

NE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS
FOUR OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

LET THERE BE LIGHT
AREA SCHOOL ENJOYING LIGHTING UPGRADE

JULY 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

27039 South 4440 Road, Vinita, OK 74301

GROVE OFFICE

212 South Main, Grove, OK 74344

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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REMAIN VIGILANT AGAINST SCAM ATTEMPTS

Ricky Hignite

Manager of Information Technology

According to the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center, scam victims were bilked out of \$3.5 billion in 2019. That's a significant increase

from the \$1.4 billion in losses reported in 2017. This money was essentially stolen from unsuspecting victims by scammers who make it a practice to robodial known telephone numbers in hopes of getting someone to turn over private information or provide access to an otherwise secure computer.

While some of these calls may be easy to identify as a scam, others can be pretty sophisticated. It's important to remember that under no circumstance will Microsoft call you and request access to your computer. No legitimate company will call and ask for your password. If you ever receive a call that sounds legitimate, you should always call the company back at a known telephone number—not a number provided by whomever may be on the other end of the line.

Scam calls range from extended car warranties (I'm sure you are aware of these and probably get them on a routine basis) to people claiming to be from Microsoft who want to help you "clean" a virus from your computer. If you provide them access, they will do some fancy work to show you that your computer is infected with a virus when in reality it is most likely being infected by the scammer to whom you allowed access.

Scammers may also attempt to extort money from you by infecting your computer, locking you out of your computer, or stealing your bank account info. Hopefully, the "STIR" and "SHAKEN" protocols the FCC is advocating will stop many of these calls this summer. STIR stands for Secure Telephone Identity Revisited and SHAKEN stands for Secure Handling of Asserted information using toKENs. Together, they're authentication standards, allowing for verification that calls come from a real caller ID instead of a spoofed or faked caller ID.

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DISTRICT MEETING DETAILS



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SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



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REBATES

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

\$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 August 2, 2021, to claim a \$100 credit on your electric account.

JULY 2021 EVENTS

National Huckleberry Festival

July 2-4 | Jay

Jay Town Square

918.253.8698

Country's Heritage Arts, Crafts, Music, and Cajun Festival

July 3 | Grove

Grove Civic Center

918.786.8896

Quapaw Tribal Powwow

July 1-4 | Quapaw

5681 S 630 Rd

918.542.1853

Vinita Fireworks Show

July 1 | Vinita

801 N Adair St

918.256.6422

Independence Day Celebration at Wolf Creek

July 3 | Grove

Wolf Creek Park

918.786.6107

Claremore 4th of July Celebration

July 3 | Claremore

Claremore Lake Park

918.342.2522

Grand Lake Fireworks

July 3 | Disney

Hwy 28

918.435.4272

Jay Fireworks Display

July 4 | Jay

RFC Event Center

918.253.8698

Duck Creek Fireworks

July 4 | Afton

42894 S 4507 Rd

918.782.3292

4th of July Extravaganza

July 4 | Miami

Buffalo Run Casino & Resort

918.542.4481

County Seat Cook-Off BBQ Competition

July 17 | Jay

Jay Town Square

918.253.8698

Aquapalooza at Grand Lake

July 17 | Afton

31527 S 4510 Rd

918.782.9546

Craig County Free Fair

July 24-31 | Vinita

Craig County Fairgrounds

918.256.7133

LET THERE BE LIGHT

AREA SCHOOL ENJOYING LIGHTING UPGRADE



NOEC's Darryll Lindsey and Cindy Hefner present a check to Wickliffe School's superintendent Melissa Cagle.

Students at one northeast Oklahoma school are enjoying an improved educational experience, thanks to a notable lighting upgrade. Wickliffe School, located northeast of Salina in rural Mayes County, recently replaced every light fixture across its campus with new energy-efficient LED alternatives.

The school replaced a total of 339 fixtures in four different buildings. There were a dozen different fixture types changed, including numerous 4-foot fluorescent fixtures, both 2- and 4-lamp. The lighting project was completed this past February during a week when Winter Storm Uri interrupted school with a barrage of snow and sub-zero temps.

When students and faculty members returned to class following the week-long hiatus, the difference was undeniable. Work was performed by Tulsa-based contractor Bridgepoint Electric.

"We are very satisfied with the work they did," said Wickliffe superintendent Melissa Cagle. "The job was completed the week we were out of school because of the snow. They got in here and got after it. They were done in a week."

According to Cagle, the upgrade was desperately needed.

"It was long overdue," she chuckled. "We went with top of the line lighting throughout the entire building. Significant changes can be seen everywhere."

Cagle explained that the project—one of several the school has undertaken in recent months—is geared toward creating a safer, more environmentally-friendly facility. From installing new energy-efficient lights to new water fountains featuring bottle filling stations, the school has made great strides toward facility enrichment.

"A lot of good things are happening here at the school," she said. "Even the students are taking notice of the improvements being made. They know that an effort is being made to provide them with a safe environment. In addition to the lighting, we are replacing roofs and installing new insulation. Over the past ten years, we have been getting by with basic repairs and patch jobs. We are grateful for the commitment our board has made to addressing these issues with longer-term solutions. They are dedicated to making sure we are here for a long time."



"Monetarily we're going to save in places and then be able to appropriate that money for other needs we have," Cagle said. "So it's a wise investment for us."

In addition to an enhanced learning environment, the lighting improvements will result in considerable energy savings. Wickliffe School will use 62,877 fewer kilowatt-hours of energy annually and save \$6,161.95 yearly on its electric bill. Payback on the investment won't take long, either—only 3.31 years.

What's more, as a Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative member school, Wickliffe received another substantial benefit. NOEC was able to walk the school through the process of securing a nice rebate for the upgrades. The rebate is one of many available from NOEC's power supplier: Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc.

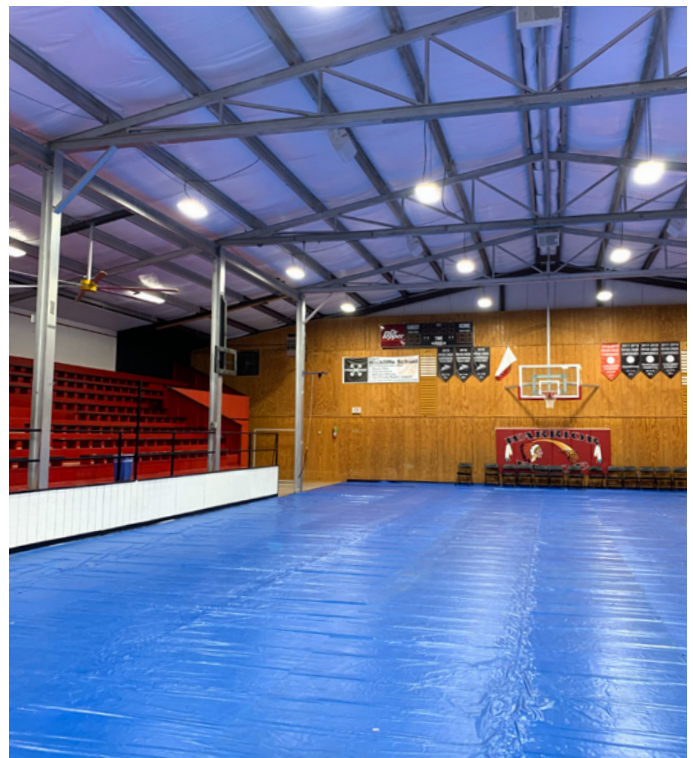
NOEC Member Services Manager Darryll Lindsey, who assisted the school with the rebate paperwork, said the school will be receiving a rebate check totaling \$3,820.62.

Lindsey himself observed the difference the new lighting made after visiting the school. He remarked that the LED lights "made a world of difference" in both the gym and library.

"Supporting communities in northeast Oklahoma has been an important role of the cooperative," Lindsey said. "These types of lighting upgrades and rebates for schools further strengthens the community by helping students with a better learning environment."

Wickliffe has 84 students enrolled this school year in grades pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. Once they graduate from Wickliffe, students go on to attend any one of several surrounding schools. While most end up at Salina, it isn't unusual to see them at Jay, Kansas, Pryor, Locust Grove, or even Tahlequah-Sequoyah. Preparing students to take that next step is what Wickliffe School is focused on in the interim.

"We want them to have the best of everything, be healthy, and be able to see their work," Cagle said. "Beyond that, I think what we are doing shows that we are committed to education, committed to our community, and here for the long haul. That is something that is getting lost right now with smaller schools."





Have you looked at your electric bill and wondered, "How can I reduce my bill?" Think about the appliances and gadgets in your home you use every day to provide the modern conveniences you enjoy. From the comfort of a warm home and a hot shower to cell phones, computers, and smart speakers. All those add up and can increase your energy use every month. However, every small energy-saving measure you take can add up to big savings.

At Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, we want to help you take control of your energy costs each month. With help from our wholesale power supplier, Associated Electric Cooperative, we offer members rebates on energy efficient appliances designed to save you money. Why? Controlling energy costs benefits all cooperative members by providing stable rates and reliable electricity now and into the future. This postpones building costly new power plants while helping you manage your energy budget.

A complete list of rebate applications, terms and conditions can be found on the cooperative's website: www.noec.coop/energy-services/rebates/

REBATES AVAILABLE

FOR ENERGY EFFICIENT APPLIANCES

Dual Fuel Heat Pumps

These systems are two to three times more efficient than an electric furnace and air conditioner. They require natural gas or propane back-up heat to use and must be a 17-SEER rating to qualify. Other terms and conditions apply in order to receive up to \$150 per ton.

Mini-Split Heat Pumps

The mini-split system uses 50 to 60 percent less energy than electric resistance heating systems and is designed for smaller spaces. They also require gas back-up heat and must be a 17-SEER rating to qualify for up to \$150 per ton rebate.

Heat Pump Water Heaters

Working like a refrigerator in reverse, a heat pump water heater absorbs heat from the surrounding air and uses it to heat water inside the tank. These units are typically two to three times more efficient than a standard electric water heater. To qualify for the rebate of \$500, the tank must be 40 gallons or larger.

Electric Water Heaters

A \$50 rebate is available on tanks that are 40 gallons or larger.

Window Air Conditioners

A \$50 rebate is available.

Energy Star Advanced Programmable Thermostats

Often called "smart thermostats," these units "learn" your day-to-day habits with regard to heating and cooling needs and automatically adjust the thermostat saving you money each day. The device must be Energy Star rated and the member must purchase more than 6,000 kWh annually from the cooperative. The rebate amount is 50 percent of the unit total cost. Other terms and conditions apply.

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

TO FOUR OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative is helping ensure a brighter tomorrow for four area high school seniors by supporting their dream of a life-enriching higher education. The cooperative's scholarship committee selected four 2021 graduates from among many qualified applicants to receive \$1,000 each toward a continuing education at a college, university, or trade school.

Recipients of the 2021 NOEC College Scholarship include: Welch High School's Charlcie Gatewood, Wyandotte High School's Ally Bartley, Adair High School's Holden Yoder, and Jay High School's Johnny Williamson.



The 2021 NOEC College Scholarship for the Craig/Rogers County area was presented to Welch High School's Charlcie Gatewood. Charlcie is the daughter of Ryan and Tobie Gatewood. She will begin her pursuit of a Biochemistry degree with a pre-med emphasis this fall at Oklahoma State University.

Charlcie has been busy preparing for a continuing education as demonstrated by her dedication to a strong academic foundation. Not only did she graduate from high school in May, she also graduated from Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College with an associate's degree having completed a battery of concurrent coursework. She also attended Northeast Tech Center's Pre-Engineering program for a year, taking Advanced Placement Calculus and Physics. Charlcie was no stranger to the Welch High School Superintendent's Honor Roll and was also named to the President's Honor Roll and Phi Theta Kappa VP of Service at NEO.

An active FFA member. Charlcie served as both chapter president and vice-president and was involved with horse and livestock judging, speech, ag communications, and sales. In addition to her FFA membership, Charlcie was a member of the National Honor Society, FCA and Student Council, Intertribal Agriculture Council, Cherokee Tribal Youth Council, and Quiz Bowl.

"I can honestly say that Charlcie is one of the most sincere and hardest working ladies that you could ever meet," remarked KaCee D. Williams, Pharm.D. "Charlcie is very committed to her academics, and has always stood out in her classwork. Not just every cowgirl can answer high level academic questions in a Jeopardy-type setting and rope a calf on the same day."

Williams added: "In addition to her incredible work ethic and strong academic foundation, Charlcie is also a lady of integrity and leadership. It has always struck me how much she works to better those around her and to work to contribute to her community. In a time when so many people are only focused on their own needs, it is refreshing to find a young lady so interested in helping those around her. Although I am extremely impressed with Charlcie's work ethic, intelligence and integrity, it is her kindness to others that really stands out. Kindness does not take much effort, but it does take courage and compassion. Charlcie Gatewood has both in spades."



ALLY

Representing the Ottawa County area in accepting the 2021 NOEC College Scholarship is Ally Ann Bartley. Ally is the daughter of Chad and Sharon Bartley.

Ally graduated from Wyandotte High School in May and plans to pursue a degree in nursing/health care this fall while also playing softball at Northern Oklahoma College.

Ally received numerous awards for her athletic participation, including being named Oklahoma High School Fastpitch Softball Coaches Association All-State. Academically speaking, Ally completed advanced placement coursework through Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College for the following subjects: Algebra, Humanities, History, Composition I & II, and American Government. Her extra-curricular participation included National Honor Society treasurer, Student Council, Gifted and Talented, and Senior Class reporter.

Bartley was recommended highly by Wyandotte High School English Instructor Marsha Hampton.

"Ms. Bartley is an excellent student and serves as a positive role model to Wyandotte High School students. She is an exceptional young lady because of her academic integrity and moral character.

She consistently demonstrates excellence and a willingness to work toward her goals," said Hampton. "Her formal educational goals are foremost in her mind. She will be a positive role model to fellow college students and work hard to meet her future academic pursuits. She is driven and more than ready to meet the challenges in her future."

Ally was described as a "model employee" by Lindsey Cooper, Early Childhood Program Coordinator at the Wyandotte Nation Child Development Center.



HOLDEN

Holden Yoder represented the Mayes County area in accepting the 2021 NOEC College Scholarship. Holden is the son of Greg and Stacey Yoder.

Holden graduated from Adair High School in May and will be attending Northern Oklahoma College in Enid this fall. He plans on playing baseball for the Jets and making mathematics the primary focus of his studies.

Holden excelled both academically and athletically during his high school career. Recognition for him included being named Oklahoma Coaches Association Region 3 Male Scholar Athlete of the Year, Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence Academic All-State, and Oklahoma Baseball Coaches Association All-State.

He also received Adair High School's prestigious Noel E. Winfield Award, which is presented to the school's top graduating student as voted on by members of the school faculty. Holden posted an ACT score of 33 and stayed busy with concurrent studies at Rogers State University.

"Holden has a natural gift for math and I have always admired his desire to learn more. He is a great problem solver and can understand and expand upon abstract concepts. Few kids come through my classes that are able to grasp mathematics at the level Holden can," remarked Kristina Cobler, Adair High School Mathematics Department Instructor.

Added Cobler: "Holden has a determination that drives him in a way few people ever envision. Mature beyond his years, he seeks opportunities that will further his education and expand his network. Holden strives to be the best, but at the same time he lifts up those around so that they can be at their best as well. Living an excellent life is not about being the best me, it's about being the best us. Holden understands that and lives that life to the fullest."



The 2021 NOEC College Scholarship for the Delaware County area was awarded to Johnny Clark Williamson of Jay High School. Johnny is the son of Ashley Temple, Mallory Morrow, and Bill Williamson. He will attend Oklahoma State University in Stillwater this fall and pursue a degree in Civil Engineering.

Johnny was an active student during his high school experience. Along with robust athletic participation as a member of the school's football, wrestling and powerlifting teams, he was also involved with Student Council, Mu Alpha Theta Club, FCA, Grand Savings Bank Junior Bank Board, Bank of Grand Lake Senior Bank Board, Science Club, and National Honor Society. He served as secretary, president-elect, and president of Student Council.

Johnny maintained a 4.0 GPA, posted a 25 score on his ACT and was named to the Superintendent's Honor Roll and 2021 senior class co-pleditorian. He received glowing praise from Dianna Woods, Political Science/History instructor and Head of the Social Studies Department at Jay High School.

"Johnny is a dedicated student with a strong work ethic. He is an asset to Jay High School in every way," remarked Woods. "He is a highly motivated individual who strives to do his best in all his studies and is successful in and out of the classroom. He meets challenges head on and completes all assignments in a timely manner. He is well respected by his teachers and peers for his pleasant, respectful personality. His interest in learning and easy-going ability to engage in meaningful classroom discussions makes him a pleasure to teach."

Those sentiments were echoed by Whitney Walker, STUCO advisor and teacher at Jay High School.

Said Walker: "Johnny has shown great character in all that he does. Whether it be on the field, mat, or in the classroom, he shows class, sportsmanship, and humility every single day. He has proven to be very dedicated in all his efforts to succeed, as well as being a caring and positive role model for others. He always has a great attitude and a big smile on his face. His peers love and respect him, as do his teachers. He is a hard worker and is always willing to lend a hand. His work ethic and helpfulness are second to none. He is often called on to assist. Whether it be tutoring, building something, giving advice, providing input or designing something—he seems to be able to do it all."

DISTRICT MEETINGS

DISTRICTS 4, 6, AND 8 TO SELECT BOARD CANDIDATES

JOHN L. MYERS

DISTRICT 4 | JULY 29, 2021

**First United Methodist Church
314 W Canadian Ave
Vinita, OK**

Directions: 3 blocks west of the intersection of 60/66/69 & Canadian Street.

SHARRON GAY

DISTRICT 6 | JULY 27, 2021

**Adair Elementary School Cafeteria
101 Harley Hughes Ave
Adair, OK**

Directions: 3 blocks east of Hwy 28 & 69 intersection & one block south.

VACANT

DISTRICT 8 | JULY 26, 2021

**Northeast Tech-Kansas Campus
450 US-59
Kansas, OK**

Directions: on the east side of Hwy 59 approximately 4 blocks north of old Hwy 412.

REQUIREMENT TO REGISTER

At District Meetings

In accordance with Article I of Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, Inc.'s Bylaws, only eligible members may register and cast a vote at any member meeting. In order to register and vote you MUST be one of the following:

- **Primary on an individual account**
- **Primary or secondary on a joint account**
- **Named representative of a business or organization (present a letter from the governing body of the entity stating you are the representative for that entity)**

If you are not listed on the account, regardless of marital status, you will not be able to register to vote. We strongly encourage you to check your account. It is simple to add a person to make a joint account. Call member services at 800.256.6405.

The Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees is extending invitations to Cooperative members in Districts 4, 6, and 8 to attend their respective District Meetings this summer. As always, the invitation includes giveaways, along with the chance to win a \$250 electric credit.

Trustee Terms for John L. Myers and Sharron Gay are expiring and Trustee elections are taking place in 2021 for three-year terms on the Cooperative Board of Trustees. The Board is also seeking a little help from members in Districts 4, 6, and 8 to conduct the yearly business of the Cooperative.

Members may register for District Meetings from 6-7 p.m. Those in line at this time will be given a card ensuring their opportunity to register.

The meeting will start as soon as is practical thereafter or when all members with cards have registered.

Please watch your mail for a postcard notification in the event it is necessary to cancel your district meeting.

NOTE: Currently, the Cooperative is planning to conduct the 2021 District Meetings in the same manner it has conducted District Meetings in the past. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, there may be government-imposed restrictions or guidelines in place, limiting the size of gatherings such as the Cooperative's District Meetings, or it may otherwise be unsafe to gather for the District Meetings. If such restrictions or guidelines are in place at the time set for the District Meetings, or if it is otherwise unsafe to gather for the District Meetings due to COVID-19, then the Cooperative may take certain actions necessary to maintain the safety of the members, Cooperative employees, and the public, and/or to comply with any government imposed restrictions/guidelines regarding gatherings. These actions may include, but are not limited to: (1) postponing the District Meetings to a later date that is not less than thirty (30) nor more than ninety (90) days prior to the date of the Annual Meeting, in accordance with Section 3.06 of the Cooperative's Bylaws; (2) utilizing drive-thru registration and voting; (3) conducting the District Meetings utilizing live video technology (e.g., Facebook Live); or (4) if necessary, cancelling the District Meetings. The Cooperative will take all reasonable efforts to conduct the District Meetings, nominate Trustee candidates, and elect Trustees in accordance with the Cooperative's Bylaws, while maintaining the safety of the members, Cooperative employees, and the public, and complying with any government-imposed restrictions/guidelines regarding gatherings.

REMAIN VIGILANT AGAINST SCAM ATTEMPTS

CONTINUED FROM INSIDE COVER

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Of course, this technology will not halt email phishing attempts. We all need to be extremely vigilant on how we handle incoming email. Under no circumstance should you open an email attachment you are not expecting. Try to verify the authenticity of the email by looking at the email address and not just the display name. Hackers are becoming more and more sophisticated with phishing emails. Many emails look legitimate. The goal is to try and infect your computer or convince you in a sneaky way to provide credentials. They may try prompting you to acquire an email address and password for your email account, Microsoft account, or some other secure account like a bank account. A legitimate business will never ask for your password in an email.

If you do receive an email that links you to a website asking for your login info, check the domain name found in the address bar of your browser to ensure the name matches whatever site you expect to be logging into. If you are being asked for your email login, check and see if the URL in your address bar actually matches your email provider. Did you get an email from your bank asking you to update some information. Unless you were expecting an email from your bank, call and verify the email you received is legitimate before proceeding. Never reply to an email with your login or password. Be vigilant. Watch out for scam calls and scam emails and help educate your technologically-challenged friends and family—especially the elderly since they are typically the most vulnerable targets. As always, stay safe.

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DOCK ELECTRICAL SAFETY

If you are in the water and feel electric current:

- Shout to let others know
- Tuck your legs up to make yourself smaller
- Try to swim away from anything that could be energized
- Do not swim toward boat or dock ladders

If you are on the dock or shore when a swimmer feels electrical current:

- Do not jump in
- Throw them a flotation device
- Unplug or turn off the source of electricity as quickly as possible
- Call for help



FEATURE RECIPE

CELEBRATE INDEPENDENCE DAY



Level: Easy

Total Time: 35 minutes

Makes: 8-10 Servings

973831

PATRIOTIC BERRY TRIFLE

DESSERT

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup plus 2/3 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon almond extract
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 pound cream cheese at room temperature
- 2 cups heavy cream at room temperature
- 2 pints blueberries
- 2 pints strawberries, hulled and sliced
- 1 premade angel food cake, cut into 1-inch slices

Step 1: Heat 1/4 cup sugar, lemon juice, and 1/4 cup water in a saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring, until the sugar dissolves. Remove from the heat and stir in the almond extract.

Step 2: Brush both sides of each slice of cake with the syrup. Cut the slices into 1-inch cubes.

Step 3: Beat the remaining 2/3 cup sugar and the cream cheese with a mixer on medium speed until smooth and light. Add the cream and beat on medium-high speed until smooth and the consistency of whipped cream.

Step 4: Arrange half of the cake cubes in the bottom of a 13-cup trifle dish. Sprinkle evenly with a layer of blueberries. Dollop half of the cream mixture over the blueberries and gently spread. Top with a layer of strawberries. Layer the remaining cake cubes on top of the strawberries, then sprinkle with more blueberries and top with the remaining cream mixture. Finish with the remaining strawberries and blueberries, arranging them in a decorative pattern. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour.