

# NE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

**MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**  
EUBANKS EQUIPMENT

**SAYING FAREWELL**  
TO NOEC'S TIM MIXSON

**MARCH 2021**



Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

# NE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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

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## VINITA HEADQUARTERS

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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](mailto:publicrelations@noec.coop)*

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## THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

**Tim Mixson**

**Former Manager  
of Safety & Loss Control**

It is with a feeling of tremendous gratitude that I write this—my last column—for the *Northeast Connection*. I am gracious for

the opportunity I have been given to be part of an amazing team or, maybe more appropriately, part of an amazing family at NOEC.

I began my cooperative journey in 1993. I arrived at NOEC after my employment as a journeyman lineman with the Chelsea Municipal Authority ended. There were no job openings for a lineman here at that time, but I was fortunate that there was an opening in the dispatching department. So I spent the next two years dispatching crews to outages—all the while longing to be working out there in the field myself.

My chance finally came in 1995, and I moved from the dispatching office to the field when I accepted a position as a journeyman lineman. Coming from a municipality that had only 200 miles of line to a rural electric cooperative with over 5,000 miles of line was daunting, to say the least. Over the years, however, the area served by NOEC became very familiar and I now consider all of it home.

Early in my career as a lineman, I often found myself working outages late at night, wondering exactly where I was. Those were the days of paper maps. There were no cell phones, iPads, or GPS devices. I remember one night realizing I was no longer in Oklahoma but in the neighboring state of Arkansas. Of course, I will never admit I was lost. I am a man, after all. Suffice to say a lot has changed since I climbed my first electric pole over 40 years ago.

It was in 2004 that I traded in my life as a lineman for a supervisory role. Then, in 2013, I accepted a management position. Regardless of the hat I was wearing, what I always enjoyed most about my employment here at the cooperative were the people I worked with.

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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](mailto: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 918.256.6405, by April 2, 2021, to claim a \$100 credit on your electric account.

## **MARCH 2021 EVENTS**

### **Free Meals for Kids & Teens**

**Mar 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 | Jay**

Delaware County Library  
918.253.8521

### **12th Annual Abu Garcia College Fishing National Championship**

**Mar 3-5 | Grove**

Wolf Creek Park  
918.786.6107

### **The Grand Lake Boat & Sport Show**

**Mar 4-7 | Grove**

Grove Civic Center  
815.562.8101

### **American Legion Bingo for Everyone**

**Mar 6, 13, 20, 27 | Grove**

American Legion  
918.786.9860

### **Grief Support Group**

**Mar 9, 23 | Grove**

Nichols-Stephens Funeral & Cremation Services  
918.786.6761

### **Operation Spoonbill**

**Mar 12-14 | Fairland**

Twin Bridges State Park  
918.542.6969

### **2 Hip Chicks Roadshow**

**Mar 13 | Grove**

Grove Civic Center  
815.562.8101

### **John Sumner's 2021 Big Meat Run**

**Mar 19-21 | Disney**

Langley Dam  
918.435.8242

### **MAO Season Opener - Spring Break + CROSXS Round 1**

**Mar 19-21 | Jay**

MidAmerica Outdoors  
918.837.0079

### **LZ X-RAY: Scenario Paintball Event**

**Mar 26-28 | Wyandotte**

D-Day Adventure Park  
918.666.3411

### **Horsin' Around at Frontier Cove**

**Mar 26-28 | Adair**

New Life Ranch Frontier Cove  
918.422.5506

*March events are subject to date change or cancellation.  
Please contact the host for most current event information.*

## CONTINUED FROM INSIDE COVER NOEC BIDS FAREWELL TO TIM MIXSON



Some of the issues you face during a 40-year career in an electrical distribution world can be quite a challenge. Northeast Oklahoma certainly has both the weather and terrain to test even the most skilled workforce when it comes to keeping the lights on, but I have been blessed to have worked with some of the best.

Memories are plentiful and always bring a smile to my face. Those memories include interactions with our membership. I have lost count of the many times I was offered a hot cup of coffee or a warm meal by a caring co-op member while working in less-than-ideal conditions to restore an outage. I recall one member who lost power ordering my co-worker and me to stay in the truck until the lightning stopped. I remember her saying it with enough authority that it made the lightning appear docile. She was simply concerned for our safety. That is just one of the many examples of the amazing membership we have here at NOEC.

We truly are a product of our relationships. One of my favorite sayings is *"it takes a village to raise a child."* I think that principle continues to apply throughout our lives. I would like to thank everyone who believed in me enough to give me a chance and contributed to making this day in my life possible.



I do not have room in this article to list all of the names, but I want to say thank you from the bottom of my heart. The years flew by and, as I look forward to my retirement, pleasant thoughts of Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative will never be far away.

*Tim Mixson retired February 1, 2021, marking 27 years of service to Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative and its membership.*

## FARM EQUIPMENT SAFETY TIPS

**Spring is officially here, and the urge to get seed in the ground has kicked in. Area farmers are encouraged to start the season off right by putting safety first.**

### **Explain where the "Back 80" is**

You may know how to get to the "Back 80" with your eyes closed, but make sure everyone else does, too.

### **Lock it down**

All machinery, equipment, or moving parts, including hydraulics, should be locked securely in place before traveling or transporting on roadways.

### **Don't rely on hydraulics**

Secure bars or parts that rely on hydraulics with another support system during maintenance. It's best to have two safety measures in place.

### **Make time for a tuneup**

Be sure to perform proper maintenance on all equipment.

### **Protect yourself and others**

Ensure all team members wear appropriate protective equipment, including gloves, safety glasses and hearing protection, depending on the task.

### **Practice good roadway etiquette**

Allow cars to pass you, but never wave them on. Let them decide when it is safe to pass.

### **Stay alert and get some sleep**

Make sure to get six to seven hours of sleep to avoid exhaustion.

### **Pack a safety kit**

From bandages to small towels for lacerations or cuts, keep a well-stocked safety kit in the truck, tractor cab and shop.

## TIPS & TRICKS

### ENERGY EFFICIENCY

#### **Ensure Your AC System is Ready for Summer**

##### **Step 1: Turning the System On**

Make sure your system is set to "cool" and locate a nearby air vent to check if cool air is blowing out.

##### **Step 2: Check the Airflow**

If airflow seems to be limited or restricted, check the system's air filter. A dirty or clogged filter could lead to limited airflow.

##### **Step 3: Clean the Outdoor Unit**

This is one of the most important components of your central air conditioning system and if it's dirty, or the area around it is dirty, it could lead to a whole bunch of problems. Remove leaves, sticks and other debris from the unit while it is not running, and clear brush and dirt from around the system.





# EUBANKS EQUIPMENT

## CONTINUES TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

**Those who find themselves traveling the thirty miles of highway between Vinita, Oklahoma, and Chetopa, Kansas, aren't simply navigating an insignificant stretch of asphalt in rural northeast Oklahoma. One could see why someone just passing through this area might come to such a conclusion. By most standards, there just isn't that much to see out here. A quick glance out the vehicle window reveals an expanse of pasture dotted with cattle and not much more.**

Nothing to see here, right? Think again.

The shoulderless, two-lane ribbon of blacktop known as State Highway 2 is located smack dab in the middle of a teeming agricultural center. Working farms and big-time stock producers are in no short supply. That you find a successful farm equipment dealer along this same corridor is no accident.

Located eight miles north of Welch, Oklahoma, and just a mile from the Kansas state line, Eubanks Equipment has been serving the farm equipment needs of the region since 2008. That's when the Eubanks family was handed the reins by Joe and Linda Jorgenson, who were ready to enjoy retirement after many years of hard work. The business was actually established in 1976 by Joe's father, Sam Jorgenson. Jorgenson Equipment became an institution with a reputation for excellence in its more than 30 years of doing business in this area.

The Jorgensons couldn't have found a better situation to carry the business forward. Bob Eubanks and his family have called this area home since relocating here from west Texas back in 1955. Bob was four years old when his father moved the family to Afton, Oklahoma.

"Our family farming roots go back as far as we can trace," Bob said with a smile.

Now, Bob and wife Kay have three grown sons and five grandchildren. Sons Craig, Brock, and Stetson all grew up around the family's custom baling business. All three would graduate with degrees from Oklahoma State University. While Brock has his own construction company, Craig and Stetson both continue to play vital roles in the family business. Craig manages the day-to-day operations at Eubanks Equipment.

**"Having a strong interest in agriculture and ag business, this venture was perfect for us," Craig said. "We have been in the hay business for as long as I can remember and this business was a natural fit."**

Craig graduated from OSU in 1998 with a bachelor's degree in Agriculture Economics. He sold insurance for eight years following graduation but always maintained involvement in ag activities. He and his father still have cattle pastured from Welch to Afton.



Anderson, MO



Grove, OK



Welch, OK

## TESTIMONIAL

*"I've always had good experiences with Eubanks Equipment. I've bought equipment from them since they've been in business. I was a customer back when the Jorgensons had the business and I've been with Eubanks since they took over. I buy all my hay equipment from them. They go above and beyond for me. When I need something, they help me out."*

**Ron Kelley, Vinita, Oklahoma**

"I always knew I wanted to be involved in agriculture in some capacity," Craig said. "Since graduating, I have always been involved with ag and dealing with the public. I spent eight years as an insurance agent before we bought this business, but the whole time I had a cow/calf operation, which maintained my involvement."

Eubanks Equipment prides itself on being the world's largest dealer of Vermeer forage equipment. Along with a full line of Vermeer forage products, DewEze hay beds and other agricultural short lines are available. You'll also find Bad Boy, Grasshopper and Hustler lawn equipment. Eubanks services everything it sells.

Said Craig: "Our primary focus is hay equipment and everything that is involved with the cutting, baling, and feeding. We also sell lawn & garden equipment, and we carry power sports equipment like side-by-sides."

Since taking the business over 13 years ago, Eubanks has expanded to include two others locations. In 2014, a new facility was constructed in Anderson, Missouri, to better serve customers in that part of the country. A third location was added in Grove two years later.

**"We started with the one store in Welch and had six employees," Craig said. "Today we have three stores and employ around twenty."**

The Anderson store is essentially a scaled-down version of the Welch location and carries everything you'll find at Welch. Bob's youngest son, Stetson, manages the Anderson location.



The Grove location, meanwhile, doing business as Eubanks Outdoor Power, is Grand Lake's premier lawn care equipment store, specializing in Bad Boy and Grasshopper zero-turn mowers, lawn tractors and handheld equipment. The Grove store also carries Kawasaki Power Sports products.

Even though Eubanks Equipment is open Monday through Saturday year around, Craig said there is a seasonal shift in the business that follows hay production.

"With the typical challenges common to agriculture like fluctuating weather and unpredictable market prices, managing the seasonal nature of our business can be a challenge," Craig explained. "In the summer we focus on hay equipment and lawn mowers. In the winter months our attention turns to sales and installation of our DewEze product line. We have a full line of DewEze hay beds and have been a dealer since we opened."

Craig said the community has been very supportive of the business, even amid concerns surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. That loyalty works both ways.

"We have a very loyal customer base, and we always do our best to make sure we take good care of them," he said. "Yes, we offer quality products, but so does a lot of our competition. We try to stand out from the crowd with our customer service."

## TESTIMONIAL

*"I have been doing business with Eubanks Equipment ever since they took over from Jorgenson. To be honest, I was kind of reluctant whenever Eubanks took over because Jorgenson had such a good reputation for taking care of their customers. Well, with Eubanks it didn't change one bit. They are the very best at what they do. I have never called them where they haven't taken care of my problem. I'm 66 years old and I've farmed all my life and I have never ever seen anybody that would even come up close to doing what they do."*

**Gene Battiest, Colcord, Oklahoma**

### **Welch, OK Location:**

443858 E 20 Rd, Welch, OK 74369

### **Grove, OK Location:**

25390 US Hwy 59, Grove, OK 74344

### **Anderson, MO, Location:**

36 Oscar Talley Rd, Anderson, MO 64831

Bob explained that a commitment to the lost art of customer service is simply a continuation from what Jorgenson established many years prior.

"We were loyal customers of the Jorgensons back when the boys got big enough to help with the custom hay baling," Bob explained. "We really appreciated the way they took care of us. The customer service they provided was always outstanding. When the opportunity came along to purchase the business, we knew we wanted to continue that strong tradition of customer service that the Jorgensons instilled. It's really important to us. We know what it's like to be on the other end because we were customers of this business before we were owners."

Bob said meeting customer needs would not be possible without a team of excellent employees, some of whom have been with Eubanks from day one.

Eubanks Equipment is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday year around. Saturday hours during high season are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The store closes at noon on Saturdays during winter months. For more information, call 918.233.7042. You can also find them on Facebook, or by visiting online at [eubanksequipment.com](http://eubanksequipment.com).



## TESTIMONIAL

*"My brother and I each bought round bale unrollers from Eubanks Equipment four years ago. They are good pieces of machinery and we are real happy with them."*

**Keith Collins, Vinita, Oklahoma**

**"It's important to acknowledge how much our employees mean to the success we've had here at Eubanks Equipment," Bob said. "Without them, we wouldn't be who we are."**



# SMARTHUB MAKES IT EASY

## TO BETTER MANAGE YOUR ELECTRIC

### GIVE IT A TRY

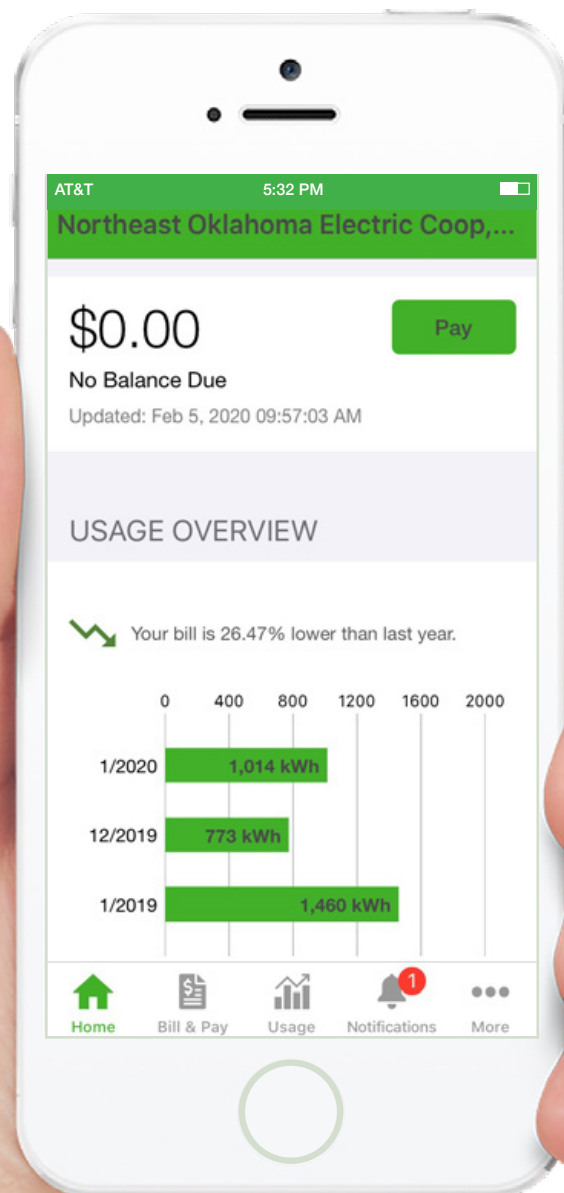
**SmarHub provides NOEC members account management at their fingertips. Members can view usage and billing, manage payments, notify member services of account and service issues, and receive special messaging.**

This member portal makes it even easier to stay connected to NOEC via today's Internet technologies. Access your information all from your web browser, iPhone, iPad, or Android device. Search for SmarHub in your app store or visit [www.noec.coop](http://www.noec.coop) and select "Pay My Bill" to sign up for SmarHub or log in.

#### Feature Highlights Include:

- **Bill & Pay**
- **Usage**
- **Notifications**
- **Outage Map**

**\*971373\***



# MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

## ENGINEERING YOUR ELECTRIC SERVICE .....

**Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative provides service to over 40,000 meters in northeast Oklahoma. Have you ever stopped to think about how many utility poles it takes to supply that many meters? Would you guess that it's 128,276? Would you believe those poles carry 5,000 miles of overhead distribution line and feed another 250 miles of underground line? That's a lot of equipment.**

So how exactly does NOEC design, build, and maintain such an expansive network to serve its membership? Obviously, it's a big endeavor that we're proud to take on. From the time you first sign up for service until you flip the light switch for the first time, there are several steps in the process of providing electric service. We are going to focus here on engineering aspects such as design and Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

The engineering group at NOEC is responsible for making sure the distribution system is designed in accordance with important codes and regulations. These standards are in place to ensure everything is safe and reliable. They come from places like the Rural Utilities Service, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, and National Electric Safety Code. There are even local and county guidelines we must follow. Additionally, the NOEC Board of Trustees has policies in place to make sure your cooperative investment is structured in your best interest.

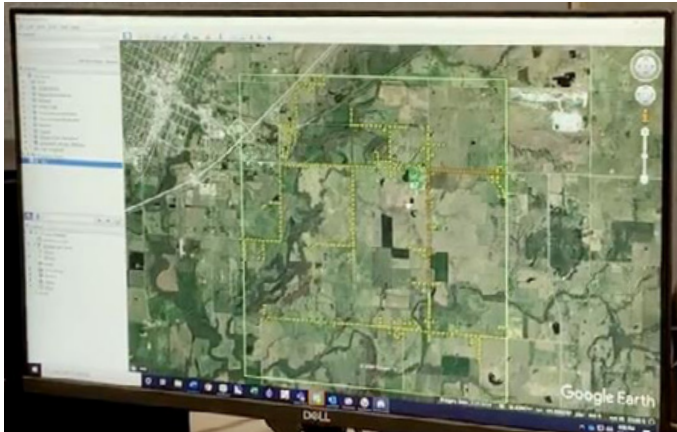
Engineering fieldmen are often the first NOEC employees you meet. These individuals are tasked with designing your electric service to ensure your needs are met. They utilize some pretty sophisticated tools in the field. In years past, range rods and other cumbersome survey equipment was used to make sure lines were built straight, angles measured properly, and ratings were not exceeded.



**We are now able to perform the same tasks with sub-centimeter accuracy by using Global Positioning System (GPS) equipment to mark pole locations and even hardware placement. That's right, the equipment now in use is accurate to less than a centimeter.**

Once a meter location is determined and a route selected, an engineering fieldman creates a staking sheet with a mobile software package. The staking sheet acts as a blueprint for the job and includes information necessary for accounting, warehousing, construction, and GIS. GPS points are collected for pole locations, and locations are marked for construction.

Some service requests are sizeable and can have a substantial impact on the distribution system if proper planning is overlooked. Large industrial facilities, agriculture operations, and other services can dramatically impact the capacity of the system and create low voltage situations. To mitigate these problems, we model every load request exceeding 50 kVA prior to construction.



This allows us to identify where issues may occur, develop a plan to prevent those issues, and take corrective action before a problem exists. This requires an accurate model of the distribution system.

**GIS is the method we use to gather, manage, and analyze data in a spatially correct form. Information gathered by engineering fieldmen, contractors, and others allows us to accurately map and identify every pole, transformer, meter, and device across our entire distribution system. Pretty cool, huh?**

There are a number of reasons why this is important and they all relate to taking care of our membership. For instance, state law requires anyone digging to call in a locate and notify underground utility owners so they can mark their equipment before the digging occurs. Having precise GIS records helps us accurately mark buried lines to prevent outages. It also allows us to notify other utility owners if we have a broken pole to replace because we have an exact location of the pole to provide.

Remember that system model we just discussed? Accurate GIS records serve as the basis for that system model. Attributes such as wire size, pole height, and transformer rating are stored in the system. The GIS model is also the base for our outage management software and is used by our dispatchers to manage and report outages. Seeing which meters are off in real time allows us to respond more quickly and with appropriate manpower, especially in the case of larger outages.

So how does NOEC keep track of 128,276 poles and 40,000 meters? We do it with help from the latest technology. We also do it with a tremendous group of employees who are dedicated to taking care of our membership.

*Contributed by: Shane Burgess,  
Director of Engineering*







# FEATURE RECIPE

CELEBRATE ST. PATRICK'S DAY



**Prep Time:** 20 Minutes

**Total Time:** 2 Hrs 15 Mins

**Servings:** 16

## NO-BAKE LUCKY CHARMS™ TREATS

### DESSERT

#### INGREDIENTS

- 5 Tbsp butter
- 1 bag (10oz) large marshmallows
- 6 cup Lucky Charms™ cereal
- 8oz almond-flavored candy coating (almond bark)
- 2 to 3 drops green food coloring



**Step 1:** Spray 13x9-inch pan with cooking spray.

**Step 2:** In 3-quart or larger saucepan, melt 5 tablespoons butter over medium-low heat. Add marshmallows. Cook, stirring constantly, until marshmallows are almost melted. Remove from heat; immediately stir in 6 cups Lucky Charms™ cereal.

**Step 3:** Pour mixture into pan. With rubber spatula, press mixture down to fit evenly in pan. Cool about 30 minutes.

**Step 4:** Microwave 8 oz almond-flavored candy coating (almond bark) as directed on bag. Stir in 2 to 3 drops green food color.

**Step 5:** Cut cooled cereal mixture into 4 rows by 4 rows to make 16 bars. Dip bottom of each bar into melted candy coating, spread evenly. Place coating side up on sheet of waxed paper; let stand until coating is set before serving.

#### CALL FOR RECIPES

Email your best recipe to [publicrelations@noec.coop](mailto:publicrelations@noec.coop) for a chance to be featured in an upcoming edition.