

“Hotlines”

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for the Members of
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Cherokee, OK
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POWER OUTAGE?
(580) 596-3333 OR
1-888-736-3837

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



AREA NEWS BRIEFS

Sept. 7 Labor Day AEC offices will be closed to pay tribute to the American labor force.

Sept. 13 National Grandparents' Day Take time to appreciate the wisdom and heritage of our senior citizens.

Sept. 20-26 National Farm Safety and Health Week Reminder to stay safe around the farm and the farm equipment.

HOT SUMMER DAYS ARE STILL AROUND. GET YOUR A/C CHECKED AND GET THE FILTER CHANGED. CALL AEC SERVICES, INC. (580) 596-3333 or 1-800-853-4969



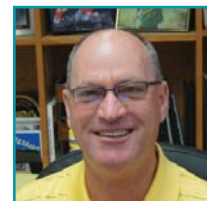
Nancy Rieger, Greg Goetz, Terry Ryel, and Gail Ridgway complete 30 years at Alfalfa Electric Cooperative.

Dedicated Service to AEC

By Robyn Turney

By the end of this month, four employees will have completed 30 years of service to Alfalfa Electric Cooperative. The saying goes, “Time flies when you’re having fun.” Everything wasn’t necessarily always fun, but it certainly didn’t seem like 30 years for these employees. There have been many changes during this time – changes in job titles, bosses, and procedures, just to name a few. Nancy Rieger, Greg

Goetz, Terry Ryel, and Gail Ridgway have remained faithful to Alfalfa Electric through some tough years and have seen many changes for the good of its members.



Burlington graduate, Terry Ryel, began working as a groundman (or “Grunt” as Terry would say) on Boyce Elmore’s

ALTERNATING CURRENTS...

Colin Whitley
CEO and General
Manager



Best Kind of Audit

If you read *Hotlines* regularly, then you have probably seen our tips for saving energy. Educating members is one of our Seven Cooperative Principles, and at Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, we believe in arming you with information that can help you save on your electric bill.

Across the country, federal and state policymakers are considering ways to make homes, farms and businesses more energy efficient. Electric co-ops agree wholeheartedly with that goal because we all benefit from being smarter about how we use electricity.

At Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, we believe energy audits are the key to increasing efficiency. To reduce energy consumption, consumers first need to know how much energy they use and why. In this case, knowledge is—literally—power.

Our energy expert Terry Ryel will come to your home and find the places where heated or cooled air is escaping and will even wriggle into the crawl space to look for duct leaks. He will find the inefficient appliances, like grandma's old icebox still chugging away in the garage. He will talk to families about costly "energy habits," such as standing in front of the open refrigerator door mulling options or leaving the X-box console on 24/7.

Energy audits are effective because they lead to specific, detailed recommendations suitable to the member's circumstances. While the recommendations vary, every audit shares the same goal: finding cost-effective ways to help members save energy.

crew in August of 1985. Staying with Boyce's crew, Terry began working as an apprentice lineman, then a journeyman and worked his way up to the line foreman. After several years working in the heat and the cold, Terry moved into an office as the Director of Marketing and Public Relations. Overseeing AEC Services, Terry still gets to work outdoors when he helps the guys with service calls. He has also been spotted on golf courses, fighting the elements of the weather in the name of service to AEC.

In 30 years, Terry has seen many changes in his jobs. When he was a lineman, AEC had only 1 big bucket truck. "We climbed poles every day. It was different!" Alfalfa Electric now has 10 bucket trucks, which allow the linemen to work more efficiently. More than once, Terry has been heard saying, "I have the best job," and he honestly means it, too.

In May of 1985, a high school graduate from Esmond High School in North Dakota started as an apprentice lineman. Greg Goetz had traveled from North Dakota to Corpus Christi, Texas, with some friends looking for lineman jobs along the way. They interviewed at Cherokee, but no one was hired at that time. A week after Greg returned home, he called AEC several times inquiring about a job. His persistence paid off, and he received a job offer from Alfalfa Electric. He accepted and has been an Okie ever since.

Greg went through several job titles – crew foreman, staking engineer, Director of Engineering & Purchasing Agent, and currently, Manager of Engineering and Operations. Greg welcomed the change from drawing maps for 20 map books to the digital maps that are now drawn on the computer. He



graduate from Esmond High School in North Dakota started as an apprentice lineman. Greg Goetz had traveled

compares the excitement of the new methods of drawing, printing, and even reading the maps to "a doctor getting his first x-ray machine." The new technology has allowed the area men and crew foremen to carry iPads to better serve their customers.

A six-week course, which Gail and Greg both attended, for the NRECA Management Internship Program in Madison, Wisconsin, is one of his great learning experiences. However, Terry recalls a different experience that Greg and he shared. Greg and Terry volunteered to do some freelance work after hours at the Helena football field. Seems there were several light bulbs that needed to be replaced on the 80 foot poles. The two young men had to climb the poles –no bucket trucks there! Terry says Greg climbed 3 poles to his 2. After this adventure, the two decided they would be alright climbing the 30 foot electrical poles.

Wakita graduate, Gail Ridgway, was hired as a cashier for AEC in September of 1985. She soon became the accountant and then later the



Accounting Director/Controller. At the present time, Gail is the Manager of Office Services. Gail has enjoyed the deviations she has seen in the way the office employees serve the members. Technology is responsible for changing the way members pay bills, report outages, and even get their meters read. Bills can be paid online with Smart Hub by computer or phone. Outages can also be reported and identified by Smart Hub. Rural members no longer have to read their own meters. Automated systems now do that for a large majority of AEC's members. The different forms of technology have made life easier in the AEC offices and have improved the service to its members.

Nancy Rieger, a Burlington graduate, came to work part time for AEC in September of 1985. Nancy began working as a billing assistant when her youngest daughter Lisa started kindergarten. She remembers thinking, "Everyone else is doing something. I need to do something with my time." Being able to be there when her kids got home from school was the main reason Nancy took the position. When her kids were young, AEC also worked with her to insure quality time with her family during the summer. In 1990 Nancy became the Engineering/Purchasing Assistant and is still holding that title today. Nancy remembers a time when there were only 3 computers in the building – a lesson in sharing. In 2001 AEC began buying their line materials from HD Supply, which made Nancy's job much easier. Before that, she spent hours



contacting several vendors, searching for the best price. Nancy owns the title of working the most years as a part-time AEC employee. With no hesitation, Nancy revealed, "I have remained working at AEC because I love the people that work here."

Don't let the term "part-time" fool you. Nancy is one of AEC's most valuable employees. Greg Goetz, Manager of Engineering and Operations, has worked with Nancy for 22 years. "Nancy does the work of a full-time employee. AEC will miss her efficiency the day she leaves."

Both Nancy and Gail reflected on the 2013 blizzard. AEC lost 728 poles and *all* of their members were without power for some period of time. Gail shared, "It's impossible to forget the incredible work of all the AEC employees, our contractors, and the mutual aid from other co-ops." Even the members pitched in by providing tractors to help get crews down roads that were impassable to AEC trucks. Members and employees

worked together to supply the workers with lunches, cookies, and water.

Nancy remembers, "Our vendors were exceptional at sending materials daily. All AEC employees worked together as repairs were made and power was restored."

Gail summed it up, "Where else, but at a rural electric cooperative, could you experience that level of cooperation. What a great place to work!"

Being employed for 30 years at the same place is quite an impressive feat; however; Terry, Greg, Gail and Nancy aren't finished yet. Alfalfa Electric members are so blessed to have this quality of employees working for them. Hopefully, all four still have several years of service left in them. A special "Thank You" goes out to this awesome group of employees for the exceptional way they have served AEC.

Students agree - worth the wait

By Robyn Turney

When the May showers turned into May flooding, the YouthPower Energy Camp, which was scheduled for May 26-29, was cancelled due to the excessive flooding in the Hinton area and across the state of Oklahoma. The Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives, which coordinates the camp, decided to reschedule it August 4-7. Despite the record-setting heat, the delegates had an awesome time at camp.

Caitlin Flackman, Sadie Crusinbery, and Kallie Thomason were among the 73 outstanding 8th graders who were chosen from across the state to represent their local rural electric cooperatives during the four days at

Canyon Camp, just east of Hinton, OK.

While at the camp, the girls attended sessions on energy, electrical safety, and rural electric careers. The delegates elected their own Manager and Board of Directors. Kallie was one of the eight students who were selected to serve on the Board of Directors. The Board operated the Coke & Candy Cooperative, which gave them a real feel for how a cooperative functions. Other special activities of the four-day program included hands-on electrical demonstrations, such as pole climbing and bucket truck rides from the linemen. The girls enjoyed a low element ropes course, swimming,

and a trip to Celebration Station for video games, putt-putt, and go-carts. Delegates participated in a friendly energy battle tournament to test their knowledge on not only energy facts but also some general trivia questions. The last night the campers enjoyed a Pizza Party, followed by a dance and karaoke.

Caitlin Flackman from Burlington described the experience as an opportunity that impacted many lives. "It was so fun. We got to hike up the canyon, dance, meet new people, and even got to play some basketball! Two of Caitlin's favorite activities were Celebration Station and, of course, playing basketball.

**AEC
OFFICES WILL
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MONDAY
SEPTEMBER
7th FOR
LABOR DAY**



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Sadie Crusinbery, also from Burlington, expressed her feelings about the camp. "I had so much fun there. It was awesome! This experience helped me become a better leader." Celebration Station and the dance were two of Sadie's highlights of the trip.

Kallie Thomason from Timberlake shared her thoughts of the

opportunity. "I enjoyed being able to meet new people. I wish this never would've ended!" Kallie, too, enjoyed Celebration Station, and the dance was also a favorite of hers.

All three young ladies expressed their appreciation to AEC for choosing them and for sending them to the YouthPower Energy Camp – better late than never.



Kallie Thomason, Sadie Crusinbery, and Caitlin Flackman attend the YouthPower Energy Camp at Canyon Camp near Hinton, OK.

2014 Tax Allocation Notice

The Notice of Patronage Taxable Income Allocation for Tax Purposes is issued in accordance with the Bylaws of Alfa Electric Cooperative, Inc. The amount of patronage taxable income for the calendar year 2014 that exceeds patronage book income due to 2014 net temporary book/tax differences is \$10,081,591. The allocation factor is .2340069749. To determine the amount of your allocation, multiply the allocation factor by the total dollar amount charged for KWH usage on your electric bill in 2014. This allocated amount is not immediately available as either cash or credit on

your electric bill. These notices are redeemable only at the discretion of AEC's Board of Directors, and are not required to be reported by you for income tax purposes until redeemed for cash and then only if you receive an income tax deduction for the payment made to the cooperative during 2014. Accordingly, it is unlikely that residential patrons will be required to report such allocations even when paid to them in cash or credited to their electric bill. If you have any questions concerning this allocation please contact Christy Schanbacher at 580-596-3333 x117.