

NE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



NOEC CREWS ANSWER CALL
FOR MUTUAL AID ASSISTANCE

BALANCING ACT
AFFORDABLE ELECTRICITY

OCTOBER 2020



Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

Northeast Connection is published monthly to communicate with the members of Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative.

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GROVE OFFICE

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BUSINESS HOURS

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Offices are closed Saturday, Sunday and holidays.

DISPATCHING AVAILABLE 24 HOURS AT

1.800.256.6405

If you experience an outage:

- 1. Check your switch or circuit breaker in the house and on the meter pole to be sure the trouble is not on your side of the service.
- 2. When contacting the cooperative to report an outage, use the name as it appears on your bill, and have both your pole number and account number ready.

Please direct all editorial inquiries to Public Relations at 800.256.6405 or email publicrelations@noec.coop

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THE IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSIFICATION

Lindey Leforce
Manager of Member Services

In the spring of 1965, neighbors up the road from our home northwest of Vinita sold eggs to people around us and also in nearby communities. Their names were Estel and Doris Ridgley.

One Saturday morning, my parents agreed to buy some of the Ridgleys' older laying hens for butchering purposes. I tagged along during the two-mile drive to pick up the chickens. Doris was cleaning eggs when we arrived, and she was being very particular in which carton she placed the eggs. I asked her why she wasn't putting all of the eggs in the same carton. Estel spoke up and said "Well, son, there's a saying about that" and he proceeded to tell me that it "isn't good to put all your eggs in one basket." He informed me that the eggs needed to be sorted because some were large, some were small, some had blemishes and some didn't. All of those factors were used to determine the collective value of eggs. Doris then said "there's a big word for what my husband just told you--diversification." At seven years of age, the word diversification wasn't part of my vocabulary. It hadn't yet shown up in the classroom, and in my mind I was hoping it didn't show up on a spelling test because I sure couldn't say it, let alone spell it.

In the years that followed, the word diversification kept surfacing in different discussions. Those discussions usually involved adults because it was still too big of a word for us kids to say and remember. But, I did remember the saying "don't put all your eggs in one basket" and how big people used this saying when they talked about crops, gardens, and livestock. My parents tried to teach us more about that as we grew older. The word diverse meant having more than one way to achieve your goals.

Fifty-five years later, the word diversification is used often in the world we live. It is used by people of all races, young and old alike. One of the principles that we should be teaching our children and grandchildren is to be diverse in your way of thinking and doing things. Respect your fellow man and show kindness to all you encounter—even those who think differently than you.

In the utility world, electric cooperatives have learned to apply methods of diversification to our ways of thinking. In the mid-1980s, Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative started looking at ways to bring more than just electricity to homes and businesses it serves.

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Events are published as space allows and must be submitted at least 60 days in advance. Send information, including phone number for publication, to Northeast Connection Events Calendar, PO Box 948, Vinita 74301 or email to publicrelations@noec.coop

\$100 IS HIDING!
Search the pages of NE Connection for a 6-digit account number with an asterisk on each side. For example: *XXXXXX*. Compare it to your account number, which appears on your monthly electric bill. If they match, contact the cooperative at 918.256.9332, by November 2, 2020, to claim a \$100 credit on your electric account.

OCTOBER 2020 EVENTS
American Legion Bingo for Everyone
Oct 3 | Grove
American Legion
918.786.9860
2020 Jay Spring Duathlon & 5k
Oct 4 | Jay
JB Earp Memorial Football Stadium
918.253.1368
37th Annual Pelican Festival
Oct 8 | Grove
Wolf Creek Park Grand Lake
918.786.2289
Endless Memories Annual Car Show 2020
Oct 10 | Grove
Eagles Landing Resort
918.786.6196
Rocktoberfest 2020
Oct 15 | Disney
Copperwood Lodge
918.435.5577
Walking with Angels
Oct 17 | Grove
Har-Ber Village
918.786.6446
5th Annual Zena Fall Fest Car Show
Oct 17 | Zena
East 345 Road
zenacommunitycenter@gmail.com
Queensferry Renaissance Festival
Oct 17-18 | Vinita
438415 E Highway 60
903.466.4881
1st Annual Fall Theme Holiday Decorating Contest
Oct 26 | Afton
Town of Afton
918.257.4304
1st Annual Trick or Meat Halloween Chili Cook-off
Oct 31 | Locust Grove
LG Plaza
615.585.1793
October events are subject to date change or cancellation. Please contact the host for most current event information.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSIFICATION

Continued from inside front cover.

Today, our BOLT Fiber Optics business serves over 12,000 people. Our Northeast Rural Services right-of-way team provides contract clearing and foliar application services so other cooperatives can have reliable electric service. We provide crucial technology services so that schools can educate our children and grandchildren. One day, we know they will grow up and share the importance of diversification.

Today, the board of trustees and management team here at NOEC works diligently to ensure electricity remains affordable for our membership. Diversification plays an important role in the decision-making. We know our members understand the importance of this principle. If we place all of our eggs in the same basket, the cost becomes greater and is even, perhaps, no longer affordable for some.

I often think back to 1965 and how an important life lesson for me started with a neighbor and an egg. Fifty-five years later, my now seven-year-old grandson started raising his first batch of chickens this past spring. In August he got his first egg during a morning feed and had a second that same evening. Fourteen little spring chicks became 13 hens and a rooster by late summer. Thus began his journey of learning the importance of diversification. Like me, it will be easier for him to remember not to put all of his eggs in one basket.



Stockton (above) with his first egg and (at right) watching over his baby chicks.



Not a day went by that Craig Hendrickson didn't have a word of encouragement, compliment, or humorous quip for one of his coworkers. A true people person in every sense of the word, the outgoing Hendrickson was a perfect fit for a growing public relations department when he was hired back in May of 1998.

Craig recently retired after 22 years of service here at Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative. His last day was July 2.

Craig's hiring more than two decades ago was prompted by the potential deregulation of the utility industry. With the possibility of consumer choice looming on the horizon, cooperative management at that time felt we needed to step up our presence in the various communities within our service territory. Craig was a logical choice. Not only was he already familiar with the area as a native of Adair, he also brought with him an exceptional track record as vice-president of DesignCAD, Inc., a successful, Pryor-based software company.

"Coming from corporate America, it was quite a bit different. The goals were different," he said. "There was more caring at REC than in the corporate world. The corporate world can be fairly harsh and demanding. With that in mind, it's going to change a lot of things. It's going to change the way you handle people and situations. Coming from corporate to the co-op was a welcome change."

Marketing Specialist was the only position Craig ever held during his tenure. But don't let that fool you. His cooperative career did not lack for diversity.

HENDRICKSON BIDS FAREWELL AFTER 22 YEARS OF SERVICE



"Saying that I only had that one job title almost makes it sound like it hasn't been adventure," Craig chuckled.

One of Craig's most visible assignments came as the point person for the cooperative's energy efficiency program. Between performing energy audits for homes and businesses and his energy efficiency presentations, Craig was right at home in dealing with the public.

"I really like to help people, and the energy efficiency program fit well with that," he said, adding: "That was also one of the biggest changes I experienced at the cooperative—just because that aspect of my job ventured outside what a person would normally do in a public relations and marketing position."

One of Craig's signature undertakings was "Doughnut Day." Quite simply, he would deliver doughnuts once a week to NOEC's Pryor warehouse. Doughnut Day quickly became a Thursday morning tradition.

"There's something to be said about tradition," Craig said. "There is strength in tradition."

Craig is an Adair alumnus—a former standout football player and track & field athlete, who attended Northeast Oklahoma A&M on a track & field scholarship.

Of course, he loved to talk sports, particularly football and track, but was well versed in a variety of athletic endeavors.

Craig would often relate that he didn't come from an athletic family and that he had to work a little harder than most. What an accomplishment that his hard work resulted in a collegiate track & field scholarship.

Craig has two grown children. Katie is 33. Josh is 26.

These days you'll find Craig putting the finishing touches on his new home. His "cabin," as he calls it, is situated on Rock Creek near the Grand River.

Once he's finished with the house, Craig says he plans to do some reading, sculpting, and traveling. As for the reading, he says there are a couple of books he'd like to tackle. And, daily Bible reading is important to him since his Christian faith is priority.

Already a talented sculptor and wood carver, Craig is taking a "go big or go home" approach to his future sculpting projects.

"There are two things I'd like to do," he said. "One is a replica of the Ark of the Covenant, and the other is full-size Benjamin Franklin."

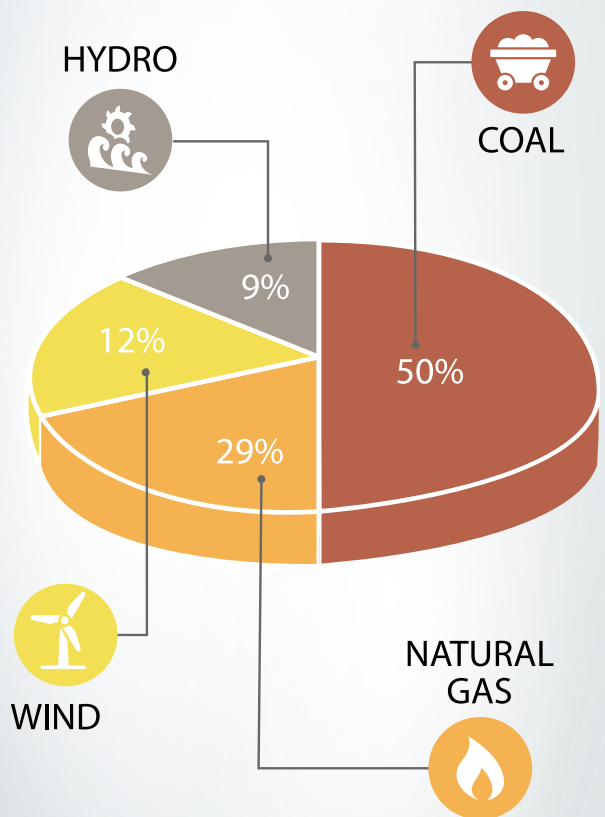
He'd also like to explore more of the world. Although he's already been to Europe twice and traveled extensively within the U.S., Craig says he'd like "to make one more trip to Europe, maybe two. I'm also still contemplating hiking the Appalachian Trail. I am still toying with that idea."

We certainly wish Craig all the best on his retirement. We know he'll make the most of it. After all, if you ask him how he's doing he would tell you himself: "I'm super, but I'm getting better!"

BALANCING ACT

AFFORDABLE ELECTRICITY A TOP PRIORITY FOR ASSOCIATED ELECTRIC AND ITS MEMBERS

2019 AECI Resources to Serve Member Load



WE ARE
Member-Owned,
Member-Focused.

Associated Electric - Member-owned, member-focused

Producing affordable power is a top priority for Springfield, Missouri-based Associated Electric Cooperative. Associated’s mission – to provide a reliable, economical power supply – has remained constant throughout its 59-year history of providing service to local distribution cooperative member-consumers.

Associated is owned by and provides wholesale power to six regional and 51 local electric distribution cooperative systems in Missouri, southeast Iowa and northeast Oklahoma that serve 2.1 million member-consumers. Included is your electric cooperative, Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative.

Members want – and need – affordable electricity

Each day, member-consumers across three states receive power supplied by Associated. Who are these members? Surveys conducted by Associated and member distribution cooperatives show most members are over the age of 45 and have been a cooperative member for more than 10 years. Most members – more than 50% – are categorized as middle income. As a result, members need, and expect, affordable power to ensure their homes, farms and businesses thrive.

Diverse generation helps deliver affordable power

How does Associated generate power to serve member-consumers across three states affordably? In a word: balance. Associated’s commitment to reliable, responsible and affordable power requires options for generating electricity. Associated continues its time-tested strategy of maintaining a diverse and flexible portfolio of generation resources that includes coal, natural gas, wind and hydropower.

Options for generating power lead to lower costs

Associated’s goal is to match the needs of local distribution cooperative member-consumers to the most affordable generation resource.

“For a number of years now, our organizational mission has stated: ‘Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, Inc., is a member-owned business that delivers competitively-priced electric power and works to improve our members’ quality of life,’” explained Daniel Webster, General Manager for Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative.

Associated invests in coal power plants that run around-the-clock to make them more efficient. Along with natural gas plants, they are an important part of a balanced, diverse generation mix that enables the cooperative to run the units that are less expensive at the time electricity is needed. While coal is traditionally a less costly fuel to make electricity than many other sources, low natural gas prices in 2019 and 2020 have, at times, made Associated’s natural gas generating units less expensive to run than coal units. During those times, more of members’ energy is coming from natural gas. The ability to choose among different ways to generate power – like coal or natural gas – is a tremendous advantage that benefits member-consumers with lower costs.

Making the most of electric generation resources

Many hours, Associated has generation available above its member-consumer needs. When utilities outside of the Associated system need power, they can buy the cooperative’s excess generation. The revenue from these power sales helps keep member costs lower than they otherwise would be.

“The balance and flexibility of our diverse generation fleet allows us, at times, to have significant volumes of excess generation we can sell to nonmembers, which reduces our overall costs,” said Associated’s Michael Denning, manager, energy marketing. “That’s good for Associated and its members.”

The bottom line: Balance benefits members

A balance of generating options used to produce electricity allows Associated to do what is necessary to control costs on behalf of member-consumers. Whether it is using the lowest-cost electricity produced by Associated’s power plants or selling extra power off-system to bring in revenue that relieves rate pressure for members, providing affordable power is a top priority.

Next month: Learn more about how wind power, hydropower and emissions reductions have formed the foundation of Associated’s responsibly-generated electricity for local cooperative member-consumers.



New Madrid Power Plant



Chouteau Power Plant

“Of course, NOEC’s board of trustees and management team take very seriously our mission to improve the quality of our members’ lives. One way of accomplishing this is to make sure we keep our cost of energy as affordable as possible. It will always be our aim to help our members spend less on their monthly power bills.”

Added Webster: “And if we are pursuing this goal, it only makes sense that our power provider has the same objective in mind. We appreciate Associated’s emphasis not only on affordability but also dependability and diversity with their generation resources. Ultimately, our members benefit from this stewardship.”

Photos courtesy of Associated Electric Cooperative

NOEC CREWS ANSWER CALL FOR MUTUAL AID ASSISTANCE



Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative answered the call for mutual aid assistance in aftermath of Hurricane Laura. NOEC crews were dispatched August 28 to Panola-Harrison Electric Cooperative in Marshall, Texas.

"Fortunately, Panola-Harrison didn't receive near the damage it anticipated so our crews were released and subsequently reported to Beauregard Electric in DeRidder, Louisiana," explained NOEC's Manager of Operations, Nick Sutton.

Added Sutton: "It is the cooperative way to provide assistance when the call goes out. We are proud to help those without power in the wake of this devastating storm. It will take many weeks—and possibly months—to restore power in the affected areas."

NOEC sent six linemen and two right-of way employees, two bucket trucks, a digger truck, and skid steer equipment.

"Our men will work sixteen-hour days for two weeks before being relieved by other workers who volunteer to replace them," explained Sutton.



Beauregard's system was badly damaged. It was reported that there were no substations with power due to widespread transmission damage.

"The hope is to have power restored to substations by mid-September and member meters in October," said Sutton. "There were 400 linemen who answered the initial call and they hope to double that number."

Sutton said workers are staying in a tent city that normally houses 500 workers. To help safeguard workers and accommodate social distancing guidelines for the COVID-19 pandemic, the tent occupancy was reduced to 200.

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FLASHBACK TO '72



We came across this gem in the cooperative photo archives this summer. Thanks to a social media post that was visited by several of the players in question, we were able to identify this team as the 1972 Adair varsity basketball girls. We also had help naming the twelve players pictured. They are, front row from left, Stacy Curtsinger, Jackie Garrison, Janice Carter, Jane Fraley, Sharon Brown, and Rachel Troyer. In back are: Patsy Sparks, Robin Bruce, Debbie Garrison, Barbara Brixey, Joni Painter, and Becky McAnally. It was believed but not confirmed that this team was coached by Kenneth Brixey.

- "We are the high school girls basketball team for 1972," corroborated Janey (Fraley) Price.
- "OMG. I just had a flashback. It's me and my girls," remarked Debra (Garrison) Stewart.
- John Coons II said: "You have no idea the smile this brought to my face. My aunt is Becky McAnally. She has passed. Thank you for posting."

Rachel (Troyer) Chronister remarked: "Oh my! I remember every single girl! What great memories! I so miss Becky McAnally! Thanks for sharing!"

ALTERNATIVE HALLOWEEN IDEAS



Contemplating staying in on Halloween this year? Here are some ideas from parents on alternative activities:

- Leave a bowl of candy (and hand sanitizer) at the end of your driveway, and wave at trick-or-treaters from your front door.
- Hang a piñata for your children in your own yard.
- Set up a haunted house for your children at home. They can still dress up and be scared in a fun way.
- Create a candy scavenger hunt inside your home (or outside if you have room).
- Scary movies, ghost stories and more can make the night fun, too. Get out the popcorn, Halloween candy and blankets and find something to watch.



FEATURE RECIPES

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL COOKIE MONTH



LINDA BETTES | DELAWARE CO.

PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 Cups Flour
- 1 tsp Soda
- 2 tsp Baking Powder
- 1/2 tsp Salt
- 1 Cup Shortening or Butter
- 1 Cup Peanut Butter
- 1 Cup Sugar
- 1 Cup Brown Sugar
- 2 Eggs

Combine dry ingredients in a large bowl. Cream shortening and peanut butter together in a separate bowl, then gradually add sugar and eggs to mixture. Combine the two mixtures by slowly adding the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients. Form dough into balls 1 inch wide and place on cookie sheet. Flatten with a fork that has been dipped in flour or sugar in a cross hatch pattern. Bake at 375° F for 8 to 10 minutes until done.



BOBBY & SHARLYN FARBRO | CRAIG CO.

FUN FETTI COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Box Confetti Cake Mix
- 1 Egg
- 1/3 Cup Vegetable Oil

Combine all ingredients together in a bowl. Form dough into balls by hand or use an ice cream scooper. Place on a baking sheet and bake at 375° F for 10 to 12 minutes until done.

A Note from the Farbros

The kids like to make these.

TAMMY BRISCOE | OTTAWA CO.

RITZ COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

- Peanut Butter
- Marshmallow Creme
- Ritz Crackers
- Chocolate for Melting (Optional)

To create your sandwich cookies spread peanut butter on one cracker, then spread marshmallow creme on another cracker. Put crackers together to create a sandwich. If desired, melt chocolate and dip sandwich cookie in chocolate, allow to cool and harden then enjoy!



GHNON CARR | OTTAWA CO.

BANANA OATMEAL COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Cup Shortening
- 1 Cup Sugar
- 2 Bananas
- 1 tsp Vanilla
- 1 Egg
- 1 1/2 Cups Flour
- 1/2 tsp Salt
- 1/2 Cups Nuts, Chopped
- 1 3/4 Cups Oats
- 1/2 tsp Soda

Cream shortening and sugar in bowl. Slice in bananas. Sift flour, soda, salt and cinnamon together in a bowl. Then add to creamed mixture. Beat in egg, add vanilla, oats, and nuts to combine. Drop dough by spoonfuls on a cookie sheet. Bake at 375° F for 10 minutes. Makes 5 dozen cookies. Keep cookies moist in tupperware.



ERLENE LUPER | CHEROKEE CO.

COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Butter Pecan Cake Mix
- 2 Eggs
- 1/3 Cup of Oil
- 1/2 Bag Health Toffee Chips with Chocolate

Mix all ingredients together (it will be tough to mix, DO NOT add more oil). Hand roll dough into small balls and place on a baking sheet. Bake at 350° F for about 8 to 8 1/2 minutes.



SAVE ENERGY

WINTER PREPARATION

Air leakage occurs when outside air enters your home and conditioned air leaves uncontrollably through cracks and openings. During cold or windy weather, too much air may enter the house. When it's warmer and less windy, not enough air may enter, which can result in poor indoor air quality. Air leakage also contributes to moisture problems that can affect occupant health and structure durability. An added benefit is that sealing cracks and openings reduces drafts and cold spots, improving comfort.

The recommended strategy is to reduce air leakage as much as possible and to provide controlled ventilation as needed. Before air sealing, you should first detect air leaks and then assess your ventilation needs for indoor air quality.

TIPS FOR SEALING AIR LEAKS

- Caulk and weatherstrip doors and windows that leak air.
- Caulk and seal air leaks where plumbing, ducting, or electrical wiring comes through walls, floors, ceilings, and soffits over cabinets.
- Install foam gaskets behind outlet and switch plates on walls.
- Replace door bottoms and thresholds with those that have pliable sealing gaskets.
- Use foam sealant on larger gaps around windows, baseboards, and other places where air may leak out.
- Keep the fireplace flue damper tightly closed when not in use.



FARM & CROP EQUIPMENT SAFETY

- If the equipment you're handling comes into contact with a power line - or even gets too close to it - it can become energized. *Safe Electricity* recommends keeping all equipment at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines, in all directions.
- If the machinery you are driving comes into contact with a power line, the safest place to be is in the cab. Remain in the cab, call 911, and report to the dispatcher that a power line is down. Then wait until utility crews arrive to make sure the line is de-energized.
- Farmers should also be mindful of hidden hazards underground. Call 811 to have underground utility facilities located and marked before digging.