

# NE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



## STUDENTS GO TO CAPITOL 2023 OKLAHOMA YOUTH TOUR

AUGUST 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](mailto:publicrelations@noec.coop)*

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## THE MORE THINGS CHANGE...

**Kenny Smith**  
**Pryor Operations Superintendent**

My wife and I recently celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary which means I've been in the electric utility industry for 30 years now too. We were married a couple months after I graduated from college and exactly twelve days after I started my first job at an electric cooperative in Kansas.

Just as my wife and I have seen many changes in our 30 years of marriage—like buying houses, moving back to Oklahoma, the birth of our children, and kids graduating and leaving the nest—I've also witnessed many changes in the electrical utility industry over the last three decades.

They say change is good, but I must admit that I'm sometimes resistant to change. Seems like to me that if it worked in the "good old days" then it should still work now.

When I first entered this field, we had large desktop computers, cell phones the size of bricks, and paper maps. To find a member, we used maps and pole numbers. There was no such thing as GPS and everything was done with paper and pencil. We didn't worry about things being deleted by mistake or dead batteries or sketchy cell service.

Today's linemen work almost exclusively with cell phones and iPads. Our maps are digital and our work cell phones fit in our back pocket. We no longer rely on our memories. We can always be reached by phone so there's no such thing as downtime. I admit that our digital maps are quite handy. Thanks to satellite imagery, we can see what's over the hill and around the bend.

*Continued on page 2.*



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VINITA DAY CENTER



10

DELAWARE COUNTY RECIPES



06

YOUTH TOUR

SAVE THE DATE

# REC DAY

SEPTEMBER 14

Jay | Miami | Pryor | Vinita

**\$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 September 1, 2023, to claim a \$100 credit on your electric account.

**FUN FACT!**

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

## AUGUST EVENTS

<p><b>Grove Playmakers presents:</b>  <b>Nonsense II - The Second Coming</b>  <b>August 1-5   Grove</b>          Grove Playmakers Theatre</p> <p><b>Eastern Shawnee's Shawna Stovall Back-to-School Children's Powwow</b>  <b>August 4-5   Wyandotte</b>          Various Locations</p> <p><b>Ottawa County Free Fair</b>  <b>August 5-12   Miami</b>          Miami Fairgrounds</p> <p><b>2 Hip Chicks Roadshow</b>  <b>August 5   Claremore</b>          Claremore Expo Center</p> <p><b>Jay Cruise Night</b>  <b>August 12   Jay</b>          Downtown</p>	<p><b>Pryor Patchers Quilt Guild Comforts of Home Quilt Show</b>  <b>August 18-19   Pryor</b>          Mayes County Event Center</p> <p><b>Will Rogers Memorial Rodeo</b>  <b>August 23-26   Vinita</b>          American Legion Rodeo Grounds</p> <p><b>Will Rogers Memorial Rodeo Parade</b>  <b>August 23   Vinita</b>          Downtown</p> <p><b>Rodeo Miami</b>  <b>August 25-26   Miami</b>          Miami Rodeo Arena</p>
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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](mailto:publicrelations@noec.coop)



# THE MORE THINGS CHANGE... CONTINUED FROM INSIDE COVER

**I'm reminded of the famous saying "The more things change, the more they stay the same."**

Despite the numerous changes that have taken place over the last 30 years, I can honestly say our cooperative's mission to improve the quality of life of our members has never wavered. We are here to serve, to be a part of our community and to look out for one another. Just like it says in the book of Philippians, "Look not only to your own interests but also to the interests of others." Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative has been doing this for over 85 years and will continue to do so.

Although I don't always like all of the changes that come my way, I also realize there's nothing I can do to stop them. If they are for the betterment of the cooperative, its members, and its employees, then I want to give them my full support.

I hope this philosophy is reflected in my priorities. Long after I've retired from our cooperative I want to be remembered as a man who was concerned for others and kept the main thing: Jesus first, family second, and my job third.



## NATIONAL 811 DAY YOUR REMINDER TO DIG SAFELY



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

An underground utility line is damaged every six minutes in the United States, meaning that ten times an hour, a potentially dangerous and costly incident causes a utility outage for one customer or an entire neighborhood.

Don't be a statistic. National 811 Day is August 11, serving as an important reminder that everyone, whether a homeowner with a shovel or a professional excavator with an earthmover, must Call Before You Dig.



# NOEC BOARD APPROVES 2022 PATRONAGE ALLOCATION

**Cooperative businesses are unique. They are owned by the members they serve and are guided by a set of seven principles that reflect the interests of those members. One of those seven guiding principles is Member Economic Participation.**

Economic participation simply means that members contribute equitably to—and democratically control—cooperative capital. Unlike investor-owned utilities, cooperatives do not issue stocks. Surpluses are considered margins, not profits.

Margins exceeding what is required to operate the business are allocated to member patronage accounts. The success of a cooperative is shared with its members through annual patronage allocation.

**Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative's board of trustees recently approved allocation of 2022 patronage capital totaling \$6,375,145.**

**\*993127\***

For 2022 usage, an allocation factor of \$0.00834577 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) will be used. A member using 1,233 kWh per month, for example, would produce \$123.48 in patronage for the year.

To calculate the capital credit allocated to your member patronage account for 2022, simply multiply the allocation factor of \$0.00834577 by your total kWh usage for the year.

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## FORMULA EXAMPLE

$$\$0.00834577 \times 1,233 \times 12 = \$123.48$$

kWh                      months

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**If you are a member of the cooperative with active service, you can find the allocation amount in the upper right-hand corner of your August 2023 statement. This amount will remain in your patronage capital account until a future patronage retirement is made.**

NOEC is honored to serve you and share its success with you. If you have questions about how capital credit is allocated or if you would like to know the total amount in your member patronage account for this or previous years, feel free to contact us 918.256.6405, ext. 9313.



# VINITA DAY CENTER

## A HAVEN FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

**Operation Round-Up reaches deep into communities all across northeast Oklahoma. Evidence of this impact can be found in downtown Vinita on any given weekend.**



*Kathy Markham, Sharon Walker, and Diane Hillegass*

On days when most families gather in their homes to fellowship, a number of disadvantaged individuals find safe haven at Vinita's Day Center. The non-profit center has been in operation since 1988 and provides warm meals and recreational opportunities four days a week for adults in the community who are either homeless or dependent on residential care facilities for housing.

A recent Operation Round-Up grant totaling \$4,579 helped the center purchase or replace items essential for its continued service within the community.

Outreach at the day center is driven by volunteers who often purchase food out-of-pocket and then cook and serve the meals. One of those volunteers is Dawn Brotherton, who also manages grants and sits on the center's board of directors. She says the facility's needs are varied and the Operation Round-Up grant was a godsend.

**"The grant was a blessing to the Vinita Day Center," Brotherton said. "We used the money to purchase a water filtration system, commercial freezer, and food for our pantry."**

Explained Brotherton: "The center provides hot meals on Saturday and Sunday, and we have snacks, sandwiches, and cereal on other days. Thanks to grants and generous donors, we never charge our guests, who are homeless or low-income adults and seniors, many of whom don't have adequate kitchens. We are very appreciative of Operation Round-Up for supporting our mission."

Center vice-president and volunteer Sandye Berga also thanked NOEC members for their generosity.

"The Vinita Day Center is serving upwards of fifty individuals on any given day," said Berga. "We needed a water filtration system that will eliminate the need to purchase bottled water. And the freezer allows us to stock up on frozen foods."

She added: "We don't receive funds from state or federal entities and many of our guests are Vinita residents who are homeless or displaced. We also work closely with area residential care facilities. As the numbers of homeless people continues to rise, we find ourselves looking for more resources to provide basic needs."

A total of \$31,782.60 in grants was awarded to seven different organizations during the latest meeting of the Operation Round-Up Trust Foundation Directors. Other recipients included CASA of Northeast Oklahoma, the Commerce Volunteer Fire Department, Harvest House Food Pantry in Salina, Ketchum Senior Citizens Center, Vinita Police Department, and Welch Volunteer Fire Department. The Trust Foundation board meets every other month to disburse accumulated funds.



NOEC introduced the Operation Round-Up program in 1998 with the slogan Small Change that Changes Lives. That description is no less fitting today. Over the past 25 years, Operation Round-Up has allocated more than \$3 million to needy causes throughout its service territory of Craig, Mayes, Delaware, Ottawa and Rogers counties.

Operation Round-Up does just what its name implies. Each month, electric bills of participating members is simply rounded up to the next highest dollar. The average contribution is 50 cents per month and totals around \$6 on an annual basis. For example, a bill of \$52.73 would be rounded up to \$53 with the additional 27 cents going to Operation Round-Up.

**To participate or for additional information, contact Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative at 918.256.6405.**



# YOUTH TOUR

NOEC SENDS FOUR TO NATION'S CAPITAL



Krystal Willis, Savannah Coblentz, Adyson Sandusky, and Guinevere Lang

## Four local students visited our nation's capital this summer as part of the 2023 Oklahoma Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative was represented on the trip by Adyson Sandusky of Pryor (Adair High School), Savannah Coblentz of Chouteau (Chouteau High School), Krystal Willis of Kansas (Kansas High School), and Guinevere Lang of Vinita (Vinita High School). The NOEC students were joined by 68 other delegates from across the state, as well as ten chaperones, and a nurse.

Students qualified for the trip by working a community service project or submitting an essay (or both) that satisfied the contest prompt *Making a Difference Where I Live*.

"It's a great honor for these students to have been selected to represent their cooperatives and communities during this once-in-a-lifetime experience," remarked Stacy Howeth, Director of Member Services for the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives and coordinator of the Youth Tour trip.

This Oklahoma Youth Tour contingent departed early on June 17 and enjoyed six full days' worth of activities before returning home June 22. They took in a number of sights and sounds during the busy week including visits to: Fort McHenry National Park, Baltimore Inner Harbor, Arlington National Cemetery, Iwo Jima Memorial, Air Force Memorial, Pentagon 9-11 Memorial, Mount Vernon, Holocaust Museum, Library of Congress, and Ford's Theatre. They enjoyed a monument tour, Youth Night, a boat dinner cruise, a congressional summit, a tour of the U.S. Capitol, dinner in Old Towne Alexandria, and the Oklahoma Reflection Party.



**“As you can see, we saw just about every monument, memorial, and museum possible,” Howeth said. “It was a jam-packed week of visiting sights that many people have only heard about or seen in a book or on television. We prepared for this trip for about a year now and were so excited to lead our students on this adventure. They shared this mission with 80 other people to whom they will be forever connected by these experiences. Oklahoma’s electric cooperatives were proud to sponsor this journey.”**

### **Krystal Willis**

*Making a Difference* doesn’t necessarily mean grand gestures. There is ample value in small acts as well.

Willis said she has learned to contribute in smaller, meaningful ways through her participation in school organizations such as Beta Club.

“Making a difference in the area where I live—even if the difference is small—is very important to me,” she said.

School organizations afford Willis an opportunity to do just that. She has joined Beta Club members on missions to patrol school grounds for trash. She has also taken part in benevolent activities as part of her childhood development class. One example was when students in the class sewed pillows for elderly residents at a local nursing home.

Another activity that Willis believes is beneficial to the student body is her role with the school newspaper. She says the pictures she takes and editorials she writes have an direct impact on how her peers view the world around them.

“The editorials address important topics such as global warming, recycling, and different materials that can be used instead of plastics and other things harmful to our environment and our world.”

From helping clean up school grounds to crafting gifts for the less fortunate to promoting environmental awareness, Willis is indeed Making a Difference where she lives.

“There are many ways I am able to help people in my community,” she explained. “They may not seem like a lot by themselves, but when they are combined they add up to quite a bit.”

### **Savannah Coblentz**

Coblentz’ *Making a Difference* story was inspired by wisdom from her grandmother, who understood that every individual is a piece of a larger puzzle.

“She said that each piece puts the puzzle together, no matter how small,” Coblentz explained. “I am a just a piece of a giant puzzle, but I can make a difference if I can help others find where they belong in life.”

Coblentz participates in several organizations, including Native American Student Association (NASA), student council, MidAmerica Ambassador, National Honor Society, and ETS. She is especially involved in NASA, where she heads a student-led, volunteer organization that seeks to educate people about Native American history and culture.

NASA hosts a Native American Day at school that features a tribal storyteller, pow-wow, and native artifacts display. Future plans for the group include a stuffed animal drive and a fundraising dinner featuring Native American cuisine

“Our primary purpose is to remind people of the history of Native Americans,” Coblentz said. “Many Native Americans don’t understand their culture and we lose a piece of ourselves when we ignore it.”

Coblentz says her immediate community consists of fellow students, teachers, office staff, administration and maintenance personnel at school.

“Although many are familiar to us and others work behind the scenes, we work together to make the world a better place, to make our community a better place, and to make ourselves better people,” said Coblentz, emphasizing the importance of skill-building. After all, progress begins within.

“Being a leader in school organizations requires many skills—leadership skills, time management, and patience—to be successful,” she said.

Coblentz said she welcomes an opportunity to help assemble the puzzle.

“It takes one person to make a change in the world, one person to help piece the puzzle together, starting with ourselves,” she said.

### **Adyson Sandusky**

For Sandusky, *Making a Difference* means involvement with her school’s FCCLA organization.

FCCLA stands for Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, and Sandusky serves as the Northeast District 2 Vice-President of Community Service. In that role, she actively works with Citizens Caring for Children, a nonprofit organization that provides items for kids living in Oklahoma foster care homes. She organized a pajama drive and a caring card drive, both of which were very successful. She also worked with 15 other high schools in the district, helping them to develop their own local service projects.

Sandusky helped organize a food drive at school that filled over 350 food bags to distribute within the community. She also served as a volunteer chef at Ronald McDonald House in Tulsa, where her team prepared and served dinner to families staying at the facility. She participated in a secret Santa project for teachers, an angel tree project, made blankets for the local DVIS shelter, and served at various community banquets and events.

“Adyson truly has a heart for service,” confirmed Robin DeLozier, Adair High School’s FCCLA Advisor.

“Community service aren’t just words,” Sandusky said. “It’s an opportunity to contribute time to help others and make a difference in society. Not only does it make the world a better place to live, it is important because as you help build up the community you are also building character by becoming a better person.”

She added: “One of the simplest ways that I gain satisfaction in life is by dedicating my time to a cause that I feel passionate about. I have been blessed in my life and want to pay it forward in ways that are possible for me to do.”

### **Guinevere Lang**

Lang’s *Making a Difference* story began when she joined Vinita High School’s student council her sophomore year.

“That led me to become more active in my community with acts of volunteerism,” she said. “If I can make a difference while helping our student council with its projects, anyone can make a difference.”

After joining STUCO, Lang said she began to participate in several school projects.

“From setting up for the Fall Fling to helping with football parking,” Lang said she began to enjoy her involvement more and more. Enough, in fact, to want to become an officer. She was elected STUCO treasurer and responded well to the added responsibilities.

“This year we began helping our local Neighbors Helping Neighbors organization fill bags for elementary and middle school students to have something to eat at home. Another program that STUCO started is stocking our local Hornet Help Boxes with food and toiletries. These boxes are designed to help families who don’t have enough money in their paychecks for essential items to get through the entire week.”

Lang recommends that students join their school’s STUCO so they can experience volunteerism first-hand.

“Joining STUCO is a big step toward becoming an active member of any community,” she said. “For me, taking that first step helped me make a difference in my community.”

**Learn more about Youth Tour by visiting:**  
[noec.coop/community-services/youth-programs/](https://noec.coop/community-services/youth-programs/).

# ASSISTANCE AGENCIES

## 2023 RESOURCE LIST

### Craig County

Department of Human Services (DHS).....	918.713.5000
Grand Gateway.....	918.783.5793
Grand Nation/Salvation Army.....	918.276.2192
Grand Lake Community Ministries.....	918.782.2861
Neighbors Helping Neighbors.....	918.713.8088
Salvation Army.....	918.256.2037

### Delaware County

Community Action.....	918.253.4683
Cherokee Nation Human Services, Jay.....	918.253.4219
Department of Human Services (DHS).....	918.435.3001
Grand Gateway.....	918.783.5793

### Ottawa County

Department of Human Services (DHS).....	918.541.2400
Salvation Army.....	918.542.3467
Grand Gateway.....	918.783.5793

### Mayes County

Cherokee Housing Authority.....	918.825.4811
Department of Human Services (DHS).....	918.824.4900
Grand Gateway.....	918.783.5793
Salvation Army/Community Action Pryor.....	918.825.3423

### Rogers County

Community Action.....	918.341.5000
Department of Human Services (DHS).....	918.283.8300
Grand Gateway.....	918.783.5793

### Northwest Arkansas

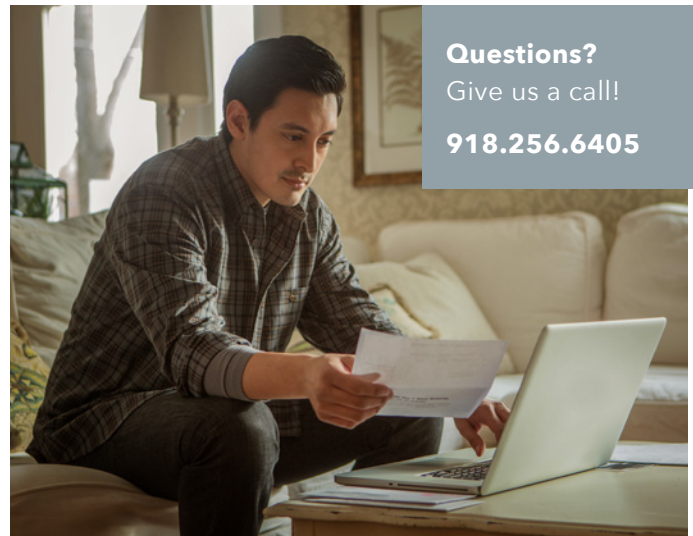
Salvation Army.....	479.521.2151
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### Contact

### Tribes

### Contact

Cherokee Nation Tribe.....	800.256.0671
Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribe.....	405.422.7476
Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma.....	580.436.7256
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.....	580.924.8280
Delaware Tribe of Oklahoma.....	918.337.6590
Eastern Shawnee Tribe.....	918.666.7710
Kaw Nation.....	580.269.2552 x 231
Kiowa Tribe.....	580.654.2300
Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.....	918.541.1389
Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma.....	918.542.1190
Peoria Tribe.....	918.542.1873
Osage Nation.....	918.287.5555
Ottawa Indian Tribe.....	918.540.1536
Quapaw Tribe.....	918.542.1853 x 222
Sac and Fox Nation.....	918.968.3526
Seneca-Cayuga Tribe.....	918.787.5452
Shawnee Tribe.....	918.542.2441
United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians	918.871.2800
Wyandotte Nation.....	918.678.2297



**Questions?**

Give us a call!

**918.256.6405**



# FEATURED RECIPES

## DELAWARE COUNTY | DRINKS



### POOR BOY PUNCH

DANNY HENDRICKSON

#### INGREDIENTS

- 2 packs of Kool-Aid (any flavor)
- 2 cups sugar
- 32 oz can pineapple juice
- 20 oz bottle of 7UP
- Water

**Step 1:** Add Kool-Aid, sugar, pineapple juice, and 7UP to a pitcher.

**Step 2:** Stir well.

**Step 3:** Add water to fill the rest of the pitcher.

### ORANGEADE

JUDY CHAMBERLAIN

#### INGREDIENTS

- 2 packs of lemonade Kool-Aid
- 1/2 package of orange Kool-Aid
- 2 1/2 cups of sugar
- 1 orange (juiced)
- 1 lemon (juiced)

**Step 1:** Mix all ingredients well, in a pitcher.

**Step 2:** Chill before drinking.



**Have a recipe to share?** Email it to [publicrelations@noec.coop](mailto:publicrelations@noec.coop) for a chance to be featured!