

"Hotlines"

Published Monthly
for the Members of
Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Cherokee, OK
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Lest we forget...

May, 2013

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Area News Briefs



**May Day!
Stay Weather
Alert!**

**Mother's Day
Sun. May 12.
(Get her a new
cell phone from
AEC!)**

**Memorial Day,
Mon., May 27**



**POWER
OUTAGE?
(580) 596-3333
OR
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To place brief announcements
in "Hotlines" please call
(580) 596-3333 EARLY

New YT Winners spread across AEC territory



Kelsey Conaway, Ringwood High School; Casee Cole, Pond Creek/Hunter; Ami Adkisson, Timberlake; Heather Armbruster, Burlington; and Carter Stewart, Burlington. (Jenna Maltbie, Burlington; is not pictured.)

Two high school juniors from AEC's southern district will be traveling to Washington, D.C. for the "Government in Action" program. Kelsey Conaway, Ringwood High School and Ami Adkisson, Timberlake High School won the honor for the 2013 season.

The delegates researched the subject ***Electric Cooperative Principle #5--Commitment for Education and***

Training for their 500-word essays. The winners will join about 60 other electric cooperative representatives to tour the Smithsonian, visit the Capitol and visit an impressive list of historical sites. A dancing boat trip down the Potomac with a choice of

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ALTERNATING CURRENTS...

Now What?

By Ron Shafer

OK, the storm has passed and the damage, for the most part, has been repaired or replaced. The question then comes up, "Now what?" Obviously the clean-up that follows an ice storm is always a big problem and concern. When we have damage this wide spread and expensive, one of the first questions we have is whether there will be a declaration of disaster. The state of Oklahoma would have to declare a disaster first in order for the incident to be considered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as a disaster. As FEMA has now made that declaration, federal funding will be made available to help eligible local governments and non-profit organizations cover the cost of repairs to damage caused by the event.

Alfalfa Electric received damage to our system in each of the five counties in Oklahoma in which we serve. All five of those counties were included in the declaration. In several of those counties, we received help from the county commissioners and their respective road workers that greatly increased our ability to respond to the outages. Those counties will also be able to receive some funds for the extra added expense they incurred during storm repairs. Without this emergency funding, the people living in those areas would have a greater burden, through increased rates and other pass through costs, to pay for the effects of this storm. Needless to say, we have been hoping, and praying, for a federal declaration.

As this article is being written, we have crews in the field cleaning up the debris left by the loss of close to 700 poles on our system. Other crews are involved in making repairs to our system that will make the system stronger before the next big storm event occurs (yes, it will happen again, unfortunately) as we continue to recover from the big snow storm of 2013. Thank you for your support of our efforts, your patience while we make those efforts, and for all the help we have received from you, the members, during the process.

Annual Meeting 2013 meant prizes for most members



Capital Credit checks totaled \$574,000 and could be picked up at the east end of the hallway. The total was actually \$60,000 more than last year. Those unable to collect their checks will receive them by mail.



Marva Stewart, Nescatunga, poses with General Manager Colin Whitley (back right) and her family members to celebrate good fortune. Mrs. Stewart won the coveted \$1,000 check at the close of the Annual Meeting.

Other lucky members who brought home valuable prizes included: Loydetta Collar, Cherokee, a TV; James Roy, Cherokee and Vencil Green, Carmen, \$100 each; Clifford Biby of Nash, Glen Speaker of Carmen, Carl Wilson of Cherokee, Wes Cresey of Burlington and Paul Labrue of Goddard, Kansas, \$50 each.

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YT Winners

favorite music mixes and a giant dance bash with representatives from other states complete the week's activities.

Carter Stewart, Burlington High School, and Casee Cole, Pond Creek/Hunter High School will be attending the Youth Energy Camp in Eden Valley, near Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

The delegates will travel by bus from Russell, Kansas to the modern campsite in the heart of the Rocky Mountains. They will join students from Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming and Nebraska for outdoor games, activities, a tour through a coal mine and a trip to an electrical power plant to see how electricity is made.

The group learns the "cooperative way" of performing tasks as students manage a co-op store. A talent show/dance finishes the week's activities.

Two Burlington students won \$400 scholarships. Jenna Maltbie and Heather Armbruster will receive the awards after high school graduation as they embark on their college careers. The money can be used at any college or training center.

Five students were recognized at a recent Youth Tour Banquet where they were ranked by a panel of judges regarding electrical cooperatives. Each read his/her essay for the benefit of Board Members, employees and guests. (Jenna Maltbie was not in attendance but was interviewed by telephone since she was participating in the FFA



Susie Koontz and Manager of Operations and Public Relations, Ron Shafer presented awards at the Youth Tour Banquet as coordinators of the 2013 campaign.

Stock Show in Oklahoma City.) English teachers representing each student were also recognized: Gina Bohlen, Ringwood; Laurie McAlister, Pond Creek; Laurie Gwinn, Timberlake; and Robyn Turney, Burlington.

Susie Koontz visited high schools this season inviting students from fourteen area schools to participate. As Youth Tour Co-

ordinator with Manager of Operations and Public Relations, Ron Shafer, Koontz helped organize the banquet and reward each deserving student in the proper category.

AEC would like to thank educators throughout the service area for continuing to support the Youth Tour program.

AEC Offices will be closed on May 27, 2013 in observance of Memorial Day. Please remember with us the sacrifices of those who have gone before.



Funny thing about air-conditioner filters...

Clogged air filters could add **\$82** to your electric bill every year. Checking, changing or cleaning your filter once a month saves money and extends the life of your home's heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system.

More than half of your monthly energy bill goes toward keeping your home comfortable. While air filters prevent pesky dust and

annoying allergens from clogging your HVAC system, dirt, like aging arteries, builds up over time. If left unchecked, a dirty filter strains a home's heart and forces the HVAC system to work harder to push conditioned air through tight spaces. This results in higher energy bills and -potentially--system failure.

Filter Facts

Air filters protect HVAC systems and perform double-duty by collecting some lost dirt from the air. These handy sieves live in duct system slots or in return grilles of central air conditioners, furnaces, and heat pumps.

Successful filters have a short lifespan--the better a filter catches dirt, the faster it gets clogged and must be cleaned or replaced. Leaving a dirty air filter in place cuts a home's air quality and reduces HVAC system airflow.

While removing a clogged filter altogether relieves pressure on the system, the system can't perform well without one. Unfiltered dust and grime accumulate

on critical parts like the evaporator coil, causing unnecessary wear and tear.

Monthly Check-up

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) advises checking an air filter once a month and replacing it at least every three months. It's critical to inspect and replace filters before seasons of heavy use like summer and winter. **NOW IS THE TIME!**

Pets and smokers

If you have pets or smokers in the home, filters clog quickly. Remodeling projects or furniture sanding add more dirt than normal; a filter may need to be changed before the average three-month lifespan expires.

Turn your heating and cooling system off before checking your filter. Slide the filter out of your duct work, and look for layers of hair and dirt. Run a finger across the filter. If the finger comes away dirty or there's a line left on the filter, it's time for a change.

When replacing the filter, make sure the arrow on the filter indicating the direction of the airflow points toward the blower motor.

To help schedule monthly check-ups, write the date on the side of the filter so you know when it needs to be checked again. Once you've made the change, turn your system back on and enjoy the cool, clean airflow!



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Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, Inc.
PO Box 39, 121 E. Main,
Cherokee, OK 73728

www.aec.coop

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and General Manager

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