

The Current

A Publication of Cotton Electric Cooperative Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

“The Current - Informing Our Members Since 1957”

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NUMBER 8

Generating new communication at your fingertips

By Carli Eubank

Keeping our members informed has always been a priority for Cotton Electric Cooperative. We get the news to you via Facebook and on our website’s outage map. Soon, we will have a new communication tool called TextPower.

Utilized by other cooperatives, TextPower allows members to receive and send text updates to Cotton Electric before, during and after an outage in a more efficient way. When there is an outage, members who have opted to receive texts will be sent a message explaining Cotton Electric’s awareness of an outage situation and another when power is restored. This new system will allow members to stay updated and plan around an outage.

“Our biggest hope with TextPower is to give members the best platform to let us know when they are having a problem,” said Mike Ottinger, Cotton Electric’s vice president of operations and engineering. “We want members to have the ability to contact us in the most efficient way during an outage.”

At times, Cotton Electric schedules planned outages for system upgrades. For those planned outages, TextPower will reach the community in a more streamlined and sure manner than having our dispatch employees trying to call several hundred members.

So how will it work?

“Potentially, a mass text configured by Cotton Electric along the lines of, ‘You have been opted into Cotton Electric’s Outage System’ will be



Mike Ottinger, vice president of operations and engineering, works with TextPower to create another form of communication for members during outages. Photo by Carli Eubank.

sent to members with mobile phone numbers in our system from our main number,” said Chace Penn, Cotton Electric’s system engineer.

If members choose to opt out of the system, they can respond with the designated keyword stated in the text message, such as “Stop” or “No.” New members will be opted into the system automatically but will have the same ability to opt out if desired.

“We value our members’ privacy,” Ottinger said. “We are only going to send you essential information.”

When members are enrolled, the cell phone number tied to their meter accounts will be linked to the outage

software. The software will analyze the data base during an outage and send texts to affected members. If an account has multiple meters, such as a house, water well or electric fence, members can select which meter to report during an outage, Penn said.

Penn is familiar with using Milsoft for engineering purposes and is excited to see the benefits of this new text system for Cotton Electric members and employees.

“The biggest thing for us was trying to get all the pieces lined up to where we could do it and do it right,” Ottinger said.

Members still have the option to call

in an outage or use the SmartHub app. With three active lines of communication working together with the outage manager, linemen can arrive to the affected area and restore power faster.

“In whatever we do, we want to take care of our members,” Ottinger said. “We want to make sure that we are doing the right thing by them and, hopefully, giving them a good avenue to understand outages and when the power will be back on.”

Penn said the hope is to complete the new software testing in April and for it to be fully operational in May.



New outage map offers viewing options

Within Cotton Electric’s website and the SmartHub app, members can see an updated version of our outage map. On the website, the outage map is found near the bottom of the home page under the “View Current Outages” box. In the SmartHub app, click the icon in the toolbar at the top of screen listed “Outage Map” to view the map on your phone.

This new outage map allows members to zoom in on outages across our service territory from a map view or detailed street view. Available information to members includes a sum-

mary of outages and restorations, location of current outages, number of meters affected by outages and radar to determine if severe weather is in the area.

Areas affected by power outages are color coded with red, orange or blue outlines. Red outlines verify an unexpected outage has occurred. Orange outlines show a predicted or planned outage. Blue outlines inform members power has been restored.

To view the outage map visit www.cottonelectric.com or download the SmartHub app.



MEET COTTON ELECTRIC’S LINEMEN

ON PAGE 9

Power Cost Adjustment Calculated

The power cost adjustment now being applied to bills mailed after April 1, 2022, is \$0.01615 per kWh.

On a member’s average bill of 1,300 kilowatt hours (kWh), this will amount to a charge of \$20.99 on the April bill.

March 2021 Temperature Extremes

Day	High	Low	Avg.	Day	High	Low	Avg.
1	75	26	51	16	83	30	57
2	77	27	52	17	80	46	63
3	80	30	55	18	65	33	49
4	77	41	59	19	76	27	52
5	82	44	63	20	82	34	58
6	52	31	42	21	62	46	54
7	46	27	37	22	50	42	46
8	48	24	36	23	59	36	48
9	58	19	39	24	68	32	50
10	58	28	43	25	81	33	57
11	40	19	30	26	76	39	58
12	59	17	38	27	84	44	64
13	70	21	46	28	87	48	68
14	69	45	57	29	83	61	72
15	70	37	54	30	65	46	56
				31	68	36	52

Source: srh.noaa.gov/oum/

Average Daily High: 69 Average Daily Low: 35

Did You Know?

Cotton Electric HVAC tune-up rebate applications are open and must be received by June 30, 2022. Tune-ups must be completed between April 1 and June 20, 2022.

The next issue of The Current should arrive in mailboxes on May 9, 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. You can also drop us a line at Cotton Electric Current, 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572.

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More news at cottonelectric.com

From the CEO

The People Behind Your Power

You've likely noticed Cotton Electric Co-operative's crews out and about, working on power lines and other electrical equipment in our community. It's no secret that a lineman's job is tough—but it's a job that's essential and must be done, often in challenging conditions. This month, as we celebrate Lineman Appreciation Day on April 11, I thought I'd share some interesting facts about electric linemen with you.



Jennifer Meason, CEO

The work can be heavy, in more ways than one. Did you know the equipment and tools that a lineman carries while climbing a utility pole can weigh up to 50 pounds? That's the same as carrying six gallons of water. Speaking of utility poles, linemen are required to climb poles ranging anywhere from 30 to 120 feet tall. Needless to say,

if you have a fear of heights, this likely isn't the career path for you.

Linemen must be committed to their career—because it's not just a job, it's a lifestyle. The long hours and ever-present danger can truly take a toll. In fact, being a lineman is listed in the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S.

Linemen often work non-traditional hours in difficult outdoor conditions. It requires technical skills, years of training and hands-on learning that are provided by the Cooperative and our associations. Did you know that to become a journeyman lineman can take more than 7,000 hours of training? That's because working with high-voltage equipment requires specialized skills, experience and an ongoing mental toughness. Shortcuts are not an option, and there is no room for error in this line of work.

Despite the many challenges, Cotton Electric's linemen are

committed to powering our local community. During severe weather events that bring major power outages, linemen are among the first ones called. They must be ready to leave the comfort of their home and families unexpectedly, and they don't return until the job is done, often days later. That's why the lineman's family is also dedicated to service. They understand the importance of the job to the community. We greatly appreciate our employees' family members because, without their support, we would not be successful.

Nationwide, there are approximately 120,000 electric linemen. Cotton Electric has 26 linemen and 60 other full-time and part-time employees that all have a role to play in keeping power flowing 24/7, 365 days a year. To do this, they maintain 5,223 miles of power lines across eight counties. In addition to the highly visible tasks linemen perform, their job today goes far

beyond climbing utility poles to repair a wire. Today's linemen are information experts who can pinpoint power outages from miles away. Line crews now use laptops, tablets, drones and other technologies to map outages, survey damage and troubleshoot problems.

Being a lineman may not seem like a glamorous job, but it is absolutely essential to the life of our community. Without the exceptional dedication and commitment of these hardworking men and women, we simply would not have the reliable electricity that we need for everyday life.

The next time you see a lineman or their family members, please thank them for the work they do to keep power flowing. After all, linemen are the people behind your power. Please join us as we recognize them on April 11, and follow "#ThankALineman" on social media to see how others are recognizing linemen.

Marketing department welcomes new employees



Carli Eubank

We are excited to welcome two new additions to the Cotton Electric marketing team, Carli Eubank and Zach Young.

Carli Eubank joins as editor of The Current and will assist with social media communications.

Carli grew up on co-op lines and followed that connection to the editorial intern position with Oklahoma Living magazine in 2021. Her time with the magazine and Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives was one of the many factors that led Eubank to Cotton Electric. Her passion for creativity and rural America will continue to grow.

"I look forward to connecting with members and learning their story," Eubank said.

"It is an honor when someone opens up to you, and I will work hard to genuinely describe stories and share information for members to read, learn and enjoy."

Carli grew up in Pocasset, where her family's commercial cow/calf operation resides. She graduated from Amber-Pocasset High School and continued her education at Oklahoma State University, graduating with degrees in agribusiness and agricultural communications.

Throughout college, she held various leadership positions in organizations, including reporter for Oklahoma Collegiate Cattlewomen and 2021-2022 team member of the National Collegiate Beef Advocacy Program. She is also a member of the Oklahoma CattleWomen communications committee.

When Carli is not working on The Current or attending community events for Cotton Electric, members can expect to see her working cattle

with her family, walking her dog, enjoying coffee at local shops, reading or traveling with friends.

Zach Young joins as marketing specialist. In this role, Zach will assist advertisers with their graphic design and placement in The Current. He will also coordinate youth programs, Co-op Connections and classified ads in The Current. Members can expect to see Zach out in the community as a friendly face from Cotton Electric.

After graduating from Comanche High School, Zach earned his bachelor's degree in communication from Cameron University. Zach is the former creative director of Purley Gates Retreat in Mount Vernon, TX, where he was responsible for social media, community outreach and forming



Zach Young

new relationships with local churches and pastors.

Most recently, Zach worked as customer service and compliance lead at Southern Machine Works, Inc. in Duncan. While working at Southern Machine, Zach was named a member of National Tooling and Machining Association's Emerging Leaders group in 2021.

"I look forward to serving our members alongside the team at Cotton Electric Cooperative and giving back to the community that gave so much to me and my family," Zach said. "Growing up with Cotton Electric in our home, I am excited to be on the other side now and be a resource for our members and local businesses."

Zach, his wife Sydney and their sons Jaxon and Josiah currently reside in Duncan. Together Zach and Sydney serve as young adult pastors at Eternal Life Church in Marlow.

Both Carli and Zach can be reached at 580-857-3351.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When streaming content, use the smallest device that makes sense for the number of people watching. Avoid streaming on game consoles, which use 10 times more power than streaming through a tablet or laptop.

Streaming content with electronic equipment that has earned the ENERGY STAR® rating will use 25% to 30% less energy than standard equipment.

Source: Energy.gov

The Current

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By Cotton Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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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.

	2021	2020
Total Amount Billed/Accrued	\$7,064,076	\$6,478,414
Cost of Purchased Power	\$5,139,607	\$4,464,666
Taxes	\$157,174	\$116,857
Total Operating Expense Per Mile	\$1,301	\$1,212
Average Farm and Residential Bill	\$186	\$209
Average Farm and Residential kWh	1,598	2,062
Total Meters Billed (farm, residential)	19,125	18,873
Miles Energized	5,223	5,209
Density Per Mile	3.66	3.62
New Service Connects YTD	55	71
Services Retired	11	32

Community Spotlight

If you would like your community event listed in the May issue, please submit information by April 22 by calling 580-875-3351 or send an email to TheCurrent@CottonElectric.com. Only events occurring after May 9 will be published in the next issue.

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

Free tax preparation in Duncan

The AARP Foundation Tax Aid Program is again offering free tax preparation. The program is a volunteer-run, free tax-preparation and assistance service offered to low- and middle-income taxpayers. Special attention given to those ages 60 and older.

Taxes are prepared and electronically filed through Apr. 15, 2022, at the Red River Technology Center, 3300 W. Bois D'Arc Ave. in Duncan. Hours are 8:30-11:30 a.m. Monday-Wednesday. Drop-off service is available. Call 580-255-2903 ext. 322 for more information.

CU hosts virtual workshops

Cameron University will host their "CU" career workshops during the month of April. All sessions are virtual and begin at 5:30 p.m. Register at the provided links below with class descriptions.

- History and Political Science: Apr. 11. This workshop focuses on the advantages of studying history and political science in the New Economy. For more information, visit <https://www.cameron.edu/social-sciences/events>.

- Be a Therapist: Apr. 12. This workshop is for those interested in earning a Master of Science degree in Behavioral Sciences and pursuing a career as a Licensed Professional Counselor or a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. Visit <https://www.cameron.edu/psychology/events/cu-be-a-therapist> for more information.

- Psychology and Family and Child Studies: Apr. 14. This workshop is geared for individuals interested in entering the fields of psychology or family and child studies. Visit <https://www.cameron.edu/psychology/events/psychology-family-and-child-studies> for more information.

- Become an Educational Leader: Apr. 26. This workshop is for those wanting information about earning a Master of Science in Educational Leadership, which lays the foundation for leadership roles in K-12 public school systems. For more information, visit <https://www.cameron.edu/education/events>.

- Pre-Law: Apr. 28. This virtual information session is for those who are considering a career in law. For more information, visit <https://www.cameron.edu/social-sciences/events>.

Meet Easter bunnies and puppies

Stephens County Humane Society welcomes all pets and families to Yappy Hour, 5:30-7:30 p.m. on Apr. 12 at Kochendorfer Brewing Company, 1155 McCurdy Road, Duncan. This evening will have doggy Easter egg hunts, music, food and dog Easter costumes. A \$15 cover charge includes one photo with the Easter Bunny.

Festival rattles Apache

Visitors to the Apache Rattlesnake Festival can get up close and personal with Oklahoma rattlesnakes Apr. 14 through Apr. 17 on Main Street in Apache. There will be snake hunts throughout the day, along with an open-air flea market and carnival for the whole family to enjoy. For more in-

formation or questions, call 580-588-2880.

Free Alzheimer's education

Oklahoma chapter of the Alzheimer's Association will host a free monthly education presentation for non-professional caregivers of those with Alzheimer's disease. Participants will learn how to communicate with people with dementia through the different stages of Alzheimer's. Behaviors will also be taught, allowing caregivers to better understand how to address changes in how someone experiencing Alzheimer's behaves. Register at www.alz.org/crf. Presentations are online at 6 p.m. on Apr. 14 and May 10.

Painting the town of Cache

Calling all mural artists: the Cache Chamber of Commerce is hosting a contest to paint the town. Theme choices include natural local beauty, Cache's history, health and wellness, or wildlife. Contestants can email up to three ideas for their mural to cachechamber@gmail.com on Apr. 18. Once the top five finalists are selected the mural selection committee will collaborate with the winning finalists and building owners to determine which entries will be placed on each site. Artists will be welcomed to do their mural outlining the night of May 19. During the Summer in the Streets event, contestants will paint and finish their murals before 6 p.m.

Passion Play in the Holy City

Join thousands of visitors from across Oklahoma to see the 97th Prince of Peace Easter Pageant. Witness the story of Jesus Christ portrayed in pantomime while readers broadcast the script on FM radio to crowds of visitors. Attendance is free, but donations are appreciated. This event begins at dusk on Apr. 9 and Apr. 16 at the Holy City of the Wichitas, 262 Holy City Road, Cache. For more information, call 580-429-3361.

Event for incoming Aggies

Prospective Cameron University students can get a glimpse of the CU Aggie life by attending Pickaxe Preview from 10 a.m. to noon on Apr. 22. For more information or if you have questions, call 580-581-2289 or email admissions@cameron.edu.

Cruising down Main Street

Car enthusiasts can enjoy a parade of souped-up cars at the Main Street Car Cruise, 6 p.m.-10 p.m. on Apr. 22 on Main Street in Duncan. For more information, contact 580-252-8696 or visit www.mainstreetduncan and click on the "Car Show" tab.

Theatre Festival in Duncan

The Mother Earth Theatre Festival is a two-day event that includes stand-up comedy, live musical performances and vendors. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and shows begin at 7 p.m. on Apr. 22 and Apr. 23 at Palace Theatre, 926 W. Main St. in Duncan. Tickets are on sale at www.eventbrite.co.uk.

Auto show rolls into Duncan

Main Street Duncan invites everyone to the Cruisin' Chisholm Trail Car and Motorcycle Show with 24 different car and truck classes, three motorcycle classes and three tractor classes. Registration begins at 8 a.m. and judging at 11 a.m. with awards presentation at 3 p.m. on Apr. 23 on Main St. in Duncan. For more information, call 580-252-8696 or visit www.mainstreetduncan.net.

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Cotton Electric member Dedrah McGuire captured her beautiful flowers at her home in Corum for our Signs of Spring contest.

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

Rodeos coming to Duncan

- Two Bulls Challenge: Apr. 22 and 23.
 - J.A.R.S. Bucking Bulls: Apr. 22 and 23.
 - WRCA Ranch Rodeo: May 5.
 - Cord McCoy PRCA Rodeo: May 6 and 7.
 - Kk Production All Women's Rodeo: May 13 and 14.
- Rodeos are set to take place at Stephens County Fair and Expo Center, 2002 S 13th St., Duncan. For more information, call 580-255-3231 or visit www.stephenscountyfairandexpocenter.com.

WE NEVER STOP



Not everyone starts their day at the same time, or in the same way. But no matter when or how, Cotton Electric Cooperative is there to help you power every moment of it.

To learn more, visit CottonElectric.com

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Upcoming Deadlines for The Current

May		June		July	
Ad Sales	Apr. 22	Ad Sales	May 27	Ad Sales	June 24
Classified	Apr. 27	Classified	June 1	Classified	June 29
Publish	May 9	Publish	June 13	Publish	July 11

Community Spotlight

Railroad club hosts open house

See trains and operating layouts of all shapes and sizes from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Apr. 23 at the SouthWest Oklahoma Railroad Association club house, 1803 N. 5th St., Duncan. For more information or questions, call 580-736-0320.

9 to 5 The Musical at CU

The classic '80s movie hits the stage in "9 to 5," a musical comedy written by Dolly Parton. Performances 7:30 p.m., Apr. 21-23, and 2 p.m. matinee, Apr. 24 at Cameron University Theatre, 2800 W Gore Blvd., Lawton. For tickets, call 580-581-2478.

LCT hosts Oz auditions

Lawton Community Theatre hosts auditions for the "Wizard of Oz" from 6-9 p.m., Apr. 25-26 at Lawton Community Theatre, 1316 NW Bell Ave, Lawton. Production dates are June 23-26. For more information, visit www.lawtoncommunitytheatre.com

Community spring cleaning

City of Duncan, in partnership with Duncan Enhancement Trust Authority, will host the annual spring clean-up from 8:45 a.m.-noon on Apr. 30. Volunteers are asked to show up at Fuqua Park West, behind the Fuqua pool on Hwy. 81 and Beech Ave., Duncan. Lunch will be provided. For more information or questions, please call 580-251-7715 or visit the City of Duncan - City Government Facebook event page.

Poker Run pedals through OK

Attend the Southwest Oklahoma Mason's Poker Run for a fun-filled day with raffle prizes, live music and food vendors before riders travel through Elgin, Marlow, Comanche and Walters. Registration begins at 9 a.m., and the event will last until 3 p.m. on Apr. 30 at Diamondback Harley Davidson, 301 SE Interstate Drive, Lawton.

Sterling VFD plans fundraiser

Support the Sterling Fire Department while eating a delicious barbecue meal. Dinner is donations only. Attendees will have the chance to enter into a raffle prize drawing. First prize is a Spartan Zero Turn Mower with trailer. Second prize is \$1,000. Third prize is a pellet grill. Raffle tickets are \$20 and only 1600 will be sold. Purchase tickets at Sterling City Hall or from any Sterling firefighter. Must be 18 years or older to enter and do not have to be present to win. Drawing date subject to change. The fundraiser begins at 11 a.m. on May 2 at the Sterling Fire Department Station.

Parkinson's Rally-Walk in Lawton

Join the Parkinson's Foundation for their Fifth annual Parkinson's Lawton Rally Walk. The Rally Walk provides the greater Southwest Oklahoma community the opportunity to show their support and provide encouragement to Parkinson's patients and their care providers. Registration begins at 9 a.m. and the Walk will begin at 10 a.m. on May 14 at Bentley Gardens at Cameron University in Lawton. If you have questions about available programs or need additional support, visit www.parkinsonoklahoma.com.

Watch the winning golf ball drop

Support the Stephens County Humane Society by watching 1,300 golf balls drop from the Duncan Fire Department's ladder for a chance to win \$1,000. The event is set to take place from 1-2 p.m. on May 14 at Jack Winger Dog Park, 15th and Cypress, Duncan. For more information, contact Patti Whitaker at 580-641-0667 or visit stephenscountyshester.com.

A "Walk to Remember" in Lawton

The Lawton/Ft. Sill Chapter of The Compassionate Friends is having their annual 'Walk to Remember' (WTR).

The Compassionate Friends is a non-profit worldwide organization that brings families together of children who have passed away from any cause at any age. The chapter meets the first Thursday of each month, working through grief and supporting each other with understanding. The 'WTR' is one of three yearly fundraisers which gives continued support and maintenance of Children's Memorial. Registration begins at 9 a.m. with the walk beginning at 10 a.m. on May 14 at The Compassionate Friends Children's Memorial on 3rd Street (off Farris Ave) in Elmer Thomas Park, Lawton. Refreshments and a raffle will be immediately after the walk. For more information, call (580) 291-7425 and leave a message.

Local artists paint the town

Chisholm Trail Arts Center is giving artists the chance to show off their skills. Contestants will have the choice of one of three nearby parks near Beech Avenue and Highway 81. At 9 a.m., artists will begin painting subjects of their choice in one of those parks. At the end of the time limit, artwork will be turned in and judged. The event is 9-11:30 a.m. on May 14 at Fuqua Park Gazebo in Duncan. For more information, call 580-252-4160 or www.chisholmtrailarts.com.

Parkinson's support groups meet

The Parkinson's Foundation of Oklahoma offers various opportunities in Southwest Oklahoma for patients, with the support of the caregiver, to address the physical symptoms of the disease. Start 2022 off by joining other patients in classes designed to improve quality of life.

Southwestern Medical Center, 5602 SW Lee Blvd., Lawton, hosts two speech therapy programs. Loud Crowd*, a speech therapy group, meets at 4 p.m. every Wednesday, and SPEAK OUT*, an individual speech therapy program that precedes the

Loud Crowd* meeting. The individual speech therapy program requires a doctor's referral & evaluation by Roni Gardner. Gardner can be contacted at 580-531-6429.

The Lawton YMCA, located at 5th and Gore Blvd., hosts two exercise programs throughout the week. Rock Steady Boxing is available at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Fridays, and a Cycling Class for Parkinson's is offered at 1 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays.

The Foundation's mission is "Inspiring Hope and Transforming Lives for Parkinson's Patients and Families in Oklahoma." If you have questions or need additional support, visit the Foundation's website at www.parkinsonoklahoma.com.

Tai Chi classes offered

The Oklahoma Healthy Aging Initiative offers Tai Chi classes to help older adults reduce their risk of falling while also increasing balance and flexibility. Participants learn ways to improve their overall mind, body and spirit through a series of slow, continuous movements. It does not matter how strong, flexible or active you are; Tai Chi is designed for people at all levels of health. Register at www.ohai.org. Classes take place from 11 a.m. to noon on Mondays and Wednesdays at the Lawton Public Library, 110 SW Fourth St., Lawton.

Food pantry open once monthly

Walters Community Food Pantry is open 8-11 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month. The pantry is in the old City Hall, 131 1/2 W. California St. Pantry organizers try to provide a two-week supply of basic staples to anyone with identification and proof of Cotton County residency. Monetary donations may be sent to Food Pantry, c/o Paul Metcalfe, 211 E. Colorado St., Walters. For information, contact Roger Noland at 580-591-6826.



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PARKINSON'S RALLY WALK
Inspire Hope
PARKINSON FOUNDATION OF OKLAHOMA

This year's Walk is the 5th held in Lawton, and it is going to be AMAZING!

Come out for the Walk and enjoy:
The Elgin High School & Middle School Ensemble
The Lawton High School JROTC Honor Guard
The Lawton Fire Department
The Lawton Police Department K9 and Bike Patrol
Unit FREE Hotdogs provided by Summit Utilities

And meet the candidates competing to be Lawton's Ugliest Man

Saturday, May 14, 2022
Cameron University

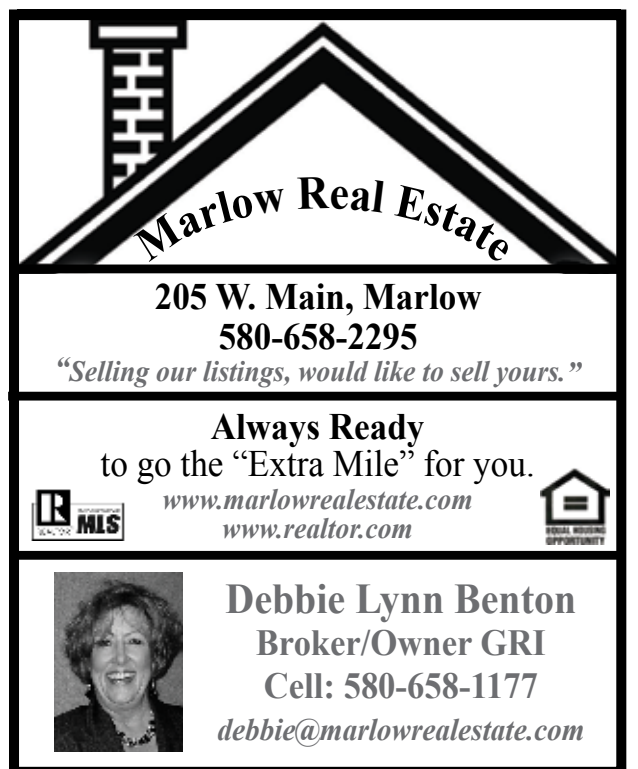
Registration 9 a.m.
Walk 10 a.m.

No registration fee
Donations encouraged

Learn more at
events.parkinsonoklahoma.com/lawton


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Three electrifying kitchen appliances save time and energy

Whether your oven and stove top are powered by gas or electricity, it is no secret that they consume more energy than smaller countertop appliances, like slow cookers and toaster ovens. In addition to efficiency, smaller kitchen appliances can provide faster cooking times and less hassle with cleanup.



Abby Berry

If you are looking for convenient cooking methods with the bonus of energy efficiency, here are three electrifying appliances for your kitchen:

1. Air fryers

Air fryers are becoming increasingly popular, and consumers have a lot of good things to say about these handy little appliances. Air fryers use convection to circulate hot air and cook

won't take up much of your counter space, and with everything cooked in the fryer, cleanup will be a breeze. Air fryers are available in a variety of sizes, and prices range from \$40 to \$200+.

2. Electric griddles

Electric griddles have certainly been

the food—this means little to no oil is required, resulting in healthier meals than those from traditional fryers. Air fryers are fairly small, so they

around for a while, and they offer several benefits for any home chef. Griddles are convenient because you can cook everything at once—like a “one-pan” meal, and the possibilities are endless. From fajitas to sandwiches to French toast, griddles can help satisfy any taste buds. They consume small amounts of energy and provide quick cooking times, so your energy bill will thank you. Prices and sizes for griddles vary, but you can typically find one for about \$30 at your local retail stores.

3. Pizza maker

Pizza brings people together, so why not consider a pizza maker for your kitchen? These compact, countertop machines are an inexpensive alterna-

tive to a costly brick oven, and they use less energy than your traditional oven. Choose your own fresh ingredients to whip up a faster, healthier pizza at home. Plus, most pizza makers are multifunctional and can be used to cook flatbreads, frittatas, quesadillas and more. You can purchase a pizza maker for about \$30 to \$150+ online or at your local retailer.

These are just a few electrifying appliance options for your kitchen. Remember, when you are cooking a smaller meal, countertop appliances can save time and energy. To learn about additional ways to save energy at home, visit www.cottonelectric.com/energy-efficiency.

New golf team is now on their way to the fairway



Empire High School golf program members wear uniforms provided by a CECF grant. Photo by Carli Eubank.

By Carli Eubank

Empire High School now has a golf program, thanks in part to a grant from the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation. The \$1,200 grant was made possible through Cotton Electric members participating in Operation Round Up and helped fund the purchase of golf equipment and uniforms.

Josh Skiles, Empire Public Schools elementary principal and high school golf coach, turned his passion for golf into creating the school's newest athletic endeavor.

“This program is something I felt I could do and volunteer to get started,” Skiles said. “I want students to enjoy the game.”

Skiles said if it weren't for the new golf program, some students at Empire Public Schools wouldn't play any sports. Thanks to the opportunity made possible by the grant, EHS has five golfers on the boys' team and six golfers

on the girls' team.

The Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation provided a putting green mat, uniforms, hats, equipment, golf clubs and training aids for youth at Empire Public Schools. The golf team put on several fundraisers throughout the school year to help with costs of starting the program, along with receiving golf balls and other equipment donated from members in the community, Skiles said.

“With Cotton Electric's help and donations, it hasn't cost us anything to start this program,” Skiles said.

Shadi Ottwell, Empire Public School senior, says she looks forward to playing with her friends on their mission to playoffs.

“We work hard on fundamentals, even past practice hours,” Ottwell says.

The team practices every day after school in their indoor golf

facility using a virtual golf simulator. On Wednesdays they take to the course, practicing at The Territory Golf and Country Club in Duncan.

Skiles has enjoyed seeing students improve each day since the beginning of the season.

“We are here to have fun, get better and build a love for the game,” Skiles said.

The future of the Empire Public Schools high school golf team is bright with goals of expanding the practice facility, qualifying for state, and introducing the sport to elementary school students.

The second quarter grant applications for 2022 are due June 14, 2022. Grant application overview and guidelines are available at www.cottonelectric.com/grant-application and can be submitted by email to sbowers@cottonelectric.com or by mail to 226 N. Broadway, Walters, OK 73572.



Shadi Ottwell practices on putting green donated from the Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation. Photo by Carli Eubank

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Cotton Electric youth heading to D.C.

After advancing through an essay competition and a video interview, we are happy to announce Isabel Moore of Cache High School and Tyler Hertzler of Marlow High School are the winners of Cotton Electric's 2022

Scholarship Contest.

Moore and Hertzler showed personality, knowledge of subject, poise and communication skills throughout the competition. They will represent Cotton Electric in an expense-paid trip to

Washington D.C. in June. There they will meet Oklahoma's congressional delegation and learn about the cooperative form of business. They will also meet other Youth Tour winners from across the country.

Below, you can read the winning essays inspired from the topic "How has the Rural Electrification Act impacted America?"

Congratulations to Isabel Moore and Tyler Hertzler.



Radios and Ringlets

By *Isabell Moore, Cache High School*

fluttered in through the little window, illuminating vast treasures waiting to be discovered.

This particular day I unearthed a small wooden trunk. I carefully undid the latch revealing a single photograph. The black and white photograph contained a little bright-eyed girl with dark ringlets sitting on the floor looking up with a huge grin at the radio towering beside her. I wondered who the little girl could be. I quickly rose and brushed the dust from my jeans. I found grandma in the kitchen flipping through a cookbook. "Grandma," I said exasperated. She looked up, giving me her full attention. With great caution I placed the trunk on the countertop. "Let me make some cocoa," grandma said with a mischievous gleam in her eyes. My heart swelled with anticipation. All throughout my childhood when grandma made cocoa we would sit beside the fireplace while she told me stories from the past. I sat down in the pastel blue armchair as she handed me the steaming mug and

sat down across from me in an identical chair.

"When I was no older than you my daddy farmed wheat. It was before the rural electrification act, and life was quite different. We had no running water. At least twice a day I would walk from my house down the hill to the pump and then carry water all the way back. There was no electricity which meant as a little girl I read by candlelight. Because there wasn't electricity we didn't have radios. Our family got our radio in 1939, just a few months after the act passed. My family gathered around it every Friday evening to hear our favorite show. All of these wonderful things, running water, electric lighting, and radios, were brought into existence by the act."

I tried to imagine life the way it had been when my grandma was a little girl. Who knew one act could change so much. I still couldn't wrap my mind around who the little girl was. Grandma gently grasped the truck and unlatched it. "The little girl in the pho-

tograph is Margaret Ann Thomas," she said. "But grandma, your name is Margaret," I thought aloud. Grandma knowingly smiled as I uncovered the mysterious identity of the girl. "I was the little girl in the photograph," grandma said! As I studied grandma I saw the dark ringlets had resided to fine waspy locks. Her skin was wrinkled and spotted from the sun, but deep within her eyes I could see the same sparkle as the little girl in the photo. It was in that moment I found my love for history. Although it has been almost ten years since grandma passed, her legacy lives on in the memories she shared, the stories she told, and the museum's newest exhibit. I take in the photos of men hauling large light poles, women cooking on electric stoves, and all the other results of the rural electrification act. In the very middle is a small picture frame containing a black and white photograph of a little bright-eyed girl with dark ringlets.

As a museum curator I naturally love history. I smile to myself while standing in front of our newest exhibit. It stands silently conveying the stories and livelihoods of the generations which courageously lit the path before us.

I attribute my fascination with history to my beloved grandmother. When I was ten, visiting grandma during winter break, I explored her attic. Although it was dusty and smelled like mothballs, it was my favorite part of the house. I loved the way the sunlight



REA Lights Rural America

By *Tyler Hertzler, Marlow High School*

life. Thanks to the national broadband plan, the United States is working on bringing reliable internet access to all areas of the U.S, including rural areas. Sometimes I think that my life is completely miserable, how could anyone survive without internet? If only I had lived in the 1930's I would be grateful for what I have now. Before 1936 rural communities were left completely without power. Not only did they not have internet they didn't even have lights! That is until the Rural Electrification Act was passed on May 20, 1936 and thanks to cooperatives such as Cotton Electric, rural communities are now supplied with electricity to all rural homes and businesses. The Rural Electrification Act has supplied the ability for co-ops to exist, which provide many services and benefits to their communities.

First, what did the Rural Electrification Act do for America? This bill made it possible for the government to give loans to farmers who came together and "cooperated" to create non-profit cooperatives with the intent of providing electricity to rural

America. A cooperative is an association filled with volunteers that come together to meet a common economic, social, and cultural needs through a democratic enterprise. Co-ops such as Cotton Electric are responsible for their community. There are seven types of cooperatives: worker cooperatives, consumer cooperatives, producer cooperatives, credit unions, retail or purchasing cooperatives, housing cooperatives, and multi-stakeholder cooperatives. Electric cooperatives are considered consumer cooperatives which means they are controlled by its consumers with a focus of meeting their members' needs, quality, and protection.

Oklahoma's electric cooperatives, such as Cotton Electric, currently provide power for over 523,000 people, which cover almost 93% of the state of Oklahoma. These co-ops distribute and sell their power to their members for a price which is used to invest back into the electric system making these cooperatives non profit organizations. Cotton Electric has made a massive impact on the people of Stephens

County Oklahoma ever since its creation 80 years ago. Cotton Electric is currently providing jobs for more than 90 people. They provide electricity for more than 20,000 locations scattered across eight counties in Oklahoma.

In conclusion, The Rural Electrification Act provided the resources for electric cooperatives to exist and to serve their communities. It provided jobs for people all across America and gave people a chance to provide and give back to their communities. Thanks to these cooperatives and especially Cotton Electric, I, along with many people here in Stephens County, Oklahoma, are able to have power to warm our homes. Not only that, but if we didn't have the Electrification Act, we wouldn't even have internet in rural areas. Thanks to the Electrification Act we are able to grow and become more efficient thanks to the power of electricity provided by Cotton Electric and the rest of the Electric Cooperatives across Oklahoma and the rest of the United States.

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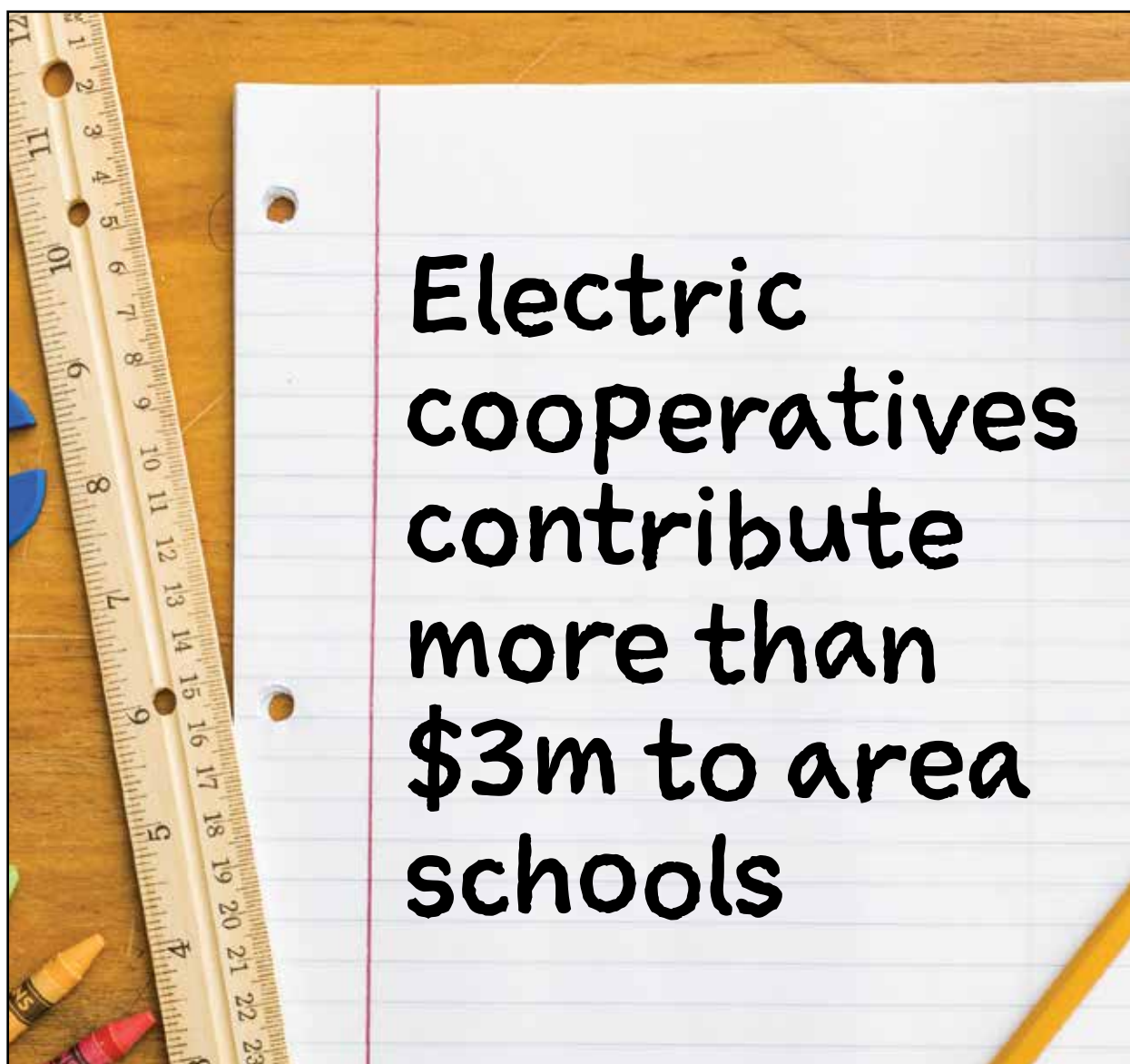
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Electric cooperatives contribute more than \$3m to area schools

Supporting area schools has always been a priority for Cotton Electric Cooperative. It is our privilege to provide educational presentations, sponsorships and assistance when needed.

Cotton Electric and its members also make a substantial impact on local schools through taxes. For example, electric cooperatives in Oklahoma are levied a 2% gross receipts tax on the revenue at both the wholesale and retail level in lieu of an ad valorem tax. Although we typically view taxes in a negative light, this tax in particular makes a significant positive impact.

When Cotton Electric members pay electric bills, the cooperative remits the 2% gross receipts tax to the state, and 95% of those funds go directly back to local school districts. During 2021, \$3,033,932.63 was apportioned back to the 31 school districts in our service area.

On a percentage basis, electric cooperatives contribute more tax dollars to local school districts

than other utilities. In Oklahoma, investor-owned utilities pay ad valorem taxes instead of gross receipts tax, and only 58% of these tax monies go to school districts within which investor-owned utilities own property. Municipal utilities contribute no tax money to public schools.

The Oklahoma Tax Commission oversees the apportionment of the gross receipts tax. The amount paid to each school is based upon the number of miles of power lines that Cotton Electric Cooperative and Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (WFEC) have in each school district. WFEC, Oklahoma's largest locally-owned power supply system, is a generation and transmission cooperative owned by 21 distribution cooperatives, including Cotton Electric.

The table at right shows the miles of line serving each district and an estimation of amounts contributed through the 2021 gross receipts tax.

2021 Gross Receipts Tax by School Districts

District	Cotton & WFEC Taxes	Cotton miles of line
Apache	45,981.04	1.26
Big Pasture	97,249.96	235.58
Bishop	332.28	1.27
Bray	135,219.32	141.03
Cache	131,361.37	210.10
Central	111,338.39	238.96
Chattanooga	258,663.56	328.68
Comanche	237,017.18	315.83
Davidson	29,003.24	33.45
Duncan	105,522.83	197.20
Elgin	113,422.90	339.78
Empire	99,867.86	241.91
Fletcher	49,647.41	27.08
Flower Mound	376.76	1.44
Fox	4,455.73	17.03
Frederick	79,342.55	6.18
Geronimo	60,010.09	169.16
Grandfield	54,961.83	163.13
Grandview	60,275.82	113.91
Indiahoma	81,694.65	157
Lawton	49,913.98	124.45
Marlow	62,607.85	239.29
Ringling	67,740.50	24.37
Rush Springs	169,604.96	153.80
Ryan	48,057.15	120.56
Sterling	77,815.30	170.16
Temple	63,869.45	229.93
Terral	18,246.78	69.74
Velma	359,570.63	512.09
Walters	240,931.39	293.62
Waurika	119,802.88	246.24
Totals	\$3,033,932.63	5,119.45

Slow down for roadside crews

Although road maintenance crews come to mind when thinking of orange directional signs and work zones, other workers perform job duties near the road, including utility and tree-trimming crews.

Streets and highways are lined with power poles and electrical equipment, and narrow roadways often require crews like ours to place their equipment in traffic lanes. Their work is often taken for granted but benefits us all; and, like everyone, they deserve a safe workplace.

April 11-15 is Work Zone Awareness Week. Be alert to utility crews and other work zone workers for their safety as well as yours.

According to the National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse, 672 fatal crashes and 755 deaths occurred in work zones in 2018 (at the writing of this article, data was not available for 2019). Of those fatalities, 124 were workers. Many other work zone crashes result in injuries. An estimated 123,000 work zone crashes occurred in 2018, resulting in 45,000 people injured.

To help keep roadside crews safe:

- Keep a safe distance between your vehicle and traffic barriers, trucks, construction equipment, and workers.
- Be patient. Traffic delays are sometimes unavoidable, so allow time for unexpected setbacks in your schedule.



Cotton Electric construction crew sets a new pole near Marlow. Photo by Carli Eubank.

- Obey all signs and road crew flag instructions.
- Merge early and be courteous to other drivers.
- Use your headlights at dusk and during inclement weather.
- Minimize distractions. Avoid activities such as operating a radio, applying makeup, looking at cell phone and eating while driving.

Don't make the jobs of utility crews, tree trimmers, road workers and others who work near traffic more dangerous. Slow down when approaching a work zone and move over for first responders and work crews on the side of the road.

This helps keep you safe as well. Drive safely.

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Match Your Financial Goals with the Right Strategies

The long-running coronavirus pandemic has fueled a lot of anxieties – including financial ones. But some people have had far fewer worries than others. Consider this: Among those investors who work with a financial advisor, 84% said that doing so gave them a greater sense of comfort about their finances during the pandemic.



ic, according to a survey from Age Wave and Edward Jones. Of course, many people experience investment-related fears even without a global health crisis, and that's probably not surprising, given the periodic volatility of the financial markets. But financial guidance can come in handy during relatively normal times, too.

A financial professional can help you:

- Look past the headlines – Inflation, interest rates, pandemics, elections – there's always something in the news that could affect the investment world in the short term. But by helping

you construct a portfolio that's built for the long term and reflects your goals, risk tolerance and time horizon, a financial advisor can enable you to look past the headlines.

- Avoid emotional decisions – Many people let their emotions drive their investment choices. When the market goes through a downturn and the value of their investments drops, they sell to "cut losses," even though these same investments may still have good business fundamentals and promising futures. Conversely, when the market is on an uptick, some people chase after "hot

investments, even when they become overpriced and may have very little room to grow. But a financial advisor can help keep you from making these fear- and greed-based actions by only recommending moves that make sense for your situation.

- Work toward multiple goals – At various times in your life, you may have simultaneous financial goals. For example, you could be investing for a retirement that's decades away, while also trying to save for a child's college education. A financial professional can suggest ways you can keep working toward both objectives, in terms of how

much money you can afford to invest and what types of savings and investment vehicles you should consider.

- Prepare for the unexpected – Most of us did not need a pandemic to remind us that unexpected events can happen in our lives – and some of these events can have serious financial impacts on us and our loved ones. Do you have adequate life insurance? How about disability insurance? And if you ever needed some type of long-term care, such as an extended stay in a nursing home, how would you pay for it? A financial advisor can evaluate your protec-

tion needs and recommend appropriate solutions that fit within your overall financial strategy.

- Adapt to changing circumstances – Over time, many things may change in your life – your job, your family situation, your retirement plans, and so on. A financial professional can help you adjust your financial strategy in response to these changes. Achieving your financial goals may present challenges, but it doesn't have to cause you years of worry and distress – as long as you get the help you need.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

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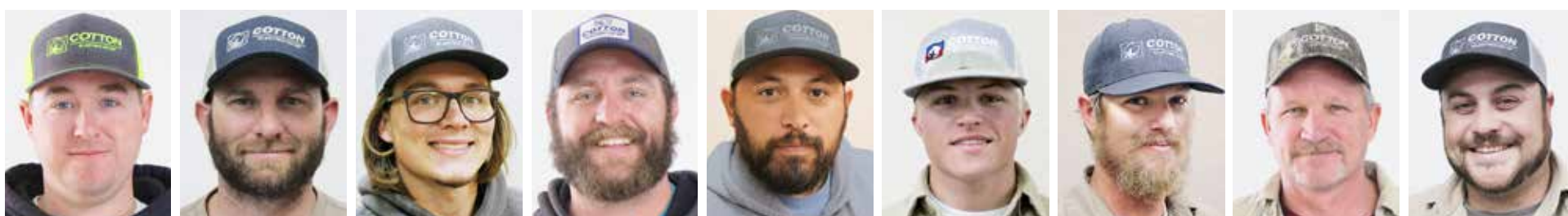
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Cotton Electric linemen always on call for members

By Carli Eubank

You and your family gather around the TV listening for updates on the storm heading toward your area. Suddenly, the screen goes black. Soon, you see headlights of a Cotton Electric truck with trusted linemen to bring back light. The crew works in synchrony, despite the brutal weather conditions. Before you know it, the linemen descend the pole, and your home is filled with light again. Thanks to linemen.

Linemen Appreciation Day falls on April 11 this year, and Cotton Electric Cooperative recognizes how vital our linemen are to the community.

Clint Ingram, operations superintendent, was a lineman for about 16

years before coming into his current position. Recently, he shared about his time as a lineman.

“I feel like we have built such a unique team here at Cotton Electric with the linemen, and I am so proud to be part of it,” Ingram said. “These guys are goal-minded, they push hard and they’ve got each other’s backs.”

Going through the lineman program is no easy course. Crewmen are entered into the lineman apprentice program after being on the job a minimum of six months. Apprentice linemen then spend three years studying, taking tests and receiving on-the-job training before officially becoming a lineman. After an additional year in the field, a lineman may be considered

for a journeyman lineman position.

Whether it’s harsh weather conditions or a beautiful spring day, linemen constantly think outside the box to overcome obstacles and safely restore power. It takes respect, grit and something special inside someone to be able to push through long days working in snow, ice, wind and rain, Ingram said.

Cotton Electric proudly employs 26 linemen and crewmen who maintain power lines and keep electricity flowing to members. Daily work orders may include line maintenance, repairing broken poles or appointments with members. However, their days are often unpredictable. If a lineman receives a call about an outage, all

work stops and attention is given to the members in the dark.

Responding to outages immediately is the commitment fulfilled by every Cotton Electric lineman. Being on call 24/7, 365 days a year is a proud devotion to keep.

“Linemen do a lot and their hearts are in it all the way,” Ingram said. “The greatest feeling for a lineman is to have the sense of accomplishment when he sees the lights come on.”

Every lineman and crewman on this page has their own story and experiences. Even though Linemen Appreciation Day is recognized on one day, let us remember to thank our linemen beyond April 11.

WHAT DOES A LINEMAN DO?

On any given day or night, in all kinds of weather conditions, lineworkers install and maintain overhead and underground electrical systems.

We entrust our lineworkers with your safety, so they hold a very important job. We also rely on their expertise to power our world.

SAFETY COMES FIRST

Lineworkers must commit to safety above all else for the benefit of those they serve (you!), fellow crew members and themselves. They spend thousands of hours in safety trainings each year and must learn and apply numerous safety regulations.

THEY ARE SPECIALLY TRAINED TO:

- Climb poles to service power lines in areas inaccessible by trucks.
- Stand in an elevated bucket to assess and repair overhead lines.
- Install poles, overhead lines and other equipment.
- Work on both energized and deenergized lines.
- Install and service underground lines.



A straightforward weekend breakfast

Try these simple and delicious caramel sticky rolls for an easy breakfast for all. The rolls are fluffy, a little crunchy and drizzled with caramel topping.



Caramel Sticky Rolls

Servings: 9

Nonstick cooking spray
 flour, for rolling pastry
 1 frozen puff pastry,
 thawed
 caramel sauce, divided
 1/2 cup walnuts, chopped
 powdered sugar

Heat oven to 400 F.
 Spray muffin tin with nonstick cooking spray.
 Sprinkle flour on work surface. Flatten pastry sheet and roll into rectangle.
 Drizzle caramel sauce over pastry and spread within 1/2 inch of edges.
 Sprinkle chopped walnuts over caramel sauce.
 Starting on short end, evenly roll pastry with filling to other end.
 Cut pastry into nine pieces. Place pastries cut side up into muffin cups.
 Bake 22 minutes, or until golden brown. Immediately remove from pan to wire rack. Let cool 10 minutes. Drizzle with additional caramel sauce and dust with powdered sugar.

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Easter Bunny Rolls with Spinach Dip



Serves: 24

- 16 ounces frozen spinach, thawed
- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/4 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1 1/2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese, divided
- 2 crescent roll tubes (8 ounces each)

Heat oven to 375 F.

In skillet, over medium heat, cook spinach, cream cheese and garlic 3-4 minutes until cream cheese is melted. Stir in mayonnaise, salt, onion powder, chili powder, pepper and Italian seasoning. Stir in Parmesan cheese and 1/2 cup mozzarella cheese. Cook until cheese is melted. Keep skillet on burner over low heat. Remove dough from tubes. Leaving dough intact, roll and stretch into 18-inch ropes. Cut each rope into 12 pieces for 24 total.

On baking sheet with parchment paper, form bunny head by placing one piece of dough in middle then surrounding it with six more pieces. Use 13 pieces to form round body. Use remaining pieces to form ears on top of head.

Scoop hot spinach dip into center. Spoon small portions on each ear. Sprinkle ears and belly with remaining mozzarella cheese.

Bake 18 minutes, or until crescent dough is golden brown and thoroughly cooked.

Dietary management of IBS

Digestive disorders affect between 18 and 21 percent of adults in the United States, resulting in increased healthcare utilization and decreased quality of life. One of the most common disorders is Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). IBS is defined as recurrent abdominal pain with abnormal stool patterns, including diarrhea and/or constipation as a result of dysfunction between the gut and the brain. In December 2020, the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) released guidelines for the management of IBS. These guidelines include two options for altering dietary intake to improve IBS symptoms.

If you have recurrent abdominal pain and/or changes in your stooling pattern, you should see your doctor immediately to obtain a diagnosis and treatment plan. Early identification and diagnosis is key to decreasing the negative impact of a digestive disorder on your health. If the recurrent abdominal pain is associated with changes in stooling pattern, it may be IBS. In addition to making an appointment with your doctor, you can take the ACG IBS screener at <https://gi.org/patients/ibs-screener/> and print out symptoms for your doctor to review during your visit.



Kim Bandelier, MPH, RD, LD



The two dietary management options suggested in the ACG IBS clinical management guidelines are to follow a Low FODMAP diet and/or adding soluble fiber to the diet. This should be done with a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (healthcare provider with a RD or RDN credential) who specializes in treating GI disorders to avoid nutrient deficiencies or the development of disordered eating.

A Low FODMAP diet is a restrictive diet that limits or eliminates carbohydrates which are partially digested in the small intestine. In individuals

without IBS, these carbohydrates are important for beneficial gut bacteria. For individuals with IBS, these carbohydrates may be contributing to abdominal discomfort. The specific carbohydrates are oligosaccharides, disaccharides, monosaccharides and polyols found in specific foods across multiple food groups - dairy, fruit, vegetables, grains and added sugars. The Low FODMAP diet has three stages - restriction, reintroduction, and personalization and must be implemented over many months. It is essential that this diet is guided by a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist because eliminating these foods can cause other dietary issues if not done correctly.

Adding soluble fiber to diet to control IBS symptoms is another diet recommendation included in the ACG IBS clinical management guidelines. This should be done under the treatment of a physician and a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist as the type of soluble fiber and the amount must be personalized based on the IBS symptom. The website www.aboutibs.org has additional information on the use of dietary fiber to treat IBS.

Some individuals with IBS may not respond to a Low FODMAP diet or adding soluble fiber; for those individ-

uals, the ACG guidelines recommend healthy eating as defined by the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence Guidelines. These guidelines are similar to the US Dietary Guidelines for Americans but add modifications for chronic diseases like diabetes. Although the research on gluten free diet as a therapy for IBS is inconclusive, some IBS patients may benefit from this restriction. Regardless of the diet restriction, it is essential that a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RD or RDN) be involved in managing any diet to treat IBS to ensure that additional nutrient deficiencies are avoided or treated and that any additional underlying conditions (chronic diseases, eating disorders) and lifestyle preferences are accounted for in the diet modification.

Digestive disorders are common in the United States. Research on diet modification to treat these disorders is evolving. It is imperative that you visit a doctor if you are experiencing abdominal discomfort or changes in your stool patterns. If IBS is suspected, there are dietary treatment options that, when implemented in partnership with a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RD or RDN), can successfully treat IBS for most adults.

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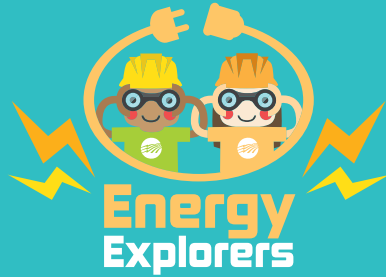
DO YOU KNOW ABOUT LINEWORKERS?

Every April, we celebrate lineworkers and the hard work they do to make sure we have electricity to power our lives.

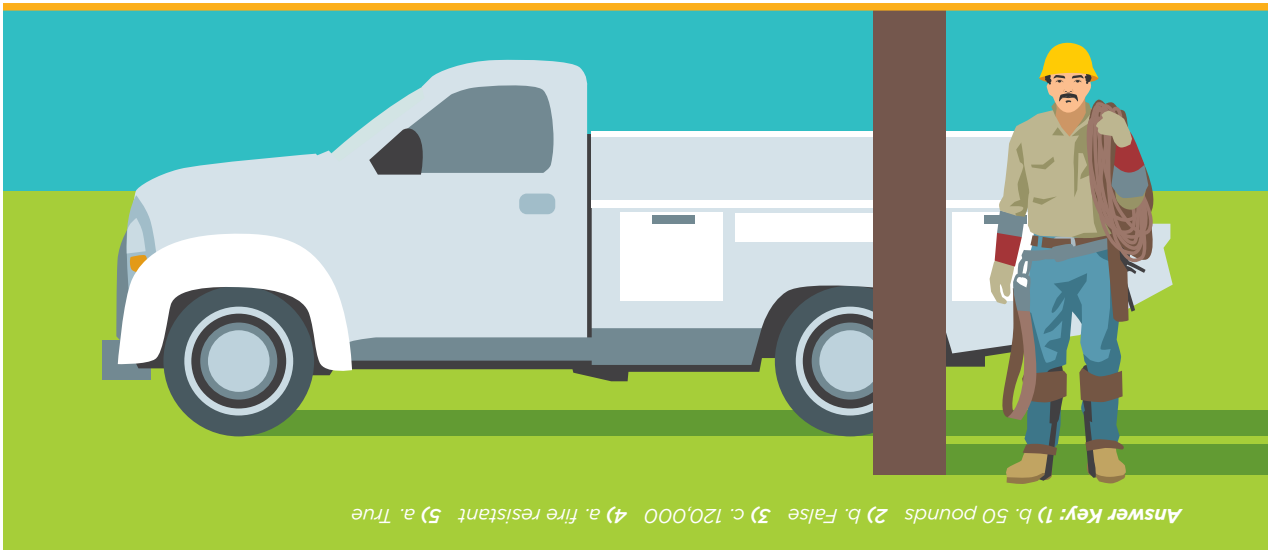
How much do you know about lineworkers?

Take the quiz below to find out!

(Use the answer key to check your work.)



1. Lineworkers have to wear a lot of gear to do their jobs. A lineworker's gear can weigh up to _____.
 - a. 15 pounds
 - b. 50 pounds
 - c. 80 pounds
2. Lineworkers maintain and repair electrical lines, but they do not install them.
 - a. True (no installation)
 - b. False (They maintain, repair *and* install lines.)
3. There are approximately _____ lineworkers in the United States.
 - a. 50,000
 - b. 90,000
 - c. 120,000
4. Lineworkers must wear _____ clothing to protect them from a possible electric arc while working.
 - a. fire resistant
 - b. extra thick
 - c. leather or rubber
5. Lineworkers must wear special conductive boots when climbing a steel structure.
 - a. True
 - b. False



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							3	8
9		5	3		6	7		
2			9					3
				1		6		2

Level: Beginner

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

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5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines and underground facilities. Always call 8-1-1 first. Here are five easy steps for safe digging.

1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.

2-3

3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.

WARNING

4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.

5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project location.

Source: call811.com

Parting Shots



(left to right) Kyle Linthicum and Michael Edgmon working to wire a new pole near Marlow. Photo by Carli Eubank.



(left to right) TJ Birdwell and Zack Smith prepare a new pole near Marlow. Photo by Carli Eubank.

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