

NE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



SHOPPORTUNITIES ABOUND
AT THE SHOPS AT GRAND MERIDIAN

FEBRUARY 2024



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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THE MORE THINGS CHANGE...

*Jason Gibe
Grove Operations Superintendent*

If you are anything like me, you probably aren't a big fan of change. I get in my comfort zone and want things to stay just the way they are.

So much for comfort zones. I have witnessed quite a lot of change in the 28 years I have been employed at Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative.

For one, the equipment we now have at NOEC is vastly improved from what we had 28 years ago. Plus, we now have enough equipment to go around. That means there are fewer poles for our line workers to climb, so jobs get done more safely and quickly.

Technology has obviously come a long way as well. A perfect example of this is the invention of smart meters. Those cool, little devices are capable of letting our dispatchers know in real time whether or not there is power to a home—sometimes even before the homeowner is aware there is an outage. That means there is less running to check on meters following a storm to see if they have power.

Our right-of-way program has also increased dramatically since the 1990s, which means fewer broken poles and downed power lines resulting from big storms.

I've provided three examples of change I've witnessed during my time here at NOEC and how all three have made a difference in how we do things today. All three of those things have helped make the jobs we do as linemen safer and more efficient. So maybe change is not so bad after all.

Continued on page 2.





SHOPPORTUNITIES ABOUND



YOUTH PROGRAMS



OTTAWA COUNTY RECIPES

\$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 March 1, 2024, to claim a \$100 credit on your electric account.

FEBRUARY EVENTS

Mother & Daughter Wellness Retreat

Feb 2-4 | Grove

Summerhill Ranch at Grand Lake

Angler Tips & Tricks

Feb 3 | Grove

Wolf Creek Park

Home of Hope Chocolate Affair

Feb 7 | Vinita

Craig County Fairgrounds

200 Hour Yoga Teacher Training

Feb 9 | Grove

414 E 3rd Street

Winter Sale Series: Ski & Wake

Feb 15-17 | Afton

MarineMax Grand Lake

Oklahoma Tackle, Hunting, and Boat Show

Feb 15-18 | Chouteau

MidAmerica Expo Center

"Persnickety"

Feb 18, 22, 23, 25, 27, & 29

Grove

Grove Playmakers Theatre

"Arsenic and Old Lace"

Feb 22 | Miami

Coleman Theatre

Women & Wellness

Feb 23-25 | Grove

Summerhill Ranch at Grand Lake

Let's Talk About It: "Wonder" by R.J. Palacio

Feb 28 | Miami

Miami Public Library

HAPPY
Valentine's
DAY
Wednesday, February 14

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE...

CONTINUED FROM INSIDE COVER

Since I've demonstrated what has changed, I should probably mention a few things that *have not*.

One is the weather itself. You can always count on those old Oklahoma storms to keep rolling in, knocking down poles, tearing down lines, and wreaking complete havoc on our infrastructure. And you can always count on us to keep working around the clock to restore power to everyone who is affected. Those two things will never change.

Another constant is our employees' dedication to the community. When I first started, I was blessed to have been trained by some very influential individuals: Danny Sherman, Tim Snow, Max Wallace, Dick Howe, Johnny Williams, and Larry Harris. Sadly, some of those gentlemen have passed. They were tough, old-school linemen who worked hard and were proud to be a part of the cooperative and the community.

I, myself, am now one of those "older" ones. While I may not like to consider myself as older, it is nonetheless true. Do you know what I've noticed since I'm now older? I see the same things I saw when I first started. We have hard-working employees who also serve on school boards, as little league coaches, and even pastors at our local churches. They work hard, they love their communities, and they are willing to help serve whenever they can. They are dedicated to keeping northeast Oklahoma a great place to live and work.

I guess the more things change, the more they stay the same.

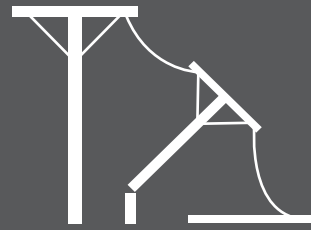


Gibe and crew build service to Lowe's in Grove, 2003



TIPS

DOWNED POWER LINE SAFETY



- **Move Away** If you see a downed power line, move away from it and anything touching it. The ground around power lines 35 feet away or more may be energized and dangerous.
- **Assume Line is Live** You cannot tell whether or not a power line is energized just by looking at it. You should assume that all downed power lines are live.
- **Use Small Steps** The proper way to move away from the power line is to shuffle away with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times. This will minimize the potential for a strong electric shock.
- **Don't Touch** If you see someone who is in direct or indirect contact with the downed line, do not touch the person. You could become the next victim. Call 911 for help.
- **Don't Move Line** Do not attempt to move a downed power line or anything else in contact with it by using an object such as a broom or stick. Even non-conductive materials like wood or cloth, can conduct electricity if even slightly damp.
- **Avoid Water** Be careful not to touch or step in water near where a downed power line is located.
- **If In A Car** If your car comes in contact with a downed power line while you are inside, stay in the car. Honk your horn to summon help, but direct others to stay away from your car.

Get Internet & Phone Services for Less!

The Lifeline and Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) provides discounted monthly broadband and home phone services for qualified customers!

For more information visit:

- Visit [fcc.gov/acp](https://www.fcc.gov/acp)

To apply for Lifeline, customers can:

- Visit [lifelinesupport.org](https://www.lifelinesupport.org)



844.256.BOLT | boltfiber.com

SHOPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

DEVELOPMENT OF GRAND LAKE CONTINUES WITH NEW SHOPPING CENTER

The shores of Grand Lake are once again abuzz with the sights and sounds of economic development. Some might say that since Jerry Brother and Greg Knotts teamed up those sights and sounds have never stopped. They wouldn't be wrong.

Friends and business associates Brother and Knotts are the brains, brawn, and backing behind the ultra-successful Grand Meridian RV, Cabin & Tiny Home Resort that broke ground back in 2016. That project debuted with 22 RV sites on 42 acres and has since blossomed into an almost unrecognizable 142 RV sites; 29 custom homes, tiny homes, and rental cabins; and 137 storage units—all on 87 sprawling acres of what was once undeveloped pasture.



And now Brothers and Knott have another project that has the Grand Lake community excited. Say hello to **The Shops at Grand Meridian**, a sprawling retail complex that will bring shopping opportunities—not to mention jobs—to what has heretofore been a seasonal bedroom community.

"This is something that Jerry and I thought would be a great addition to the Duck Creek area of Grand Lake," Knotts said. "It is definitely needed here in this community."

Just like everything else that Brother and Knotts do, **The Shops at Grand Meridian** has a decidedly "go big or go home" feel. Ground was broken back in September 2023 on the first phase of the project, which includes three buildings that comprise a total of 10,900 square feet of retail space. All but 600 feet of that space has already been leased with five shops set to open February 1, 2024.

"We have several units leased and others are being negotiated currently," said Knotts. "We will have more announcements coming soon."

Those five shops include: Grand Lake Fitness, a 24-hour fitness center, Grand Lake Tanning, Java Don's Gourmet Coffee and Bistro, Sassy & Classy 4 Grand Lake boutique, and Jerry's Place Classic Car Showroom.

But wait, there's more, says Knotts.

"We already have the slab poured for a fourth building, which will be 2,700 square feet. It will be finished and ready by April 1, 2024."

In case you need further convincing that The Shops at Grand Meridian means business, Knotts says he and Brother plan to eventually add three additional buildings for a grand total of 23,300 square feet of retail and office space. He said they envision a plethora of options occupying the space at **The Shops at Grand Meridian.**

"In addition to the many retail opportunities, we would like to see professional offices for an attorney, real estate, and accountant," Knotts said. "And we are currently looking to add a high quality hair salon and nail salon."



He added: "We have units beginning at 600 square feet and will customize sizes and interiors as needed."

The Shops at Grand Meridian is located at 31842 South 4510 Road in Cleora. Inquiries can be directed to Knotts at 918-864-2417. You can also email theshopsatgrandmeridian@gmail.com or follow on Facebook.

"Both Jerry and I are over-the-top excited about this project for the employment opportunities, economic growth, and convenience it will bring to the area," Knotts remarked.

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Youth Tour Community Service Project or Essay | High School Juniors

Area high school juniors can complete a 6-8 hour community service project for a chance to win an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., June 14-20, as part of the 2024 Youth Tour contest. Winning students will also receive \$500 in spending cash. As an alternative form of entry, students can submit a 300-500 word essay on the topic "Making a Difference Where I Live." Students who are in the eleventh grade and attend school within the cooperative service area are eligible to participate in this contest. Cooperative membership is not a requirement. Two winners will be selected. Entry deadline: March 25, 2024.

College/Trade School Scholarship | High School Seniors

High school seniors whose parents or guardians are NOEC members and who live in a household served by NOEC electric can apply for a \$2,000 scholarship to a college, university, or trade school. Four winners will be selected. Entry deadline: April 22, 2024.

Classroom Incentive

NOEC is encouraging area schools to get involved. If a teacher administers the Youth Tour program as part of a classroom assignment and produces a contest finalist, he or she could be rewarded with \$100 toward the purchase of classroom materials or equipment.

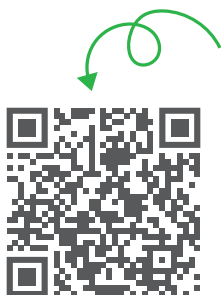
Community Service Award | FFA, FCCLA, 4-H

Local FFA, FCCLA, and 4-H organizations can apply for \$200 to assist with program expenses.

Safety Presentations

Area students can receive an introduction to electrical safety this school year, thanks to NOEC's "kid-friendly" safety presentations. Traveling presentations are available upon request to elementary school classrooms and local youth organizations. Presentations utilize visual aids and are geared toward a younger audience.

Visit www.noec.coop and click on the *Community Services* tab for youth programs entry forms and additional information.



SCAN ME!

Community Service Project Ideas

Pick up trash around your school campus and/or athletic field(s), your church, a park, or your town sports complex. Volunteer time at a local animal shelter, food pantry, or thrift store. Offer to mow, pull weeds, or rake leaves for an elderly neighbor. Collect non-perishable items to donate to a local food bank. Assemble goodie bags and deliver them to a local day center or assisted living facility.

Need more help? Contact the NOEC Public Relations department at publicrelations@noec.coop for a project idea in your area!

\$2,000 Scholarship For Area High School Seniors

Deadline: Monday, April 22, 2024

Applicants may attend public, private, charter, or home school but must reside in a household served by NOEC, be in the top one-third of his/her graduating class, **submit two letters of recommendation (one school source & one character reference), and an official copy of their high school transcript.** Return this application with the supporting documentation listed above to: NOEC, PO Box 948, Vinita, OK 74301, or email to publicrelations@noec.coop.

I. Personal Information

Full name _____ Date of birth _____
Home address _____ County _____
Parents or guardians (*name and address if not the same*) _____
Household account # with Northeast Electric _____
Home phone number _____ Email address _____
Name of high school _____ Year graduating _____
What college/trade school do you plan to attend? _____
What will be your major field of study? _____

II. Financial Information

Annual household income \$39,999 or less \$40,000-\$69,999 \$70,000-\$99,999 \$100,000 or more
Number in family _____ Number currently in household _____
Factors or circumstances that affect your financial need _____

Other scholarships, grants, or financial awards you have received _____

III. Academic Performance & Potential: *Please Attach High School Transcript*

High school grade point average _____
Most recent ACT and/or SAT score, plus others ACT _____ SAT _____ Other _____
Honors & recognition received _____

Other academic achievements (*advanced placement, vo-tech education, concurrent college courses, etc.*) _____

IV. Other Activities: *List Includes During High School Only*

Participation in extra-curricular activities _____

Participation in school-affiliated organizations _____

Offices held in organizations _____

Work experience _____ Are you currently employed? _____
What type of work? _____ Other types of work? _____



Youth Tour Contest

For Area High School Juniors

Tour Date: June 14-20, 2024 | Contest Deadline: March 25, 2024

6-8 Hour Community Service Project or 300-500 Word Essay

Two winners will be selected. Each will receive an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., on June 14-20, 2024, as part of the 2024 Oklahoma Youth Tour. Each will also receive \$500 spending cash.

Students who are in the eleventh grade and attend public, private, charter, or home school within cooperative service area are eligible to participate in this contest. Cooperative membership is not a contest requirement.

Project must be 6-8 hours, documented with photos, and validated by a community representative for whom work is being performed. As an alternative form of entry, students can submit a 300-500 word essay on the topic "Making a Difference Where I Live."

Submit entry form and project photos or essay to: publicrelations@noec.coop, or mail this form and supporting documentation to NOEC, PO Box 948, Vinita, OK 74301.

Describe project _____

Why is this project important to you? _____

Community representative signature _____ Phone _____

Student name _____ Age _____ Date of birth _____

Guardian name _____ Guardian signature _____

I give permission for my child to attend Youth Tour if selected.

If you win, are you willing to attend Youth Tour? Yes No

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

School _____

Teacher name _____

If you were informed about this opportunity at school, please provide the name of the teacher so we can thank them.

NOEC Community Service Award

Claim Yours!

A \$200 award is available to each FFA, FCCLA, and 4-H program within our service territory. This money may be used by these organizations to award an individual (or individuals) for an outstanding accomplishment or may be used to offset program expenses. One submission is allowed per program per calendar year.

Applying for the NOEC Community Service Award is easy. Simply complete the form below and return it to us via mail or email. After hearing from you, we will mail your check to the address you provide. We are proud to support the students in our service territory in this way and appreciate the positive influence that your organization has on our youth. Submit entry form to: publicrelations@noec.coop or mail this form to NOEC Community Service Award, PO Box 948, Vinita, OK 74301.

I would like to request NOEC Community Service Award for my organization. FFA FCCLA 4-H

Organization name _____

Representative name _____

What county does your organization represent? _____

How will the money be used? _____

Email _____ **Phone** _____

Address _____

Please provide an address where check can be mailed.



FEATURED RECIPES

OTTAWA COUNTY



MISSISSIPPI ROAST

NICOLE HART | QUAPAW

INGREDIENTS

- 2 sticks salted butter
- 2 packs au jus seasoning
- 1/2 jar pepperoncini peppers
- 2 packs ranch seasoning
- 1 cup water
- 2-3 lbs roast

Step 1: Throw all ingredients into a slow cooker and cook on low for 8-10 hours.

Step 2: Serve hot over mashed potatoes.

BEEF STEW

JACKIE STONE | MIAMI

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pack stew meat
- 1 pack of mixed vegetables, frozen
- 1 can of diced potatoes
- 1 can tomato sauce
- 1 can of mild Rotel
- 1 pack of brown gravy mix

Step 1: In a large pot cook stew meat. Once done, add mixed vegetables, potatoes, tomato sauce, and Rotel and heat to almost boiling.

Step 2: Add brown gravy mix to pot and simmer for 30 minutes.

Step 3: Serve hot.



HAVE A RECIPE TO SHARE?

EMAIL IT TO PUBLICRELATIONS@NOEC.COOP FOR A CHANCE TO BE FEATURED!