

December 2011

Northeast Connection

Route 66 Road Trip series rolls into Afton



COVER:

With only a few stops left to make, our Route 66 Road Trip series through northeast Oklahoma this month carries us into the town of Afton, a town impacted heavily by the decommissioning of the "Mother Road." We'll visit a revitalized Buffalo Ranch, a restored D-X Station and a piece of Route 66 history that is still hard at work.

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All Around Green Country

Events are published as space allows and must be submitted at least 60 days in advance. Include a telephone number for publication. Send information to Northeast Connection Events Calendar, P.O. Box 948, Vinita, OK 74301. Email: clint.branham@neelectric.com, or fax: 918-256-9380. Please call ahead to confirm dates and times.

NOV. 24 - JAN. 2 • Ketchum

Winter Wonderland Lighting Display
Pine Lodge Resort (nightly from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.)
918-782-1400

NOV. 25 - DEC. 21 • Pryor

Christmas Train
Dry Gulch U.S.A
918-234-8100

NOV. 25 - DEC. 26 • Fairland

Christmas Lighting Display
Twin Bridges State Park
918-542-6969

DECEMBER 1 • Miami

Children's Christmas Carnival
NEO Student Activity Center
918-540-6169

DECEMBER 1 • Vinita

Route 66 Christmas Parade of Lights
Downtown (7 p.m.)
918-256-7133

DECEMBER 1 • Pryor

Christmas Parade of Lights
Downtown (7 p.m.)
918-825-0157

DECEMBER 3 • Bluejacket

Christmas Parade
Downtown (11 a.m.)
918-784-2382

DECEMBER 3 • Welch

Christmas Parade
Downtown (2 p.m.)
918-788-3616

DECEMBER 3 • Salina

Christmas Parade
Downtown (7 p.m.)
918-434-8181

DECEMBER 3 • Miami

Business Expo & Rotary Club Breakfast
Civic Center (7 a.m.)
918-542-8405

DECEMBER 3 • Miami

Holiday Home Tour
Various locations
918-542-1590

DECEMBER 3 • Miami

Route 66 Christmas Parade
Downtown (6 p.m.)
918-542-4481

DECEMBER 3 • Grove

Christmas Thyme Tour of Homes
Various locations
918-791-9355

DECEMBER 3 • Vinita

Open House
Summerside Vineyard & Winery
918-256-3000

DECEMBER 4 • Vinita

Vinita Christmas Parade of Homes
Various locations (1-4 p.m.)
918-256-7133

DECEMBER 10 • Ketchum

Christmas Light Boat Parade
Cherokee Yacht Club (5 p.m.)
918-782-4421

DECEMBER 10 • Langley

Christmas Parade & Lighted Boat Parade
Pensacola Dam (7 p.m.)
918-782-9850

DECEMBER 10 • Grove

Grove Annual Lighted Christmas Parade
Downtown (6 p.m.)
918-786-9079

DECEMBER 10 • Jay

Jay Christmas Parade
Main Street (2 p.m.)
918-253-8698

DECEMBER 10 • Miami

Tulsa Praise Orchestra Performance
Coleman Theatre
918-540-2425

DECEMBER 10 • Peoria

Peoria Christmas Parade
Main Street
918-541-5834

DECEMBER 17 • Grove

One Grand Christmas Bazaar
Grove Community Center
918-786-6600



Sharing that never stops

The holiday season is upon us. It is the time of year when the spirit of giving stirs within us a heightened sense of goodwill and generosity toward others. That means spending time with friends and loved ones, exchanging gifts and doing a little more to help our fellow man.

With Operation Round-Up, there is no season of giving because the giving never stops.

Operation Round-Up truly is an amazing demonstration of the care and concern Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative members have for their friends and neighbors.

NEOEC adopted Operation Round-Up in 1998.

Approximately 300 co-ops across the U.S. now implement the program as a way to positively impact the communities where they serve.

NEOEC is humbled by all that has been accomplished over the past thirteen years. During the time the cooperative has been involved with the program, approximately \$2 million has been allocated

to needy causes throughout its service territory of Craig, Mayes, Delaware, Ottawa and Rogers counties.

What is remarkable is how little Operation Round-Up asks of each contributor in proportion to the amount of good it does. Our cooperative rolled out the program with the slogan *Small Change that Changes Lives*. That description is no less fitting today.


Operation Round-Up does just what its name implies. Each month, our cooperative simply “rounds up” the electric bills of participating members to the next highest dollar.

As a voluntary program, Operation Round-Up relies on member participation to ensure its success. When a member does participate, his/her average contribution is about 50 cents per month, totaling around \$6 on an annual basis. A bill of \$52.73 would be rounded up to \$53 with the additional 27 cents going to the Operation Round-Up fund. This may seem like small change, but if every consumer took part in the program, we could raise nearly \$200,000 a year to help worthy community projects within our service area.

All Operation Round-Up donations are placed in trust and administered by an independent board of directors called the *Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative Trust Foundation*. The Trust Foundation board consists of one designee from each of the cooperative’s nine districts and is made up of community leaders who serve on a voluntary basis.

The Trust Foundation board receives and evaluates all requests, determines who receives funding and how all Operation Round-Up monies will be distributed. Typically, the funding is used to address crucial community needs such as emergency equipment, medical care and education—but is not limited to these categories.

With the possible participation of over 33,000 accounts, Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative has the potential to make even more of a difference in the years ahead.

If you would like to sign up to participate in Operation Round-Up, or if you need additional information, contact a Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative member services representative toll-free at 1-800-256-6405. 



Clint Branham

Communications Specialist

Northeast Connection is published monthly as an effective means of communicating news, information and innovative thinking that enhances the profitability and quality of life for members of Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative.

Please direct all editorial inquiries to Communications Specialist Clint Branham at 800-256-6405 ext. 9340 or email clint.branham@neelectric.com.

Vinita headquarters: Four and a half miles east of Vinita on Highway 60/69 at 27039 South 4440 Road.

Grove office: 212 South Main.

Business hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. Offices are closed Saturday, Sunday and holidays.

A representative is available 24 hours at:
1-800-256-6405

If you experience an outage, please 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. If you contact us to report service issues or discuss your account, please use the name as it appears on your bill, and have both your pole number and account number ready.

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Afton recalls its Route 66 heyday

We continue our journey this month eastward along the approximately 80 miles of Route 66 located in cooperative service territory here in northeast Oklahoma. We hope you've enjoyed our adventure so far.

We kicked off the **Route 66 Road Trip** series this past June with a look back at the amazing Andy Payne, a Foyil resident who cemented his legacy of athletic prowess by winning the first ever transcontinental footrace across the United States in 1928 at the age of 20.

Stops in Chelsea and Vinita followed and featured several important landmarks and attractions, from the state's first oil well to a popular diner that has gained national acclaim for its chicken fried steak.

The fourth segment of our series takes us to Afton, an Ottawa County town that once embodied the lively spirit of Route 66. Today, many weathered symbols remain of what was once a bustling stopover for station wagons filled with energetic families ready for adventure.

Route 66 pumped Afton full of life—life that was drained by the convenience of Interstate 44. In its heyday, Afton offered weary travelers rest at Palmer Hotel, Rogers' Motel, Rest Haven Motel, Green Acres Motel and Avon Motor Court. Rogers' Motel bore on its correspondence the slogan "You are a stranger here but once."

Favorite food stops in Afton included Baker's Cafe, Clint's Cafe, Smith Store and Barrett's Food Store. Mack's Place and Fred's 66 Bar were among some of the best spots to grab a cold one and shoot a game of pool.

Horse Creek Bridge

One of the leftovers from Afton's bygone heyday carries a little less traffic than it once did but is no less dependable.

Horse Creek Bridge was built in 1936 by Pharoah & Co., when only the prosperous owned cars. The pedestrian walkways on either side of the roadway make this historic concrete span the last of its kind on Oklahoma Route 66. The 143-foot steel stringer structure was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1995.

Afton's Horse Creek Bridge, with its dual pedestrian walkways is the last of its kind on Route 66.

Buffalo Ranch

In 2003, businessmen Larry Schumacher and Terry Addington breathed new life into Buffalo Ranch, a once-popular landmark in decline. Along with live buffalo on display, the facility had souvenirs and one of the best burger stands in the land in Dairy Ranch.

Buffalo Ranch is back as a busy convenience store and a 70-seat restaurant that welcomes both state highway and interstate travelers at its Route 66



Buffalo Ranch not many years ago.

location just south of the Afton turnpike exit. The 6,000 square-foot complex is open 24 hours, seven days a week. It has been owned since September 2004 by Rick Wood.

Afton Station

Another Route 66 revival in Afton came when Connecticut transplants Laurel and David Kane took early retirement, moved to Grand Lake and purchased the old downtown Afton DX gas station. While no longer a functioning service station, the renovated building is full of Route 66 memorabilia.

Afton Station is less of a gift shop and more of an unofficial "rest stop" and museum for Laurel's personal collection of Route 66 memorabilia. You won't find any of





Afton Station is a popular rest stop for Route 66 travelers in northeast Oklahoma.

The renovated D-X filling station is home to a wealth of of Route 66 memorabilia, as well as an impressive collection of vintage Packard automobiles.



the standard souvenir junk for sale—just helpful items such as maps, guidebooks and perhaps a few unique items that might interest travelers.

“It isn’t a money maker and I never meant it to be,” explained Laurel, now a Tulsa resident. “I do have a few things for sale, but it’s not a commercial enterprise and I don’t need it to be. Even the things I sell here, I won’t sell them unless they are produced by someone I know. All the books are written by someone I know. I just want to avoid commercialization as much as possible. This is for fun, for the community, and for people who are traveling.”

Added Laurel: “I intend to keep it open as long as I plan to stay around here, and I plan to stay around here a long time.”

Renovating Afton Station was no small endeavor. A drop ceiling was removed to reveal the signature tin of the era. Flooring was replaced and extensive sheetrock and plaster repair was performed inside before the installation of ceiling fans, new lighting and a security system. Outside, roof repairs were required, as well as new stucco and a coat of paint. An outdoor restroom was completely made over and the vintage gas pumps were replaced.

Afton Station was recognized in 2003 as a top roadside attraction along Route 66 during the Save-A-Landmark campaign sponsored by Hampton Hotels. Special placards that bear the distinction are on display at the station. Further honors were awarded in 2009 when the station was recognized as *Route 66 Business of the Year* at the *Route 66 Festival* in Flagstaff, Arizona.

“We are very honored by both of those recognitions,” said Laurel.

A self-proclaimed Route 66 fanatic, Laurel says she began developing a love for the road early on.

“It happened for me the same way it happens for most everyone else,” she said. “I loved traveling with my parents.”


Laurel collected postcards from her family’s many journeys and began studying the intricate details of Route 66. Later in life, she traveled the road, armed with an even greater appreciation. She is active in numerous Route 66 activities, including Tulsa’s Route 66 Festival.

“Because I’m a member of so many Route 66 organizations and know everybody along the route, we have quite a little network of people along the way,” she said. “I generally know if a big group like a car club or a motorcycle club—mostly Europeans in this day and age—is coming through, so I can be here to open the station up. Mostly it’s a rest stop for travelers.”

Laurel explained that the number of visitors is growing yearly, with a substantial increase in travelers from foreign countries. Afton Station reported some 6,000 visitors during the 2011 tourist season.

The Kanes also recently unveiled David’s impressive collection of vintage automobiles in a renovated showroom next door to Afton Station. Route 66 Packards is home to about 20 classic cars, mostly Packards, all restored to their original glory. Of particular interest is a 1917 Packard Motorhome, the first motorcoach in the United States.

Afton Station and Route 66 Packards is open seven days a week in summer and Friday through Sunday in winter, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call ahead for special hours, which can usually be accommodated. Phone 918-382-9465 or 918-257-4044 for more information.

Plan to join us again next month when we conclude our Route 66 Road Trip series in Ottawa County, where more attractions await. 

Helping hand

Operation Round-Up grant helps make life easier for Fairland seniors

Funny, isn't it, how a simple thing like concrete can be such a blessing?

The folks who use the Fairland Senior Citizens Center found themselves counting their blessings this fall when a grant from Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative's Operation Round-Up program helped fund parking spaces at the facility.

The center relocated earlier this year from Conner Street to North Main in Fairland. A brand new building was constructed, thanks to grant money from Grand Gateway.

The move has been a good one, according to Terry Chase, president and chair of the center's board of directors. For one thing, utility bills are much lower since the building makes efficient use of its space and climate control. Brand new kitchen appliances have also been a welcome addition.

More importantly, perhaps, was leaving behind the racoons that had taken up residence in the old building. Those pesky varmints simply weren't keeping up with their membership dues.

Joking aside, Chase says the new facility provides an active membership ample space for socializing, whether it be a quilting group, a lively game of bingo on the first Wednesday of each month, or shooting a relaxing game of pool. Free health checks are offered throughout the year and there are also a few exercise machines for member use.

The center also serves 500 meals each month. Meals are served at noon each Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Delivery is provided to homebound members for a small charge.

"We try to do the best we can with the food," said Chase.

But not everything about the new center was perfect. The gravel parking area wasn't working out too well. Not only did the surface make for some shaky footing in good weather, it was also holding too much runoff after a good rain.

An asphalt surface wasn't recommended for the low-lying area due to the enormous—and expensive—base layer it would have required. Concrete made the most sense, but concrete ain't cheap, either.

"We're a little different than other senior centers in that we are not funded by the city or the county," explained Chase. "We do get food from the food bank in Tulsa, but we have to go get it."




Terry Chase shows off the new slab at the Fairland Senior Center, funded in part by a grant from Operation Round-Up.

The center is able to generate enough income to defray operating expenses by charging a nominal membership fee of \$24 per year. The building can also be rented for community events and gatherings.

"We don't have a lot of income, so grants and donations really mean a lot," Chase said.

The center was able to pool its resources and pay for a sidewalk and five parking spots. A \$4,000 grant from Operation Round-Up took care of three additional parking spots.

It wasn't the first time Operation Round-Up came through for the center. In May of 2010, a \$4,500 grant helped the center purchase a vent hood for its range. The vent helped the center's kitchen conform to the necessary code requirements.

The Fairland Senior Center is just one more example of how Operation Round-Up is meeting needs for communities in northeast Oklahoma. 



Sign-ups underway for 2012

You can join the co-op's green team

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative members have an opportunity to join the "green team" and support the use of renewable, environmentally-friendly energy.

What is green power?

The term "green power" generally refers to electricity generated by renewable energy sources, such as wind, solar, geothermal, hydropower and various forms of biomass. Increasingly, electricity customers are being afforded options as retail power markets open to competition or when regulated utilities develop green pricing programs.

More than 50% of retail customers in the United States now have an option to purchase green power directly from their electricity supplier.

Why buy green power?

By choosing to purchase green power, you can support increased development of renewable energy sources, which can reduce the burning of fossil fuels, such as coal, oil, and natural gas. Greater reliance on renewable sources also provides economic benefits and can improve our national energy security.

Joining the green team is easy!

Green power is reserved in blocks of 1,200 kilowatt-hours, which represent 100 kWh of energy per month for one year. Members interested in participating are required

to complete a year-long agreement with the cooperative to purchase green power.

Upon electing to participate in the program, an additional expense will be added to your bill. The adder represents the exact, additional cost the cooperative pays the wholesale power supplier. While the adder may change from year to year, participating members lock in the same rate for the year.

Green power was first made available to cooperative members in 2006 through a partnership with KAMO, a supplier of wholesale power to the cooperative. The adder then amounted to an extra \$1.44 on participating members' monthly bills for each block reserved.

Members who sign up for 2012 will pay an adder of \$0.82 monthly per block of green power generated.

Members who took part during the initial offering were also limited to a purchase of no more than five blocks. This limit has since been removed. Members who sign up for 2012 may commit to purchase an unlimited number of blocks.

Each block purchased is delivered as 100 kWh per month and participation in the green power program is a year-long commitment. The adder will be designated as a separate line item on the bill of those participating and will renew automatically each year.

To reserve your block of green power, contact a member service representative toll-free by phoning 1-800-256-6405. 



Join the co-op green team and show your support for renewable energy.

Join our green team and plug into renewable energy


Get all the details by calling
1-800-256-6405



REC NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
Your Total Home Energy Cooperative



Big winners!

Players and coaches representing the Locust Grove varsity football team were among several schools in attendance during the 2011 Coaches Aid Media Day event held at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah. Attendees enjoyed guest speakers, lunch, lots of freebies, and an opportunity to visit with product vendors. Coaches and players also took part in a professional broadcast session that included photos, video and interviews. Pirates players Trenton Hooker (#71) and Forrest Woolman (#66) were the lucky winners of Apple TV media streamers following the event. The prizes were presented by NEOEC representatives Earnestine Helmick (left) and Craig Hendrickson (right). Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative and Touchstone Energy are proud sponsors of Coaches Aid, a website and media outlet dedicated to high school sports coverage. For more information about Coaches Aid, visit online at coachesaid.com. 

Statement of Nondiscrimination

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, Inc., is a member-owned, not-for-profit service organization that adheres to rules, regulations, and policies, which provide that no person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, union affiliation, veteran's status, or disability shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.


The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is the Human Resources/Benefits Administrator. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint with this organization. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Equal Opportunity Employer M/F/V/D

DHS expects decrease in assistance funding

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative has received notification from the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (DHS) that changes have been made to the LIHEAP Winter Heating Assistance process for the coming winter.

"The amount of funding that they expect to be available is uncertain, but they do anticipate a significant decrease," explained Susanne Frost, Manager of Office Services for the cooperative. "Depending on how low the temperatures get in coming days, this could be a real challenge for those who rely on this assistance during cold winter months."

Frost said that the cooperative will keep members informed of changes as more information becomes available. 

Special payment option can help offset seasonal usage


Cooler temperatures are upon us and that can mean increases in electricity usage as switches begin to flip on home heating systems.

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative members who want to avoid spikes that come from increased seasonal usage may want to consider having their monthly bills *averaged*. Averaged bills are the perfect way to avoid being surprised by the peak usage that comes when more home heating is required.

The **Average Monthly Payment Plan** offered by the cooperative keeps a rolling average of a member's last 12 months of usage. That way, they'll pay a more predictable amount each month.

Members who participate in the program can still look at their bills and tell what they would have had to pay for that billing period. Meters are still read monthly for members who pay averaged bills.

Averaged billing simply keeps monthly bills within a similar range. That predictability is something from which every home and business owner on a budget can benefit.

Members can apply for the **Average Monthly Payment Plan** by calling the cooperative during normal business hours at 1-800-256-6405 and speaking to a member services representative. 

Christmas Connections

Use your Co-op Connections Card and save on holiday gift purchases

Having trouble deciding on the perfect Christmas gift for that special someone? Something tells us that a kitchen makeover might fit the bill.

It just so happens that **Parks Custom Cabinets** in Chelsea is one of the newest area businesses to join Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative's Co-op Connections Card discount program. That means Co-op Connections Card-carrying cooperative members can save up to \$250 on hardware when they purchase cabinets from Parks.

Parks Custom Cabinets staff has been designing, building and installing custom cabinets and countertops for nearly 20 years. There is a large selection of materials, designs and finishes from which to choose. And, estimates and design services are free of charge.

Parks Custom Cabinets is open Monday through Thursday from 6 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. You are encouraged to call 918-789-2540 for more information.

Parks also offers larger storage solutions. With **Parks Portable Buildings**, you can choose a model that best suits your storage needs by calling 918-789-2694. Business hours are 6 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

"We are excited about working with the Co-op Connections Card program and about being able to offer some added value to purchases for cooperative members," says owner Bruce Parks.

Golf gifts galore

You can't go wrong with golf gifts for dad during the holidays, and **Kelly Golf** in Grove



Beautiful new cabinetry from Parks Custom Cabinets in Chelsea can really add some sizzle to your kitchen.




The crew at Parks Custom Cabinets in Chelsea is ready to help you give your home a facelift by designing and installing new kitchen cabinetry.



has a great selection of ideas for stocking stuffers or under the tree. Present your Co-op Connections Card at the time of purchase and receive an additional 10% pre-tax discount.

Kelly Golf is open Tuesday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and from 9:30 a.m. to noon on Saturday at 311 West 3rd in Grove. Phone 918-787-7640 for more info.

Shop owner Mike Kelly says headcovers, balls, bags, hybrid clubs, gift sets and practice accessories are all popular items stocked at Kelly Golf during the holidays.

To browse the complete list of participating local Co-op Connections Card businesses, visit neelectric.com and click on the card icon on the homepage. 

Lucky Account Number

Check your copy of the *Northeast Connection* each month and see if you are the lucky winner of a \$25 electric credit. Match the number in the box below to the account number on your monthly statement and then call 1-800-256-6405 ext. 9340 to claim your prize.

This month's winning account number is:

944539

Watts for Dinner *with* THE CHEROKEE NATION



Cherokee Indians are Native American people who settled in the southeastern region of the United States in and around Georgia, the Carolinas and eastern Tennessee. Linguistically, they are part of the Iroquoian language family. Historians have recorded an oral tradition that tells of the tribe having migrated south long ago from the Great Lakes region.

The Cherokee refer to themselves as *Tsalagi*, which means *Principal People*. The distinction as one of the Five Civilized Tribes was given the Cherokee for having assimilated numerous and advanced cultural practices.

Around 1809, Sequoyah began developing a written form of the Cherokee language. His experiences as a silversmith dealing regularly with white settlers convinced him that the Cherokee needed to develop written communication. In 1821, he introduced the Cherokee syllabary, the first written syllabic form of a North American Indian language.

In 1819, the Cherokee began holding council meetings at New Town, near present-day Calhoun, Georgia. New Town became capital of the Cherokee Nation and was renamed New Echota. Sequoyah's syllabic alphabet was adopted and, in 1827, the tribe drafted a constitution modeled after the United States.

A dark chapter in the tribe's history unfolded when the Indian Removal Act authorized the relocation of Native Americans east of the Mississippi to a new Indian Territory. Over 16,000 Cherokee were forcibly relocated westward to Indian Territory in 1838-1839, a journey known as the Trail of Tears. Escorted by federal troops, members of the tribe marched over 800 miles across Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri and Arkansas. As many as 4,000 Cherokee died as the result of disease, exposure and starvation.

The federal government dissolved the former Cherokee Nation to make way for the incorporation of Indian Territory into the new state of Oklahoma, and from 1906 until 1975, the structure and function of Cherokee tribal government were not clearly defined. The tribe drafted a constitution that was ratified in 1976 and the tribe received federal recognition.

The Cherokee tribe today is a sovereign Indian nation under federal law and treaties. The tribe is headquartered at the W.W. Keeler Complex near Tahlequah, the capital of the Cherokee Nation. Tribal jurisdiction extends to an area covering 14 counties in northeast Oklahoma. With nearly 300,000 citizens, the Cherokee Nation is the largest of the 565 federally recognized Native tribes in the United States.

The Cherokee Nation has a constitutional government. Executive power is held by the principal chief, an elected position. The council serves as the tribe's elected legislature, consisting of representatives

from districts across the tribe's jurisdiction. The tribe has an appointed supreme court and district court, as well as a marshal service and a variety of governmental commissions.

The Cherokee Nation has achieved unprecedented expansion in economic growth, equality, and prosperity for its citizens. It has significant business, corporate, real estate, and agricultural interests. The tribe is the largest employer in northeastern Oklahoma, employing over 8,000 people in its government and in various business entities. Tribal businesses are controlled by Cherokee Nation Businesses (CNB). CNB is incorporated under the laws of the tribe and is wholly-owned by Cherokee Nation. CNB pays a dividend to the Cherokee government used for services to the Cherokee people. The tribe and its business entities have an annual payroll of over \$240 million and are a powerful and positive economic and political force in eastern Oklahoma.

The Cherokee Nation, with a government budget of over \$600 million, provides services and opportunities for its people. It has constructed health clinics throughout Oklahoma, contributed to community development programs, built roads and bridges, constructed learning facilities and universities for its citizens, instilled the practice of self-reliance in its citizens and revitalized language immersion programs for its children and youth.

The Cherokee Nation preserves its culture and heritage through the operation of the Cherokee Heritage Center in Tahlequah. The tribe also hosts the Cherokee National Holiday on Labor Day weekend each year. Some 90,000 Cherokee citizens travel to Tahlequah for the festivities. It also publishes the Cherokee Phoenix, the tribal newspaper, published in both English and the Sequoyah syllabary.

Pumpkin Fry Bread

2 cups sifted flour	3/4 cup brown sugar
4 teaspoons baking powder	1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon salt	1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1 egg	1/4 teaspoon vanilla
2 cups fresh pumpkin	1/2 cup warm water or milk
<i>(or 16 ounces canned pumpkin)</i>	

Sift together flour, baking powder and salt. Stir in beaten egg and add remaining ingredients (additional warm water or milk may be needed to soften dough). Knead dough lightly on a floured surface. Roll dough into half-inch thick strips and cut into two-inch pieces. Drop into deep fat and fry until brown on both sides. Serve hot with butter, honey or powdered sugar. Try substituting pumpkin with sweet potatoes for a delicious alternative.

Bean Bread

1 cup of cornmeal	1 cup melted shortening
1 cup flour	1 beaten egg
2 teaspoons baking powder	2 tablespoons honey
1 tablespoon sugar	4 cups drained brown beans
2 cups milk	

Set beans aside and mix all other ingredients thoroughly. Fold beans into batter. Pour batter into greased, heated pan. Bake at 450 degrees F until brown (usually 30 minutes).

An artist rendering of the new Cherokee Nation Health Clinic set to open in Vinita during the summer of 2012.



Make it a safe holiday season

Holiday lights warm our hearts and help make the season beautiful, but they can turn holiday cheer into tragedy when handled improperly.

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative would like to take a moment to remind its members to heed safety while enjoying holiday festivities. Electric lights and candles warm our hearts, but they can turn holiday cheer into tragedy if they are not handled carefully.

NEOEC offers the following electrical safety tips for holiday lighting:

- Be sure all holiday lights have the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) label, which means they meet UL safety standards.

- If you plan on decorating outdoors, be sure to buy lights intended for outdoor use.

- Newer, light-emitting diodes (LED) holiday lights use much less energy than traditional lights. Consequently, they do not become hot enough to burn fingers or catch trees on fire.

- Before installation, check for frayed wires, damaged sockets, or cracked insulation. If you find any defects, replace the entire light set.

- To minimize fire and shock danger, make sure there is a bulb in each socket. If a bulb is burned out, leave it in until you unplug the light set and replace the bulb.

- All outdoor cords, plugs and sockets must be weatherproof. Also, make sure there is a ground fault circuit interrupter on each circuit.

- Remember that hot bulbs can ignite dry tree branches. To avoid damage and injury, keep trees well watered and keep extension cords and light strings away from the water.


- Keep a working fire extinguisher handy.

- Be sure your home's smoke detectors have new batteries and that they are working properly.

- Don't overload your electric circuits or extension cords with too many light strings. Don't connect more than three light strings. The cords could overheat and start a fire.

- Never leave lighted candles unattended. Responsible adults should monitor them at all times.

Do not light candles on Christmas trees. Properly installed electric lights are much safer.

- Always unplug holiday lights before going to bed or leaving the house. 



Keep an eye out for holiday lighting energy hogs


If you still use those old-fashioned, two-inch (C-7) bulbs for decorating, keep in mind that they each use about five watts of electricity. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, lighting six, 100-light strands of these large bulbs around the clock for 30 days costs more than \$18, based on an average of eight cents per kilowatt hour.

A more energy-conscious choice would be the miniature white or colored lights. Miniatures use only about half a watt each.

Even more energy-efficient are LED holiday lights, which use .04 watt per bulb.

Over a 30-day period, lighting 500 LED bulbs would cost about 19 cents. LEDs also last a long time—typically more than 60,000 hours—which means you would probably never have to change a bulb. This long life makes LED lights very cost-effective despite a higher initial cost.

Operate lights for no more than six hours a day to keep energy use under control. Timers make this simple.

If you are building a new home, ask your builder or electrician to install holiday electric outlets which turn on and off with one easy switch. 





Preparation key to taking winter by storm

The arrival of winter brings with it the possibility of severe weather. Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative does its best to prepare for the winter storms that impact our region and urges members to do the same.

NEOEC reminds members to make safety a top priority and always keep a good distance from downed power lines that may result from winter storms. Stay at least 20 feet away from fallen lines and anything they contact, like metal fencing. Treat every downed power line as if it is energized and keep children and pets out of the area.

When a power outage occurs, members are encouraged to first check breaker panels or fuse boxes for tripped circuit breakers or blown fuses. If the home's electrical system is intact, determine the extent of the outage by checking to see whether neighbors also have a problem.

Report power outages and downed power lines by contacting NEOEC at 1-800-256-6405. Don't assume the utility knows you are without power. Your report can help the cooperative identify the scope of the outage and aid in the restoration effort.

Before a storm

Assemble an emergency kit that is easily accessible. It

should include a battery-powered radio or television, a flashlight and extra batteries, candles and matches or a lighter, a first-aid kit, a fire extinguisher, bottled water and non-perishable food. Keep a corded or cell phone on hand because cordless telephones need electricity to operate.

After a storm

Turn off or unplug all major appliances to prevent an electrical overload when power is restored. Leave on one light to indicate when power is restored.

If using a portable generator, disconnect house circuits from NEOEC power lines. Switch all main fuses or circuit breakers to "off" to protect line crews working to restore service.

Always operate generators outdoors to avoid dangerous buildup of toxic fumes.



Keep a storm kit handy for emergencies.

Where to find restoration information

Storm updates and restoration information can be obtained by calling the cooperative at 1-800-256-6405 or tuning into local radio station KGVE 99.3 FM. If you have Internet access, information is available online at www.neelectric.com. Members can also get current updates on our Facebook page. Download the application at: <http://facebook.com/neokrec>. 