NECONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



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

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VINITA HEADQUARTERS

GROVE OFFICE

BUSINESS HOURS

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

DISPATCHING AVAILABLE 24 HOURS AT

If you experience an outage:



IT'S A COMMUNITY

Erik Feighner **Chief Financial Officer**

It's a community. That's what I heard when I joined Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative in December of 2020. I've come to discover during my brief tenure

at NOEC that the community I joined is much larger than I could have ever imagined.

The dictionary defines community as a "unified body of individuals with common interests living in a particular area." There are many layers to the community I joined, but I want to talk about four specifically.

First, I work alongside some great people at our office in Vinita. We also have fantastic employees representing us at our locations in Grove and Pryor. And let's not forget about our ambassadors out in the field, working hard to provide quality electric service to our members. No matter where we are stationed, we all wear the NOEC logo proudly.

The second layer is made up of our brothers and sisters at KAMO Power across town here in Vinita. NOEC is part of a KAMO family that includes 16 other regional distribution cooperatives. Together, we make up the KAMO generation and transmission cooperative that serves portions of northeast Oklahoma, southwest Missouri, as well as parts of Kansas and Arkansas.

Thirdly, KAMO is also part of six generation and transmission cooperatives that make up Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc., which serves all of Missouri as well as our section of northeast Oklahoma. Associated is responsible for generating the power that KAMO transmits to us and we distribute to you, our members.

The final and most important layer of cooperative community is the membership we serve. Our organizational mission statement confirms our commitment to enhance the quality of life for our members by providing affordable electricity.

Continued on page 2.









ENERGY-SAVING TECHNOLOGY

\$100 IS HIDING!

MAY 2021 EVENTS

Vinita Strong Man Competition May 1 | Vinita

Oklahoma State Picking & Fiddling Championship May 1-2 | Claremore

Elvis, Orbison, Cash May 8 | Miami

2nd Annual Vinita Firefighters' **Golf Tournament** May 7 | Afton

Block Party May 22 | Spavinaw

Big Bass Bash May 22-23 | Grove

Food Truck Thursday May 27 | Claremore

Will Rogers Stampede PRCA May 27-30 | Claremore

Grove Farmers' Market May 29 | Grove

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IT'S A COMMUNITY

CONTINUED FROM INSIDE COVER

The last twelve months have been challenging for all of us. It started in March of 2020 with the pandemic, which led to so much uncertainty. Aside from the many health implications, COVID-19 created financial stress, educational challenges from virtual schooling, unemployment, and so much more. Then came a much-contested national election in November that seemed to leave our country divided. As if all of that wasn't enough, a polar vortex hit us in February 2021, causing additional hardship that created extra anxiety for all of us. Each of those events by themselves would be enough to push some of us to our breaking point, but the collective strain of all three events compounded together-one on top of the other-can weigh even the strongest among us down. That is where community comes in.

At times like this, Oklahomans show their true character by coming together as a community to support and take care of one another. As we emerge from a difficult year and start 2021 with additional challenges brought on by the weather, I am encouraged when I look out and see examples of the community taking care of each other. From a neighbor who helps shovel a driveway, to people who take food to someone in need, to our police and firemen showing compassion to someone at a low moment of their life, to the lineman working with a smile on his face in the bitter cold to restore someone's electricity, everyone can do their part. The combination of all these individual acts of kindness can bind us together and create a truly stronger community.

In times of uncertainty, frustration, and stress, it is easy to assume the worst in people, especially those we see every day. My challenge to myself and to each of the people I encounter is to assume the best in someone. Show kindness to someone today. It's more likely than not that they will give it back to you or someone else.

A famous quote by Thomas Jefferson—"The government you elect is the government you deserve"—implies that we are all responsible for what shape our government takes. In the same way, we all play a part in shaping the kind of community in which we live. The best way to make improvement is one step at a time, one person at a time.

I'm so thankful to be part of the cooperative community here at NOEC. I'm equally excited to work to help fulfill our mission of improving the quality of life for those who also share in the responsibilities of our collective community.

HONEY CREEK HIVE MINI GOLF COURSE Grove, OK | 918.713.1888



1 FREE SOFT DRINK

WITH PURCHASE OF 1 ROUND OF GOLF

Good for one visit | Expires June 30, 2021 Present original coupon (no photocopies).

for more deals visit www.connections.coop



NEW MINIATURE GOLF COURSE BRINGS FAMILY FUN TO GRAND LAKE

Who doesn't love miniature golf? It's a recreational activity universally enjoyed by both the young and young at heart. So, if you find yourself in one of those two categories—and even if you consider yourself to be old or old of heart-quality time spent with family and friends in the great outdoors is never a bad thing, right?

If perchance you are the only human to have never tried sinking a putt through a spinning windmill or into a clown's mouth, there is something you should know: You don't have to be great at golf to be good at miniature golf. In fact, if you are REALLY good at actual golf, you may find yourself exceptionally frustrated at the unpredictability of mini golf. Just keep in mind it's not cool to "read the greens" out here on the mini links, Tiger. And, if it has been a while since you've played and you can't remember how "good" you are at putt-putt, here's another tip: Just make sure you're the one holding the scorecard.

The biggest issue with miniature golf has always been finding a place to play without traveling to the big city or fighting crowds at an amusement park. Thanks to Honey Creek Adventures in Grove, Oklahoma, area "putt-putt" enthusiasts can now experience timetested fun without the hassle. You don't even have to leave Grand Lake to play.



Honey Creek Hive Mini Golf unveiled its signature 18hole course last summer. The course is located just south of Honey Creek Bridge on the west side of the highway. Slated to open nearly three months earlier, the venture, like most 2020 start-ups, was delayed by a pandemic.

"We originally tried to open Memorial Day weekend last year, but because of COVID-19 we didn't open until August 22," explained owner Henry Mogilka.

He added: "Like many other small businesses, it has been a challenge dealing with a pandemic. We delayed our opening, but when we finally opened we instituted safety practices that have become familiar to everyone. We encourage social distancing and wearing masks when purchasing tickets, offer a contactless payment option when paying with a card, and clean golf equipment after every use."

Honey Creek Hive Mini Golf is lake-themed and holes are named after familiar Grand Lake landmarks. Area state parks are featured, and there are also holes dedicated to Horse Creek, Wolf Creek, Duck Creek, and Drowning Creek. Even the rivers that feed Grand Lake are represented. You'll see a scaled-down version of Pensacola Dam with water flowing over its spillway. Hand-crafted steel replicas of the Bridge to Nowhere and Sailboat Bridge are also on display. All around the course are hand-painted images of wildlife indigenous to northeast Oklahoma-fish, birds, and mammals. Guiding the way through the course is none other than mascot Bizzybee, a honey bee who is more than happy to lead you in your quest for gold (a hole-in-one).

The course was thoughtfully planned and carefully constructed by a company known around the world for its work.

From left: Carol Kelley, Henry Mogilka, and Susan (Wright) Mogilka.

"When we first discussed building a miniature golf course, we thought of just building it ourselves," explained owner Henry Mogilka. "However, we quickly learned how much mini golf has evolved over the past forty years. There is much more design and engineering in today's courses than in the past. We wanted a quality, customized course and we were very fortunate to be able to hire one of the best mini golf builders in the world, Castle Golf, Inc. Castle Golf builds custom mini golf courses in the United States, England, and Canada. They worked with us to engineer a layout that fit into the landscape of the property. There are numerous elevation changes and we were able to preserve most of the existing oak trees so the course offers plenty of summer shade. The individual holes were designed to be challenging for adults but still fun for kids to play."

Honey Creek Hive Mini Golf is a family affair. Henry and wife Susan (Wright) Mogilka, along with Susan's mother, Carol Kelley, and Carol's husband Bill, are involved with the operation in some capacity.

"Carol and Bill have been tremendously supportive of our efforts to build and run the course," Henry said. "We could not have opened it without their help."





The Mogilka's daughter Kelley, with help from boyfriend Mason Williams, contributed artistic expertise.

"Kelley and Mason spent a few months last summer painting all of the images on the course," remarked Henry. "They both are working towards Master's Degrees in Fine Art at the Laguna College of Art and Design in Laguna Beach, California. I am so proud of their hard work on the course and how their artwork adds to the look and feel of the course."

To see more of Kelly and Mason's art, check them out on Instagram at @kelleymogilka and @masonbanana.

The Mogilka family has long had a heart for Grand Lake. That love began when Susan, who grew up in Miami, Oklahoma, spent summers at Grand on a small family houseboat. She has many fond memories of warm summer nights sleeping on the top of the houseboat and enjoying all that the lake has to offer. Susan is also a musician and as a young adult would often play gigs at the lake.

Henry grew up in Wisconsin and is a retired federal employee, having worked 33 years for the Federal Aviation Administration. He was an air traffic controller in New Mexico before moving to Oklahoma City to teach air traffic control at the FAA Academy in the early 1990s. His last assignment prior to retirement was tower chief at the Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City.



The Mogilkas made the short trek from OKC to vacation at Grand Lake every summer for 20 years. And then one day they had an opportunity to own a small piece of the lake. For them it was a chance to make an investment in an area they'd come to love.

"Susan's lifelong friend and fellow musician, Terry Jordan, owned a lodge and some vacant property just south of Honey Creek Bridge," explained Henry. "Terry spent many years refurbishing the lodge into a beautiful getaway spot. We spent many nights at the lodge and always talked about someday owning property on the lake. A few years ago, Terry decided to sell the property and we knew it was our chance to own lake property and start a family business at the same time."

Extending the investment beyond just the lodge itself was always in the back of the Mogilkas' minds.

"I have always enjoyed playing mini golf with family when we went on vacation," Henry said. "When we were considering buying Terry's lodge, we discovered the property was large enough to build a nice family mini golf course with the budget we had in mind. We think mini golf is a fun activity that anyone at any age can play. We had fun playing mini golf with our family and we hope our guests have fun with their friends and family when they play our course."

A good sense of humor may be more important now than ever for anyone aspiring to own a business. Henry jokes that his bachelor's degree in psychology and his law degree make him the perfect candidate to operate a miniature golf course. Kidding aside, Henry explained that he "always liked being of service" during his career.

"I enjoyed having a career as a public servant and now with the mini golf course, I can continue providing a service that is a lot of fun to the public," he said. "In return, I get to enjoy seeing my customers smile and laugh as they play and hear them cheer if they make a hole in one. It is very satisfying to see young kids play with their families and friends and know that we are helping to create happy memories that will last a lifetime."

Honey Creek Adventures has some exciting plans for 2021. Henry said a mini golf league is in the works, as well as special discounts for returning guests. There will be additional snack and soft drink options at the concession stand. He also expects business from birthday parties to be robust.

"We have already had quite a few requests for private birthday parties," he said. "We have picnic tables away from the course so that guests have a place to sit or keep their cake and gifts safe while others play the course."

Henry said the lodge will also be available for rent in 2021.

"We will begin renting out the Honey Creek Lodge to vacationers," he said. "The lodge is a cabin-themed, 4-bedroom home that offers a relaxing environment after a busy day on the lake or playing mini golf."

NOW OPEN FOR THE SPRING SEASON

For more information, you can reach Honey Creek Adventures office at 918.713.1888. You can also follow on Facebook or Instagram, or visit online at www.honeycreekadventures.com. Unless there is inclement weather, the mini golf course is open daily during summer months and on weekends only during spring and fall. Weekday hours are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday hours are 12 noon to 8 p.m. The course is closed during the winter. The address is: 31421 S 620 Rd. Grove, OK 74344.

RECORD COLD, PEAK USAGE, AND WHY:

A FEBRUARY TO REMEMBER

Having experienced unprecedented frigid temperatures for an extended period of time–12 straight days, to be exact members of Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative faced increased electric consumption in February and therefore, higher electric bills. The main question asked of many electric utility representatives was "why?"

I would like to take a moment to answer that question. While the answer is fairly straightforward, there are factors that create increased electric consumption in winter months. Let's look at some of them.

Insulation

Insulation is a major factor in keeping cold air outside. Insulation provides resistance to air flow and is commonly referred to as R-value. Proper insulation reduces heating and cooling costs and increases comfort in your home. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, homes in our area should be insulated to an R-value of R-30 to R-60 in the attic space.

To understand how insulation works it helps to understand air flow, which involves three basic mechanisms—conduction, convection, and radiation. Conduction is the way heat moves through materials, such as when a spoon placed in a hot cup of coffee conducts heat through its handle to your hand. Convection is the way heat circulates through liquids and gases, and is why lighter, warmer air rises, and cooler, denser air sinks. Radiant heat travels in a straight line and heats anything solid in its path that absorbs its energy.

The primary goal of insulation is to stop air infiltration by keeping cold/hot air outside and conditioned air inside. What types of insulation reduce air infiltration? Insulation materials that densely fill building cavities (walls, floors, ceilings) enough to reduce air infiltration can also reduce convective heat loss. Some types of insulation can reduce electric usage by 20 percent. Because they are denser, materials like spray foam and wet-spray cellulose provide higher R-values. However, these must be installed by a professional and may be higher in initial cost.

Heating System

Heating makes up the largest part of your home energy bill here in Oklahoma. There are several different heating types: space heaters, furnaces, boilers, heat pumps, and wood/pellet stoves/fireplaces.

Resistance heat is common in both electric space heaters and as supplemental heat on air-to-air heat pumps. In the latter application it is also known as emergency, auxiliary, or backup heat.

Air-to-air heat pumps take outside air and work to warm it to the desired temperature. Here in Oklahoma, that outside air was as cold as -18 degrees back in February. It requires a lot of electricity to make heat. The heat pump simply cannot keep pace with air that cold and will switch over to resistance heat when the outside air temperature is around 32 degrees. This is why resistance heat runs continuously during those sub-freezing days. Resistance heat strips are typically sized at 10,000 to 20,000 watts. That's like having 10-20 electric space heaters running non-stop.

Weather

With the help of Oklahoma Mesonet, we can determine the number of heating degree days, which is the measurement used to quantify the demand for energy needed to heat a dwelling. Degree days are based on the assumption that when the outside temperature is 65°F, we don't need heating or cooling to be comfortable. Degree days are the difference between the daily temperature mean, (high temperature plus low temperature divided by two) and 65°F. On February 15 and 16, the daily heating degree days for Vinita were 68 on both days. Looking at those same days historically, you can see how this event impacts everyone.



Vinita recorded this same number of heating degree days on February 10, 2011. The low temperature that day was -24 degrees.

Here to help

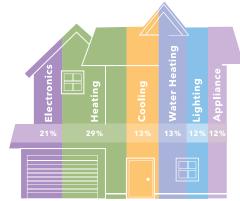
This "perfect storm" as many are calling it, stressed the electric system not only here but across the country. NOEC set a peak demand record of 254 megawatts, shattering the previous peak of 212 megawatts set in December 2017. During that peak, Vinita recorded 52 heating degree days.

While winter is now in the rear-view mirror, the NOEC management team acknowledges that "sticker shock" may occur any time members open bills that include high usage. For instance, some February bills may have been 25-30% higher than normal. However, the unprecedented circumstances surrounding this cold snap makes it difficult to compare with any other time.

If you anticipate struggling to pay a high bill, NOEC has several flexible payment options to help lighten the load. Our board and management have discussed this extraordinary event and the board has authorized additional options to help members that struggle with paying for the higher usage from this event. Those members are encouraged to call 1-800-256-6405 and discuss these options with our member services team.

Contributed by: Darryll Lindsey, Manager of Member Services

WHERE DOES MY MONEY GO?



Graphic: Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

Pay by MoneyGram at Walmart

Pay your bill with cash. Please note there is a

Pay by Automatic Bank Draft

NEEDING A FORM?

Application for Service & More

Landlord letters, medical certificates, auto pay and Downloads tab. All documents can be found there. You can also contact us at 1.800.256.6405. We will be

Questions or Concerns?

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us so we may

PAYING YOUR NOEC BILL

Pay On Our Cooperative Website: www.noec.coop

Choose "Pay Your Bill" from the home page and you will be presented with the option to pay using your 6-digit electric account number and last name.

Pay By Phone: 1.800.256.6405

Give us a call and choose Option 2 to pay with a bank card, credit card, or store-loaded card.

Pay By PaySite Kiosk

Have your account number handy. You will be given several prompts to verify account information. Please note the kiosks do not give change, so the total amount of cash deposited will be posted to your account.

PaySite Kiosk Locations

- Harps Food Store, 300 E Layton, Chelsea, OK
- Harps Food Store, 1120 S Main, Grove, OK
- Homeland, 1629 S Main, Jay, OK
- Harps Food Store, 710 E Main, Locust Grove, OK
- Harps Food Store, 111 E Ferry, Salina, OK
- Shout & Sack, 305 S Wilson, Vinita, OK
- Homeland, 925 S Mill, Pryor, OK
- Reasor's, 1624 N 3rd St, Langley, OK

AREA ASSISTANCE AGENCIES:

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CRAIG COUNTY	
Department of Human Services	
Grand Gateway 800.4	32.4594 or 918.783.5793
Grand Lake Community Ministri	
Neighbors Helping Neighbors	
Grand Nation/Salvation Army	918.276.2192
DELAWARE COUNTY	
Community Action	918.253.4683
Cherokee Nation Human Service	
DHS	
Grand Gateway 800.4	
OTTAWA COUNTY	
DHS 918.54	1 2400 or 900 994 1715
Grand Gateway 800.48	
Salvation Army	
	910.342.3430
MAYES COUNTY	
Cherokee Housing Authority	918.825.4811
DHS 918.82	
Grand Gateway 800.4	
Salvation Army/Community Action	n, Pryor 918.825.3423
ROGERS COUNTY	
Community Action	918.341.5000
DHS 918.28	3.8300 or 800.270.0804
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SPECIAL NOTICES AVAILABLE:

Members struggling to pay utility bills may qualify for additional notice or provisions prior to disconnection of service for non-payment. These rules provide requirements for special notice, deferred payment plan, and special provisions that may delay disconnection. Here, we address a few of these requirements.

SPECIAL NOTICES

Elderly and disabled members may qualify for special notice from the OCC regarding pending disconnection of service. To qualify, a member must be age 65 or older or have a disability or impairment that substantially limits their ability to pay for utility service. Members must submit a written request and complete a verification form to qualify for the additional notice from the OCC.

DEFERRED PAYMENT PLAN

Members may contact Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative to enter a payment arrangement, referred to by the cooperative as a "one-time agreement," before being disconnected for non-payment. If service is disconnected, the member may be required to pay the full amount owed, including disconnect and reconnect fees, and provide a deposit before being reconnected.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Weather may create a special provision under which disconnection of service is delayed. On days the heat index is predicted to be 101° F or higher or the low is predicted to be 32° F or lower, the cooperative will suspend disconnection activity.

Residential members who have applied for and are awaiting financial assistance from a federal, state, or local service agency may qualify for a delay in the disconnection of service. The agency involved must provide the cooperative verification of the application for assistance.

It is important to remember that qualifying for a delay in disconnection or additional notice does not absolve a member from the full payment of their bill.

The cooperative gladly complies with rules outlined by the Oklahoma Corporation Commission (OCC). To learn more about these and other requirements of the OCC, contact the cooperative member services department at 1.800.256.6405, the Consumer Services Division of the OCC at 1.800.522.8154, or mail: Consumer Services Division, P. O. Box 52000, Oklahoma City, OK 73152.



FEATURE RECIPES

MOTHER'S DAY FAVORITES



Prep Time: 5 Minutes

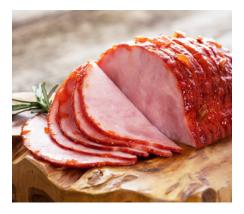
Cook Time: 5 Minutes

Servings: 2

CHICKEN SALAD

INGREDIENTS

- 1 can canned chicken
- 1/2 cup hummus
- 1/2 cup celery chopped
- 1/2 cup grapes halved
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1. Mix together canned chicken and hummus in a mixing bowl. Add in celery, grapes, salt, and pepper.
- 2. Spread chicken salad onto a croissant. Add lettuce and desired veggies.



Prep: 10 minutes

Bake: 1 hour

Makes: 12 servings

SRIRACHA PEACH GLAZED HAM

MAIN

INGREDIENTS

- 1 boneless ham, spiral sliced
- 1/3 cup sriracha hot sauce
- 1 cup peach preserves
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/3 cup dijon mustard

- 1. In a small bowl mix the last 3 ingredients.
- 2. Preheat oven to 325 degrees F.
- 3. Place the ham in a shallow baking dish and brush with glaze.
- 4. Heat in preheated oven for 15 minutes per pound, basting in intervals.
- 5. Remove from oven and serve.

CREATIVE KIDS

CONTEST WINNERS FEATURED ON AREA BILLBOARDS

Congratulations to our four safety billboard coloring contest winners! One winner was selected from each of our four primary counties to be featured on a billboard in their respective service area. We had 87 entries submitted. Entrants ranged in age from 5-13 years old. Cooperative employees helped judge the contest.















ENERGY SAVING





Outdoor solar lights are easy to install and virtually maintenance free. Best of all, using them won't increase your electric bill. Popular home uses for outdoor solar lighting include pathway light sets, wall-mounted lamps, freestanding lamp posts, and security lights.

Outdoor solar lighting systems use solar cells, which convert sunlight into electricity. The electricity is stored in batteries for use at night. Manufacturers most commonly use nickel-cadmium, sealed lead acid, and lead acid batteries.

WATER SAFETY

GFCI PROTECTION

Ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) are one form of protection from electrical hazards. GFCIs detect dangerous situations where a shock may occur and cut off power to prevent shock. Any situation where electricity is used near water is a shock hazard. You should have GFCI protection on underwater lighting circuits, lighting around pools, hot tubs, and spas.

