

country living

FOR MEMBERS OF EAST CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



On average, more deaths occur due to flooding each year than from any other severe weather related hazard.

While nearly half of all flood fatalities occur in vehicles, personal contact with flood waters in your home or outdoors can also present life-threatening danger. It takes as little electricity as found in 1/50th of a standard 60 watt light bulb to cause paralysis of the muscles which results in drowning.

Follow any directives to turn off utilities. If you're advised to switch off the main power source to your home, flip each breaker and then turn off the main breaker.

Keep your power off until an electrician has inspected your system

for safety. This includes inspecting any appliances that may have been wet. A trained professional may be able to recondition some devices while others will require replacement.

It is always recommended to have a qualified electrician restore power in your home. However, if you must do it yourself, ensure your body and clothing are dry, and you are standing on a dry surface before touching a circuit breaker or fuse.

When outside, stay far away from any downed power lines especially if there is standing water nearby. Downed lines can energize dry ground up to 35 feet away. Even more in wet conditions.

SOURCE: ELECTRICAL SAFETY FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL

ecoLINK Update

Affordable Connectivity Program

ecoLINK Fiber Services is pleased to participate in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), a federal broadband assistance initiative designed to help Americans stay connected.

Formerly the Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB), the program is an FCC benefit that helps ensure households can afford the broadband they need for work, school, healthcare, etc.

The benefit provides a discount of up to \$30 per month toward internet service for eligible households and up to \$75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal lands. Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if they contribute more than \$10 and less than \$50 toward the purchase price.

The Affordable Connectivity Program is limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household.

Who is Eligible?

A household is eligible for the Affordable Connectivity Program if the household income is at or below 200%

Connectivity, Continued on Page 2

To learn more about your elected trustees, or to view a district map, please visit ecoec.com. To contact your trustee, please call 918-756-0833.

notes from the chair



by Lowell Hobbs, President, East Central Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees

Cooperatives and Horses

After our February board meeting we were given a tour of our new building in progress. WOW! What a fabulous facility. Completion should be late summer. Ecolink staff is already using office space in the new remodeled part. I know you will be astonished when we are able to show it off!

Our strategic planning session is scheduled mid March, so by the time you read this we will be through with that session. This plan allows the board and staff to look further into the future to better prepare us for what's coming next for our cooperative.

ECE's safety program has resulted in over 2 years without a lost time accident for our co-op employees. Recently we conducted a new member survey, and I am proud to report we got a 98.3% satisfactory report from new members. I get notes and several calls on my personal phone of accolades pertaining to our employees and also this article. I tell my wife that's just like saying "sic em" to a dog! Thank you for your positive input and attitude.

We will be at the state capitol March 1 to visit with our elected officials. I hope one day our officials at the national level will work together for the benefit of our nation rather than trying to oppose the other political party. Our co-op will be part of the effort to help the people of central Guatemala get electric power to their region. The co-op world has been part of this effort for several years now.

A recent report showed Oklahoma has more marijuana dispensaries than the state of California. 49% of all grow houses are in Oklahoma with Okemah called the capital.

A few years ago Bob and Wanda moved into our community and became our

instant friends. They are good, strong Christian people, the kind you like to be with. This story is about their son Neil. Bob and Wanda served in a large church in West Texas where Bob was Director of Education. Their young son was always active doing something, though not always things that pleased his parents. He was not a mean kid, he just marched to his own music, often disobedient to his folks guidance.

Things all changed when a deacon in their church gave Neil a horse. Neil became a different kid and soon wanted to go to farrier school to learn to shoe his own horse. Bob paid the \$1,000 tuition at a farrier school halfway across the state of Texas. At 14 years age he was the youngest in the school, and the school master laid out the expectations for the students. It was the first of July, and one of the rules was no fireworks around

the horses. Neil had taken a handful of bottle rockets with him, and after dark he set off some of the fireworks. The school master called Bob and said he was sending Neil home and explained why. Bob asked that Neil be given another chance, and the school master said he would let the rest of the class vote tomorrow about his staying or going. Neil was told to prepare his presentation.

The school master called the next morning saying..."Bob, as well as the fireworks, Neil also brought his Bible. With his Bible Neil told the class that he had asked God to forgive him of his sins and through Jesus he had been forgiven. Adam and Eve had sinned in the Garden of Eden and God forgave them. David sinned with Bathsheba and God forgave him, and several others as revealed in the Bible. Neil told how God had given his own son Jesus to die for our sins and will forgive us if we repent and ask Jesus to live in our hearts! I am asking you all to forgive me too!" The school master continued on, "Bob, that was the best sermon I have ever heard. The vote was unanimous to stay."

It's amazing how God can use even a horse to change lives.

Lowell Hobbs represents ECE District 2. To reach him, please call his cellphone at 918-695-5289.

Connectivity, Cont.

of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, or if a member of the household meets at least one of the criteria below:

- Participates in certain assistance programs, such as SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, SSI, WIC, or Lifeline;
- Participates in Tribal specific programs, such as Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, Tribal TANF, or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations;
- Participates in the National School Lunch Program or the School Breakfast Program, including

through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision; or

- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year.

To Enroll:

Go to ACPBenefit.org to submit an application or print out a mail-in application. Most ECE members live on Tribal Lands. Be sure to confirm this at the bottom of your application. Once you receive your qualifying email, contact us by calling 918-756-0833. Our ACP experts will assist you with the final steps to receive your benefit.

Meet Jay Emerson

District 5 Trustee



As a retired teacher of 22 years, Jay Emerson prides himself on his abilities to help people understand complex information, take in multiple points of view to reach a compromise, and resolve conflicts before feelings are hurt.

These are the skills he has brought since he was elected to the East Central Electric Board of Trustees in July, 2021.

Jay has been a member of the cooperative for over 40 years, and has lived in Checotah, Oklahoma all his life. Jay has been married to his wife Linda for 30 years, and together they have five children and a host of grandchildren.

After receiving his degree from Northeastern State University, Jay taught elementary school and coached P.E. at Midway and Stidham Public Schools. Since retiring from education, Jay started his own business, buying and selling replacement cattle.

Jay said that retirement has given him the time to commit to, and give back to, the communities that helped him succeed.

While serving on the Board, Jay said he would like to continue the traditions that East Central Electric has provided while also looking to the future, such as windmills, solar energy, and expanded broadband to our more rural areas and public schools.

Jay Emerson represents ECE District 5.

Congratulations Youth Tour and Energy Camp Winners

Each year East Central Electric Cooperative sponsors six high school juniors in our service territory to take part in a youth leadership experience in Washington D.C. Winners were anonymously selected by a panel of judges based on the quality of their essay or video submission.

2022 Youth Tour Winners

Brady Long - Preston
Cassidy Fisher - Haskell
Haley Dennis - Muskogee
JaiCee Lester - Checotah
Jonathan Mitcham - Midway
McKenna Jones - Preston

Each year East Central Electric Cooperative sponsors six eighth graders in an energizing summer camp experience at Red Rock Canyon near Hinton, Oklahoma. Winners were anonymously selected by a panel of judges based on the quality of their essay or video submission.

2022 Energy Camp Winners

Jeffrey Bonebrake - Twin Hills
Dawson Richardson - Beggs
Rachel Hembree - Twin Hills
Landon Helt - Beggs
Blaine Crowe - Bearden
Aubrey Gray - Graham-Dustin



LINWORKER APPRECIATION DAY - APRIL 11

We thank our lineworkers and all our dedicated co-op employees for their courage and commitment to powering our community.



Operation Roundup funds support local charitable organizations, civic groups, youth programs, community services, and needy families. For more information on this voluntary bill roundup program, please visit us online at www.ecoec.com.

TOTAL GRANTED
\$2,133,661.57

APPLICATIONS REVIEWED
1,268

APPLICATIONS GRANTED
882

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED
\$284,500

AVERAGE MEMBER CONTRIBUTION
48¢



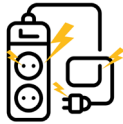
Texas Hash

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 1/2 lb. hamburger meat | 1 C. water |
| 1 1/2 C. cooked rice | 1/2 tsp. chili powder |
| 1 large can stewed tomatoes | 1/2 C. chopped onion |
| 1/2 C. tomato ketchup | Salt and pepper to taste |
| | 1 1/2 C. grated cheese (last) |

DIRECTIONS

Brown meat, add tomatoes and ketchup. Cook slowly. Add rest of ingredients. Cook slowly 15 minutes. Pour into a greased 9x13 pan. Bake at 350 degrees, covered, for 40-45 minutes. Serves 6-8.



ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Spring rains can cause flooding, which in addition to being a hazard of it's own, can also hide electrical dangers. Be aware that submerged outlets or electrical cords may energize standing water.

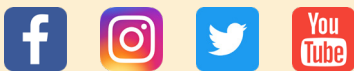
SOURCE: ELECTRICAL SAFETY FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL

SOURCE: ECE 80TH ANNIVERSARY COOKBOOK



East Central ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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Power Outage Hot line
(918) 756-0833

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PAYMENT OPTIONS

Pay online using SmartHub.

Pay by phone using VISA, Mastercard or Discover at 866-999-4584. Available 24/7. Convenience fee associated with payments.

Pay with cash or credit/debit card at participating Moneygram or Pay Site locations. Convenience fee associated with payments.

Pay using our drive-thru window Monday - Friday from 8 am to 4:45 pm.

Pay via automatic draft of your checking or savings account. Sign up online or download the ebill form at www.ecoec.com, or set up online payments through your bank. No convenience fee.