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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 66

October 11, 2022

NUMBER 2

## Co-op shows gratitude to members at the 2022 Annual Meeting

By Carli Eubank

Cotton Electric members and employees were eager to enjoy the back in-person 2022 Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation Night on Sept. 20. There were 524 registered members and their families in attendance. They came from across the service territory to come to the Great Plains Coliseum in Lawton for an evening of co-op business and community.

Registration opened at 5:30 p.m. where members received their gift bags and entered into the prize drawing that would be announced later that evening. The traditional barbecue dinner was served and Co-op Connection partners displayed products for shopping. Members also posed wearing a hard hat in a Cotton Electric bucket at the photo booth.

The kids' area stayed energetic all throughout the evening as kids jumped in the bounce houses, were entertained by Star Spangle the Clown, collected balloons, and enjoyed fresh cotton candy.

One of the benefits for members when they attend the Annual Meeting is the opportunity to engage with Cotton Electric employees and board of trustees. Many members stopped by the co-op's departmental booths to ask questions, address concerns, or show appreciation to their co-op employees.

At 7 p.m. sharp, the business meeting was called to order by Board President Shan Files. Ken Layn, board trustee of District 2 gave the invocation and led the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance. Everyone in attendance directed their attention to the presentation of colors and the playing of the National Anthem performed by the Central High Public School band program. Students played with instruments provided through a past Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation (CECF) grant.

Five percent of the co-op's 16,360 membership must be present to reach quorum. This allows those in attendance to vote on co-op business. Files announced a quorum was not met and adjourned the business meeting.

Next, Brian DeMarcus, board trustee of District 4, introduced special guests and the co-op's trustees.

Jace Zacharias, field representative for Congressman Tom Cole, traveled to the event and engaged with the membership throughout the night. Jane Lafferty, CEO, Sondra Boykin, communications coordinator and Howie Jackson, information specialist at Western Farmers Electric Cooperative, Cotton Electric's power provider, set up a booth and explained how energy generation and transmission works.



Many Cotton Electric members reunited with friends throughout the evening. Photo by Carli Eubank.



Cotton Electric Member Services Representative Kyle Graham and Purchasing Agent Adam Metcalf welcome members at registration table. Photo by Carli Eubank.

CEO of Southwest Rural Electric Cooperative Jeff Simpson was at the meeting, as well. Another guest in attendance from the cooperative community was Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives CEO Chris Meyers.

Files returned to the microphone to give the president's report to the membership, focusing on three important values in his life: faith, family and friends.

“One of the things I love about this co-op is at every meeting we

all still salute the flag and we pray,” Files said. “Without my faith I would not have my family and friends, and I am very thankful for that. So, God bless Cotton Electric Cooperative and God Bless the United States of America.”

Following Files was Steve Robinson, secretary-treasurer and board trustee of District 7, who presented the co-op's well-managed financial status before asking Jennifer Meason to present the CEO report.

*Continued on page 2*

### Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment now being applied to bills mailed after October 1, 2022, is \$0.03292 per kWh.

On a member's average bill of 1,300 kilowatt hours (kWh), this will amount to a charge of \$42.79 on the October bill.

### September 2022 Temperature Extremes

Day	High	Low	Avg.	Day	High	Low	Avg.
1	88	73	81	16	95	67	81
2	96	73	85	17	98	72	85
3	99	68	84	18	99	72	86
4	95	65	80	19	99	66	83
5	96	59	78	20	99	66	83
6	96	61	79	21	100	70	85
7	96	65	81	22	89	62	76
8	91	65	78	23	96	59	78
9	92	62	77	24	98	60	79
10	93	58	76	25	94	62	78
11	81	56	69	26	90	50	70
12	87	52	70	27	95	51	73
13	95	60	78	28	95	53	74
14	93	65	79	29	85	60	73
15	92	63	78	30	84	56	70

Source: [srh.noaa.gov/ou/](http://srh.noaa.gov/ou/)

Average Daily High: 94 Average Daily Low: 62

### Did You Know?

Cotton Electric Cooperative can come speak to your classroom or civic group. Give the marketing department a call at 580-875-3351 or email [paula@cot-tonelectric.com](mailto:paula@cot-tonelectric.com).

The next issue of The Current should arrive in mailboxes on Nov. 14, 2022.

### 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](mailto:TheCurrent@cottonelectric.com).

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



**COTTON**  
ELECTRIC CO-OP

**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

## Celebrating membership

October is National Co-op Month

October is a particularly eventful month with school, community and sports activities in full swing. It's also when all cooperatives celebrate National Co-op Month.

When I say Cotton Electric Cooperative celebrates Co-op Month, it really means we are celebrating you! After all, our co-op wouldn't exist without you, our members.

Our core business purpose is to serve as your electricity provider, but the larger mission of the co-op is to help make our corner of the world a better place. "Concern for community" is one of seven guiding principles that all co-ops share.

Similar to how our wires run through our service territory, our concern for community

flows through all of our decisions—because being a co-op means being a responsible partner and good neighbor.

Cotton Electric works to help our community thrive through initiatives led by our employees and local board that's comprised of neighbors who live in our community. Because we're local, we understand our community's unique needs and strive to help meet them.

We're proud to support local youth through our Youth Tour and Energy Camp programs. With your help, the Operation Round Up program provides assistance to our communities, supporting area schools, senior citizens centers, food banks and other charitable organizations.

The word "cooperative" is close to "cooperation," meaning

people working together towards a common goal—mutually benefitting one another and the larger community. That's the essence of the cooperative spirit. Our employees and member-elected board members are invested in the community in which we live and serve.

Above all, as a co-op, we put our members' priorities first. As your trusted energy partner, we know that saving energy and money is important to you. This has become increasingly important with inflationary pressures and the rising cost of power. That's why we have numerous programs in place to help and we want to empower you to manage energy use at home.

If you haven't already, I encourage you to download our app, SmartHub. Through the



### Jennifer Meason, CEO

app, you can conveniently monitor and manage your energy use.

If you're considering an investment in wind or solar power, we want to be a resource for you. We can offer a candid assessment of your specific situation to help before making a significant financial investment.

Cotton Electric Cooperative is continuously examining ways to operate more efficiently while continuing to provide the highest level of friendly, safe and reliable service you expect and deserve. We are here to help, so call us at 580-875-3351 if you have any questions or concerns.

## CEO shares co-op updates and appreciation to members during message



Cotton Electric CEO Jennifer Meason gives the membership updates on co-op business at the 2022 Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation Night. Photo by Carli Eubank.

Continued from page 1

Meason expressed how exciting it was to see everyone back together in fellowship and thanked members for taking time out of their schedules to be part of their cooperative. Before sharing updates of the co-op, she took time to recognize and show appreciation to all of the veterans and first responders in attendance that evening.

"A lot of things have changed since we were founded in 1938, but one thing that has remained the same is our purpose and our mission to provide our members safe, reliable and affordable power while giving back to our communities," Meason said.

Over the past year, the operation side of the co-op has been working

on pole inspections and changeouts along with vegetation management crews maintaining lines by trimming trees and applying an herbicide application throughout the service territory.

Meason also explained the variety of communication avenues the co-op offers to its members. Members can call or email the offices or speak to their district trustee about questions or issues.

"We are going to do our best every day to provide excellent service for you and to follow the policies and guidelines of the cooperative," Meason said.

Meason shared how the co-op's purpose goes beyond providing electric service, and that's by being involved in the communities we serve.

The Operation Round Up program is overseen by the CECF. Today, more than \$1.42 million dollars have gone back to service organizations, schools, senior citizens, food pantries and other organization within our service territory. None of that would be possible if it weren't for members rounding up their bills every month. That little bit a change added together makes a huge difference, Meason said.

The evening ended with the anticipated prize drawing. A complete list of prizes and winners can be found on page 6.

"We would not be here if it weren't for you," Meason said. "Cotton Electric trustees and staff are dedicated to you, our members."



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

With winter weather on the way, now is the time to seal drafty windows. If you can see daylight around a window frame or if you can rattle a window (movement means possible leaks), the window likely needs to be sealed.

Most window leaks can be sealed with caulk or weatherstripping, which come in a variety of compounds and materials. Visit [www.energy.gov/energysaver](http://www.energy.gov/energysaver) to learn how and where to seal air leaks.

Source: Energy.gov

### August 2022 Operating Stats

	2022	2021
Total Amount Billed/Accrued	\$8,691,970	\$6,869,653
Cost of Purchased Power	7,161,543	4,883,341
Taxes	174,886	125,926
Total Operating Expense Per Mile	1,657	1,265
Average Farm and Residential Bill	211	186
Average Farm and Residential kWh	1,668	1,651
Total Meters Billed (farm, residential)	19,290	19,026
Miles Energized	5,380	5,206
Density Per Mile	3.59	3.65
New Service Connects YTD	350	275
Services Retired	87	121

### Upcoming Deadlines for The Current

November	
Ad Sales	Oct. 28
Classified	Nov. 2
Publish	Nov. 14
December	
Ad Sales	Nov. 25
Classified	Nov. 30
Publish	Dec. 12

## The Current

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Jennifer Meason .....CEO  
 Shane Bowers.....Vice President  
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 Carli Eubank.....Editor  
 Zach Young.....Marketing Specialist

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# Energy Efficiency

## Ways to improve your home's efficiency for fall

Summer is officially over, and we finally are starting to see some relief from the excessive heat we had to deal with this year. The passing of one season means it's time to prepare for the next. Consider the tips below to help you keep your home comfortable and your energy bill more affordable this fall.

### Service your heating system

As the weather patterns start to change and the temperatures start to fall, it is important to schedule fall HVAC maintenance appointments. Your system has just spent months working overtime trying to overcome the triple-digit heat of summer. It's time to have it inspected and make sure it is ready to face the upcoming winter weather. These inspections can catch



*As seasons change, so should your energy efficiency habits, such as scheduling HVAC maintenance appointments and inspecting doors and windows in your home.*

minor equipment issues before they become major ones. Take this opportunity to replace your air filters and to update your thermostat programming.

Fall is a great time to offset temperature settings while you are away from the house or sleeping. Turn down the heating set point while you are away during the day, and open up your blinds to allow the sun to help maintain the temperature in your home. Specifically, open blinds and curtains for windows facing south or west. Be sure to speak to your HVAC professional about the best programing practices.

### Doors & windows

Now is a great time to inspect your doors and windows for any gaps or cracks in your sealant. Eliminating air leaks in these areas will help to keep the cold air out and warm air in. Caulking, spray foam, and sealant kits can be effective tools in this process.

When it comes to spray foam, pay special attention to the specific application for the foam you are buying. Different types of foam are formulated for different applications. Big Gap foam is designed with max expansion in mind and can actually cause significant damage if used around doors or windows. Use foam specifically designed for these areas. The Window and Door formula is a minimally expanding foam with low-pressure build. This formula will not cause frames to bow when used properly.

Pay close attention to the sealant type as well. Certain types of sealants are specifically designed for outdoor installation, and a flexible caulking can reduce future cracking due to small structural movement.

### Prepare your water heater

To begin, perform a quick inspection on your water heater to make sure there are no leaks that need to be addressed before moving on. Next, check your water heater's temperature set point. 120 degrees Fahrenheit is the DOE's recommended setting. Make sure the power is turned off before checking or adjusting the thermostats.

Once you have the power off just remove the top and bottom covers to expose the thermostats. Not all models have actual temperatures indicators on the dial. In these cases, a quick search can identify which indicator represents your desired set-point.

Finally, take a look at insulation opportunities. Installing a water heater blanket and insulating all exposed water pipes will normally cost you less than \$50. You can see a return on that investment in less than one year. If you are not comfortable inspecting your home's water heater, be sure to contact your plumber.

### Look for energy-savings in every room

When you really start to look around your house there are opportunities for energy savings in almost every room. Lighting is a great place to start. LED lighting can use up to 75% less energy per bulb. Not only will you save on energy cost, but replacement cost is reduced significantly. On average a LED bulb will last up to 25 times longer than an incandescent bulb. Outdoor lighting that is left on for long periods of time is a great place to save a lot of energy, as well.

Remember to keep fireplace dampers closed when not in use. An open damper is like keeping a window open



**Heath Morgan,  
Energy Efficiency  
Coordinator**

during the winter. Warm air is less dense and wants to rise above colder air. This results in what is known as the Stack Effect. Warm air can be drawn out of the home due to pressure differences. This case occurs in an evenly balanced home with no systems running.

When exhaust fans are introduced to the equation, you can actually be drawing that cold air into your home. Vent hoods, bathroom exhaust, and even your clothes dryer can create a negative pressure within your home. This negative pressure will draw cold air in from your flue pipe and any other air leaks around the home.

### Use the tools available

Visit [cottonelectric.com/energy-efficiency](http://cottonelectric.com/energy-efficiency) to find a link to the Energy Star interactive guide on what upgrades can be made to reduce your energy usage. The Department of Energy webpage is another useful tool. Visit [energy.gov/energysaver/energy-saver](http://energy.gov/energysaver/energy-saver). Here you can find a host of resources such as their DIY projects complete with how-to videos, incentives and financing options, and a number of weatherization pages.

You can also schedule a free in-home energy evaluation by calling your cooperative today at 580-875-3351.

## The Cooperative Advantage

Electric co-ops are community-focused organizations that deliver safe, reliable and affordable energy to their members

1

2

Our electric co-op is unique because we belong to the community we serve. The co-op is led by its members, which gives us a unique understanding of the needs of our local communities. In fact, many of our leaders and employees live right here in the community and are members of the co-op - just like you!

3

Because we answer to local members rather than far-away shareholders, we're able to respond quickly to the changing needs of our community. We even share any excess revenue with our members because we're not-for-profit.

4

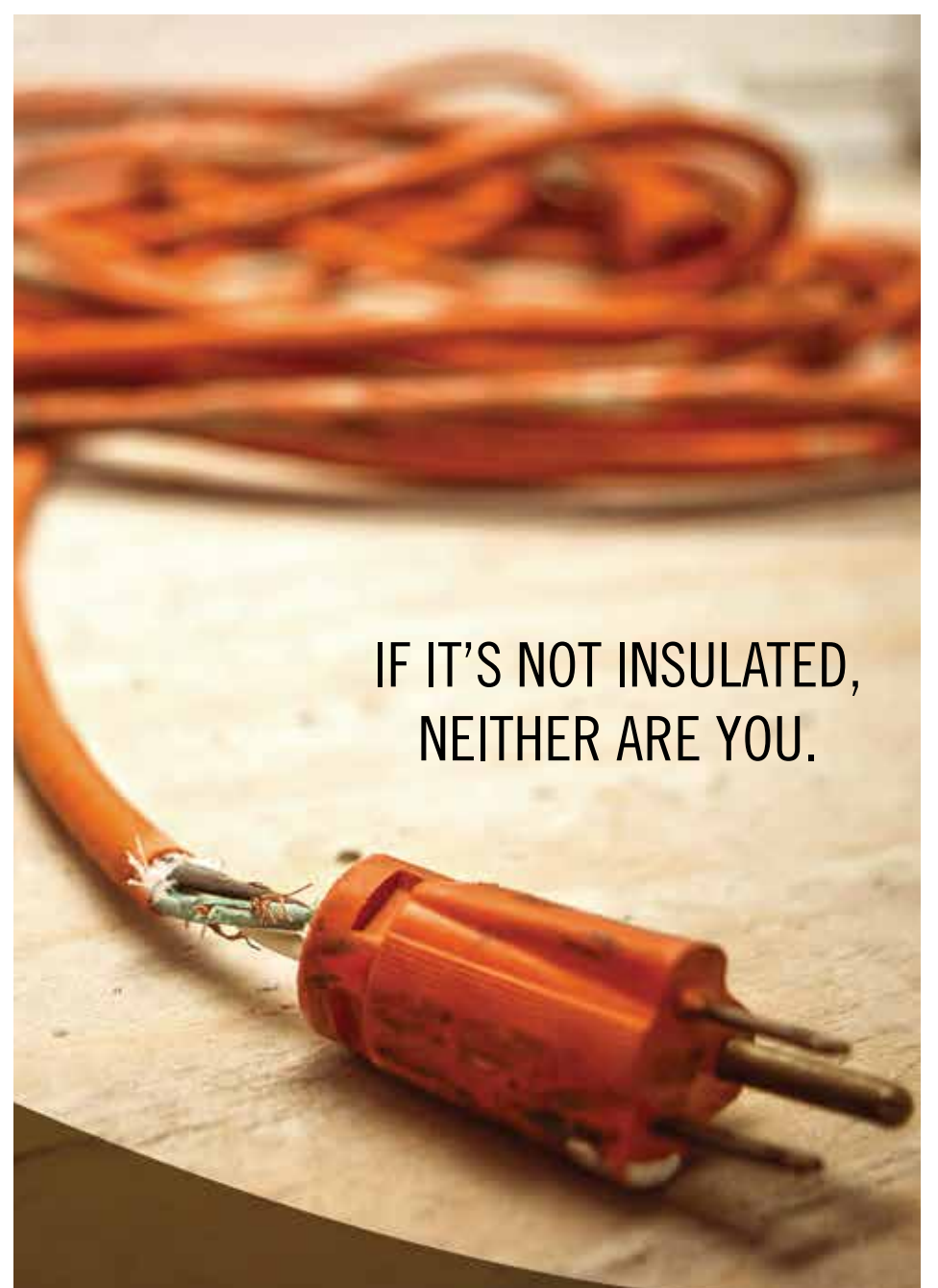
Even though we're locally-owned and operated, we cooperate with other electric cooperatives across the country to develop new technologies, invest in equipment and infrastructure that benefits multiple co-ops in a region, and assist with major outages. This type of collaboration allows us to address complex challenges while remaining true to our local roots.

5

Our electric co-op was built by the community, belongs to the community and continues to be led by the community - that's the cooperative difference!



**COTTON**  
ELECTRIC CO-OP



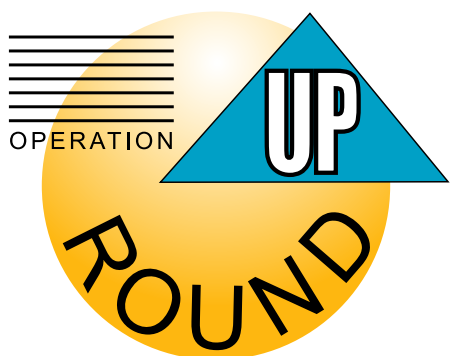
IF IT'S NOT INSULATED,  
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# Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation



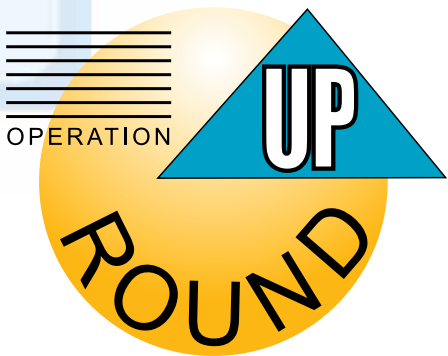
A Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation (CECF) grant was awarded to Jefferson County Free Fair for installation of heaters in their show barn. Pictured left to right: Steve Howard, board president and Glen Hobbs, board member of the Jefferson County Free Fair Board; and Cotton Electric Marketing Specialist Zach Young.



The Chisholm Trail Kiwanis Club recently received a CECF grant to purchase life vests for their swimming students. Pictured left to right serve on the Chisholm Trail Kiwanis Club's swim committee: Cindy Edwards, Nate Edwards, Chris Genn, Jim Matthews, and Cotton Electric Editor Carli Eubank.

## Reminder!

Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation fourth-quarter grant applications are due **Nov. 8 by 5 p.m.**



Download applications at [www.cottonelectric.com/operation-roundup](http://www.cottonelectric.com/operation-roundup)

Need help? Email [paula@cottonelectric.com](mailto:paula@cottonelectric.com)



A recent Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation (CECF) grant will support a youth conference designed to reduce the misuse of marijuana among adolescents in Jefferson County. Pictured left to right are Wichita Mountains Prevention Network staff and members of the Jefferson County Pathways Coalition: Lauren Nitschke, Suzy Bruner, Jennifer Gormley, Terri Sheffield, Gina Olheiser, Brooke Anthony; Cotton Electric Marketing and Communications Director Paula Huckabaa; Jamie Williams, Lori Lovett and Tara Brown.

**OCTOBER 13TH • 14TH • 15TH**

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**DUNCAN, OK 7:30pm NIGHTLY**

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Duncan 580.252.3220 Lawton 580.248.2097

★ A portion of the event proceeds benefit the Taylor Le Norman / McCasland Cancer Center and the Alzheimer's Association, Oklahoma Chapter ★

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# Meetings held in Cotton Electric Districts 4, 7 and 9

By Carli Eubank

Cooperatives operate with their members in mind and through the seven cooperative principles. The second principle is democratic member control. One way members can exercise this principle is through attending Cotton Electric's district meetings and actively engaging with the co-op's Board of Trustees.

During the end of August, meetings were held in Districts 4, 7 and 9.

The meetings began with District 4 on Aug. 23 in Lawton. Brian DeMarcus, serving as trustee of District 4, welcomed members of his district before handing the meeting over to the District Meeting Committee, composed of Board Trustees, to call the meeting to order.

Districts Meetings of 7 and 9 followed the same order.

Steve Robinson, trustee of District 7, gathered with members in his district on Aug. 25 in Lawton, and District 9 trustee Ronnie Bohot welcomed members within his area on Aug. 30 in Waurika.

Members at each meeting selected a chairman from among those present. The chairmen appointed a meeting secretary then asked for a report on the presence

of a quorum. Co-op by-laws require a quorum of 5% of a district's members to hold an election.

Neither a quorum nor opponents were present at any of the meetings held this year, so DeMarcus, Robinson and Bohot were held over for additional three-year terms beginning immediately after the 2022 Annual Meeting on Sept. 20.

Cotton Electric CEO Jennifer Meason thanked the members for expressing an interest in the co-op through their attendance and gave a report on cooperative business.

"Members are the reason we are here, and everything we do at the co-op is with our members in mind," Meason said.

The meter change-out project wrapped up at the end of 2021, and Meason shared how this upgrade will give more intricate data on energy usage that can be helpful when making decisions about a solar installation or overall home energy efficiency improvements. This also allows more accurate outage location readings that will aid employees to restore power quicker.

Next, Meason shared how the Vegetation Management crew is maintaining and improving quality power

by clearing trees and brush from power lines. This year the co-op has been working with an USDA certified herbicide application contractor to prevent regrowth of vegetation within the service territory.

The upcoming text messaging system, TextPower, will hopefully be available to members at the end of the year, Meason added.

Meason also addressed the factors that led to an increase in power bills, such as the intense summer heat and the overall rise in the cost of generating power compared to previous years. She also thanked members for their voluntary participation to help beat the peak this summer.

To wrap up her report, Meason gave an update on the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation. Since the foundation was established in 2004, \$1,421,127.07 have been awarded to local organizations in the co-op's service territory.

Each meeting concluded with energy voucher prize drawings, refreshments and fellowship with Cotton Electric members and employees.

Next year's meetings will include Districts 2, 6 and 8.



District 4 energy voucher winners were Brian Edwards, Gary Simmons and John Hamilton.



Lenora Musgrove, Donna Cargill and Darvin Smith were the energy voucher winners from District 7.



District 9 energy voucher winners were Karen Johnson, Susan Sommers and Maudene Scott.

## NOW TAKING APPLICATIONS FOR OPERATOR POSITION

Comanche County Rural Water District #3 is seeking a qualified candidate for the full time position of Water Distribution System Operator.

The System Operator duties include but not limited to repair and maintenance in all areas of the distribution system, reading/repair of meters, valves, waterlines and towers, maintain chlorination and pump equipment at well site and booster stations and other duties as assigned by the System Manager.

The candidate must be 18 or older and possess a valid driver's license. Experience in water system operations is preferred but not required, training will be provided by system staff. Must possess a High School Diploma or GED. Must have or be able to obtain an Oklahoma Class C Water Works Operations Certification within one year of hire. Must be able to lift and/or move over 50 pounds and must be willing to work on an "on-call" status for nights, weekends, and emergencies.

Must possess both organizational and communication skills in dealing with the public.

Competitive pay. After completing probationary period benefits include: employer-paid health, dental and vision insurance (employee only), vacation and sick leave.

Applications and a more detailed job description are available at the District Office located at 5845 SE 90<sup>th</sup> Street, Lawton, Oklahoma 73501 Monday through Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm.

This position is open until filled.

Comanche County RWD #3 is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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Stove & Refrigerator,  
Carpet & Mini Blinds, On-Site Laundry.  
Rental Assistance available for qualified applications  
HUD Section 8 Accepted.  
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## How should you pay for short-term financial goals?

As you go through life, you will likely have long- and short-term financial goals. But how will your strategies for meeting your long-term goals differ from those needed for your short-term ones?

If you're like most people, your biggest long-term goal is achieving a comfortable retirement. And for this goal, a common strategy

is putting away money in tax-advantaged retirement vehicles, such as your 401(k) and IRA.

So, how should you go about preparing for shorter-term goals, such as a family vacation, home renovation, wedding or major purchase?

For starters, determine what your goal is, how much you can spend on it and when you'll need the money. Even if you can't pinpoint a precise amount, you can develop a good estimate. Of course, the sooner you start this process, the better off you'll be, because you'll have more time to save.

Your next decision involves the manner in which you save for your

short-term goal. Specifically, what savings or investment vehicles should you use?

The answer will be different for everyone, but you need to make sure that your investments align with your risk tolerance and time horizon. And you'll want to ensure, as much as possible, that a certain amount of money is available for you at the specific time you'll need it.

If you aren't able to save enough to reach a short-term goal, you have other options — you can borrow what you need, or you can potentially sell investments to cover the cost. How can you decide which choice is best?

To help make up your

mind, you'll first want to consider some of the most common borrowing options: credit cards, home equity loans, personal loans and margin loans. (A margin loan lets you borrow against the value of investments you already own). How might each of these loans fit into your overall financial strategy? Will the repayment schedule work with your cash flow and budget?

You'll then want to compare the costs and benefits of borrowing, in whatever form, against selling investments. For example, if you can borrow at a lower interest rate compared to the return you think you can get from your

investments, borrowing might be a reasonable choice. You'll also need to consider other factors, such as your credit score, taxes, fees associated with selling investments and time needed to repay debts. If, for instance, selling investments will trigger a large amount of taxes, borrowing might be preferable. You'll also want to consider whether there's a penalty or high costs associated with selling investments. In addition, if you have a long time horizon for a loan, you may want to sell investments to avoid paying interest for a longer period of time, and thus driving up the overall cost of borrowing.

Finally, keep in mind that you may have built an investment mix designed to align with your goals and risk tolerance. If you were to sell any of these investments to meet short-term needs, you would want to consider the need to rebalance your portfolio to maintain your desired asset allocation.

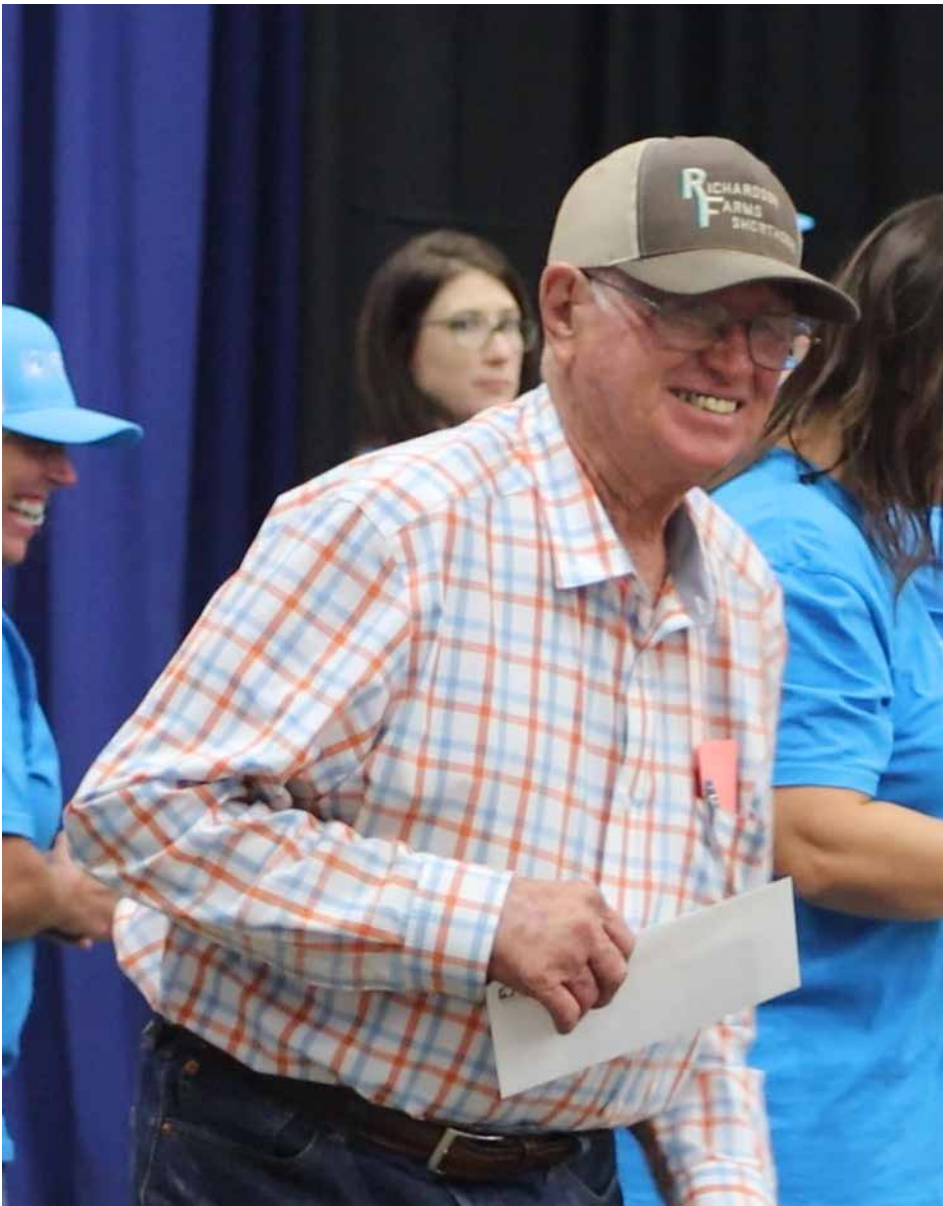
As you can see, there's a lot to think about when it comes to paying for short-term goals. But by carefully evaluating your options, you can make the choices that are right for your needs.

Edward Jones, Member SIPC



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## 2022 Annual Meeting prize winners listed

Cotton Electric's 2022 Annual Meeting concluded with a prize drawing. Each member in attendance was automatically entered to win a variety of prizes. Here is a complete list of prizes and winners:

\$500 energy voucher: Leon McComber	\$250 energy vouchers: Curtis Wilson, Joe Stuckey	\$100 energy vouchers: Mike Woods, Kay Stewart	\$50 cash: Debra Vanness, Maurice Jones, Jim Davis, Russell Mathesen, Jennifer Williams, Sammy Richards, Donald Kern, Charles Keenan, Kari Adams, JG Smith, Ray Kesner, Larry Landran, Robert De-	Leaf Blower: Robert Tuppeconnie
nard, Chris Polsgrove, Sandy Edgmon, Terrell Crow, Darrell Knapp, Gennive Gallagher, Joan Smith, and Kevin Ramsey	Power Washer: Rosemary McGlothlin	Ratchet Straps: Jerry Williamson, Richard Rhodes, Monica Bishop, Kim Bitts	Wireless Chargers: WJ Vowell, GW McAlister	Jump Starter: JW Watkins
	Hedge Trimmer: Ronald RedElk	53 Piece Tool Set: Edward Eschiti	WeedWacker: Lyn Carmon	Keurig: Ladonna Castillo
			Wireless Speakers: Barbara Sauerman, Mike Coffia, Robert Luna	50' Cord Reel and Wall Mount: Stanley Daubenspeck
				LED Work Lights: Thomas Downs, Charles Guthrie
				Ninja Kitchen System: Joyce Lowery
				Nest Doorbell Camera: Billy Smith
				DeWalt Drill: Ronald McDonald
				32" Television: Kay Alexander
				Ninja Air Fryer: Judy Russell
				Yeti Coolers: TC Mayhugh, Stacy Valentine

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# Four ways to boost your cyber hygiene

## October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month

In today's digital world, cyberattacks are unfortunately nothing new. Cyber criminals can attack on a multitude of levels, from large-scale attacks targeting corporations to smaller phishing attacks aimed to gain an individual's personal information and data.

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month, but good cyber hygiene should be practiced year-round. This year's theme is "See Yourself in Cyber" – because we all have a part to play in cybersecurity. When we hear about massive data breaches, it can feel overwhelming and lead us to think we're powerless as individuals to stop cyber criminals.

The truth is, there are several practical steps we can take to safeguard our electric devices and data. Listed below are four easy ways to boost your cyber hygiene:

### 1. Enable multi-factor authentication.

Also known as two-step verification, multi-factor authentication adds a second step when logging into an account (to prove you're really you), which greatly increases the security of the account information. This second step could include an extra PIN, answering an extra security question, a code received via email or a secure token.

Regardless of the type of authentication, this additional step makes it twice as hard for cyber criminals to access your account. Not every ac-

count offers multi-factor authentication, but it's becoming increasingly popular and should be utilized when available.

### 2. Use strong passwords and a password manager.

Remember, passwords are the "keys" to your personal home online. Your passwords should always be long, unique and complex. When creating strong passwords, use at least 12 characters, never reuse passwords for multiple accounts and use a combination of upper- and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters.

If you have a lot of accounts, consider using a password manager to store them easily and securely in one place.

### 3. Update software.

It may seem obvious, but regularly updating software is one of the easiest ways to keep your personal information and data secure. Most companies provide automatic updates and will send notifications so you can easily install the update. If you're not receiving automatic software updates, set a reminder to do so quarterly.

Be aware that some cyber criminals will send fake updates; these typically appear as a pop-up window when visiting a website. Use good judgement and always think before you click.

### 4. Recognize and report phishing attacks.

Do not take the bait when cyber criminals

# See Yourself in Cyber.

## October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month

**Improve your cyber hygiene by doing these four things:**

1. Enable multi-factor authentication
2. Use strong passwords and a password manager
3. Update software regularly
4. Recognize and report phishing attacks



are looking for phishing attack opportunities.

The signs of a phishing attack can be subtle, so remember to take extra time and thoroughly inspect emails.

Most phishing email attempts include the following warning signs:

offers that are too good to be true, an urgent or alarming tone, misspellings and poorly-crafted language, ambiguous greetings, strange requests or an email address that does not match the company it's coming from.

Most platforms like Outlook, Gmail and Mac Mail allow users to report phishing emails. If you suspect a phishing attempt, take an extra minute to report it.

Unfortunately in today's digital world, cyber criminals are everywhere

and here to stay. When we all take a risk-based approach to our cyber behavior and habits, we are helping create a safer internet for all.

For questions or additional cybersecurity tips, visit [www.staysafeonline.org](http://www.staysafeonline.org).

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--	---

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# Automate your defense against energy vampires

Energy vampires lurk in many households, and because of them you could be paying for powering devices that are turned off or not in use. You can automate your home's defense against these energy vampires by using advanced power strips. They can help reduce the amount of wasted energy and help families save money.

Energy vampires are present when devices are turned off but still plugged in and using standby power.

Molly Hall, executive director of the Energy Education Council says, "Standby power can be useful as it powers remote control sensors, clock displays, and cordless phones and the like. However, if you have a device that is plugged in that doesn't need standby power, then you could be wasting your hard-earned money."

One way to reduce wasted energy is to unplug electrical devices. While this works well for seldom used devices like secondary TVs, it can be an inconvenience when it comes to devices that get daily use.

To help automate your defense against energy vampires in your home, the Energy Education Council suggests using an advanced power strip.

An advanced, or smart, power strip makes it much easier to manage standby power.

Advanced power strips look just like ordinary power strips, except they have built-in features designed to reduce the amount of energy used by many electronics. Specifically, some of the outlets on the strip work differently than a regular power strip.

A smart power strip has some outlets that are always on and some that control other outlets on the power strip.

Outlets that are always on are just like those on a regular power strip outlet. These outlets are where you plug in things that will not be powered down — for example, a modem or backup power supply on a computer system or the cable box on a home entertainment system.

Next is the control outlet, which determines if the remaining switched outlets on the power strip are turned on or off.

Using home entertainment for example, if the TV is plugged into the control outlet and turned on, then the rest of the switched outlets on the smart power strip will also power up.

Devices like a DVD player, surround sound

**ARE HOME ELECTRONICS AND APPLIANCES DRAINING YOUR ENERGY?**

If you collect your spare change in a jar, all those coins add up over time, usually to a larger amount than you expect. Small amounts of consumed energy throughout your home add up as well, so plug "energy vampires" into a smart power strip that detects dormant devices or unplug items when not in use, especially those with illuminated controls.

**TOP NINE ENERGY VAMPIRES**

- TVS
- VIDEO GAME CONSOLES
- COMPUTERS
- SURROUND SOUND SYSTEMS
- PRINTERS
- STANDBY COFFEE MAKER
- CELL PHONE AND TABLET CHARGERS
- SATELLITE/CABLE BOXES
- MICROWAVES

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system, or other peripherals might be plugged into these outlets and will be powered up. When the TV is turned off, everything plugged

into switched outlets will be powered down, saving you money.

You can also enable power management settings. Most computers

and peripherals have a power management settings allowing devices to go into a sleep mode that will save energy when not being used.

For questions or more ways to be energy efficient at EnergyEd-Council.org or www.cottonelectric.com/energy-efficiency.

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# CEC to issue capital credit retirements to membership

You may receive two items from Cotton Electric Cooperative in the mail over the next few weeks: this newspaper and a capital credit retirement check. Capital credit checks will be mailed out the end of October. This check represents your contribution toward the construction, upgrades and maintenance of Cotton Electric Cooperative (CEC) and Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (WFEC).

A total of \$1,478,580.19 in capital credits will be retired

from CEC and WFEC allocations. WFEC is a generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative owned by Cotton Electric and other electric co-ops in Oklahoma and New Mexico.

The amount of the check is based on the amount of electric power purchased by each member.

Checks are void after 90 days. Members should cash or deposit their checks promptly, otherwise banks may not honor the check if brought in.

If the combined amount of the retirement is less than \$5, a check will not be issued. Instead, it will be carried forward and added to any amount authorized for distribution the next time capital credits are retired.

When a resident or business owner signs up to receive electric services from Cotton Electric, they become a member and owner of the co-op.

As owners, members have a responsibility to help finance their busi-

ness. They do this by using our services and by allowing the cooperative to retain any money collected in excess of actual operating costs. The money is used to build and maintain the facilities needed to serve Cotton Electric's members and to service our long-term debt.

This money is considered to be capital furnished by the members - capital that will be returned to members at a later date. While the co-op uses the money, members' capital credits are

considered "allocated" but not "retired."

Capital credits are retired at the discretion of the cooperative's Board of Trustees. Before retiring capital credits, they consider the financial condition of the co-op and the impact on electric rates.

Your cooperative is financially strong and, as a result, is able to share this economic benefit with the membership. The Board of Trustees have determined conditions are appropriate for returning capital credits to

the cooperative's current and former members.

Because the retirements are meant for active and inactive members, Cotton Electric needs changes of address, even if a person has moved and is no longer a member of the not-for-profit cooperative.

Several hundred checks are returned to Cotton Electric Cooperative for lack of proper address each time capital credit checks are issued. Call us at 580-875-3351 or 800-522-3520 if your address has changed.

## CAPITAL CREDITS SPARK QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

Capital credits can be difficult to understand. Here are some of our most frequently asked questions and answers to help with any confusion.

- 1 WHY AM I GETTING THIS CHECK?**  
Cotton Electric and Western Farmers Electric Cooperative have retired capital credits. This check is your portion of that retirement.
- 2 WHAT ARE CAPITAL CREDITS?**  
Electric cooperatives operate at cost - collecting enough revenue to run and expand the plant. When the co-op has margins left over, they are retired back to its members as capital credits.
- 3 WHY DIDN'T I GET A CHECK?**  
If the amount of your retirement is under \$5, a check is not issued. Instead, your allocation will be carried forward and added to any amount authorized for retirement in the future. In some cases, an account may be in arrears and the retirement is put toward the past-due amount.
- 4 HOW IS THE AMOUNT OF THE CHECK DETERMINED?**  
The amount allocated is based on the amount of electric power you have purchased.
- 5 I AM MOVING OUT OF THE COTTON ELECTRIC SERVICE AREA. WILL I STILL GET MY CAPITAL CREDIT CHECK?**  
Yes. Let us know your new address, and checks will be mailed as capital credit checks are retired.
- 6 I HAVE NOT BEEN A MEMBER FOR YEARS. WHY DID I GET A CHECK?**  
You may still have a portion allocated to you, even though you have not been a Cotton Electric member for a long time. Capital credit retirements over \$5 are issued to all active and inactive members.
- 7 HOW DO I KNOW IF YOU HAVE A CURRENT ADDRESS FOR ME?**  
We will publish a list of members needing to provide updated addresses in later issues of The Current.
- 8 HOW CAN SURVIVING FAMILY MEMBERS OR FORMER CO-OP MEMBERS CLAIM CAPITAL CREDITS?**  
To claim a capital credit check intended for deceased members or those who have moved away, we require certain information to verify the member's identity. Former members or their heirs can call the office at 580-875-3351 or 800-522-3520 to begin the process.
- 9 STILL CONFUSED?**  
Think of capital credits as water in a large barrel. Annual capital credit allocations are extra water, added to the barrel and retained to keep things afloat. Occasionally, a percentage is retired to all who contributed to the total amount. How it is distributed is similar to dipping out the water. The size of your drink of water is proportionate to how much you contributed or how much electricity you purchased. If your portion is only a drop or two, it is left in the barrel. You continue to contribute through power purchases and may get a dipperful with the next retirement.

Cotton Electric Cooperative is a not-for-profit cooperative with members who share in the ownership, construction, maintenance and prosperity of the co-op.

## CAPITAL CREDITS

When a person establishes service with us, they become a member and are eligible for capital credits.

Capital credits represent a member's share of the cooperative's margins during the time they have membership.

At the end of each year, any funds (margins) remaining after expenses have been paid are allocated, based on percentage of electricity used, to the member's account.

The allocated funds are used as operating capital for system improvements and maintenance.

Annually, the board of trustees evaluates the financial condition of the cooperative to determine if we can retire capital credits. We may not retire capital credits every year.

When the board elects to retire capital credits, we calculate the amount to pay each member.

Checks are mailed to members due a retirement of more than \$5. Retirements less than \$5 are not issued a check and the allocation remains in the member's capital credit account.

### ALLOCATION

An allocation is made annually for each member, based on the amount of electricity purchased. An allocation is the member's share of the net margins. The co-op sets this money aside to be used as operating capital for improvements and maintenance over a period of years.

### RETIREMENT

A retirement is the amount a member receives back as a refund. It is a portion of the total allocation. When capital is no longer needed for operating expenses, it is retired. The amount paid is decided annually by the board of trustees based on the financial needs of the cooperative.

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# Going to great heights for one another

By Carli Eubank

Chatter and engines buzzed on Sept. 13 when several Cotton Electric employees gathered for the annual pole top and bucket rescue safety training at the co-op headquarters in Walters.

Many co-op employees are exposed to dangerous conditions every day. Whether it's severe weather conditions, operating heavy machinery, or encountering hazardous material, safety is top priority when bringing our members quality power and service.

Co-op crews brave extreme heights and hazardous conditions to keep the lights on, so it's vital for them to stay up to date on safety trainings to prevent accidents and injuries on the job.

Cotton Electric Safety and Loss Control Coordinator Jarrod Hooper strives to have a safety meeting or training for employees every month. One of the mandatory trainings for crews is the annual pole top and bucket rescue.

Supervised by Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives Safety and Loss Control Instructor Greg Hambrick, linemen are observed and timed during each rescue drill.

All Cotton Electric Cooperative employees who could possibly work in the field go through bucket rescue drills once a year. That includes line workers, engineers, meter technicians, vegetation management workers, and warehouse employees.

They climb onto the back of a basket truck to switch control of the basket and boom to the lower panel located on the bed of the truck. Next, they lower the basket, tilt it, climb down and reach into the basket as if to pull a colleague out.

Pole top rescue drills are required for all linemen, the only employees trained to climb a pole.

The linemen straps on climbing gear and makes his way up the pole to drive a screwdriver into the pole to loop a rope over. The other end is tied around a mannequin's chest. After its safety belt is cut with a knife, the mannequin is lowered to the ground and CPR is started.

The goal for each lineman is to complete the

drill in four minutes or less, as recommended by the American Heart Association. For each minute that passes, the victim's chance of survival decreases by 10%. Completing the drill in four minutes allows for a 60% chance of reviving the victim.

"Every one of these guys would climb that pole to get anybody else down in a heartbeat," said Braylin Dowlen, Cotton Electric journeyman lineman.

The sense of brotherhood is strong between co-op employees. Safety for our members and employees are top priority at Cotton Electric Cooperative, and annual pole top and bucket rescue is just one of the many ways we practice that mission.



Ely King, Cotton Electric apprentice lineman, works quickly to complete his poletop rescue drill. Photo by Carli Eubank.



Scott Dennis, Cotton Electric journeyman lineman, performs his poletop rescue drill. Photo by Carli Eubank.

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# UNDERSTANDING THE SEVEN COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

Cooperatives around the world operate according to the same set of core principles and values, adopted by the International Co-operative Alliance. These principles are a key reason why America's electric cooperatives operate differently from other electric utilities, putting the needs of our members first.



## 1 VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP

Membership in a cooperative is open to all persons who can reasonably use its services and stand willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, regardless of race, religion, gender or economic circumstances.



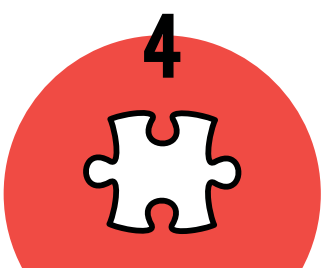
## 2 DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Elected representatives (directors/trustees) are elected from among the membership and are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote); cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.



## 3 MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative; setting up reserves; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.



## 4 AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control as well as their unique identity.



## 5 EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION

Education and training for members, elected representatives (directors/trustees), CEOs and employees help them effectively contribute to the development of their cooperatives. Communications about the nature and benefits of cooperatives, particularly with the general public and opinion leaders, helps boost cooperative understanding.



## 6 COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES

By working together through local, national, regional, and international structures, cooperatives improve services, bolster local economies and deal more effectively with social and community needs.



## 7 CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies supported by the membership.



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**ESCHITI FOR COUNTY COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 1**

Dear Cotton County District 1 Resident,

I am asking for your vote and support in my campaign for County Commissioner for District 1 of Cotton County. I am active in the Native American community and in Cotton County. I served two terms as County Commissioner from 2010 to 2018. I served as Vice Chairman for the Comanche tribe in 2011 and 2012. I have served on the ASCOG Board of Trustees since 2010. During the COVID pandemic I offered my assistance to businesses local churches and local citizens who needed help

DURING my two terms the ambulance service and the establishment of the E911 system was implemented, and roads around the Walters Public Schools were repaved. Additionally, while I was in office, Cotton County received 3 million in FEMA money funding for repair of bridges and damages due to flooding. Seven new bridges were built during my two terms. I was responsible for the implementation of the paving of Sultan Park Road, and also procured funding for Wine Valley Road.

The E911 Trust system dispatch time and funding should be a big concern to all of us. We have an excellent ambulance service that responds quickly to the dispatcher. The problem lies within the E911 system. Numerous individuals have talked to me about issues they have had when they have called 911 dispatch. The E911 Trust system has been in place since 2019 (one year after my last term) but is still in Phase 1. I will do my best to work with the E911 Trust to move forward into the final phase of its transition.

I will actively support the Cotton County Sheriff Department and their staff and endeavor to find funding necessary for their needs.

Should I be elected as your County Commissioner, I will work diligently with the Comanche, Apache, and Kiowa Tribes and State and Federal Government to help find funding that benefits Cotton County and our cities. I will work diligently to obtain funds to fix city and county roads. I will actively pursue the paving of Wine Valley roads and other roads that were on the table when I left office. As a previous county commissioner, I know the advantages of seeking assistance from federal, state, tribal and local government. We are a small county with limited resources and funds. As a county commissioner I will diligently search for the funding assistance that we need for projects.

I cannot do these things without your help. Regardless of your political affiliation I would appreciate your vote. **You do not have to vote a straight party ticket.** You need to vote for the person who can best serve you and your county.

I look forward to answering any questions, concerns or interests, that you may have. You can reach me at 580-512-7688. I also can be reached by email at [edwardeschiti@yahoo.com](mailto:edwardeschiti@yahoo.com). I welcome the chance to meet with you to discuss your concerns.

Sincerely,  
 Edward Eschiti,  
 Candidate for District 1 County Commissioner.

Paid for by Ed Eschiti

# G. Brent Russell for District Judge



## Experienced Lawyer & Judge:

Brent has spent his whole career serving the people of Stephens County. He has seen all sides of the law, acting as an attorney in private practice, a prosecutor in the Stephen's County DA's Office, and as an Associate District Judge for over 16 years.

## Family Man:

Brent and his wife are lifelong residents of Duncan. He and his wife, Jeanna, have been married for 40 years, and are blessed with two sons and daughters-in-law, as well as three granddaughters.

## Community Involvement:

Brent has been a very active member of our communities, serving many years as a well respected football referee at the high school and college levels, a volunteer coach and community leader in youth sports, and a former member of the OSSAA Board of Directors.



"I have been honored to serve the citizens of Stephens County in my current position for over 16 years and to have gained their trust. Now, I am seeking the trust of Comanche, Cotton, and Jefferson counties as well. My diverse background practicing law, and my experience serving as a judge, uniquely qualify me to serve well if elected."

- G. Brent Russell

Judge Russell was recently described, **by his opponent**, as "A man of honor", and "the best trial judge that I've ever appeared before."

# VOTE NOV. 8

*Elect* ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Judge G. Brent**  
**RUSSELL**  
 District Judge Office 2

Authorized & Paid for by Committee to Elect Judge Brent Russell



# Co-op Life



## Powering lines, empowering lives

*Cotton Electric Safety and Loss Control Coordinator Jarrod Hooper returns to Guatemala as a volunteer for the Energy Trails rural electrification mission project. Photos courtesy of Studio1441.*

By Carli Eubank

When he reached the project location, familiar senses returned: the smell of fresh rain coming in; the feeling of humidity clinging to his skin; the sound of an occasional motorcycle cruising by; and the sight of green trees rolling endlessly through the lush mountainsides. Once again, he found himself in Central America. Once again, he was there to impact lives through electrification.

Last month Cotton Electric's Safety and Loss Control Coordinator Jarrod Hooper traveled the winding rural roads of Guatemala where he and 12 other volunteers from Colorado and Oklahoma's electric cooperatives brought first-time electricity to an isolated village in the region of Jalapa, east of Guatemala City.

The mission project, known as Energy Trails, is in partnership with Colorado's electric cooperatives and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) philanthropic arm, NRECA International. The local Guatemalan partner for the project is Empresa Eléctrica Municipal de San Pedro Pinula, a municipal utility, now responsible for maintaining the project.

After crews arrived and sorted through materials and job descriptions, they kicked off the three-week-long project on day three.

Hooper was no stranger to the electrification project since he previously volunteered in 2019. This year, he held responsibilities of leading the wiring crew.

"We weren't forced to do this job," Hooper said. "We chose to do it. I can't describe it, but I just had this feeling I was supposed to go back."

Crews powered more than 80 adobe homes, one elementary school and two churches. The job consisted of 77 poles, 5.5 miles of line and six transformers. Each home received four lightbulbs, two light switches and two electrical outlets.

"It's a lot of hard work – both physically and mentally," Hooper said, "but you also have the chance to enjoy lunch with the crew and the locals. Getting to know the people and share a few small joys with them is what it's all about."

Whether it was playing with the local kids or giving them a toy, it meant the world to the families, Hooper said. The people there are so nice and hard-working, he added.

Hooper shared that providing electricity for these families and individuals will ease their lifestyle in many ways, especially in the morning and evenings. Kids will be able to finish homework and families can cook dinner with the glow of a lightbulb instead of candlelight, Hooper said.

"Bringing electricity to remote areas in developing countries takes electric cooperatives back to their roots," says Chris Meyers, general manager of the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives. "It reinforces our commitment to improve the quality of life for local communities at home and abroad. Access to electricity will bring economic empowerment, better access to health care and education and enhanced safety for these villagers. It's a life-changing gift."

Hooper's favorite moment was the ending celebration. "To me, that day was good closure," Hooper said. "Watching the kids play, seeing how happy everyone was, and knowing we did something for this community that nobody else would have done was rewarding."

It wasn't until the last day filled with celebration that Hooper and the other volunteers had time to slow down and reflect on what they just completed. Hooper was overwhelmed with the realization of how many

people and their homes were impacted when more than 500 villagers gathered for the big celebration, he added.

Hooper made memories and moments in Guatemala that he'll remember for many years: the camaraderie of the crew, developing new friendships, giving toys to local kids and changing the livelihood of many individuals.

"Many people don't understand what you get out of this project," Hooper said. "But giving people the gift of electricity and being able to put your skills to work to help somebody out means something to me beyond measure."

As Hooper left the vibrant green hills of Jalapa with the other volunteers, a list of emotions ran through his mind. Hooper's indescribable calling to volunteer became clear throughout the project: he experienced feelings of humbleness, calmness and thankfulness.

Oklahoma's electric cooperatives have established a 501(c)3 not-for-profit, The Oklahoma Energy Trails Foundation, to support this cause. All contributions to the Foundation are tax-deductible. Learn more at: <https://oaec.coop/co-op-difference/energy-trails/>.



# Community Spotlight

If you would like your community event listed in the November issue, please submit information by calling 580-875-3351 or send an email to [TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com](mailto:TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com) by Oct. 28. Only events occurring after Nov. 14 will be published in the next issue.

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

### Food and more at night market

Grab dinner and go shopping at the Lawton Farmers Market's Food Truck Tuesday and Night Market. Browse through all of the food vendors, growers, bakers and producers. The event is from 4 to 7 p.m. on Oct. 18 at the Lawton Farmers Market, 77 SW 4th St., Lawton. For more information or to register a food truck, call Cindy at 580-678-9472.

### Fall event for all ages in Lawton

Enjoy fall festivities at Fall Fair at the Square. There will be live music, dancing, games, craft vendors, train rides, car show and more. C3 Car Club will also host a Truck or Treat. Potential vendors can email [eventsbyourteam@gmail.com](mailto:eventsbyourteam@gmail.com) to register. Registration for the car show begins at 1 p.m. with a \$20 fee per vehicle. The event is from 2 to 6 p.m. on Oct. 22 at Cache Square Road, 3801 NW Cache Road, Lawton.

### Petting zoo, pumpkins and more

Attend Loyalty Farm and Co. Duncan Oklahoma's inaugural Boo at the Zoo event. There will photo areas, a petting zoo, bounce house, Halloween crafts, games, movies and more. This is a donation-based event and will accept candy donations prior to the event. The festivities are from 6 to 8:30 p.m. on Oct. 28 at Loyalty Farm & Co. in Duncan, 2404 N. N St. For more information or questions, contact 720-724-6621 or visit their Facebook event page.

### Fall Fest continues in Comanche

The annual Comanche Fall Fest is a great place to celebrate the season with fun, family-friendly activities. Children can participate in the Great Pumpkin Hunt, collect prizes, show off their costumes in the Kids' Halloween Costume Contest, and get their fill of candy at the Candy Harvest while trick-or-treating at vendor booths. There will also be live entertainment from local musicians in the morning and evening, amateur lawn mower races and a classic car and tractor show. The event is on Oct. 29 on Main Street in Comanche. For more information or questions, call 580-351-8426.

### Spooky twist on local trail

Chisholm Trail Heritage Center (CTHC) is partnering with the Simmons Center to provide Halloween fun. Guests will experience the Chisholm Trail like never before. Experience a special, haunting performance from two of CTHC's favorite animatronics characters, Tex and Jesse. Spooky games and art projects will also be available for those in attendance. Entry fee is \$1 per child. CTHC will host Halloween on the Trail from 6 to 9 p.m. on Oct. 29 at the Heritage Trails in Duncan. For more information or questions, call 580-252-6692.

### Barn quilt painting night

Enjoy an evening of fun at Quilt N Bee's Barn Quilt Painting Date Night. Paint a wood cut square reminiscent of barn quilts seen in rural areas. All materials are supplied along with snacks. Pre-register at [www.quiltndee.biz](http://www.quiltndee.biz). The event begins at 6 p.m. on Nov. 4 at Quilt N Bee, 506 W. C Ave., Cache.

### Trick or Treat at the Boo Review

Main Street Duncan merchants will pass out candy to the kiddos at the annual Boo Review from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Oct. 29. Costume contest categories include cutest costume, scariest costume, most creative costume and best group costume in different age brackets. Costume judging begins at 10th and Main from 11 a.m. until noon. For more information or questions, visit [mainstreetduncan.net/boo-review](http://mainstreetduncan.net/boo-review).

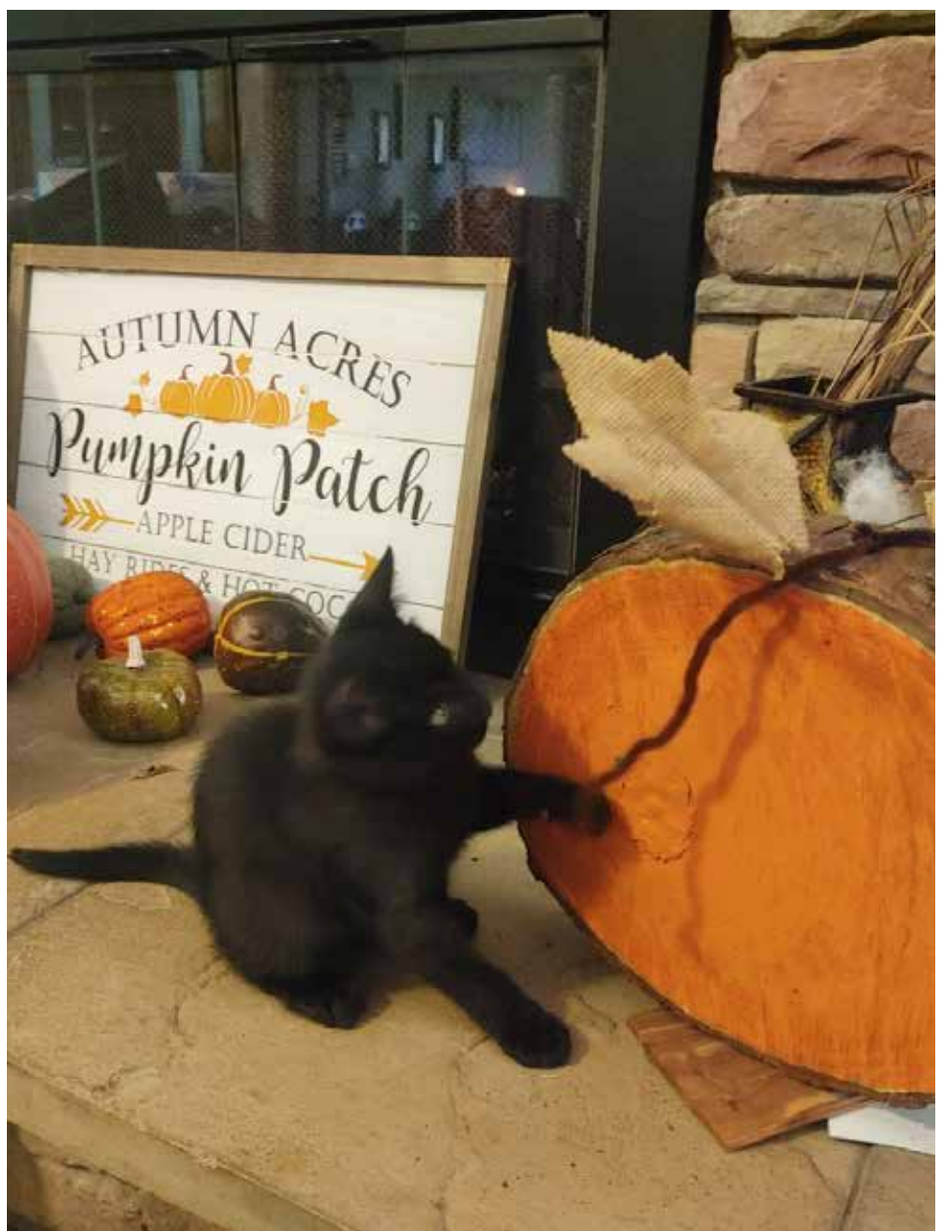
### Chickasaw artist showcased

Chickasaw artist Mike Larsen will be showcasing his artworks at the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center in Duncan from Oct. 1 through December. Larsen is an accomplished painter and sculptor whose works have been featured in prominent locations such as the Oklahoma State Capitol, Oklahoma State University and the Chickasaw Cultural Center. He is also an author and a member of the Oklahoma History Hall of Fame and the Oklahoma Hall of Fame. The Chisholm Trail Heritage Center will host a reception to celebrate Larsen's exhibit from 4:30-6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 6. Entry to the reception is free and open to everyone.

### Whodunnit play in Duncan

Classic board game characters come to life in Duncan Little Theatre's production of "Clue on Stage" Nov. 4-5 and 11-12 at the Simmons Center in Duncan. Performances will be at 7:30 each night. For more information or questions visit [www.duncanlittletheatre.com](http://www.duncanlittletheatre.com).

# PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Cotton Electric members Tim and Sheri Lederer's kitten, Lilo, is enjoying her first autumn.

Enter your "best shot" in our Photo of the Month contest. The theme for November is Friday Night Lights! Entries can be emailed to [TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com](mailto:TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com) or mailed to The Current, 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572. Winners will receive a Cotton Electric Cooperative prize.

## Quality used equipment for sale

2018 BOBCAT T550 - PRICE \$46,000 (USD)	
Description:	SKID STEER TRACK LOADER
Make/Model:	1700-1999# BOBCAT T550
Year:	2018
Serial #:	AJZV19572
Meter:	2151.078
Equipment #:	10783425
Location:	25J - OKLAHOMA CITY, OK



2013 JLG 450AJ - PRICE \$60,000 (USD)	
Description:	BOOM 40-50' ARTICULATING
Make/Model:	JLG 450AJ
Year:	2013
Serial #:	0300174254
Meter:	2954.000
Equipment #:	10162114
Location:	D62 - LAWTON, OK



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Eric Donahue  
940-257-7258  
[edonahue@ur.com](mailto:edonahue@ur.com)



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# Pumpkin patches provide fall fun outings

With autumn around the corner, that means temperatures cooling off, leaves changing color and pumpkin patches opening up. There are many pumpkin patches within Cotton Electric's service area waiting to be visited by all.

Red River Pumpkin Patch LLC is open to the public every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from 1 to 6 p.m. located at 21773 CREW 192 in Davidson. Members can visit their Facebook page or [www.redriver-pumpkinpatch.com](http://www.redriver-pumpkinpatch.com).

Located in Jefferson County, the Happy Day Farms Pumpkin Patch is open every Saturday from

10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Happy Day Drive in Terral. Members can receive updates on their Facebook page at Happy Day Farms Pumpkin Patch.

Snider Family Exotics is found just outside of Fletcher at 20010 OK-17 in Sterling. Business hours are open every Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visitors can follow upcoming fall events on their Facebook page, Snider Family Exotics.

From Oct. 16 through 29, St. Paul's United Methodist Church will be selling pumpkins at 910 NW 38th St. in Lawton. Proceeds will benefit local charities. Hours

are from 12 to 8 p.m. For more information, visit their Facebook event page or visit [www.stpaulslawton.org](http://www.stpaulslawton.org).

Another pumpkin patch located in Lawton is found at Heritage Farm and Ranch, 26432 OK-58. Their pumpkin patch opens to the public beginning Oct. 8. For more information, visit their Facebook page, Heritage Farm and Ranch.

When looking for pumpkins or a fun fall outing, don't forget the local pumpkin patches all throughout the Cotton Electric service territory.



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OCTOBER 15, 2022**

**LOCATION Double G Event Center • Rush Springs, OK**

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Steven W. Crow 405-820-9725 • Stephanie & Jerrell Crow 580-585-2522  
Jeff Aegerter, AMS Inc., 402-641-4696

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2022 Fall

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Vernon Livestock Auction  
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500 - 700 two-year-old Red Angus  
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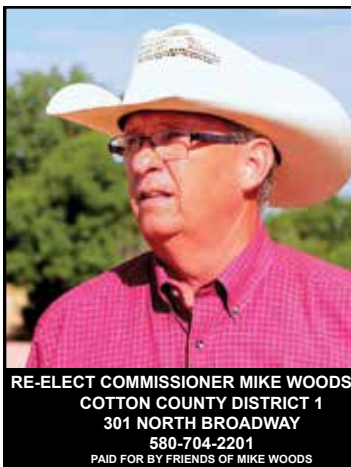
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Reference Sire 3SCC Domain A 163.  
(picture above)

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Colby Crawford 580-318-3211  
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RE-ELECT COMMISSIONER MIKE WOODS FOR COTTON COUNTY DISTRICT 1 301 NORTH BROADWAY 580-704-2201 PAID FOR BY FRIENDS OF MIKE WOODS

Hello everyone! I am Mike Woods, your Cotton County District 1 Commissioner. It has been my pleasure serving in this office for the past three and half years. I have come to know a lot of the residents living in this small rural community. You have made it easy for me to do my job and for that, I would like to say thank you. I am currently seeking re-election in the General Election on November 8, 2022. I am an active member of the First Baptist Church in Walters and the Walters Rotary Club. I serve on the board of directors for ASCOG and as Vice-Chairman for Walters Cotton County Enhance 911. I also serve as Chairman on the Cotton County Emergency Food and Shelter board.

I believe in placing an emphasis on rural road and bridge projects to keep the public safe. This is why I promised in my last election to keep the ditches mowed and the intersection visibility maintained. I have kept that promise to you. The expertise of my crew has enabled us to put in 63 new tin horns and clean out a total of 36 miles of ditches. These projects have helped with the flow of water to keep it off the roadway enhancing your safety. I also worked with the Comanche Nation Tribe on a \$562,000 project to redo the Walters Public School parking lots and the walkways for the safety of our children. Under my leadership, District 1 finished the 2015 FEMA project, as well as the 2016 and 2017 FEMA projects from start to finish totaling \$2,284,264. District 1 is currently working on a project of a new bridge over Little Beaver Creek the total estimated cost is \$968,485. This has been needed for decades. The bridge will provide relief to the area farmers and residents traveling the county road. Under my leadership it has been possible for District 1 to acquire three new graders, a new pickup truck, an additional pickup truck, a tractor and mower, a semi-truck, and a loader. With the help of my four full-time employees and one part-time employee, we have over one hundred years of road maintenance experience ranging from laying rock, to pulling ditches, grading roads and just your everyday maintenance.

As Commissioner, I was not only able to deliver the previously mentioned accomplishments, but also able to produce a steady increase in the revenue available to District 1. Cotton County District 1 was also able to provide an improved benefit package for the employees. I have served you gladly for the past three and half years. I have the background experience and necessary qualities needed to continue moving Cotton County District 1 into the future. I will continue to strive at being the best at serving the needs of our area. The Commissioner election is on November 8, 2022. Please vote for me, Mike Woods, as your Cotton County District 1 Commissioner. I want to continue working for you, the citizens of Cotton County District 1...BECAUSE THAT IS MY ONLY JOB!

# POWER YOUR HOME GATE PLAYBOOK WITH A SAVORY APPETIZER



## Jalapeno Bacon and Salsa Biscuit Bites

Source: Family Features  
Recipe courtesy of chef George Duran

Yield: 16 biscuit bites

- 1 tube biscuit dough (8 biscuits total)
- 7 ounces grated mozzarella cheese
- 1/4 cup jarred jalapenos, chopped
- 8 slices cooked bacon, chopped
- 1 cup Fresh Cravings Restaurant Style Salsa
- nonstick cooking spray

Preheat air fryer to 350-360 F.

Divide each biscuit in half by pulling apart in centers. Use hands to flatten each biscuit into circles. Set aside.

In a bowl, mix mozzarella cheese with chopped jalapenos, bacon and salsa.

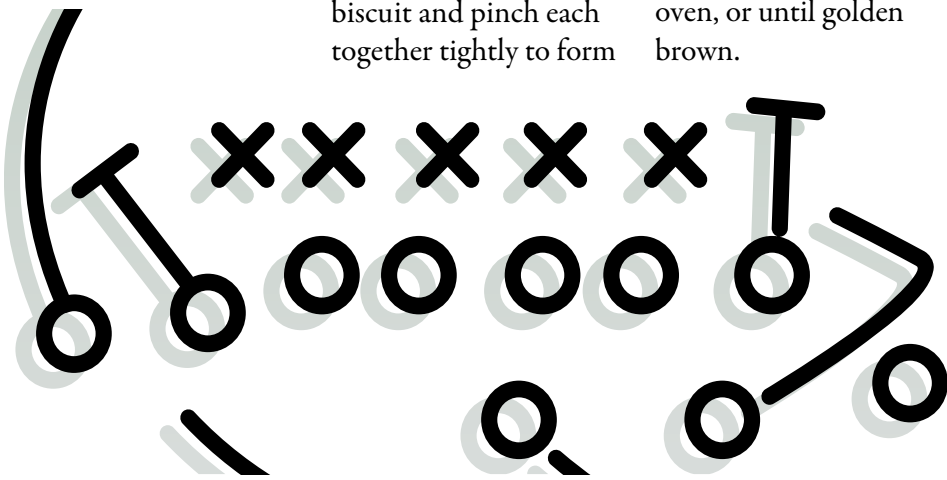
Add heaping spoonful into each flattened biscuit and pinch each together tightly to form

balls. Top each with small amount of salsa.

Spray nonstick cooking spray in air fryer and, working in batches, cook biscuit bites 6-9 minutes or until golden brown.

Serve warm.

Note: If air fryer access is unavailable, biscuit bites can be baked 8-10 minutes at 400 F in oven, or until golden brown.



*Comanche Lake*  
No Limit

All proceeds go to support Lake cleanup and improvements



# Crappie Tournament

Saturday October 15, 2022

7:00 AM - 2:00 PM

286016 E 1825 Rd - Comanche OK

## TWO DIVISIONS

UNDER 15 \$5 ENTRY

15 & OVER \$25 ENTRY

Trophy for Youth & Adult Largest Fish, Youth & Adult Most Fish  
\$100 for most combined weight

Artificial & Live Bait allowed

No Size Limit

No Catch Limit

Must follow all other State Fishing Laws

Live wells will be checked before launch  
1/4 pound penalty per dead fish

Only fish from Comanche Lake

Youth under 15 must have adult present

Must use Rods no netting allowed

Food Truck will be onsite

Only one weigh-in per person  
Fish must be submitted by 2PM

Fishing Permits are waived for this event boating permits are still required

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# Classic cookies get a fall makeover

Makes 24

1 cup all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled	1/4 tsp salt	puree, squeeze out the excess moisture with paper towels
1 tsp pumpkin pie spice	1 1/2 cups old-fashioned rolled oats	1 large egg yolk, at room temperature
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon	1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened	1 tsp pure vanilla extract
1/2 tsp baking soda	1/2 cup packed light brown sugar	1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
	1/4 cup granulated sugar	
	1/3 cup pumpkin	

There are plenty of reasons to enjoy oatmeal. This fiber-rich food is filling and can be part of a healthy eating plan that promotes weight loss. In addition, health experts say that oatmeal can be instrumental in helping to moderate cholesterol levels in the blood.

Flavor and versatility are some additional reasons to enjoy oatmeal, especially when preparing baked goods like cookies. Oatmeal cookies are classics all on their own, but home bakers can put a fall spin on this cookie jar staple with the introduction of a few seasonal ingredients.

Enjoy "Pumpkin Chocolate Chip Oatmeal Cookies" from "Live Well, Bake Cookies" (Rock Point) by Danielle Rye.

- Preheat the oven to 350 F. Line two large baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats and set aside.
- In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, pumpkin pie spice, ground cinnamon, baking soda, and salt until well combined. Stir in the old-fashioned rolled oats and set aside.
- In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment or in a large mixing bowl using a handheld mixer, beat the butter, brown sugar, and granulated sugar together for 1 to 2 minutes, or until well combined.
- Mix in the pumpkin puree, egg yolk, and vanilla extract until fully combined, making sure to stop and scrape down the sides of the bowl as needed.
- Mix in the dry ingredients until just combined, then mix in the chocolate chips on low speed until fully incorporated.
- Using a 1 1/2-tablespoon cookie scoop, scoop the cookie dough onto the prepared baking sheets, making sure to leave a little room between each one. Gently press each ball of cookie dough down to slightly flatten it.
- Bake for 9 to 11 minutes, or until the tops of the cookies are set. Remove from the oven, and allow the cookies to cool on the baking sheets for 5 to 10 minutes; then carefully transfer the cookies to a wire rack to cool completely.
- Store the cookies in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

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# T H R O W B A C K



Let's look back 20 years ago and see what was cookin' in The Cuurent!

## Pumpkin soup

2 large onions, chopped	Saute onions in butter until tender.	Stir in fresh pumpkin and salt.
1 tsp. curry powder	Sprinkle with curry powder and saute two more minutes.	Add half-and-half, stirring constantly. Stir in broth.
1 tbsp. salt	Remove and place in a large saucepan.	Cook over low heat, stirring occasionally.
5 c. chicken broth		
1/2 c. butter		
4 c. half-and-half		
4 c. fresh pumpkin		

## Dietary recommendations to help battle gout

Gout, a form of arthritis that causes severe joint pain, affects close to 9.2 million people in the United States. Eradication is not yet possible as there seems to be a genetic component.

The current standard treatment is medication and self-management strategies which include dietary and lifestyle modifications. Dietary modification previously focused on reducing intake of foods high in purines, but recent studies point to other dietary modifications that yield better management results. If you have gout or a family history of gout, discuss these dietary approaches with your health care provider to evaluate if they are appropriate for you.

Gout is caused by hyperuricemia, where too much uric acid accumulates in the body. This results in the formation of uric acid crystals that can build up in joints, fluids, and tissues in the body and cause pain, redness, swelling and if not treated, joint damage.

Uric acid is a byproduct of purine metabolism. This relationship between purine intake and uric acid led health care providers to recommend reducing foods high in purines and foods that contribute to uric acid production to control gout. Those foods include seafood, red meat, alcohol, and sugary



Kim Bandelier, MPH, RD, LD

### Food For THOUGHT

drinks. Recent research has called this dietary advice into question.

More recent research points to long-term purine restriction not being sufficient to control gout. The rationale is the relationship between gout and the effects of insulin resistance on uric acid build up in the body.

Simply put, only restricting foods high in purine does not adequately address other health conditions present in most people affected by gout. These health conditions include obesity, heart disease, high blood sugar and insulin resistance and contribute to the development and severity of gout. This

points to more expansive dietary modifications to best manage gout.

A review article published in the journal Nutrients in August of 2022 is an excellent overview of the most up-to-date science for gout and dietary management. The title is "Gout and Diet: A Comprehensive Review of Mechanisms and Management" and it was written by Zang and colleagues.

If you are currently being treated for gout, print out this article and share it with your healthcare provider. They can decipher the medical jargon and provide you with a referral to a registered dietitian for implementation.

Another publicly available article titled "The Role of Diet in Hyperuricemia and Gout" is available via an

internet search. This article written by Yokese and colleagues and published in March 2021 in the journal Current Opinions in Rheumatology suggests The Mediterranean Diet and The DASH Diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) for management of gout. Both diets focus on intake of healthy fats, whole grains, fish, fruits and vegetables, and lean meats and limiting alcohol, sugar, and salt.

For many in the United States, this is a drastic departure of current dietary habits. Seeking professional help from a registered dietitian will make implementation easier and potentially result in the better management of gout and associated health conditions.



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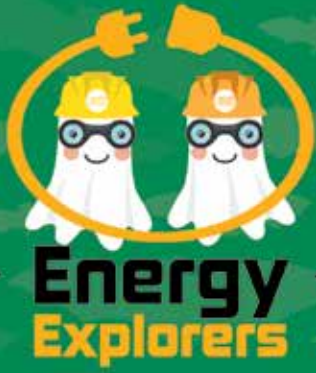
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When you're done watching your favorite show, unplug the **seotnivile**.

If your phone is juiced up, unplug your **nophe rahrgce**.

*Answer key: game console, coffee maker, television, phone charger*



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6					1	5	4	

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# Parting Shot



Clint Ingram, Cotton Electric superintendent of west side operations, flies high in the bucket truck between poletop safety drills. Photo by Carli Eubank.

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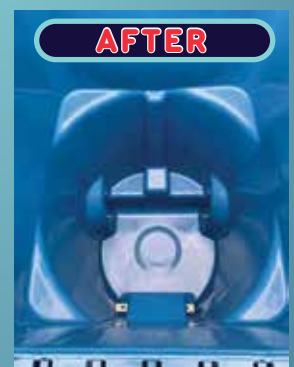
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