s being able to meet the demands of new technology and it’s how we serve you with various generation sources without skipping a beat. Ultimately, resilience is how we deliver on our promise to improve the quality of life for our member-owners. When it comes to having a resilient electric grid, it begins with a system that is designed and built to withstand high winds, powerful storms, cybersecurity threats and other disruptions that could result in outages.



Jennifer Meason, CEO

A resilient grid is also flexible and adaptable by allowing different types of generation – such as wind, natural gas, solar, coal and hydro – to seamlessly work together to provide you with safe and reliable power. The way our systems react to advancements in technology – from demand response investments to serving the needs of electric vehicles – all factor into the resilience of our grid. Resiliency is a 24/7, 365-days-a-year task. Whether it’s the power lines, substations or generation facilities on our grid, it takes proactive maintenance and investment to keep them running smoothly. With thousands of consumers without power for months, the lack of resiliency in Puerto Rico’s power grid wasn’t solely caused by hurricane damage; it was the result of years of neglect in taking care of their system. In a similar way to how we maintain our vehicles with regular oil changes, inspections and tire rotations, a grid must also be properly maintained. Throughout the year, we regularly conduct pole and line inspections. Our goal is to find a problem before it becomes one. For example, if we find a weak pole that is damaged, we replace that pole. Doing so ensures that pole is as strong – or as resilient – as it can be. Last year, we inspected 8,300 poles, leading to the replacement of 833.

Another major aspect of how we improve grid resiliency is our vegetation management program. Members have seen continued improvement in the ability of the system to weather storms with minimal damage. Clear cutting, trimming and herbicide application are key. Living in Oklahoma, we know that significant power outages can occur throughout the year. It seems as though no season is immune. Whether we’re at the mercy of ice storms, tornadoes or high winds, we have confidence in the resiliency of our system to recover from the situation with as little disruption as possible. For example, a recent summer storm in the Holister area resulted in 53 broken poles and 3 miles of line to rebuild. I was extremely proud of our employees and contractors who worked around the clock to have power restored by the next day. In the dictionary, resilience is defined as “the ability to bounce back, recover quickly and go back into shape or position after being stretched.” When it comes to providing our member-owners with resilient service, this is what we work toward – day in and day out.

CECF announces third-quarter grants

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

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

The funds are pooled and administered by the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation (CECF), a board of directors that meets quarterly to consider grant applications. The board consists of Jennifer Meason, the co-op’s CEO; Ronnie Bohot, 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 in August to review 13 grant applications. Grants totaling \$25,170 were pledged to eight of the applicants. Third-quarter grants include:

•Break Bread Together: A \$770 CECF grant will purchase a freezer to provide more storage for food.

- Central High Public Schools: A \$2,400 CECF grant will provide 20 Chromebooks for their classrooms.
- Chattanooga Fire and Rescue: A \$7,500 CECF grant will purchase seven sets of wildland firefighting personal protective equipment.
- Chattanooga Public Schools: A \$4,500 CECF grant will purchase 15 programmable thermostats for the school.
- Geronimo Elementary School: A \$3,000 CECF grant will purchase two digital signs, one to be placed in front of the high school and the other in front of the elementary school.
- Make-A-Wish Oklahoma: A \$2,500 grant will sup-



Download CECF grant applications at CottonElectric.com.
Deadline for fourth-quarter 2018 grant applications is Nov. 21.

Operation Round Up is a voluntary program and members may opt out at any time by calling or sending a letter or email stating the account holder’s name, account number and the request to be removed.

port wishes from children and their families in Cotton Electric service territory who have been dealt unimaginable circumstances.

•Stephens County Humane Society: A \$1,000 CECF grant will support kennel upgrades.

CECF has pledged \$3,500 to Camp Waluhi’yi in support of an Eagle Scout project to purchase and install a fishing dock. The grant will be issued once all funds are raised.

CECF has awarded or pledged grants totaling \$1,113,500.22 since the foundation was established in 2004.




MONEY
back to
YOU

Capital Credits will be retired soon

Cotton Electric Cooperative and Western Farmers Electric Cooperative will be retiring Capital Credits in October. Qualifying members will receive a check in the mail.

More information will be included in the October issue of The Current.






Energy Efficiency
Tip of the Month

Turn off kitchen, bath and other exhaust fans within 20 minutes after you’re done cooking or bathing. When replacing exhaust fans, consider installing high-efficiency, low-noise models.

Source: energy.gov

TheCurrent

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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.

July 2018 Operating Stats

	2017	2016
Total Amount Billed/Accrued	\$6,119,547	\$6,036,411
Cost of Purchased Power	4,013,384	3,869,305
Taxes	120,917	113,610
Total Operating Expense Per Mile	1,109	1,050
Average Farm and Residential Bill	179	179
Average Farm and Residential kWh	1,707	1,594
Total Meters Billed (farm, residential)	18,420	18,282
Miles Energized	5,176	5,166
Density Per Mile	3.56	3.54
New Service Connects YTD	168	157
Services Retired	57	86

VM crew moving toward Duncan Lake area

Cotton Electric’s Vegetation Management (VM) program is a proactive effort to ensure quality power delivery. Aggressive and preventive vegetation management is a good value to the co-op’s members from a service and an economic perspective. Keeping trees away from power lines is also a matter of safety.

Scott Crew, vegetation management coordinator for Cotton Electric, oversees an in-house crew and several contract crews in the year-round effort to clear trees and prevent regrowth.

He said all tree-clearing crews make every effort to contact land and home owners in person as they move into an area. In some cases, they will leave bright-colored door hangers either at the house or tied to a gate post.

“Please call the number on the hanger or call me at 580-875-4224. Plan to leave



a message,” he said, noting that he is likely to be out on the job.

After trees are cleared, crews return to the area at regularly scheduled intervals to apply a specially formulated herbicide that will prevent tree growth while protecting grasses. Spraying is done only during the growing season.

During the third quarter of the year, clearing crews are working in these areas: Bacco Tree Service of Claremore is

completing re-trim work on lines extending west from the Paradise substation. The lines are north and west of Lake Ellsworth in Comanche County.

They are also working on lines extending from the Hulen substation. They started south of U.S. Highway 70 in the Cache Creek area and are working their way north to Oklahoma Highway 7.

Family Tree Service is completing hot spot work in the Walters and Geronimo areas.

The ROW department is assessing the condition of lines serving the Duncan Lake areas. Action in those areas will begin this Fall. As always, Cotton’s vegetation management crews will work with district linemen on ROW clearing where needed throughout the service area.

Scott Crew said his crews are always looking for land and home owners in

need of free untreated wood chips. Because these chips are untreated, it is not recommended to use them next to a structure.

Landowners looking for material to help with erosion problems may want to contact the co-op, too. With the new skid steer, the ROW crew can deliver stumps and other debris too large to chip or mulch.

Chips and large debris will be delivered to members nearest the day’s work location. Work crews will deliver wood chips only to members they can reach by phone and whose location is nearest the day’s work. There is no guarantee a member will receive wood chips at any particular time.

Leave a message at 580-875-4224 to have your name added to the list of members willing to take wood chips.



MEMBERS:

Never give out personal information to a caller demanding immediate payment.

Co-op members may be subject to scammers

Scammers are targeting energy consumers everywhere. They often call threatening to shut off power unless payment is made immediately.

Or they may call saying you overpaid and ask for credit card or bank info to provide a credit.

Be a savvy consumer: Never give out personal information to anyone who calls claiming to be from your utility.

Many of these scam attempts play out like this: the caller poses as a representative of your power provider, says you are behind on the bill and a truck is on the way to disconnect your service unless you pay your bill right now – over the phone.

Some ask their targets to purchase prepaid cards and

call back with the prepaid card number to pay the bill.

Don’t fall for these scams. Any possible disconnection would be preceded by written notice in the mail, possibly with your bill.

Your utility will never call demanding immediate payment over the phone. If you get such a call, or have questions about your bill, call your utility using the number they provide on the bill or online.

Three separate notices will be mailed to members in the event of potential disconnection. If your provider needs to replace or service equipment in your home, they will contact you in advance.

Never respond to an email that claims to be from your utility that provides a link for payment or asks for

personal information. If members suspect someone is trying to scam them, they should hang up, delete the email, or shut the door. They should call Cotton Electric Cooperative at the number on their monthly bill – 580-875-3551 or 800-522-3520 - not the phone number the scammer provides.

If members ever feel that they are in physical danger, they should call 911.

Members who suspect that they have been victims of fraud should also contact local law enforcement authorities.

The Federal Trade Commission’s website (www.ftc.gov) is also a good source of information about how to protect personal information.

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Community Spotlight

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

CTHC offers session for schools

Chisholm Trail Heritage Center kicks off the school year with the Abernathy Boys session running from Sept. 4 through Oct. 31. Teachers are encouraged to bring their classes to learn about Oklahoma's first celebrities.

Temple and Bud Abernathy were 5 and 9 years old when their father sent them on their first adventure through several states. The young brothers traveled on horseback, in automobiles and even on motorcycles.

Students will get to see a 1910 Brush automobile – identical to the one the boys drove from New York City to Oklahoma when they were 6 and 10 years old.

To schedule a session date for the Abernathy Boys, contact Leah at 580-252-6692 or Leah@OnTheChisholmTrail.com.

Chamber hosts annual business expo

Lawton Fort Sill Chamber of Commerce presents the 2018 Southwest Oklahoma Business Expo beginning at 4 p.m. Sept. 13 at the Great Plains Coliseum.

Shop Lawton as area merchants and service providers will be under one roof showcasing local goods and services available. Entry fee is two non-perishable goods for the Lawton Food Bank.

For more information, contact Sharleen Gehers at 580-355-3541 or sgehers@lawtonfortsillchamber.com.

Prather performs Sept. 13

Prairie Circuit Finals Rodeo committee presents Chad Prather at 7:30 p.m. Sept. 13 at the Simmons Center Theatre in Duncan.

Prather, a comedian and motivational speaker, is known for his social media posts and YouTube series offering his take on current events and politics.

Tickets are \$20 and are available at Crutcher's Western Wear in Duncan and Lawton and at the Simmons Center Box Office.

For more information about Chad Prather or the Prairie Circuit Finals Rodeo, visit PrairieCircuitFinalsRodeo.com.

LPO presents Willy Falk

Lawton Philharmonic Orchestra kicks off the 2018-19 season with Willy Falk: Mostly Love at 7 p.m. Sept. 14 at the Hilton Garden Inn.

Originally from Lawton, Falk has performed on Broadway for many years.

Sponsored by EZ Go, Lawton Fort Sill Chamber of Commerce and Hilton Garden Inn, the event will include cash bar and light refreshments.

Enjoy an evening of love songs and more from the Tony Award nominated Broadway star.

Tickets and sponsorship are available at Phillips Music Co. in Lawton or by calling 580-531-5043.

DLT presents series of 'Shorts'

Duncan Little Theatre continues the 2018 season with a return of the popular "Evening of Shorts."

Presentations of short skits of comedy, drama and more from new playwrights and local writers will be at 7:30 p.m. each night Sept. 14, 15, 21 and 22 at the Marlow Opera House.

Tickets can be purchased at the door or at DuncanLittleTheatre.com.

Coin show in Stephens County

Duncan's Annual Coin Show is held from noon to 6 p.m. Sept. 15 and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sept. 16 at the Stephens County Fairgrounds.

Guests will receive appraisals on gold, silver, currency, coins, tokens and supplies. Event includes free parking, admission and refreshments.

For information, contact Ed McGill at 580-475-4570.

Lawton hosts Care2Cure Car Show

Lawton Kia presents the 8th Annual Care2Cure Car Show at 10 a.m. Sept 15 at the Comanche County Fairgrounds.

Proceeds will support the awareness and research of Huntington's Disease.

Vehicles can be pre-registered for \$20 by calling Ryan at 580-917-2594. Day of registration is \$25 at the door.

Admission is \$1 and children 12-years-old and under get in free.

The indoor event will feature fun for all ages including prizes, food, raffles and auction.

Lions support eyesight in Duncan

Duncan Evening Lions Club sets 9th annual Ride for Sight Poker Run from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sept 15 at the Freedom Biker Church.

Funds raised will support those in need of eyeglasses in the Duncan community.

For more information, contact Lion George Hazelbaker at 580-467-2933.

CTAC hosts live concert series

Chisholm Trail Art Council's live concert series opens the 2018-19 season with Dueling Guitars beginning at 7:30 p.m. Sept. 27 at the Simmons Center in Duncan.

Together, Pat Balder and Glen Everhart create a fun, high energy and entertaining night of music.

Before joining forces with Pat, Glen was one of the most successful musical comedians in the national corporate market, having performed over 1,200 shows across the country.

Pat was a veteran front man guitarist in the successful, national corporate rock band Spirit of the Radio. He built his own recording studio and production company through which he independently released five albums of original music.

Tickets are available at the door or through the ChisholmTrailArts.com website.

Seating is limited. For more information, contact Darcy at 580-252-4160.

Craft fair set for weekend in Sept.

Fall Fest Craft Fair is set for noon to 8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 28 and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 29 at the Simmons Center in Duncan.

Guests will enjoy a large selection of goodies from more than 30 vendors at one of the largest craft fairs in the area.

For information on booths, contact Lori Belcher at 580-252-2900 ext. 227 or LoriBelcher@live.com.

Annual fest in Medicine Park

Medicine Park's annual Art Walk and Flute Festival will begin at 3 p.m. Oct. 5-7 at the Town Center.

Celebrating the traditional Native American flute, this two-day festival features live music and performances, arts and crafts vendors, food trucks and great fun for the whole family.

For more information, go online to MedicinePark.com.

More Community Spotlight on Page 12

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Peace out Kindergarten! Cotton Electric member Annabelle Salaiz submitted this photo of her daughter Aryanna headed Back to School on her first day of first grade. Her favorite subject is art.

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

Duncan hosts annual Bark in the Park

For the 13th year, four-legged fur-bearing critters will take over Duncan's Fuqua Park during Bark in the Park from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 13.

This tail-waggin' celebration is open to all pets, their owners and spectators.

The Stephens County Humane Society and Friends of the Humane Society plan fun, pet -and family - friendly activities that include pet photos, concessions, demonstrations, a Bark Boutique/Meow Mart, obstacle course, a Strut Your Mutt pledge walk and onsite adoptions.

There will be competitions for best costume, best bark, owner look-alike, best trick and longest tail.

The first 100 people will receive a Bark in the Park goodie bag.

For questions or sponsorship information, call Patti Whitaker at 580-641-0667.



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October		November		December	
Ad Sales	Sept. 21	Ad Sales	Oct. 26	Ad Sales	Nov. 30
Classified	Sept. 26	Classified	Oct. 31	Classified	Dec. 5
Publish Date	Oct. 9	Publish Date	Nov. 12	Publish Date	Dec. 17



Humidity is key to home comfortability

By Danielle Quickle

Humidity plays an important role when it comes to summer weather. Temperatures can feel much warmer than expected when accompanied by high humidity, causing it to be nearly unbearable to spend any amount of time outdoors. Outdoor humidity is important to notice, but paying attention to the humidity within your home is just as significant. With the end of Oklahoma summer approaching, most homes' HVACs will enter a neutral state. Cooling systems will not run as frequently and heating systems will continue waiting for their time to be needed. However, with temperatures lowering weekly, now is the time to prepare for the effects of winter. Lower temperatures are usually accompanied by lower humidity levels, causing the air to be dry. When temperatures drop, we naturally crank the heat up in our homes. This can exacerbate the effects of dry winter air and increase the

chances for health risks. Little to no humidity in the air can cause dry skin, itchy eyes and irritated sinus and throat. Extended exposure to dry air can also inflame the mucous membranes lining the respiratory tract — which can increase the risk of infection. An appropriate humidity level can better protect you and your family from airborne illnesses and common winter health issues. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends an indoor humidity level between 30 to 60 percent. In addition to personal well being, when the humidity levels are within the EPA's recommended range, a home can heat much more efficiently. These levels allow for a lower thermostat setting, which will keep your HVAC system running less and lower your energy use. Outside air naturally affects the humidity in your home whenever doors or windows are opened. A typical forced-air

heating system will also contribute to the low humidity by replacing the interior air with drier outdoor air. However, humidity in the home when outdoor temperatures are freezing or below can lead to water and ice buildup or mold along walls. So, it's important to find the ideal levels that won't harm you or your home. A good rule to follow is that the lower the outside temperature, the lower your humidity should be. Most modern HVAC thermostats allow you to set the humidity level in your home, but a hygrometer will also give an accurate measurement. This device can be found at any home improvement store. An obvious solution to dry air in your home is to run a humidifier. Do this with caution as too much humidity can be equally harmful as not enough. Whole-home humidification is a great solution for maintaining healthy humid-

ity levels. It is installed directly into your home's central air unit and works for the entire house, rather than just a single room as with portable humidifiers. Here are a few other options to combat dry air this upcoming winter:

- Air dry your clothes to introduce humidity and save on energy costs.
- Open the door to your bathroom when showering or bathing.
- House plants help improve indoor air quality and release moisture into the air through transpiration.
- Fish tanks, indoor fountains and standing water all add moisture to the air through evaporation.
- Opt for more stovetop cooking to introduce needed moisture.
- Your heating system contributes to dry indoor air, so lower the thermostat when you can. This will also save energy.
- Seal and insulate your home to keep the cold, dry winter air out.

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Efficiency opportunities this fall

It’s time for an HVAC check-up

Every fall before it gets too chilly outside, call a qualified heating and air-conditioning technician to give your central heating system a once-over.

In fact, it’s important to have your heating system professionally maintained every fall. Regularly maintaining your heating will help prevent a breakdown on a cold night during the dead of winter.

Between annual check-ups, you can head off trouble by paying attention to your heating system. Here’s how:

Replace your system’s air filters once every three months. Dirty filters can get clogged and prevent air from flowing through them. That will make your system work harder, which is energy inefficient.

When you turn the heat on for the first time this fall, listen for banging, rattling or other unusual sounds. They could be a symptom of a malfunction-in-the-making. Call your tech to have it checked out.

If your windows are steaming up or you see rust or a lot of dirt on your heating vents, something is wrong. A professional can diagnose

the problem.

And, if some rooms in your home feel cold while others are comfortable, that’s a sign that something’s not quite right. Call for help.

Use less hot water to save energy

Water heating is the second-largest energy expense in your home, so if you use less hot water, you’ll save energy.

Here are three ways to save hot water around your house.

Washing clothes: Your clothes don’t really get any cleaner if you wash them in hot water instead of cold. In fact, the kind of laundry detergent you use is more of a factor than water temperature when it comes to getting your clothes clean.

Ninety percent of the energy your washing machine uses goes to heating the water. So you can save up to \$40 a year just by selecting the cold-water cycle instead of warm or hot.

Don’t believe it? Experiment with it for a few loads and see for yourself.

Washing dishes: Your dishwasher needs to use hot water to dissolve the dishwashing detergent and to get the grime off of your dishes.

However, you can save hot water by placing your dirty plates, cups, glasses and silverware right in the dishwasher after you use them, without rinsing them first.

Most modern dishwashers do a good job of cleaning even dried-on gunk from dishes, so there’s no need to waste hot water by washing them by hand before you load them into the machine.

Another way to save hot water: Choose a short cycle. The less time your dishwasher runs, the less hot water it will use.

Washing your family: Low-flow showerheads save water — hot and cold. Replacing your old showerhead could save more than 40 percent of the water you use when you bathe.

Paying attention to how much water you’re wasting in the shower can save precious resources as well. If you turn on the water to let it get warm — but then brush your teeth and shave at the sink before hopping in the shower — you’re letting gallons of heated water run down the drain unused.

Source: Pointers and Prose

CTHC calls for entries

In conjunction with the fourth annual Chisholm Trail Cowboy Poetry Gathering, the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center (CTHC) is hosting its first Chisholm Trail Cowboy Poetry Contest for Kindergarten through 12th grade students.

Participants must write or type a cowboy poem that is their original work. Each student is allowed to submit one entry that is a minimum of eight lines and no more than two pages long.

Poems that are written in a different language should be accompanied by an English translation. It is required that the back of each entry include the student’s name, phone number, email address, school, grade, address and parent or guardian’s name. Poems will be judged on creativity, originality, figurative language, appropriateness of content and structure by a panel of award-winning experienced cowboy poets.

All students will receive a certificate of participation while trophies will be awarded to first through sixth place. Winning entries, along with the student’s name and school, will be published on CTCH’s website.

Entries can be emailed to Toni@OnTheChisholm-Trail.com, mailed to CTHC at 1000 Chisholm Trail Parkway, Duncan, OK 73533, or hand delivered by Nov. 1.

Winners will be notified by Nov. 12 and are guaranteed a spot in the Chisholm Trail Cowboy Poetry Gathering to read their work, but are not required to do so.

All students who participate are welcome to attend the gathering from 5 to 9 p.m. Nov. 16 in Duncan. For questions regarding contest rules and event information, contact Toni Hopper at 580-252-6692.

Source: Chisholm Trail Heritage Center



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- SAFETY
- SHOCK
- SPARK
- STORM
- VOLTS
- WATER
- TEACH
- LEARN
- CARE

Answers

Across
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ACROSS

- 1. Feel pain
- 5. Interest rate
- 8. Long narrative poem
- 12. Sedimentary rock
- 14. No (Scottish)
- 15. Ribosomal ribo-
nucleic acid
- 16. Sleep gear
- 18. One who buys and
sells securities
- 19. Cincinnati ballplay-
ers
- 20. Of the backbone
- 21. Car mechanics
group
- 22. Iranian village
- 23. Canadian pennin-
sula
- 26. For all ills or diseases
- 30. Known for his
“razor”
- 31. One who plays the
viola
- 32. Resinlike substance
- 33. Educational associa-
tion
- 34. Inappropriate
- 39. A team’s best pitcher
- 42. The cost of bus
travel
- 44. Badgerlike mammal
- 46. Popular sport in
Ireland
- 47. Written works
- 49. Pop
- 50. Consumed
- 51. Something compa-
rable to another
- 56. Wild goat
- 57. One-time space sta-
tion
- 58. Outline of a plan
- 59. Actress Petty
- 60. An electrically
charged atom
- 61. Chewed and swal-
lowed
- 62. Bones (Latin)

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- 63. Central nervous
system
- 64. Type of pipe
- DOWN
- 1. Vipers
- 2. Pal
- 3. One who has been to
Mecca
- 4. Energy and enthusi-
asm
- 5. Leaf-footed bug genus
- 6. Southern belle acces-
sory
- 7. ___ de Mornay, actress
- 8. Print errors
- 9. Preceding
- 10. Asian nation
- 11. The people in a movie
- 13. Liberate
- 17. Strong laxatives
- 24. Tub
- 25. Happening
- 26. Polyvinyl acetate
- 27. Small island (British)
- 28. Neither
- 29. The G.O.A.T.
- 35. What Goodell over-
sees
- 36. One who engages in
Dawah
- 37. Tall, rounded vase
- 38. Electroencephalo-
graph

- 40. Made of clay and
hardened by heat
- 41. Great happiness
- 42. Chinese surname
- 43. Supposed emanations
- 44. Travelers
- 45. Loss of bodily move-
ments
- 47. Los __, rock group
- 48. Seabirds
- 49. Used to store grain
- 52. Whale ship captain
- 53. “Joker” actor
- 54. Portends good or evil
- 55. Organized group of
criminals

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Steak Fajita Burrito Bowl

- Makes: 4 bowls
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
 - 1 pound skirt steak
 - 1 red pepper, sliced
 - 1 yellow pepper, sliced
 - 1 package instant rice
 - 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
 - 1/2 packet Ortega Original Taco Seasoning
 - 1 Ortega Bakeable Tortilla Bowl Kit
 - 3 cups green leaf lettuce, sliced
 - 2 avocados, diced
 - 1 cup corn kernels
 - 1/2 cup cotija cheese
 - 1 bottle Ortega Green Taco Sauce, to taste

Add 2 tablespoons oil to skillet over medium-high heat. Cook skirt steak 5 minutes on each side. Remove steak from pan and let rest. When cooled, slice into strips. Add remaining olive oil to skillet over medium-high heat. Saute red and yellow peppers until cooked through. Prepare rice as directed on package. Add squeeze of lime and taco seasoning. Stir to combine. Prepare tortilla bowls as directed on package. Fill with rice, shredded lettuce, sliced steak and peppers. Top with diced avocado, corn and cotija cheese. Finish with taco sauce.

Back-to-School Meals in Minutes

Tex-Mex menu ideas for simple family dinners

Family Features
When the school year is back in full swing, families often find themselves battling the mealtime crunch. Tex-Mex-inspired meals bursting with flavor are known family-friendly picks that can be easily prepared and put on the table on those frenzied weeknights. These simple ideas from the experts at Ortega can help make “taco night” and other Tex-Mex meals better than ever. Encourage kids to get hands-on. It’s no secret that kids like finger foods, and many Tex-Mex dishes are best enjoyed by hand. Tacos are an obvious favorite, but

other options like quesadillas, taquitos and Ortega Fiesta Flats are also easy to enjoy sans silverware. Step outside of tradition. If you’re looking for something that makes mealtime feel extra special, skip the basic taco and choose a meal kit that lets you serve up a restaurant-style experience at home. For example, Ortega’s Bakeable Tortilla Bowl Kits bring a new and simple way to change up your Tex-Mex meals. Just bake and fill with your favorite ingredients. Offer a variety of ingredients. One of the benefits of a Tex-Mex meal is all the ways each family member can customize plates to their own tastes. Try setting out a

wide range of ingredients and encourage the kids to experiment with toppings they may not have tried before, like olives and guacamole. Don’t forget the sauce. Taco sauces can bring unique, unexpected flavor to recipes. One to try is Ortega’s line of bold and creamy Flavor Craver Taco Sauces. Varieties include Taco Ranch, Chipotle and Jalapeno Lime, all perfect for tacos, taco salads, dips, burgers and more. Find more recipes and ideas to add a unique twist to any Tex-Mex meal at Ortega.com.



Poblano Ranch Tacos

- Makes: 8 tacos
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 4 poblano peppers, sliced
 - 1 yellow onion, sliced
 - 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice (optional)
 - 1 box Ortega Yellow Corn Taco Shells
 - 6 radishes, sliced
 - 1 cup corn kernels
 - 1 cup cotija cheese
 - 1 bottle Ortega Flavor Craver Ranch Taco Sauce, to taste
- Add olive oil to skillet over medium heat. Add sliced poblano peppers and yellow onion to pan. Saute until cooked through. Add squeeze of lime to pepper and onion mixture, if desired. Bake taco shells according to package directions. To assemble tacos, add poblano and onion mixture to base of taco. Top with sliced radishes, corn and cotija cheese. Finish with taco sauce.

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Comanche and Cotton Counties

Dick Tannery is a 3rd generation Oklahoman. He comes from a family with strong military values; he is son to Richard Tannery who fought in WWII at Iwo Jima and later retired as Lawton's Fire Chief in 1989. Dick served in the Army in the 70's and his grandson Joby Pazoureck is currently deployed to Afghanistan. Dick is married to Becky Baden Tannery a retired teacher and counselor of 39 years. Together they have six children and twelve grandchildren and attend First Christian Church. When Dick was formerly elected District Attorney of Comanche/Cotton Counties for two terms he personally tried over 300 trials with over 50 being murder/manslaughter trials. Dick believes in a "hands on" approach and that the DA's office needs a strong experienced prosecutor with a new vision.

He will grow a strong "Veterans Court" to handle cases when Veterans have PTSD and addiction/mental health issues. He will establish a strong and aggressive "violent crime" and "gang task force" while working side by side with local police agencies.

Find more information on Facebook Tannery for District Attorney
tanneryforda2018@gmail.com

Paid for by the committee to elect Dick Tannery for District Attorney, Lawton, OK





- Southwest Chicken Salad**
Makes: 4 bowls
- 2

tablespoons olive oil
- 4

chicken breasts
- 2

teaspoons chili powder
- 1

Ortega Bakeable Tortilla Bowl Kit
- 3

cups green leaf lettuce, sliced
- 1

can Ortega Black Beans
- 1

cup corn kernels
- 2

avocados, diced
- 1

tomato, diced
- 1

cup cotija cheese
- 1

bottle Ortega Flavor Craver Ranch Taco Sauce, to taste

Add olive oil to skillet over medium heat. Coat chicken with chili powder. Cook chicken 8 minutes on each side, or until cooked through.

Remove chicken from pan and let rest. Slice chicken into strips when cooled.

Okra is sliming with health benefits

What is slimy on the inside and green on the outside? Okra - my favorite vegetable.

I love it pickled, fried, and oven baked. I like it sliced in gumbo and stewed with tomatoes. I don't care for it cooked whole but will still eat it because that is how much I love it.

Recently, I sliced it, covered it in olive oil and lemon pepper, roasted it in the oven, and sent it in my kids lunches cold. You could say I am a little obsessed with okra.

The okra plant has been traced back to West Africa, Ethiopia and South Asia. Okra was introduced into the Americas by the slave trade.

Although it grows best in warm temperate climates and tropical climates, by the 1800s, it was reported to be grown as far north as Philadelphia. It is often included in Creole, Indian, African, Caribbean, and Southern cuisines. It is a side dish in the state meal of Oklahoma.

It is very easy to grow. It grows tall like corn but the leaves are thinner and take up less space. It is not as susceptible to



Kim Bandelier, MPH, RD, LD

Food

For

THOUGHT

pests or drought like other garden vegetables. It loves heat.

Mature plants can grow as tall as 6 to 10 feet. The okra plant actually produces a beautiful light yellow flower near where the pods form. Pods should be harvested before they get too large in diameter. Long but skinny pods are usually still tender enough to eat.

The part of okra that we eat is the seed pod. The pods look like long green furry fingers. When you open the pod, you see small round seeds and a slimy substance. Sounds delicious, right?

Different preparation methods reduce the slime, so you should not let that deter you from trying okra. Specifically, frying, roasting, pickling, and using it in soups, stews, or gumbo masks the natural goo. Preparation is simple: Wash and then cut as desired or leave whole.

Okra, like most vegetables, is filled with healthy nutrients. It is high in fiber, vitamin K, and vitamin C and contains magnesium, folate, calcium, potassium, vitamin B6, and thiamine. It is low in calories and fat. It contains some protein and carbohydrates.

Recently, the internet exploded with claims that okra could help manage blood sugar. Recipes for okra water began showing up everywhere in the popular literature.

Okra water has not been tested in humans for blood sugar regulation. Preliminary tests in rats with type 2 diabetes

have shown that okra helps lower blood glucose.

Okra water is not bad for you, but it is too soon to say it can help with diabetes. It can actually interfere with the effectiveness of the common oral diabetes medication metformin, so discuss any intake of okra above and beyond an occasional side dish with your diabetes doctor.

I use okra to increase the variety of vegetables I offer my family. My daughter recently got braces, and oven roasted okra is the preferred soft but not mushy vegetable for her to eat.

If I fry okra, I lightly dust it with corn meal and pan fry it. Pickled okra is a staple in my house, an homage to my Oklahoma roots. I should probably use it in soups to help naturally thicken the broth, but I have not done that yet.

If you have only eaten it fried, try it roasted in the oven. You will be surprised by the flavor, the texture, and the lack of slime, and you will reap all the nutritional benefits without the added breading and fat.

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Control utility pole exposure during burns

Properly controlled burns can have many benefits for agricultural land. However, if these burns are not managed safely, they can result in property damage, power outages, injury, and even death. Safe Electricity urges you to make safety a priority and shares important information on the special considerations that need to be taken around power lines.

First, make yourself aware of laws and regulations. Burns should only be conducted by those who are experienced with fire and burn paths. Avoid burning near public roads or airports, as this can create a potentially dangerous visibility hazard. Alert all those who may be potentially affected by the burn — including neighbors, the local fire department, and law enforcement. Depending on local regulations, you may also need to obtain a burn permit.

Take special note of power poles and lines. Burning a

power pole could result in a widespread power outage and be costly for the individual responsible for the fire.

Cut down grass and weed. Water the area near the poles as to discourage fire encroachment. Be careful to keep water streams out of power lines.

If a power pole catches on fire, call the fire department and alert your utility to handle the possible electrical dangers. Even if you think you have been able to put out the fire yourself, alert the utility to the fact that it caught fire. The creosote, a preservative on the inside, could still be burning the pole from the inside out. In addition, if the pole catches on fire, it could create shock or electrocution hazards for those who may be nearby or spark fires in unintended directions from downed lines.

Carbon particles in smoke can conduct electricity, and it is also possible for smoke produced during the

burnings to conduct electricity and cause an electrical discharge from the line. To reduce this risk, the fire should not cross under power lines.

Also keep environmental factors, such as temperature, humidity, and wind direction and speed in mind. The wind speed in the area should be low and in a steady direction as to not let the fire get out of control. As environmental factors are subject to change, check forecasts as well as actual conditions before you begin the burn.

Ensure that you have the proper clothing, equipment, and tools. For personal safety, all those near the flames should wear clothing made of natural fibers or approved for firefighting.

For more information on safety around electrical equipment, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Source: SafeElectricity

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Billy Owens shows class participant Peggiann Combs how to weave the reeds in order to make her backpack.



Owens Oak Baskets come in many different designs.

Walters hosts Missouri basket weaver

By Danielle Quickle

There is so much pride to be found in doing something by hand.

Technology has taken over nearly every aspect of our lives. Everywhere we look we can find something that requires a charge or new set of batteries to operate. Most of society has become so reliant on machines that finding something made by hand is rare.

Owens Oak Baskets brings a refreshing relief to the trend with their traditional handmade baskets.

Based in the Ozark Hills near Branson, Missouri, Owens Oak Baskets was founded by Dale Owens.

Dale began as the primary basket weaver for Silver Dollar City. He eventually opened up a store in Branson where he sold baskets, kits and supplies.

As Dale’s health started to decline, his son Billy took over the family business in 1999.

Billy left his full-time job to devote his time to continuing the production of Owens traditional baskets and classes.

Business became so demanding that Billy had to choose between running the store or traveling. He chose the road. He now spends roughly 150 nights on

the road each year traveling anywhere from Florida to North Dakota.

For a weekend in August, Billy made his way to Walters to give a class hosted by the Basket Weavers Guild of Oklahoma (BWGOK).

Billy had around 20 participants in both classes. He showed students how to make a variety of creations such as market, bicycle and backpack baskets. He also shared the Owens family traditional way of creating the materials for each basket.

Every basket starts out as a white oak tree indigenous to the Ozark Mountains. Billy harvests only a few trees at a time in different areas so not to harm the population. His method allows room for growth and reproduction of the trees and improves the population of the species.

All usable parts of the tree are hauled back to his saw mill where they are examined and determined what kind of basket they will become.

The log is cut to the appropriate width and Billy uses a tool his father made to strip it down by hand to make reeds for weaving.

Billy has a certain window of opportunity to cut a

tree into materials after it has been harvested. He does not soak or treat the wood so his class can have the confidence that the basket they are weaving was simply a tree not two weeks prior.

Cotton Electric Cooperative (CEC) had several members and employees participate in the weekend class. CEC’s engineering Work Order Clerk Vikie Jeffrey is a member of the BWGOK and was attending Billy’s class for the second time.

“His classes are much different from the ones I am used to going to because he does it all by hand,” Jeffrey said. “He is so knowledgeable about what he is doing and makes it fun.”

Patrons like Jeffrey are how Billy can make basket weaving his living and not just a hobby.

“I am grateful to all of the basket weavers who come to my classes,” Billy said. “Because of them I get to carry on my father’s tradition and support my family in the process.”

Billy is making arrangements for a third trip to Walters next summer.



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Community Spotlight

Continued from Page 4

International Festival celebrates 39 years

Lawton Arts and Humanities Council, City of Lawton and the International Festival Committee present the 39th annual International Festival beginning at 5 p.m. Sept. 28 at Elmer Thomas Park.

Since 1979, the festival continues to provide an opportunity for the community to display aspects of different cultures that make Lawton-Fort Sill so unique.

The event is free to the public and will include parking, food and display vendors.

For more information, find the 2018 International Festival page on Facebook.

CTCH offers free historical writing workshop

A free writing workshop, “Writing from Historical Objects” will begin at 1:30 p.m. Oct. 21 at the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center in Duncan.

Using items in the museum’s collection, Dr. Jeanetta Calhoun Mish will guide participants in a journey of prose and poetry in this 2-hour workshop.

Oklahoma-born, Mish has been writing and presenting workshops for more than 30 years. Her writing is recognized with honors earned from the Oklahoma Book Award, the National Cowboy Museum’s Western Heritage Award and the WILLA Award for Women Writing the West.

There is no charge to attend and pre-registration is encouraged, but not required. Participants should bring paper and writing utensil. Those who would prefer using something more personal to them are encouraged to bring their own historical objects for inspiration.

This program is made possible through funding by the Oklahoma Arts Council and Chisholm Trail Heritage Center. For more information, call the Heritage Center at 580-252-6692.

Magic Lantern screens ‘Lost Boys’

Magic Lantern Film Society of Cameron University screens DVD presentations of classic films each month

in the CETES Conference Center, Room A. Most screenings begin at 7:30 p.m.

The Oct. 26 offering will be “The Lost Boys,” a 1987 mystery film directed by Joel Schumacher. Teenage brothers Michael and Sam move with their mother to a small town in northern California.

While the younger Sam meets a pair of kindred spirits in geeky comic-book nerds Edward and Alan, Michael finds himself involved with a local gang of vampires.

Sam and his new friends must save Michael from the undead. With Corey Haim in the title role, the cast includes Corey Feldman, Kiefer Sutherland and Jami Gertz.

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.

Annual Boo Review haunts downtown Duncan

Main Street Duncan hosts Boo Review, an annual Halloween celebration, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Oct. 27.

MSD merchants will have trick or treating for the kids in costumes through the duration of the event. There is a pumpkin carving contest hosted at Boomarang Diner with proceeds benefiting the Stephens County Humane Society.

A pet costume contest will be held at the corner of 9th and Main Street for pups only. Kids costume contest begins at noon on 10th and Main.

The first 100 registered participants receive a goody bag and all children receive a participation ribbon. Awards will be given for a variety of categories ranging from best group costume to most unique.

Event also features bounce houses, haunted house, music and plenty of treats. For more information, contact Destiny Ahlfenger at 580-252-8696.

Holiday craft show begins Nov. 2 in Duncan

Duncan Arts, Crafts and Hobbies Association is making preparations for a Holiday Craft Show on Nov. 2 and 3 at the Stephens County Fair & Expo Center. A

variety of crafts will be showcased, demonstrating the talents of the people of Duncan and surrounding areas.

Entrance to the show is free. Visitors should pick up tickets at the big wheel booth to be eligible for drawings.

The group has booth space available and encourages those who have never brought their crafts to the public eye to consider this event. For information, call Jean at 580-786-4414.

Cache FFA hosts market

Cache FFA will host the Cache Farmers Market from 8 a.m. to noon every third Thursday of the month in the wrestling gym parking lot just west of Cache High School cafeteria.

Vendors with fresh produce are welcome to join in the market. For information, contact Kelly Jenkins at 580-512-66287 or Mitch Dorrell at 704-0711.

Weekly kids’ activities in Central High

Central High presents Story Time from 10-10:30 a.m. every Wednesday while school is in session at the high school library.

Participants will read a story, sing songs and do an activity. Children who have not yet started school are welcome if accompanied by parent or caregiver.

For more information, call 580-685-2929 Ext. 6.

Chapter of the Blind meets monthly

Duncan Chapter of the Blind meets at 1:30 p.m. on the third Saturday of each month at New Hope Baptist Church, 200 S. 42nd Street.

This is an opportunity for those who are visually impaired or blind and their caregivers to learn about the availability of services and equipment such as white cane training and large lighted magnifiers.

The group also provides information about free access to an extensive library of audio books.

For information about the group or to arrange free transportation to the monthly meeting, call 580-786-8041 or 427-2933.

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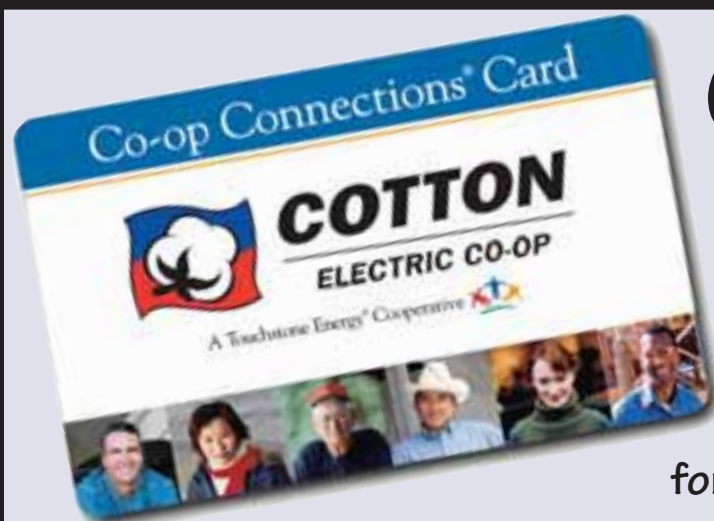
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