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The Current

A Publication of Cotton Electric Cooperative Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

"The Current - Informing Our Members Since 1957"

VOLUME 69

March 13, 2026

NUMBER 7

High school students are set for Washington, D.C., this summer

Cotton Electric is pleased to announce Abigail Bannister of Marlow High School and Aubrey Knapp of Central High School as the winners of the 2026 Youth Tour contest. After advancing through an essay competition and a video interview, Bannister and Knapp will represent the co-op in Washington, D.C., this summer.

The two juniors showed great efforts with speaking ability, knowledge of subject, poise and personality throughout the competition.

During Youth Tour, students will meet Oklahoma's congressional delegation, learn about the cooperative business model and connect with other Youth Tour winners from across the country while touring historic sites, monuments and memorials in our nation's capital.

Below, you can learn more about our 2026 Youth Tour winners. Congratulations to Abigail Bannister and Aubrey Knapp.



Aubrey Knapp | Central High School



Q: What subjects or areas of study are you most interested in?

A: I plan to be a residential architect, studying architecture for the next several years.

Q: Are you involved in any school extracurricular activities?

A: I am a section leader and drum major in my high school band.

Q: Why did you choose to apply for Youth Tour?

A: My teachers, parents and even my grandma told me about it, and I was curious. After I learned more about the contest, I decided it was something I really wanted to enter and began working meticulously.

Q: How do you think Youth Tour will impact your future goals or career path?

A: I am going to be an architect and planned to visit Washington, D.C., at some point during my studies. With this experience, I will see it all sooner and even get an opportunity to visit another place during my future education.

Q: Have you been to Washington, D.C., before?

A: I have not.

Q: What are you looking forward to the most on Youth Tour?

A: I am looking forward to getting a view of the culture in Washington, D.C., and I am so excited to see the architecture, monuments and other artistic expressions throughout the area.

Q: What's one thing or experience you want to bring back from Youth Tour to share with your friends or family?

A: I am really excited to tell them all about the trip and the people I will meet and show them all of the pictures I will get to take.

Q: What skills do you hope to develop and strengthen on Youth Tour?

A: I am excited to meet all the others who won these contests and get to go, and to improve my skills relative to meeting new people.



Abigail Bannister | Marlow High School



Q: What subjects or areas of study are you most interested in?

A: English has always been my favorite, but music is a close second. I plan on going into architecture and interior design in the future.

Q: Are you involved in any school extracurricular activities?

A: I am the library club president, academic team co-captain, National Honor Society member, clarinet and oboe band member and art class level three student.

Q: Why did you choose to apply for Youth Tour?

A: I thought the opportunity to see Washington, D.C., sounded so cool, and I've always thought essay writing was my strong suit.

Q: How do you think Youth Tour will impact your future goals or career path?

A: I think Youth Tour will give me a greater love for travel, learning and meeting people than what I already have.

Q: Have you been to Washington, D.C., before?

A: No, which is why I am so excited!

Q: What are you looking forward to the most on Youth Tour?

A: I am most excited to meet new people and visit all the monuments and memorials.

Q: What's one thing or experience you want to bring back from Youth Tour to share with your friends or family?

A: Most people I know have never been to Washington, D.C., and I can't wait to tell them all about it and everything I learned.

Q: What skills do you hope to develop and strengthen on Youth Tour?

A: I hope to strengthen my people skills and gain some experience being independent from my parents while traveling.

Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment now being applied to bills mailed after March 1, 2026, is \$0.01237 per kilowatt-hour (kWh).

On a member's average bill of 1,300 kWh, this will amount to a charge of \$16.08 on the March bill.

February 2026 Temperature Extremes

Day	High	Low	Avg.	Day	High	Low	Avg.
1	52	17	35	16	76	38	57
2	69	24	47	17	80	53	67
3	64	33	49	18	75	44	60
4	56	30	43	19	68	41	55
5	72	26	49	20	57	29	43
6	78	36	57	21	54	29	42
7	71	35	53	22	53	26	40
8	81	41	61	23	57	26	42
9	79	36	58	24	78	27	53
10	60	42	51	25	76	37	57
11	64	36	50	26	79	44	62
12	77	31	54	27	80	37	59
13	76	44	60	28	84	47	66
14	67	56	62				
15	69	42	56				

Source: srh.noaa.gov/oun/

Average Daily High: 70 Average Daily Low: 36

Did You Know?

Have you downloaded the SmartHub app? With SmartHub, co-op members can check energy use, pay power bills and more! Download SmartHub in Google Play or the Apple Store.

The next issue of *The Current* should arrive in mailboxes April 10, 2026.

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 TheCurrent@cottonelectric.com.

You can also drop us a line at Cotton Electric Current, 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572.



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Mission Statement
Our mission is to safely deliver reliable and affordable power, provide excellent member service, and improve the quality of life in the communities we serve.

From the CEO

Winter Storm Fern Returning the favor, paying it forward



Jennifer Meason, CEO

Several Cotton Electric line workers recently traveled to Mississippi to assist Tallahatchie Valley Electric Power Association (TVEPA) following Winter Storm Fern. Two crews of five rotated over the course of two weeks, enduring challenging conditions and working long hours to restore power for a sister cooperative. At the peak of the storm, approximately 90% of TVEPA's members were without power. Much of their system had to be rebuilt and 1,600 poles were replaced.

When events like these happen, co-ops across the nation answer the call to provide mutual aid. Cooperation Among Cooperatives, one of the seven Cooperative Principles, is an integral part of the cooperative difference.

The damage to TVEPA's system by Winter Storm Fern was reminiscent of the historic 2010 Ice Storm that devastated much of the Cotton Electric service

area. At that time, Cotton Electric was a beneficiary of the power of mutual aid as 233 additional line personnel from electric cooperatives and contractors assisted with the storm restoration efforts. Even with additional help, it took 15 days to restore power. Crews replaced 2,900 poles and the recovery effort cost \$12 million.

Natural disasters like these highlight the importance of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and federal disaster aid programs. As not-for-profit, member-owned utilities, electric cooperatives are eligible for FEMA aid. Without it, the costs of disaster recovery efforts would be passed directly to the members we serve, often causing electric bills to rise. Cotton Electric received \$9 million in FEMA aid for the 2010 ice storm.

We've experienced several more FEMA events due to ice

storms, severe storms, tornadoes and flooding, bringing Cotton Electric's total FEMA reimbursement to \$12.2 million since 2000. As a state, Oklahoma's electric cooperatives have received \$540.8 million in FEMA funding for disaster recovery and mitigation projects during that time frame. Cooperative eligibility for FEMA disaster funds has been vital to help keep rates affordable and maintain system reliability for co-op members.

I was recently asked to speak on a panel at National Rural Electric Cooperatives of America PowerXchange regarding the importance of FEMA to electric cooperatives and the discussion surrounding FEMA reform. America's electric cooperatives support commonsense FEMA reforms. We are advocating for solutions that help ensure essential services are restored quickly while protecting taxpayer dollars after a disaster.

If you would like to learn more about our advocacy efforts, I encourage you to become a member of Voices for Cooperative Power (VCP). VCP is a grassroots network of over 1.1 million advocates who help shape energy policy that keeps the lights on. By getting involved in VCP, co-op members like you carry your voices to Washington, D.C., and beyond to help educate policymakers on the important role their co-op plays in providing safe, reliable, affordable power.

Much like mutual aid, we accomplish more together.

To learn more or to join our efforts, visit www.voicesforcooperativepower.com or www.cottonelectric.com/your-co-op-your-voice.



Earlier this year, several Cotton Electric lineworkers traveled to Mississippi to assist Tallahatchie Valley Electric Power Association following historic Winter Storm Fern. Photos courtesy of Cotton Electric Lineman Aubrey Edmonson.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

As spring arrives, take advantage of milder temperatures to save energy at home. Open windows on pleasant days to bring in fresh air instead of running your HVAC system. It's also a great time to replace dirty air filters, which helps your system run more efficiently and improves indoor air quality. As daylight increases, turn off unnecessary lights and rely on natural sunlight when possible. Small seasonal adjustments like these can reduce energy use, lower monthly bills and help keep your home comfortable as winter transitions into spring.

Source: Energy.gov

January 2026 Operating Stats

	2026	2025
Total Amount Billed/Accrued	\$7,909,823	\$8,195,758
Cost of Purchased Power	5,928,945	5,741,809
Taxes	141,718	140,118
Total Operating Expense per Mile	1,464	1,427
Average Farm and Residential Bill	204	216
Average Farm and Residential kWh	1,770	1,860
Total Meters Billed (Farm, Residential)	19,960	19,813
Miles Energized	5,289	5,282
Density per Mile	3.77	3.75
New Service Connects YTD	35	19
Services Retired	11	7

Upcoming Deadlines for The Current

April	
Ad Sales	March 27
Classified	March 27
Publish	April 10
May	
Ad Sales	April 24
Classified	April 24
Publish	May 8

The Current

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Energy Efficiency

Spring-cleaning for your energy use: What to toss, fix and upgrade

When people think of spring-cleaning, they picture closets, garages and dusty shelves. But one of the most important areas to clean up this time of year is something you can't see: your home's energy use. March is a perfect moment to find and eliminate waste before warmer weather and higher cooling costs arrive.

Just like clutter, energy waste builds up quietly over time. Old habits, worn-out equipment and small maintenance issues all add up to higher utility bills and less comfortable living spaces.

Toss: Outdated wasteful habits

Start by clearing out the habits that no longer serve you. Leaving lights on in empty rooms, running appliances when they're only half full or keeping electronics plugged in when they're not in use all add to unnecessary energy use. Power strips make it easy to shut off multiple devices with one

switch, preventing "phantom" energy draw.

Thermostat settings also deserve a fresh look. As outdoor temperatures rise, you may not need as much heating as you did in winter. Gradually adjusting your thermostat a few degrees can deliver noticeable savings without sacrificing comfort.

Fix: Small problems that cause big losses

Spring is a great time to walk through your home and look for places where energy is slipping away. Drafty windows and doors are common culprits. Even small gaps allow conditioned air to escape, forcing your heating or cooling system to work harder. Simple weather stripping or caulking can make a big difference.

Dirty air filters are another easy fix. A clogged filter restricts airflow, which makes your system run longer and use

more energy. Replacing or cleaning filters regularly helps improve efficiency and indoor comfort at the same time.

Upgrade: High-impact improvements

While not every upgrade needs to be expensive, some small investments can produce lasting benefits. LED lighting, for example, uses far less energy and lasts much longer than older bulbs. If you haven't switched yet, spring is a great time to start.

Programmable or smart thermostats also offer a simple way to avoid wasting energy when no one is home. By matching heating and cooling to your daily schedule, you can cut down on unnecessary run time without having to think about it.

A fresh start for energy use

Spring-cleaning your energy habits doesn't require major renovations. By



Heath Morgan,
Energy Efficiency
Coordinator

tossing wasteful routines, fixing small leaks and inefficiencies, and upgrading a few key items, you can create a home that runs more smoothly and costs less to operate. The result is a lighter energy footprint, lower utility bills and a more comfortable home as you head into the warmer months ahead.

For more information, visit www.cottonelectric.com/energy-efficiency.



SPRING INTO ENERGY SAVINGS.

- Schedule a tune-up for your heating/cooling system.
- Set fan blades to run counterclockwise for cooling.
- Adjust your thermostat a few degrees.
- Take short showers to save on water heating.
- Run major appliances during off-peak hours.

Heating Degree Day and Cooling Degree Day Calendar

FEBRUARY

HDD	YEAR	CDD
296	2026	3
674	2025	0
412	2024	1

Degree days measure how cold or warm a location is by comparing the average of the high and low (mean) of the outdoor temperatures recorded in that location to the standard U.S. temperature, which is 65 F. The assumption is that we don't need heating or cooling to be comfortable when this is the outdoor temperature.



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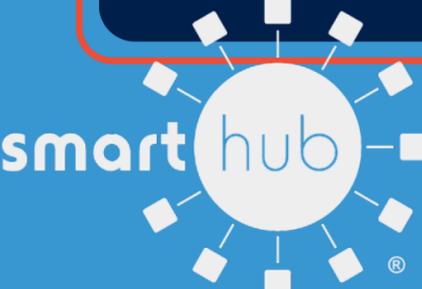
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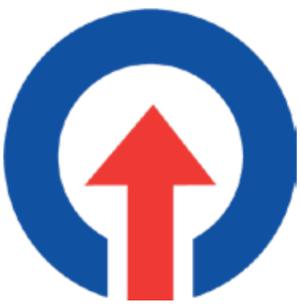


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Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation



Waurika Senior Citizens Center recently raised funds and received their contingent CECF grant for their kitchen upgrade. Pictured left to right: Members and Board members of the Waurika Senior Citizens Center and Cotton Electric Communications Specialist Carli Eubank. Photo by Zach Young.

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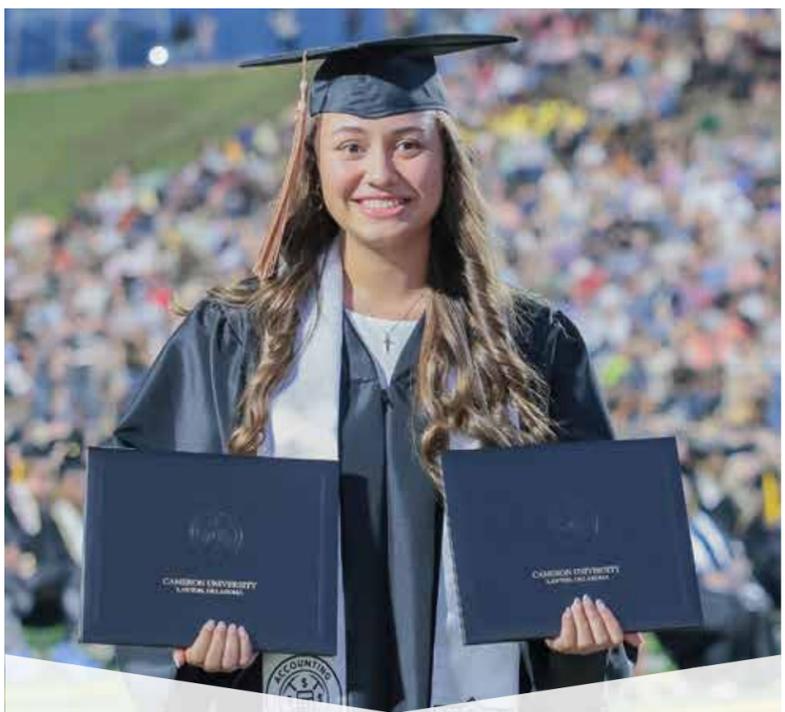
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Friends support beauty, wildlife, education in SW Oklahoma

By Carli Eubank

Its rolling landscape and variety of wildlife are a couple of the features that make the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge a unique experience. Working alongside the staff of the refuge, the Friends of the Wichitas were established to promote and support the hidden gem in southwest Oklahoma.

Founded in 1985, the Friends of the Wichitas offers many programs and outings for those wanting to explore the refuge, including various tours, guided hiking trails, The Nature Store and much more. In 2015, Friends of the Wichitas received a \$5,000 grant from the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation with a matching grant from the McMahon Foundation for the Nature Store Takeover Project.

“At the time, we were approached by the refuge staff to see if we were interested in taking over the Nature Store,” said Jim Meyer, Friends of the Wichitas president emeritus. “We accepted with the thought that, besides a couple part-time wages for employees, 100% of the proceeds generated from the store would go back to the refuge.”

A central part of the mission for the Friends of the Wichitas is their year-round and seasonal guided tours. Visitors can choose from their historical, wildlife or elk bus tours or from their geology, wildflower or fall foliage bus tours with some moderate hiking sections. The Friends of the Wichitas also offers a limited number of field trip grants for schools and other youth groups, awarding \$250 to help cover travel and other miscellaneous costs to help provide a hands-on learning experience at the refuge.

One of the main areas that the Friends of the Wichitas helps manage is Doris Campgrounds. Meyer shared how they help welcome campers and visitors at the kiosk entrance and offer helpful information and answer questions visitors may have



One of the major projects for the Friends of the Wichitas was restructuring the Ferguson House at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Photo courtesy of Jim Meyer, Friends of the Wichitas president emeritus.

about the area. Another way they help generate income is selling ice and firewood at the campgrounds.

Preserving and maintaining the beauty of the refuge is an important responsibility for volunteers with the Friends of the Wichitas. They mow around picnic spots and public building areas as requested by the refuge staff and clean up any graffiti found on landmarks and structures, as well as regularly pick up trash throughout the area and along the four entrances into the refuge.

A major transformation project for the organization was restoring the Ferguson house after a fire had burnt the structure down to its shell in 2010.

“We raised \$70,000, which included a matching \$35,000 grant from the Terry K. Bell Foundation, to totally restore the outside of the Ferguson house,” Meyer said. “We found plans of how it was origi-

nally made so we could stay true to that when we reconstructed it and then we had a large boulder engraved with the history of the structure. We were really tickled to be able to do all that.”

With more than 350 members today, the Friends of the Wichitas work hard to maintain the natural state of the refuge and look forward to all the future projects.

“We have such a great group of people who are so giving of their time and willing to show up and volunteer on our workdays,” Meyer said. “We have seen a lot of neat things happen over the years, and we just absolutely love being able to be in this beautiful place.”

To schedule a tour, become a volunteer or learn more, visit www.friendsofthewichitas.org.

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HVAC Tune-Up rebate program begins April 1

Spring is approaching, and now is the perfect time to start prepping for summer. From April 1 through June 20, Cotton Electric is offering to help members offset the cost of getting air conditioning units ready for high summer temperatures.

Through the HVAC Tune-Up Rebate program, the co-op will provide a rebate of 50% the cost of your spring tune-up service, excluding repairs and not to exceed \$50. For heat pump systems, the co-op will provide a rebate for 50% the cost of annual maintenance contracts, excluding repairs and not to exceed \$75. The goal of this incentive program is to ensure the largest power-consuming appliance in members' homes is ready to operate at peak performance when needed — most.

Heating and air conditioning systems are typically the largest purchase for homeowners, led only by home and vehicle purchases. Like with a vehicle, lack of maintenance can have a dramatic impact on the efficiency and life of HVAC systems. Most car owners would not even consider skipping the scheduled maintenance of their vehicle, the same type of thinking should be applied to air conditioning service.

There are two schools of thought when it comes to maintaining these systems: Reactive and preventative. Reactive or "run-to-fail" practices are marked by forgoing regular maintenance and running equipment until parts fail. Preventative practices involve periodic maintenance as required by manufacturers.

There are numerous studies showing the effects that poor maintenance procedures have on HVAC systems. A majority of studies show a 5% loss of efficiency over the course of one year. This loss in efficiency can be attributed to a reduction of air flow through indoor and outdoor coils. As dirt attaches to coils, airflow is limited. Units not properly serviced, even for just a few years, can have up to 40% loss of efficiency throughout its life.

Lack of maintenance can affect more than just the efficiency of the unit. Restricted airflow can raise

operating amperage of motors and compressors, resulting in a shortened operating life span. You wouldn't drive your car with a flat tire, would you? Continuing to drive with a flat tire would result in further damage. The same is true for your air conditioning system. Running components at higher amps than they are designed for will decrease the life of that component.

It may be difficult to tell if your unit has a weak start capacitor or is low on refrigerant; this is why we recommend involving a professional contractor. Scheduled tune-ups allow professionals an opportunity to perform recommended cleanings and test specific components and refrigerant levels that keep your system operating efficiently.

Applications will be available at www.cottonelectric.com/rebate-program, through your contractor or at one of Cotton Electric's office locations in Duncan or Walters.

Beginning April 1, Cotton Electric is offering a rebate of up to \$50 per home (50% of the cost of your spring tune-up, excluding repairs, up to \$50) or up to \$75 per home (50% of the cost of your annual maintenance contract, excluding repairs, up to \$75) for members who get a tune-up for their HVAC system. In order to qualify, the following guidelines must be met:

- Must be a Cotton Electric Cooperative member. Residence must be within Cotton Electric's service territory.
- Rebate is not available for new construction.
- A completed Rebate Application is required. Application forms can be downloaded at CottonElectric.com and are available at the Walters and Duncan offices or by calling 580-875-3351.
- Application must be signed and dated by both the member and a licensed and bonded HVAC contractor.
- Member must submit a dated, itemized invoice as proof of service completion from a qualified contractor. A copy of the annual contract must be submitted show-

ing at least two scheduled maintenance checks, if applicable. Failure to provide required information will result in denial of rebate.

- Rebates are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis until program funds have been depleted.
- Rebate not valid on gas-fired furnaces.
- Rebate limited to one tune-up per home annually.
- HVAC tune-ups must be completed by June 20, 2026. Rebate applications must be received by June 30, 2026.

Tune-Up Checklist

Tune-ups must be performed by a qualified service professional and must include the following criteria:

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

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Austyn Lawler gets a leg up on a power pole during Energy Camp 2025. Photo courtesy of OAEC.

Energy Camp contest closes March 26

The countdown for the opportunity to grow in cooperation, teamwork, leadership development and safety education at the 2026 Energy Camp is winding down for all incoming and current eighth graders attending schools within Cotton Electric's service territory. Contest winners will be selected to attend an all-expense-paid trip to Canyon Camp in Red Rock Canyon, southeast of Hinton, May 26-28.

The top four students will join students from other Oklahoma electric cooperatives for a chance to be a lineworker for a day, hear from motivational speakers, learn the science

behind electricity and participate in various team-building group activities, all while enjoying the great outdoors at Red Rock Canyon.

Contestants must submit an essay between 50 and 100 words explaining why the entrant would like to represent Cotton Electric at the 2026 Energy Camp. Writers of the top 10 essays move to the second round for a live video interview between students and judges where the top four students will be selected to attend this year's Energy Camp.

For contest deadlines, guidelines and submission, visit www.cottonelectric.com/energycamp.



Equity Technical Services contractors are conducting pole inspections on behalf of Cotton Electric.

Contractors assisting with pole inspections

As part of the co-op's ongoing efforts to provide safe and reliable power, members may see a contractor working in certain areas. Equity Technical Services will be conducting pole inspections in the Elgin, Medicine Park and Paradise substation areas.

A crew will be going pole to pole to check the condition of poles and equipment to help ensure everything remains safe and dependable for our members.

If members have any questions, please contact us at 580-875-3351.

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Take charge of your debt, one step at a time

If you're dealing with debt, you're far from alone. More than 80% of U.S. households carry some form of debt (2025 Federal Reserve report), and since 2019, total household debt for Americans has increased more than 31%, to \$18.59 trillion.

While debt can help you achieve important goals,



such as buying a home or getting an education, it can also create strain on your life and finances. If you only make minimum payments, for example, you'll hold debt longer and pay more in interest.

Having a clear debt reduction plan can help you take control, reduce anxiety and even save money.

Know your debt. The first step is understanding what you owe. Make a comprehensive list of all your debts, including credit cards, mortgages, auto loans, student loans and medical bills. For each one, note the total amount owed, the interest rate and your minimum

payment requirements.

Next, add it all up to see your total debt load. Then calculate your debt-to-income ratio by dividing your total monthly debt payments by your gross monthly income. A good rule of thumb is to keep this ratio below 35% if you have a mortgage or 20% if you don't.

Manage what you owe. Now that you have the big picture, look for opportunities to reorganize your debt more effectively. Perhaps you can reorganize existing loans at lower interest rates, consolidate multiple debts into a single payment or transfer high-interest credit card balances to cards that offer

lower or 0% introductory rates for up to 12 months.

These strategies won't reduce the total amount you owe, but they can make your debt more manageable and potentially save you money on interest. Just watch out for fees and make sure you understand new terms before making changes.

Set your payment target. Start by identifying your required minimum payments across all debts. Missing these can trigger fees and penalties and damage your credit score, so treat them as non-negotiable expenses in your budget.

Next, look at your budget to identify any funds

available after covering all essential expenses. Consider how much of this surplus to put toward paying down debt versus saving for other goals. Remember that building an emergency fund and saving for retirement are also important priorities that shouldn't be sidelined.

If you have no surplus, you may need to cut back on things like eating out, clothes shopping, on-line subscriptions, entertainment or expensive vacations while you bring your debt in line. Consider an additional part-time job for extra income to pay off your debt sooner.

Prioritize your debt. Finally, decide which debts

to tackle first with any extra payments. One approach is to focus on paying off the debt with the highest interest rate first, which minimizes the total interest you'll pay over time. Alternately, you can target the smallest balance first to help you build momentum and motivation.

Taking control of your debt doesn't happen overnight, but with a clear strategy, you can make steady progress toward your financial goals.

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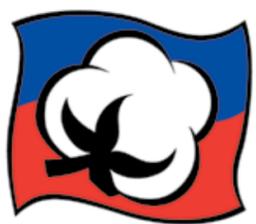
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Co-op Life

Local organizations receive CoBank matching grants

By Carli Eubank

Improving the quality of life in the communities we serve is a key focus for Cotton Electric Cooperative and our Charitable Foundation. Since it was founded in 2004, Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation (CECF) has awarded grants totaling more than \$1.5 million to local nonprofits, youth organizations, schools, volunteer fire departments and more. Recently, four previous CECF grant winners were given a matching grant donation from CoBank's Sharing Success Program: Christians Concerned, Duncan Community Residence, Indianhoma Community Food Bank and Waurika Senior Citizens Center.

CoBank Sharing Success Program

CoBank, a member of the Farm Credit System, is a cooperative bank that provides financial services and solutions to industries of rural America. They also give back to the communities they serve through their Sharing Success Program. CoBank partners with their customer-owners, one of them being your cooperative to provide matching charitable donations that their customers award to local organizations.

Once an organization is deemed eligible, CoBank customers work with the organization to complete the application for the program.

Christians Concerned

Located in Duncan, Christians Concerned serves the community as a food bank and local resource hub for Duncan and Velma residents, or neighbors, at or below the federal poverty line. They received a matching \$2,000 grant from CoBank.

When neighbors step in to the food bank, they're greeted by a volunteer who shows them to a shopping cart and provides a list of eligible food and hygiene items on the rows of shelves.

"When our volunteers shop with our neighbors, we want to create a feeling like they're shopping with a friend," said Kevin Lawrence, Christians Concerned executive director. "We've had people come up to us afterwards so happy to be treated with kindness, have the option to pick out their own food and do so much on their own. That's the best feeling ever."

Lawrence shared that the organization would like to extend gratitude to their partners: the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, Walmart, Homeland, the Family Dollar Distribution Center and Life's Hope.

They would also like to thank the McCasland Foundation, the United Way, Cotton Electric, and the churches and people of Duncan whose generosity helps fund their mission.

Eligible residents can make an appointment during the week with Christians Concerned every 60 days. The public can help support Christians Concerned by signing up to be a volunteer or through monetary and food donations.

For more information, visit www.ccfpduncan.org or follow them on social media.



Christians Concerned received a matching \$2,000 grant from CoBank. Pictured left to right: Cotton Electric Director of Marketing and Communications Zach Young, Cotton Electric COO Bryce Hooper, Christians Concerned Executive Director Kevin Lawrence and Cotton Electric CEO Jennifer Meason. Photo by Carli Eubank.

Duncan Community Residence

Duncan Community Residence is a nonprofit facility providing safe and structured living arrangements for adults with mental health needs. They received a \$4,750 matching CoBank grant.

Directed by a Board of 12 community volunteers and with daily operations managed by staff, Duncan Community Residence is a United Way agency that provides opportunities for socializing, recreating and learning to live in the least restrictive situation possible.

If interested in supporting Duncan Community Residence as a volunteer or employee or making a donation, visit their website at www.dcrduncan.com.



Duncan Community Residence received a matching \$4,750 grant from CoBank. Pictured left to right: Cotton Electric Director of Marketing and Communications Zach Young, Duncan Community Residence Grant Manager Andrea Moore, Duncan Community Residence Board President David Moore, Cotton Electric CEO Jennifer Meason and Cotton Electric COO Bryce Hooper. Photo by Carli Eubank.

Indianhoma Community Food Bank

The Indianhoma Community Food Bank serves as a local resource for residents in the area by providing food assistance to those in need. They received a \$1,000 matching CoBank grant.

Waurika Senior Citizens Center

The Waurika Senior Citizens Center's mission is to recognize the challenges of aging by partnering with the community and government to provide programs and activities that improve the quality of

life for those 60 and better. They received a matching \$2,500 CoBank grant.

Many residents of the Waurika community come to the Senior Citizens Center for their programs and friendly atmosphere, whether it's getting a flu shot, attending the annual Thanksgiving fundraiser meal or playing a game of pokeno. However, their most popular gathering is their daily lunches, starting at 11:45 a.m. Monday through Friday.

"We serve anywhere from 20 to 50 people every day at lunch," said Lori Wesberry, Waurika Senior Citizens Center director. "I love getting to come in here and see everyone laughing and having a good time."

A lot of building improvements have changed the space over the years, but the laughter and community that fills the same space are constant.

"It's such a nice thing to be able to get out and about to see everybody and have some fun," said Judith Henderson, Waurika Senior Citizen Center corporate secretary and grant writer. "We feel like we're definitely an asset to the community that provides services and a place to say hello to everybody."

For more information, visit their Facebook page.



Waurika Senior Citizens Center received a matching \$2,500 grant from CoBank. Pictured left to right: Members and Board members of the Waurika Senior Citizens Center and Cotton Electric Communications Specialist Carli Eubank. Photo by Zach Young.



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Community Spotlight

If you would like your community event listed in the April issue, please submit information by calling 580-875-3351 or by sending an email to TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com by March 27. Only events occurring after April 10 will be published in the next issue.

Editor's Note: We recommend checking for cancellations with local sources before attending any event.

Marlow Fish Fry for Lent

Fish Fry Fridays at the Marlow Catholic Church will be held on each Friday of Lent from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Feb. 20, 27 and March 6, 13, 20 and 27. Fish, fries, coleslaw and homemade dessert cost \$15. All proceeds go for community support such as Charis Pregnancy Center, Coats for Kids, Seminarian Support and Toys for Law Enforcement to give to children in times of stress. Dine-in facilities and carryout are available under the blue roof at 4th & Comanche St. in Marlow. Contact them during serving hours at 580-658-2365.

AMVETS Post 11 – OK hosts garage sale

Browse through clothes, furniture, décor, children's items, toys and more at a local garage sale hosted by the AMVETS Post 11 - OK. Donations will be accepted beginning March 1. The garage sale is schedule for March 27-29 at the AMVETS Post 11 building, 126th S. 10th St. in Duncan. For information, call 580-786-4865.

"Care for the Caregiver" series returns to Stephens County

Stephens County Oklahoma Home and Community Education (OHCE) has continued their state project for 2026 on dementia with a specific focus on "Care for the Caregiver." Gina Flesher, state project committee chair for Stephens County, continues to meet with the committee to develop information relevant to those who care for someone with dementia.

The coalition is made up of community members from OSU Extension and Stephens County OHCE along

with local community partners: DRH Health, DRH Health Foundation, Alzheimer's Association and Pathways to a Healthier You. They have partnered to bring a public forum to educate the public. This is free to the public and there is no need to RSVP. The committee continues to actively work on forming a caregivers support group.

The information for this evening will focus on "Care for the Caregiver, Part 2."

It will be held Tuesday, April 7, at Red River Technology Center, 3300 W. Bois D'Arc Ave. in Duncan at the Delbert E. Morrison Health Careers Center (Building 200) in the auditorium at 2 p.m. and repeated at 6 p.m.

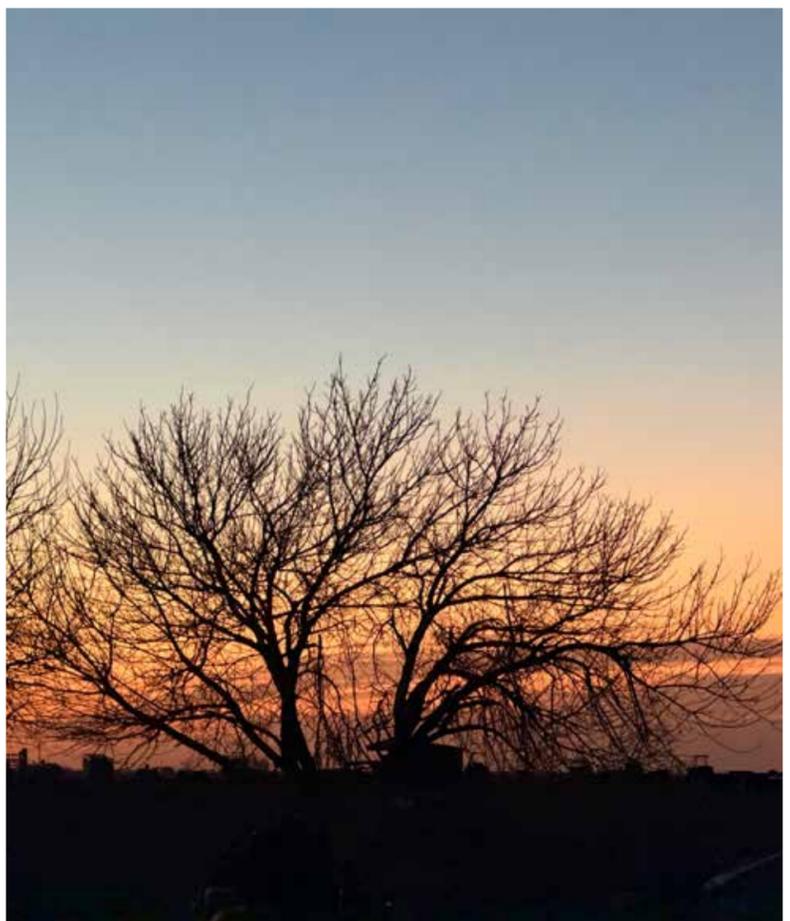
"Care for the Caregiver" information this evening includes:

- The Alzheimer's Association: "Safe Proofing the Home" - information on home assessment
- OSU Able Tech: "Better Care for All" - information on special adaptive aids to use with dementia persons
- Sooner Success: "Rest and Respite" - information on respite vouchers for caregivers
- Continued roundtable discussion related to a caregivers support group formulation
- Question and answer session

Lap fidget blankets made by OHCE members will be available for attendees to take as a free gift at the end of the forum.

In addition, a "Virtual Dementia Simulation" will be held Thursday, May 7 at the DRH Learning Center located at 2465 Whisenant Drive, Suite 200. This free simulation will allow caregivers to better understand the challenges in the environment that someone with dementia is experiencing. It will be held from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. This will require registration as time slots are limited. Participants are asked to enter from the back of the facility on Scott St. Signage will assist participants to find the proper entrance. For more information and to register, please call Gina Flesher at 580-467-0299.

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Cotton Electric member Devin Renschen snapped this beautiful sunset in Geronimo.

Enter your "best shot" in our Photo of the Month contest. The theme for April is Signs of Spring! 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.

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Kim Bandelier, MPH, RD, LD

Food For THOUGHT

When most people pull a radish out of the garden, they grab the crunchy red root and throw the leafy green top into the compost bin. You may be tossing the best part. Turns out radish greens are not only edible, but they can also be delicious and are packed with nutrients.

Radish greens are the emerald-colored leaves that grow above the ground.

The radish root that we normally eat is spicy and crunchy. The leaves are mild and earthy. When the leaves are young, they are tender and great for salads. As they get older, they develop a fuzzy texture - almost like peach fuzz - that disappears completely as soon as you cook them.

For the freshest radish greens, the best way is to grow them yourself. The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service recommends planting radishes from seed between March 1 and April 15. Radishes are meant for cool weather planting and harvesting before the summer heat. Radishes grow fast, with some varieties being ready in just 25 days.

You might be surprised to learn that the leaves are actually healthier than the radish root. The greens contain vitamin C, vitamin A, calcium, iron and fiber. These nutrients come at a very low-calorie cost, making radish greens nutrient dense. Of course, they could be the healthiest food on the planet but if the taste is off-putting, none of that matters.



Luckily, radish greens are very versatile and easy to prepare. If you want to add them to salads or other dishes without cooking, young radish leaves are best (pre-fuzz). Otherwise, mature radish leaves can be cooked for a couple of minutes to soften and bring out a rich, savory flavor similar to kale or tur-

nip greens. Once washed, radish greens can be sauteed in a pan with olive oil and garlic, sauteed with bacon, added to stir fries and soups, tossed into pasta dishes, added to omelets or piled on a baked potato. The options are endless for this versatile, nutrient-dense, but often forgotten green.

Hearty stew tailor-made for St. Patrick's celebrations



St. Patrick's Day is a festive day in which people from all walks of life embrace Irish culture. Celebrated right in the middle of March, St. Patrick's Day calls for hearty fare that those who have been to the Emerald Isle know is a staple of the Irish diet. This year, anyone looking to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, and stay warm in the process, can enjoy this recipe courtesy of Lines+Angles.

Irish Stew With Lamb and Potatoes

Serves 6

- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 3/4 pound lamb neck, on the bone, thickly sliced
- 4 small onions, diced

- 2 carrots, sliced
 - 6 cups beef stock
 - 8 to 10 small waxy potatoes, halved or quartered depending on size
 - 1 to 2 tablespoons chopped parsley
1. Heat the oil in a large pot and sear the meat. Remove from the pan and set aside.
 2. Cook the onions and carrots in the pan for 3 minutes. Return the meat to the pot, season with salt and ground black pepper and deglaze with the stock. Cover and simmer on a low heat for 40 minutes.
 3. Add the potatoes to the pot, cover and cook for another 30 minutes until the potatoes are soft. Season to taste and serve garnished with parsley.

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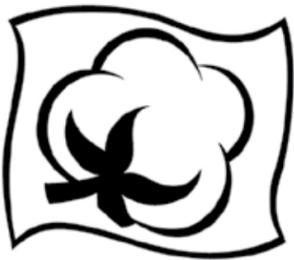
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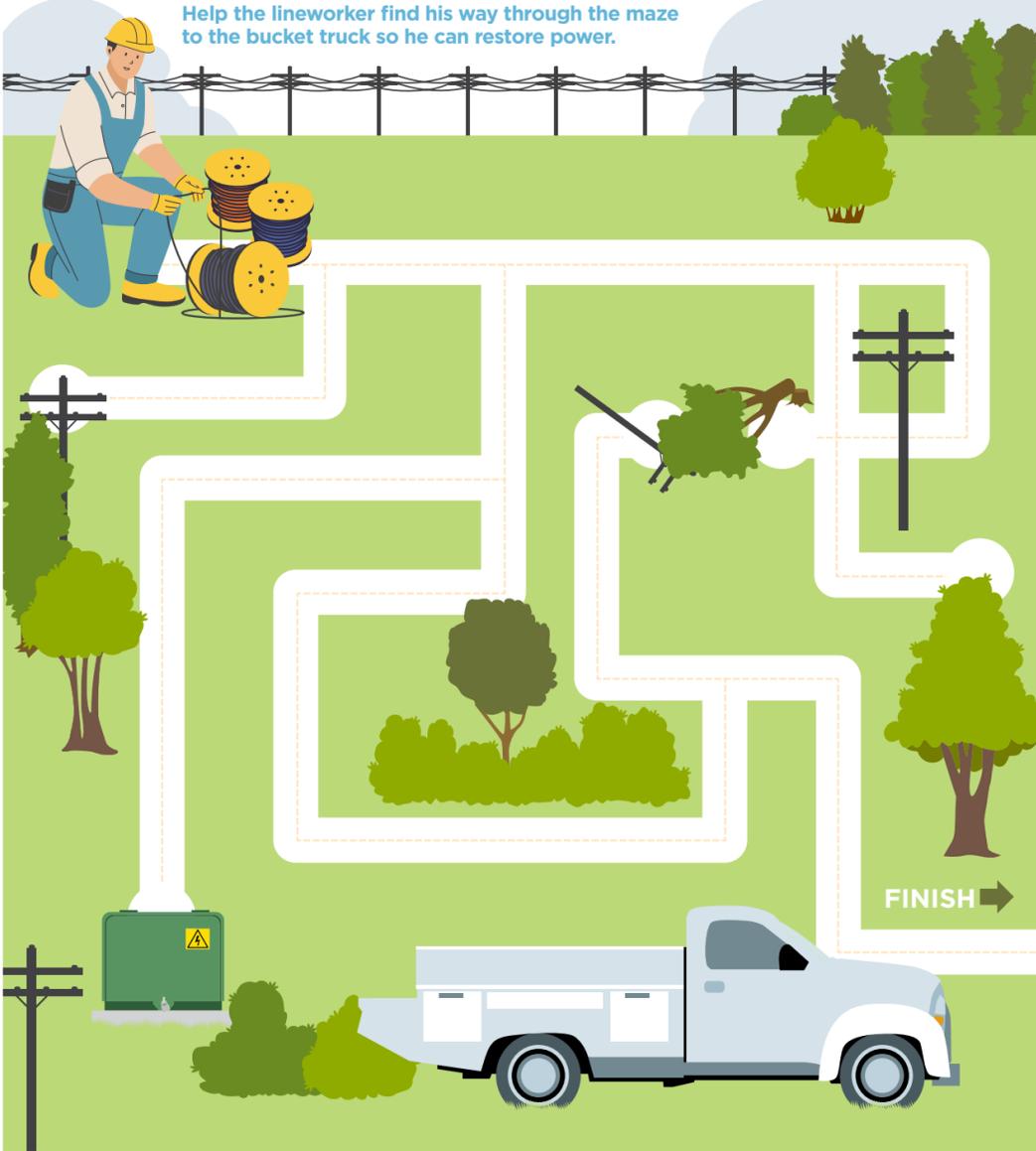
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Help the Lineworker Spring into Action

Did you know March 20 is the first day of spring? This time of year marks new beginnings and fresh blooms, but it can also bring powerful storms that interrupt electric service.

Help the lineworker find his way through the maze to the bucket truck so he can restore power.



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- Chinese lute
- Not wet
- Moves wings up and down
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- Swiss river
- Female sibling
- Receive
- Relating to a type
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- Bitter-tasting organic substance
- Die
- Matched
- Literary genre ___-fi
- Cannot
- Pounded
- British rock group
- Debt relief order
- 2006 NL Cy Young winner
- Green vegetable
- Tough outer skin of fruit
- ___ Spumante (Italian wine)
- Ailments
- Famed singer Charles
- Camper

Brink
 Auction Service

Taking Consignments for our 39th Annual Spring Farm & Ranch Equipment sale!
 To be held at Brink Auction yard, 1 mile south of Frederick, OK on Hwy 183.
 NO BUYERS PREMIUM

April 11, 2026

Online auction services available at www.equipmentfacts.com
 P.O. Box 928* Frederick, OK 73542
 To consign, please call
 Terry - 580-335-4126 Mobile
 John Dee - 580-471-7937 Mobile
brinkauction@gmail.com
 We appreciate your business!

Visit our website www.brinkauction.com

Step Into His Story



JESUS GOSPEL PARK

ADDINGTON, OKLAHOMA

Walk through the life, miracles, and message of Jesus in a peaceful outdoor setting designed to bring Scripture to life. Each step draws you deeper into a story of love, sacrifice, and hope that changed the world. Whether you are strengthening your faith or discovering it for the first time, this is more than a visit. It is an experience.

Our Mission

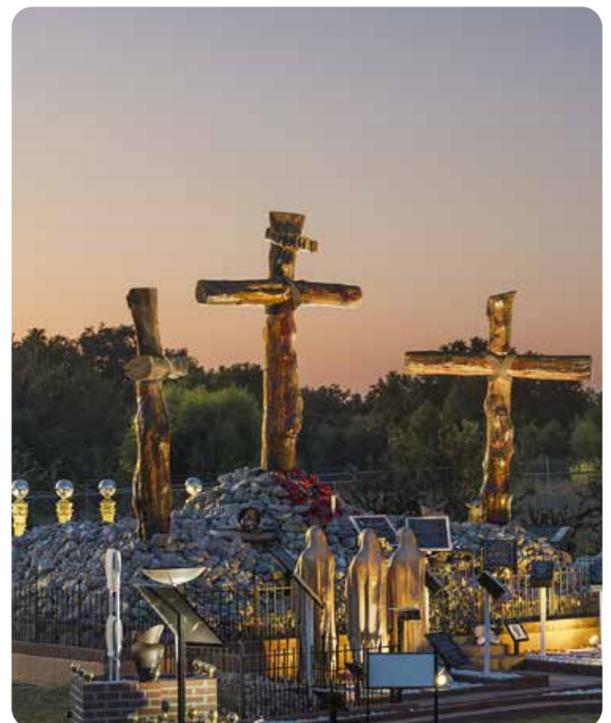
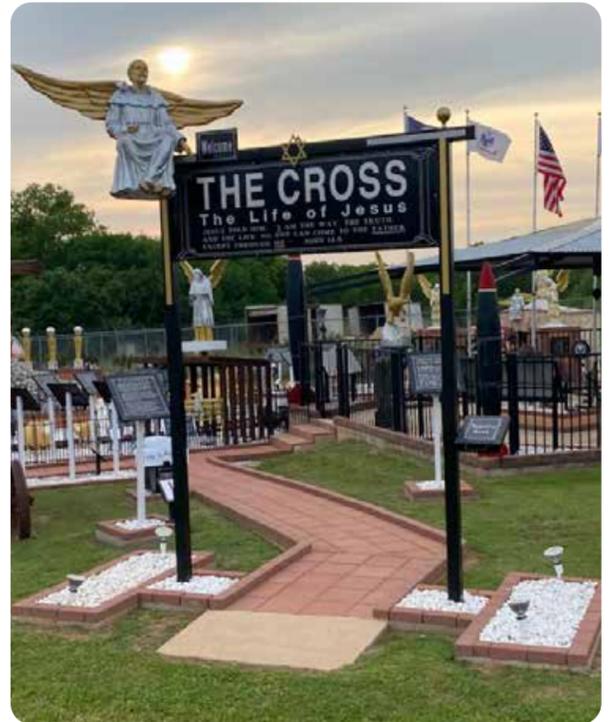
Bringing The True Biblical Gospel Story of Jesus Christ to Life

A Place To Find Peace

The gospel is about the burial and His resurrection from the dead. He lived a life of perfect obedience. His atoning death on the cross was followed by His resurrection from the dead. This led to His ascension into heaven. This was followed by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit for all believers. Jesus Gospel Park is a great place to be wrapped in God's arms and learn the true story of his Son, Jesus. The park is a place of education, serenity, reflection and salvation. Here visitors can share a common bond of faith, hope and inspiration.

Helping the Community

The gospel of Christ leads to the gift of salvation to all who believe. For the unbeliever, the Holy Spirit of God will come into you personally. This is the most important opportunity of your life, and ultimately the purpose of our time on earth. Jesus Gospel Park will give you an opportunity to listen to the call of the Holy Spirit on your life. God's invitation is waiting for you.



You're invited.
Gather your family and experience the life of Jesus together.

Created with you in mind.

Come experience a meaningful walk through the life of Jesus.

Watch the Story Unfold



Outreach

We are called to continue the work of the Lord who came to speak and save the "lost". [Luke 19:10] He gave us the Great Commission which is "to go into the world and preach the Gospel" [Matthew 28:18-20]



Fellowship

Very important for all believers and especially for new believers where encouragement strength and support is fostered by sharing with others who embrace the same beliefs and are followers on the same path to Heaven.



Serve

We serve out of a motivation to love to be equipped and to equip others with the Gospel and move forward in learning to serve others supernaturally. The Lord states that the things He did we are assigned to on a daily basis. [John 14:12]

jesusgospelpark.org
(580) 439-5566

WE ARE OPEN 24/7 NO ADMISSION FEE
401 US Highway 81, Addington, Oklahoma 73520