

CEC inside your co-op

Published for members of Choctaw Electric Cooperative

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Special Event Celebrates Co-op Members

Choctaw Electric will honor its best assets —its members—at upcoming Member Appreciation Days

This time of year, co-op members are provided with audited financial statements that list assets, liabilities, revenues and more. But what doesn't show up in the end-of-year fiscal reports is Choctaw Electric Cooperative's biggest asset—its members.

Without the support, participation and watchful eye of its membership, Choctaw Electric (CEC) could hardly call itself a cooperative. Members are the fibers that hold the co-op together.

To show appreciation for members, CEC will host Member Appreciation Days on November 1-3.

CEC offices in Hugo, Idabel and Antlers will host their own special event from 11 am until 2 pm on the following days :

November 1 - Hugo
November 2 - Antlers
November 3 - Idabel

Annual Meeting Updates

Printing deadlines for your CEC newsletter prevent us from publishing CEC Annual Meeting news in this issue. You can find photos of prize winners and election results posted on CEC's Facebook page and website, or watch for a full report on the meeting in the November issue of *Inside Your Co-op*. Thank you!



CEC Member Appreciation Days

Hotdogs & Soda Pop
Gifts & Prizes

11 am - 2 pm

November 1 - CEC Hugo
November 2 - CEC Antlers
November 3 - CEC Idabel

Co-op members and friends will gather on the front lawn of their local CEC office to enjoy free hotdogs, chips and soft drinks, served by CEC employees.

CEC staff and trustees will be on hand to visit and answer questions. The event is "come and go" to make it convenient for members.

Those who attend won't leave empty handed: CEC will give away free promotional gifts, along with other prizes. Local radio stations will broadcast live from each event, adding to the fun and festivities.

It is the first time CEC has held such an event for members and staff are hoping for a good turnout.

"This is our chance to let our members know how much we appreciate their support and participation, especially these past several years," said Jia Johnson, director of member services.

CEC members and employees have undergone a great deal of change and turmoil, but the result is a stronger, healthier co-op, Johnson added. "We are very grateful for that and we want our members know," she said.

A monthly newsletter of
Choctaw Electric Cooperative.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Joe M. Silk, *Vice President*

Mike Brewer, *Secretary Treasurer*

James Woods Bill Woolsey
Danny Antwine Norman Ranger
Marcia Wright Becky Franks

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Jennifer Smith, *Executive Assistant*
Jia Johnson, *Director of Public Relations*
Craig McBrain, *Chief Financial Officer*
Jim Malone, *Director of Operations*
Darrell Ward, *System Services Manager*

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Monday-Friday • 8 am - 5 pm

ANTLERS OFFICE

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Toll Free: (800) 780-6486
Local: (580) 298-3201
Monday-Friday • 8 am - 5 pm

On the Web:
www.choctawelectric.coop



24 Hour Outage Hotline
800-780-6486

MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

Why We Celebrate Cooperatives

Every October, cooperatives from all sectors across the country celebrate National Cooperative Month. The purpose of this celebration is to recognize the cooperative difference and remind you, the members of the co-op, about Choctaw Electric Cooperative's purpose.



BY KENNETH GATES
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

I must admit I am somewhat cynical of the many different "days" and "months" that are celebrated throughout the year, but National Cooperative Month is truly an opportunity to celebrate.

When co-ops recognize National Cooperative Month, we inform others about our unique business model, which is based on the Seven Cooperative Principles: Voluntary and Open Membership; Democratic Member Control; Members' Economic Participation; Autonomy and Independence; Education, Training and Information; Cooperation Among Cooperatives; and Concern for Community.

For co-op employees and members that are familiar with the principles, the month of October is a great opportunity to renew our connection to each other and the purpose of our co-op. CEC's mission is to continuously improve customer service and satisfaction by providing members with high quality electric and related services at fair and equitable rates.

In the U.S., there are more than 29,000 co-ops serving in every single industry. Many co-ops from different sectors join together during the month of October to educate members in the community about cooperatives.

There are more co-ops in Oklahoma than most people realize. Ace Hardware, True Value, and Do It Best Hardware are cooperatives.

We also have numerous credit unions, farmer's co-ops, food co-ops and more. Co-ops are even represented on the shelves at our local grocery stores, such as Land O'Lakes, Welch's, Organic Valley, Cabot Cheese, Sunkist, and Ocean Spray.

According to the latest data, more than 130 million people belong to a co-op in the U.S. alone, and co-ops employ more than 2 million Americans.

This speaks to the heart of why we must take every opportunity to celebrate and teach others about the cooperative business model. It works! I hope you will celebrate your co-op by being an active member.

💰 Lucky Account # 13667103 (\$25 Bill Credit). If the account number above belongs to you, contact your co-op by the 10th of the month to claim your \$25 bill credit. Call Jennifer Boling at **800-780-6486**, ext. 207, or contact CEC via email or in person.



FIND IT ONLINE

■ **Connect with Savings.** Choctaw Electric's Co-op Connections card provides members with multiple ways to save money. Use it at the pharmacy to save on prescriptions, dental visits, eyeglasses and more. It's also good for savings at hundreds of participating retail stores, restaurants and hotels. Find out how you can save with Co-op Connections at www.choctawelectric.coop. Click on Member Services, and then Co-op Connections.

Help Us Serve You Better

Use CEC survey forms to tell us how we can improve

Choctaw Electric Cooperative (CEC) employees interact with members throughout the day and sometimes into the night. These encounters may occur in the field, on the telephone, or during visits to the co-op office. To make these experiences as positive and satisfying as possible, CEC is asking members to fill out a quick survey.



Surveys are generated after a member meets with an employee in the field, visits the office, or calls the office for assistance. After an on-site visit, members may notice a survey hanging on their door or receive a follow-up telephone call asking them about their recent experience. In some cases, members may receive a postcard survey in the mail.

If you receive a survey, please take a few minutes to fill it out and return it to CEC. When it comes to providing the best customer service experience possible, your opinion counts! Your ideas, comments, suggestions, and honest appraisal are appreciated.

You can also provide feedback via email to customerservice@choctawelectric.coop/.

Become a Better Driver



Choctaw Electric Cooperative's Brad Kendrick will teach an AARP Driver Safety course on October 12 at the Idabel Chamber of Commerce. The class will begin at 9 am.

The AARP driving course is designed to help driver's of all ages improve their driving skills. After completing the eight-hour class, participants receive a certificate of completion that could qualify them for a discount on their automobile insurance premium.

The cost for the course is \$12 per person for AARP members, and \$14 per person for others. Fees for the course cover teaching materials that participants may take home with them.

For more details or enrollment, please contact Kendrick at **800-780-6486**, ext. 209.



Going for the Gold

George Burns (right), president of the Choctaw Electric Cooperative (CEC) board of trustees, earned his Director Gold certificate and pin this spring. The certificate issued by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) identifies Burns as having completed the coursework required to receive the NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership Certificates. The professional development program for co-op directors includes over 44 hours of training in cooperative finance, director duties and liabilities, board operations and process, understanding electric co-ops and strategic planning. Additional board leadership classes delve deeper into topics such as industry, governance, risk management, rate making and policy development.

CEC bylaws require trustees to earn their Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate within their first term of office.

Presenting the certificate is Joe Silk, vice president of the CEC board of trustees.

Note: CEC trustee qualifications are listed in Section 4.02 of the CEC bylaws. The bylaws are available online at www.choctawelectric.coop or pick up a copy at any CEC office.

OFFICIAL



MINUTES

Scan this code with your smartphone or tablet to read the monthly minutes of your co-op board meeting. Minutes are also available at any CEC location.

To scan the code, install a Bar Code Scanner app, available at the App Store.



Mail from Members



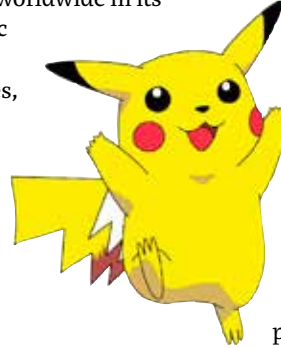
I wanted to take a moment to say "Thank you" for the quick response and reliable service that you and your company have provided to us at our Broken Bow complex facilities. Specifically, the work on our recent but lengthy water treatment plant project, working on electrical switches outside our engine room, working with us to correct our power factor at the processing plant and at our feed mill in Craig, and our renovation of our processing facility in 2010, have all helped Tyson grow over the years and you are a key partner in our growth. The personal relationships are vital for us to know who to call and who we can count on when we need help. I look forward to working together in the future to continue to make our companies a continued success.

Steve Cash
Director of Electrical Engineering
Tyson Foods, Inc.

Pokemon—NO!

Game players advised to stay away from power equipment

If you haven't noticed, there's Pokemon Go craze that has millions worldwide in its grip. While your electric co-op has nothing against players enjoying themselves, when it comes to hunting virtual Pokemon on or near real power lines, substations or other co-op property, Pokemon Go quickly becomes Pokemon NO!



Game manufacturer Niantic determines where Pokemon will appear. While the game's user agreement forbids players from trespassing on private property, private property locations somehow still seem to appear. The company asks players to report inappropriate locations online, but how quickly these issues are resolved is unknown.

If Pokemon are hiding around co-op property, players are advised to keep a safe distance. Any game or activity that distracts you from the possible dangers nearby or brings you in close proximity to CEC lines and equipment is a major concern.

If you spot suspicious activity near CEC substations or power lines, please call your co-op immediately at **800-780-6486**.

Pokemon is a smartphone-based augmented reality game that sends players to real world places to "capture" Pokemon. Pokemon can turn up anywhere from the grocery store to hospitals to your own front yard. Lately, they are appearing at electric substations, drawing players into dangerous situations.



UTILITY POLES ARE NOT BULLETIN BOARDS

Think before you post that sign!
Staples, nails and tacks used to hang signs and fliers create dangerous obstacles for electric lineworkers.
Their jobs are dangerous enough – help us keep them safe!

Using Less Energy Is Paying Off

Energy efficiency measures become third-largest energy resource

Free home energy audits, energy efficiency tips, and loans to help members purchase the most efficient appliances possible. These measures do more than help electric co-op members save money on their monthly electricity bills.

Across the nation, energy efficiency programs and improved appliance efficiency standards are starting to pay off in very big ways. In fact, the American Council for on Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE) considers the energy saved by such measures to be the nation's third largest electric power resource, and it could grow to be the most efficient by 2030, the ACEEE says.

According to ACEEE, the nation's energy efficiency efforts since 1990 have resulted in a major accomplishment for the US electric power industry. Not only is efficiency the nation's third largest energy resource, but it has averted the need to build the equivalent of 313 power plants since 1990. Efficiency is a greater contributor to the U.S. energy mix than nuclear power, says the ACEEE.

"We also estimate that efficiency reduced annual carbon dioxide emissions, a major contributor to climate change, by 490 million tons in 2015," the group said in a blog post. "We can see further evidence of

Why you should care about energy efficiency:

1. Using less electricity helps shrink your monthly bill.
2. Saving energy helps prevent the need to build more power plants, which everyone pays for in higher rates.
3. It's good for the environment.

efficiency's impact in the fact that electricity consumption has flattened in recent years even as the economy has grown. What's more, energy efficiency has saved consumers \$90 billion annually on electric bills."

For individual households in the United States, that works out to an average savings of \$840 per year, says the ACEEE.

Furthermore, a well-designed set of efficiency policies could help the United States avoid the need to build 800 power plants by 2030, meaning 1 billion tons fewer annual carbon dioxide emissions by 2030.



Community Events

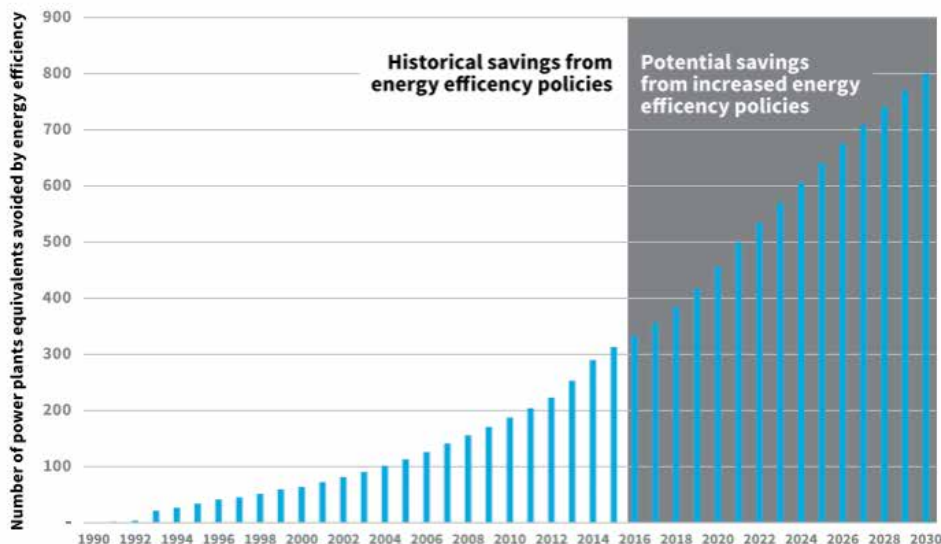
Help us promote your event by sending event details in advance. Please send event information to Jennifer Boling/Inside Your Co-op/ PO Box 758, Hugo, OK 74743; or e-mail info to jboling@choctawelectric.coop. Events and dates are subject to change.

OCTOBER

- 1-16 Masters at Work: Wood-turning Competition & Exhibit, Forest Heritage Center, Broken Bow
- 1 Idabel Fall Festival
- 1 Honobia Bigfoot Festival & Conference, Kiamichi Mtn Mission Campground
- 1 Deer Festival, Antlers
- 6 Dulcimer & Acoustic Music Festival, Bennington
- 10 Columbus Day, CEC offices closed for the holiday
- 14-16 Kiamichi Independent Bikers Fall Rally & Bike Show, Idabel
- 15-16 Sportsman's Gun Show Fair Building, Antlers
- 15 Caddo Heritage Days, Caddo
- 31 Halloween

NOVEMBER

- 1 CEC Member Appreciation Days, Hugo
- 2 CEC Member Appreciation Days, Antlers
- 3 CEC Member Appreciation Days, Idabel
- 6 Daylight Saving Time Ends
- 11 Veteran's Day, CEC offices closed for the holiday.
- 11-13 Beavers Bend Folk Festival & Craft Show
- 24 Thanksgiving, CEC offices closed for the holiday.



Energy Vampires Can Bleed Your Wallet Dry

Unplug those energy sucking devices and stop paying for what you don't use

This Halloween, be aware that the little vampires who ring your doorbell aren't the only ones you need to be afraid of.

Energy vampires inside your home are sucking electricity right out of the wires—for no good reason.

Energy vampires are appliances and electronic devices that you leave plugged in when nobody is using them. Even though they're turned off, they still use small amounts of energy.

When you consider how many unused devices are plugged in around your home, their energy use can add up. In fact, they can add 10 percent or more to your monthly electric bill.

So when you turn something off, be sure to unplug it, too. Here are three examples of devices that waste energy when they're plugged in but not in use:

Chargers. You've got one for your phone, your tablet, your portable speaker, your iPod—and what else? Once the device is fully charged it continues to draw electricity as long as it's plugged in. And if you unplug the device from the charger but leave the charger plugged in, the charger continues to use—and waste—electricity.

Cable box. If you leave yours plugged in all the time for convenience, you're adding nearly \$20 a year to your electric bill for energy you're not using.

Computers. Your home office equipment, like the computer, printer and scanner, don't need to stay on all the time. Turn them off and unplug them when you're finished using them for the day.

Can't remember to unplug them? Plug several devices into a power strip instead of into a wall outlet. Power strips allow the user to cut power to multiple devices at once. And unplug anything you rarely use, like the TV in the basement or the old stereo you haven't turned on since you started downloading music.



The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) looked at the devices likely to be found in the "typical" American home and measured their idle – or not in active use – energy load to determine what are the biggest "energy vampires" in your home. It found that household fans and fishpond equipment are the biggest culprits, both drawing 110 idle watts each. Other culprits include the hot-water recirculation pump as well as always-on lighting, aquarium equipment, and set-top cable boxes. Surprisingly, televisions rank No. 7, followed by Internet modems, desktop computers, and security systems. For more energy saving advice, contact CEC at 800-780-6486 or visit choctawelectric.coop.



Co-ops Salute Their Special Month

Choctaw Electric Cooperative is celebrating National Cooperative Month in October, along with 40,000 other cooperative businesses serving more than 120 million people nationwide.

“Cooperatives Build” is the theme of this year’s National Cooperative Month. “This theme is excellent, because there are so many ways that co-ops work for their communities,” says Jia Johnson, CEC members services director.

Cooperatives Have Principles

Most co-ops strive to adhere to seven key cooperative principles, which combine to help build trust between the co-op, its members and the community. For example, the first principle is Voluntary and Open Membership, which means that we are a voluntary organization open to all people to use our services and willing to accept the responsibility of membership. The second principle, Democratic Member Control, gives members a voice in the cooperative’s policies and decisions. The fifth principle, Education, Training and Information, helps contribute to the development of our cooperative by making sure employees are qualified to do the

jobs they are called to do in service to members and in providing members with information they need on co-op services.

Cooperatives Build Community

The seventh cooperative principle is Concern for Community. Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through employee involvement in local organizations, through contributions to community efforts and through support for schools. CEC employees donate hundreds of hours to various community organizations. CEC supports schools and youth through programs such as Youth Tour and its energy curriculum for classrooms.

Cooperatives Build Jobs

Cooperatives generate jobs in their communities, keep profits local and pay local taxes to help support community services. Cooperatives often take part in community improvement programs, ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to benefit from the cooperative experience.

Through all of the above ways, cooperatives build a better world. For more information, visit www.coopmonth.coop.



SEND US EMAIL: Please email questions for Ask Your Co-op to: Jennifer Boling, jboling@choctawelectric.coop. Or, mail questions to Choctaw Electric Cooperative, PO Box 758, Hwy 93 North, Hugo, Oklahoma 74743.

ASK YOUR CO-OP

■ CEC says it does a lot for the community but what about local schools?

Choctaw Electric Cooperative supports local schools in a number of ways. CEC members pay gross receipts tax every month on their monthly bill and 95 percent of that money goes to local schools. The remaining five percent is used by the Oklahoma Tax Commission to cover their administrative costs.

CEC also provides energy-based learning programs for schools that include all classroom materials and instruction. Four programs are available. For younger kids, CEC’s “Danger Ranger” teaches the basics of electrical safety. Another program, “Get Powered,” helps kids understand how electricity is generated and delivered to their homes.

For middle school students, CEC offers “Watt’s Up With Green.” This highly interactive course includes experiments and activities that teach students about the many forms of energy, the importance of energy efficiency, and why saving energy is beneficial to the environment.

CEC’s newest course, “Go ECO,” helps students understand alternative energy, the transfer of electric current, electricity generation and delivery. Students also learn about bio-mass energy and nuclear power.

CEC instructors present these programs to local schools at no charge. The co-op also invites classrooms to tour CEC headquarters in Hugo. For details on these programs, visit choctawelectric.coop or call 800-780-6486.



**ELECTRIC CO-OPS
BUILD
COMMUNITY**



october

Best days according to Moon phases.



Best planting days

Above ground crops ...	1-4, 7-9, 12-13, 30-31
Root crops	16-17, 20-21, 27-29
Seed beds	2-4, 20-21, 29-31
Kill plant pests	22-26

Best fishing days

👉 Best	12-13, 20-21
☺ Good	3-4, 10-11, 16-17
☹ Fair	2, 7-9, 14-15, 18-19, 24-26, 29-31
☹ Poor	1, 5-6, 22-23, 27-28

Best days to do other stuff

Begin diet to gain weight	4, 13
Begin diet to lose weight	17, 21, 26
Begin logging	8, 9
Breed animals	3-4, 30-31
Make sauerkraut, can, or pickle	21-22
Cut hair to discourage growth	27-29
Cut hair to encourage growth	2, 12-13
Cut hay	14-15
Destroy pests and weeds	14-15
End projects	30
Go camping	5-7
Graft or pollinate	21-22
Harvest above ground vegetables	8-9
Harvest below ground vegetables	25-26
Go to the dentist	25-26
Plant above ground vegetables	3-4, 12-13
Plant below ground vegetables	21-22
Prune to discourage growth	23-24
Prune to encourage growth	5-7
Quit smoking	17, 21, 26
Set posts or pour concrete	8-9
Set chicken eggs	9-10, 19-20
Start projects	2
Wean animals and children	17, 21, 26

—from the *Old Farmer's Almanac*

Good Eats

IN SOUTHEAST OKLAHOMA

Easy Butterfingers Candy

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound candy corn
- 1 (18 oz) jar crunchy peanut butter
- 1 (6 oz) bag semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 tablespoon vegetable shortening, or more if needed



DIRECTIONS

Line a 9x13-inch pan with parchment paper.

Place candy corn in a microwave-safe bowl (not plastic) and heat in several 30-second intervals, stirring after each interval, until candy corn is warm, melted, and smooth.

Stir peanut butter into melted candy corn until thoroughly combined; transfer candy to the prepared pan, pressing and smoothing the candy into the corners of the pan.

Place chocolate chips and vegetable shortening into the top of a double boiler set over simmering water. Heat the chocolate, stirring constantly, until just warm, melted, and smooth. Spread warm chocolate over the peanut candy. Chill in refrigerator until candy is set, at least 30 minutes, before cutting into squares.

■ swap shop

FREE CLASSIFIED ADS FOR CEC MEMBERS

■ BOATS

20 ft. sculling/rowing boat for sale. Brand new condition w/ seat, oars and 2-wheel hauling car. Perfect for exercise or enjoying the lake. \$3,000 obo. 405-760-0129.

■ PETS

Miniature Donkey business for sale. 580-326-7672 or 580-326-1438.

Ark of McCurtain County offers discount spay/neuter services +mobile spay/neuter services. Please help us stop unwanted litters by spaying

and neutering your pet. We also have dogs and cats ready for adoption. 580-236-2275.

■ MISCELLANEOUS

Looking to buy a used 48' aluminum flatbed 18-wheeler trailer, no longer highway legal, for use as a bridge. Must be delivered. 580-298-5850.

■ RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

2005 Sun Seeker Motorhome by Forest River. 31' long, 51,000 miles, 2 slide outs, new tires and brakes, oak cabinets and Onan Power plant. Very good condition. 580-271-2143.

SWAP SHOP ads are free for CEC members. Submit ads online at www.choctawelectric.coop, email to jboling@choctawelectric.coop, or mail ads to CEC *Inside Your Co-op*, PO Box 758, Hugo, OK 74743. Ads must include a telephone number or email address. Please provide your name, mailing address and CEC account number when submitting an ad.