

NE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

**MONKEY ISLAND'S
ONE-STOP SHOPPING CENTER**

**JOIN US!
2023 DISTRICT MEETINGS**

JUNE 2023



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

600 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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NO SUBSTITUTE FOR EXPERIENCE

Tommy Bauer
Director of Broadband Services

Albert Einstein summed it up perfectly when he said; "The only source of knowledge is experience."

There is no substitute for experience. Growing up as a pipeliner's son, I had the opportunity to travel across the country. I acquired hands-on experience early while working as a welder's helper and a ditch hand. I learned how to read blueprints and found myself fabricating natural gas substations. While I have a lot of respect for those in that profession, I learned that I would not willingly choose pipelining as a career.

After moving back to Oklahoma and getting married, I began subcontracting installations and service on C-band satellite television dishes. Most of that work was for Radio Shack. It was interesting to watch technology finally make its way to rural America.

Technology was evolving rapidly at that time and C-band gave way to much smaller 18-inch DBS satellite dishes used by DirecTV and Dish. Along with the satellite work, I was wiring homes for home automation systems. With internet popularity growing, I began taking classes to become certified in something called "internet dial return." Dial return is obsolete now, but it was a big deal back then. Basically, it used telephone lines to send information to satellite receivers.

One day I received a call from a Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative representative requesting a meeting. They wanted me to join their team and help roll out the next technology gamechanger for northeast Oklahoma, fiber-to-the-home. My wife Denise and I prayed about it and made the decision. We took time to make the necessary arrangements and close my business.

BOLT Fiber Optics has been an amazing next chapter in my career. I can say that I am truly blessed to have acquired that previous work experience and put it to work for customers here in northeast Oklahoma. We have something special here and I am privileged to be a part of it.



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THE LAYK SCHOOLHOUSE



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MAYES COUNTY RECIPES



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2023 DISTRICT MEETINGS

HAPPY
Father's
DAY
Sunday, June 18th

\$100 IS HIDING!

Search the pages of *Northeast 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 July 1, 2023, to claim a \$100 credit on your electric account.

FUN FACT!

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative is celebrating its 85th year serving you!

JUNE EVENTS

First Friday Cruise Night

June 2 | Commerce
Downtown

2023 Grand Lake Camp Bandage

June 3 | Afton
Grand Lake RV Resort

Grand Lake Wrestling Camp

June 6-7 | Grove
Grove High School Fieldhouse

Krawling for Kids

June 10 | Disney
Off-road Recreation Area

Miami Little Theatre Presents: Seussical

June 8-11 | Miami
117 N Main Street

MAP Motorsports Monster Trucks

June 9-10 | Miami
Miami Fairgrounds

2023 Toes in the Grand Summer Festival

June 15-18 | Grove
Wolf Creek Park

26th Annual Peoria Powwow

June 16 | Miami
60610 E 90 Road

Grand Meridian RV Resort's 6th Annual Grand Jam Music Fest

June 22-25 | Afton
Grand Meridian RV Resort

Huckleberry Festival

June 29-July 1 | Jay
Downtown

976348

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



SUMMER SAFETY

DANGER IN UNEXPECTED PLACES



Unknowingly, many place themselves in harm's way by swimming near boats and docks. This innocent act can turn tragic when faulty wiring, damaged cords, and other devices cause the surrounding water to become energized from electricity leakage. Awareness among boat owners and marina operators can help prevent electric shock drowning and other electrical injuries.

- Have your dockside electrical system (pedestal) inspected and updated yearly by a qualified electrician. If you have a new installation, hire a qualified electrician to ensure it meets all safety and code standards.
- Have "Marine Listed" Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) installed on the dock and test them monthly.
- Require boat owners to use only "Marine Listed" shore or marine power cords, plugs, receptacles, and extension cords that have been tested by Underwriters Laboratories (UL). They are specifically designed for use near water.
- Never use cords that are frayed or damaged or that have had the prongs removed or altered.

NEED A VACATION?

GIVE YOUR ENERGY BILL A BREAK AS WELL

While you are away for the holidays, will anyone be watching television, playing video games, connecting to the internet, or making coffee? Let's hope not! Unplug those devices and appliances and save your money from the phantom power draw that keeps them warmed up and ready to turn on at the click of a remote. About 10% of the utility bill for a typical home can be attributed to the electronic devices that are eager to serve you and are always at the ready. Give them a rest and vacation as well.

FOLLOW US!

Follow Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative on Facebook for more safety and efficiency tips.



2023 DISTRICT MEETINGS

DISTRICTS 1, 3, AND 5 TO SELECT BOARD TRUSTEE CANDIDATES

Our district meeting format is changing this year. In addition to our standard \$250, \$100, and \$50 electric credit prize drawings, each registered member in District 1, 3, and 5 will also receive a \$10 electric credit and enjoy a complimentary meal for themselves and one guest.

MEETING DATES

JULY 10: DISTRICT 1

Charles Wyrick, Incumbent Trustee

Peoria Tribe Community Center
1809 Cleveland Ave.
Miami, OK 74354

JULY 11: DISTRICT 3

Brian Kelly, Incumbent Trustee

Welch Civic Center
610 S Curtis Street
Welch, OK 74369

JULY 13: DISTRICT 5

Dandy Risman, Incumbent Trustee

Ketchum High School, commons area
236 N Fulton
Ketchum, OK 74349

The Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees is extending invitations to Cooperative members in Districts 1,3, and 5 to attend their respective 2023 District Meetings this summer.

Members may register to vote/participate at their District Meetings from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Those in line prior to 7 p.m. will be given a card ensuring their opportunity to register. All District Meetings start at 7 p.m., or as soon as is practical thereafter.

"With the success of our REC Day drive-thru events, we have missed out on the opportunity to gather in recent years," remarked NOEC General Manager Daniel Webster. "These member appreciation district meetings will help us fill that void."

OFFICIAL TRUSTEE CANDIDATE FILING PERIOD: JUNE 26-30, 2023

Section 3.06 of the Cooperative Bylaws requires any member desiring to be a Trustee candidate from the District of their primary residence to file with the Cooperative their Notice of Candidacy for Trustee during the official Candidate Filing Period:

- **Monday-Thursday, June 26-29, 2023:** 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Friday, June 30, 2023:** 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Notice of Candidacy for Trustee MUST be filed at the Headquarters Office of the Cooperative: 27039 S 4440 Rd, Vinita, OK 74301, during the Candidate Filing Period. **Only pre-qualified Candidates can be nominated at District Meetings.**

REQUIREMENT TO REGISTER

At District Meetings

Only eligible members may register and cast a vote at any member meeting. To register and vote you MUST be one of the following:

- **Primary on an individual account**
- **Primary or secondary on a joint account (only one joint member may vote)**
- **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, as a single or joint member, you will not be able to register to vote. We strongly encourage you to check your account. Call member services at 800.256.6405.

MONKEY ISLAND'S

ONE-STOP SHOPPING CENTER

ECHOES FROM THE PAST

You don't have to venture far here in Oklahoma to find a Work Progress Administration (WPA) project. These decades-old structures dot the rural landscape still today. While some have been razed over the years to make way for something more modern, others remain. They stand as silent sentries, reminders of a bygone era.

You may have experienced these structures unknowingly while driving across a bridge or passing an abandoned building. Designed with artisan sensibility, WPA projects were efficiently constructed and built for permanence. The buildings themselves reflect a sense of time and place. They feature simple yet distinctive stacked-block architecture using materials cut from native sandstone.

Many WPA structures have been repurposed. Such is the case with the Layk Schoolhouse, originally named *Lake Center Schoolhouse* when it was constructed back in 1940. The schoolhouse was utilized only three years. It was no longer needed once infrastructure was in place to connect Monkey Island with nearby towns like Grove and Afton.

THE LAYK SCHOOLHOUSE

27600 S HWY 125
AFTON, OK



Debbie Mitchell in front of The Layk Schoolhouse

If variety is the spice of life, you'll need a tall drink to cool your tongue after visiting the Layk Schoolhouse. The Monkey Island business center is a unique shopping destination in an area of Grand Lake that doesn't have unlimited options.

And that tall drink? You'll find it at **Bailey's Bistro**, one of several businesses occupying space at Layk Schoolhouse.

"We currently have four businesses and a leased office space with room for another business," said Debbie Mitchell, owner of the Layk Schoolhouse and one of its four occupying businesses. **Bailey's Bistro** and **Mitchell's Monkey Buzz** are joined by **Monkey Island Mail** and **Imago Expo Salon** under one roof.

Debbie and husband Brian purchased the schoolhouse in late 2021 after retiring and quickly discovering Debbie "couldn't sit still." The building had been an Italian restaurant and a residence, among other things, until catching Debbie's eye.



Bailey's Bistro dining room

"We retired and moved to Monkey Island in 2019," said Debbie. "Every time we would drive by this building I would say 'something needs to be done with that place.' I thought it was such a waste that it wasn't being used more by the community. My vision was always to have multiple businesses since there is a need for that on the island."

The Mitchells were pleasantly surprised to discover the building was structurally sound. Even the original gym floor was in great shape. Aside from an overhaul of the HVAC system and other challenges that come with owning an older building, Mitchell said the schoolhouse didn't require a lot of extra attention.

"The inspector was shocked at how well preserved everything was," Debbie said. "Of course, owning a historical building does have its challenges. We just tackle them one at a time."



Imago Expo Salon's Tammy Botts with a client



WPA Placard on exterior of building

She added: "We love this building. It's part of the history of this area. Sometimes it can be a little stressful, maybe even a little overwhelming, but isn't anything worth saving a little stressful?"

One of the newest additions at Layk Schoolhouse is an outdoor patio area. This space is available to rent for events, parties, and even small wedding celebrations.

Plan a visit to the Layk Schoolhouse. Do some shopping, grab a bite, or just look around.

VISITORS WELCOME

"We welcome all visitors and hope they will help us support our businesses," Debbie said. "It was closed for so long that we have many people who want to just stop by and look."



BAILEY'S BISTRO AT THE LAYK SCHOOLHOUSE

There are a million other ways to enjoy your time at Grand Lake, so why let hours spent cooking, cleaning, and prepping in the kitchen complicate your day? Why not leave that to the culinary experts at Bailey's Bistro.

Bailey and Lori Stanphill are all about the flavor and are more than happy to share that with guests at **Bailey's Bistro**. The restaurant is open for breakfast, brunch, or lunch year-round Wednesday through Sunday from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Bistro guests can expect food made fresh and cooked to order, as well as drink options that are worth the visit all by themselves. The smoothies are head-turners and coffee is always a popular choice and is served hot, iced, or as a flavored cold brew.

"We offer a variety of smoothies like Mango Tango and the blueberry smoothie made with fresh spinach and oats," Bailey explained. "We also have iced cold brew drinks flavored with vanilla sweet cream and salted caramel coconut."

Bailey describes Brenda Guidry as the "face and soul of the bistro" and says "she does a great job of making sure the food comes out fresh and fast."

Bistro breakfast items include biscuits and gravy, an assortment of wraps and sandwiches, and a hash brown casserole that is fast becoming a favorite among guests.



Breakfast is served all day at Bailey's Bistro

Lunch brings delicious soups such as tomato bisque, and grilled cheese options that are other-worldly. Smoked salmon & Gruyere, the High Five (five different cheeses), the Muffaletta, and the steak & blue cheese wrap are all big hits. Bailey said the bistro is a family venture with valuable input coming from daughters Sophia and Mia, and son Crispin.

"Our family has very strong ties to Grand Lake and we are very blessed to be able to call Monkey Island and the Grand Lake area home," Bailey said.

Bailey and Lori are both Grove High School graduates, and each of the five Stanphill children attend—or have

graduated—from Grove schools.

The Stanphills bring almost thirty years of restaurant experience to Bailey's Bistro. Many are familiar with the family's other dining venture, Blind Swine.

"Being in the bar business for almost 25 years, which I still love, the bistro offers a different side of the hospitality business," Bailey explained. "Our guests here are starting out their day or popping in for a bite to eat while taking a break from work or meeting friends for lunch."

IMAGE EXPO SALON

AT THE LAYK SCHOOLHOUSE

Look and feel better with one visit to **Image Expo Salon**. Owner Tammy Botts and staff offer both cosmetology and massage services to help customers do just that. Botts has 40 years of experience in the cosmetology field, along with numerous certifications. She says staying current is extremely important in an industry that is always changing.

"In this industry you are always evolving, learning new things, new techniques, and keeping with the latest trends," she said.

Botts opened Image Expo Salon in 2004. She moved to the area in 2002 to be closer to her parents.

I have always loved doing hair," she smiled.

Botts is joined by cosmetologist Misty McPhetridge and licensed massage therapist Christi Cox at Image Expo Salon, which features cuts, color, mani/pedi, full facial waxing, and full body massages. Featured product lines include Matrix and Lanza.

"Business is great," said Botts. We are very blessed to have great community support."

Cox, meanwhile, is a licensed massage therapist offering a plethora of massage options ranging from thirty minutes to two hours and from sports massage to raindrop therapy. Customers can select from a robust menu that includes Swedish or deep tissue massage, trigger point, reflexology, cupping, hot stones, migraine relief, and more.



Christi Cox, Tammy Botts, and Misty McPhetridge

"I offer several clinical, five-star massage services using high-grade coconut oil and Young Living oils," she said.

While she has been doing massage since 2006, Cox and her family didn't move to Grand Lake until 2020.

"We moved here the week of Christmas in 2020," she explained. "COVID inspired us to move out of our cookie-cutter neighborhood in Edmond."

Cox also is open year-round. Her summer hours are Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. In the winter she is open those same days from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

"Business has been so amazing since I started working here," said Cox. "I never expected to be this busy so quickly. I love my Grand Lake clientele."

**Call 405.306.8436 to schedule a massage.
Call 918.257.4771 to schedule with the salon.**

OKLAHOMA IMPACT

According to the Oklahoma Historical Society, the WPA had a significant impact on our state, employing approximately 119,000 people and with a total investment of \$59 million—over a billion dollars when adjusted for inflation. Projects included farm-to-market roads, hundreds of schools, numerous National Guard armories, and dozens of dams, reservoirs, and drainage projects.

MONKEY BUZZ AT THE LAYK SCHOOLHOUSE



Products on display at Monkey Buzz

Monkey Buzz is open Wednesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. It is also open the first Sunday of the month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For further information, call 417.437.9240.

Debbie Mitchell's passion for creativity is on full display at **Monkey Buzz**, a boutique featuring clothing, gifts, and floral design—both fresh and silk.

Mitchell retired in 2019 but admits she "can't sit still." Thus was born Monkey Buzz, a unique boutique with a little something for everyone.

Mitchell brings forty years of experience in floral design and event planning to the shop. She is joined by employees Dawn Parker and Nancy Morgan, who share her passion for business.

"We are always trying to offer customers something unique and creative," said Mitchell, adding that "we recently added an area for customers to make their own gift baskets."

Mitchell and husband Brian are also owners of the Layk Schoolhouse.

"The Monkey Island community has been very supportive of us," Debbie said. "We are truly blessed."

A NEW DEAL

The United States was reeling from the effects of the Great Depression when Congress created the Work Progress Administration in 1935. WPA addressed unemployment directly, putting millions to work while creating long-term benefits for communities. It administered more than \$5 billion in public works over the next eight years, making it the largest New Deal project implemented under President Franklin Roosevelt.

By the time the program ended in 1943, it had created more than eight million jobs nationwide and numerous public works projects. Many of these projects are considered architectural gems and stand today as testaments to a nation determined to survive.

The majority of these projects involved building and repairing infrastructure, including thousands of miles of roads; 10,000 bridges; and over 40,000 new buildings were constructed. These landmark buildings and monuments have become icons in their own right and have left a lasting legacy.



Lisa Kucera

MONKEY ISLAND MAIL

AT THE LAYK SCHOOLHOUSE

Lisa Kucera opened Monkey Island Mail in early 2022, inspired by her own routine trips to the local post office, which she describes as "an inconvenient, 25-mile round-trip."

Explained Kucera: "I was also experiencing reliability and security issues with postal delivery to my lake address."

Her solution? "I started researching what it would take to become a Commercial Mail Receiving Agent (CMRA) and offer a more convenient and secure private post office box option here on the island."

Kucera's background includes a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Nebraska, and working as a CPA for both Price Waterhouse Coopers (an international public accounting firm) and later Sprint (now T-Mobile).

"I switched careers in my 40s," she said. "I got my masters in gifted education and taught in a metropolitan context in Kansas City, Missouri, up until a few years ago."

Kucera and husband Gordon and have always been self-described "lake people." Their destination for more than twenty years was Table Rock Lake for camping, boating, and water skiing with their three now-grown daughters and their friends.

When the youngest daughter chose to attend the University of Tulsa, the Kuceras found themselves making frequent drives from Kansas City. During these trips they would see the signs along the turnpike for Grand Lake. On one such occasion, Lisa said they decided to exit and scope out the area.

"We ended up stopping at the Shangri-La real estate office to pick up an informational brochure. We ended up looking at two condos. Within 24 hours we had put in an offer. It was the most impulsive—and best—decision we've ever made."

Lisa's enterprising spirit is evident at **Monkey Island Mail**, a full-service mailroom offering USPS, UPS, and FedEx options. Private mailbox rental, shipping supplies, stamps and labels, and also copy, fax, scanning, and notary services are also available.

"We also assist with Amazon returns via label printing or QR codes," she said. "We're thrilled to be able to facilitate Amazon return services, something normally requiring a drive to and from Joplin to accomplish."

The store also recently introduced a used book exchange with a "take one leave one" policy. Books are available for purchase if you simply cannot part with them after reading.

Monkey Island Mail services are available year-round and open Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., or by appointment. Extended hours are offered during the Christmas season, as well as an additional service of gift wrapping.

"Islanders have been incredibly supportive of this convenient option," Kucera said of the holiday gift wrap option.

Kucera said she and her staff look forward to connecting with area residents who appreciate having more time to spend out on the water, instead of in line at the post office.

Monkey Island Mail can be reached by phone at 918.314.2259 during business hours.



FEATURED RECIPES

MAYES COUNTY | DESSERTS



Makes 2 beautiful pies!

OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD PIE

SUE DIXON

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large can cherry pie filling
- 1 large can crushed pineapple with juice
- 1 tsp red food coloring
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 TBS cornstarch
- 1 small box raspberry Jell-O
- 6 bananas, sliced
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 2, 10 inch pie shells, baked
- Whipped topping to garnish

Step 1: In a saucepan combine cherry pie filling, pineapple with juice, red food coloring, sugar, and cornstarch. Cook until thickened.

Step 2: Remove from heat, stir-in Jell-O, and allow to cool.

Step 3: Add bananas and pecans to filling mixture then pour into pie shells.

Step 4: Top pies with whipped topping and chill in refrigerator.

CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

CECELIA CANNON

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup butter (softened)
- 1 cup brown sugar (packed)
- 1 cup white sugar
- 2 tsp vanilla
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3 cups flour
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 2 tsp hot water
- 2 cups chocolate chips
- 1 cup chopped nuts

Step 1: Cream butter, and brown and white sugar until smooth. Beat in eggs.

Step 2: Add vanilla and hot water to mixture and stir to combine.

Step 3: Gradually stir in salt, flour, baking soda, chocolate chips, and nuts.

Step 4: Drop by the teaspoon on an ungreased cookie sheet (I like to use parchment paper) and bake at 350°F for 10 minutes, or until edges are nicely browned.



Bake time: 10 minutes