



The Birds and the Bees ... and the Butterflies

Appreciating and protecting our pollinators

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Plus:

ATV safety

Free Fishing Weekend

Checking out Camden

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CORRECTION

In the May Arkansas Living issue, photos of the Magnolia Blossom Festival and World Championship Steak Cook-off — courtesy of the festival — were taken by Allaynah Pennington and Tanya Clemons.

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Special Delivery

BY JENNIFER CHRISTMAN CIA



At Arkansas Living, there's only one thing we love more than a

heartwarming story — and that's a heartwarming story with an electric cooperative connection.

This one involves the family of Victoria Lamb, senior director of commercial operations for Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (AECI). Tori's husband, Jon, is the great-nephew of World War II veteran Marion Lamb, who served in the South Pacific with the U.S. Army's 96th Infantry Division.

Recently, a Texas postal carrier, Alvin Gauthier, found wartime letters from Marion intended for his parents. As the letters were dated 1942 to 1945, they were simply addressed to Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Lamb in Jacksonville, Arkansas. (They would be Jon's great-grandparents.)

Knowing how much these letters could mean to the Lamb family, Alvin — himself a Marine Corps veteran who was stationed in Iraq — made a public appeal to find them. A story on Little Rock's KARK, Channel 4, inspired many Arkansans to try and locate the family.

The letters had gotten separated from a package of genealogy materials sent from Jon's uncle, Paul Lamb, in Tennessee to Marion's niece, Debbie Smith, in Texas. Alvin, it turns out, is her postal carrier.

Debbie says, "(Alvin's) just a good

guy, and I've talked to him several times. I didn't even know his name though. Now, he's family."

Because instead of just giving the letters to her in Texas, Alvin took personal time off to drive, at his own expense, to Jacksonville and hand-deliver the letters to Debbie's mother, JoAnn Smith, who is Marion's youngest and only remaining sibling. (Debbie and JoAnn are Jon's second cousin and great-aunt, respectively.)

"We had never seen these letters before, so this has been really special

for us," says Debbie, who likewise drove to Jacksonville for the delivery.

What made it so meaningful was not just being reunited with priceless pieces of family history, Debbie says, but being on the receiving end of so much care and generosity — from Alvin and from strangers.

"What was really the neatest thing was Arkansas viewers. Some of them just took it as a personal mission to find us," says Debbie, who

received multiple messages from well-meaning online sleuths. "My postman was getting bombarded by emails and questions and phone calls. The news station was getting a lot of calls. They were from people trying to help — being Arkansans, being helpful."

Wishing you a special summer,

Jennifer Christman Cia
jennifer.cia@aeci.com



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DEBBIE SMITH

Due to the kindness of strangers, the Lamb family of Jacksonville was recently reunited with letters (above) written by World War II veteran Marion Lamb.

Foundational Fathers

BY VERNON "BUDDY" HASTEN

President and CEO of Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., and Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation



June means a lot of things to many people. For me, it is my wedding anniversary month; Tracy and I are celebrating 36 years. It's also the month of Father's Day, occurring on June 16 this year.

Interesting fact: The amazing father who

inspired Father's Day is a native Arkansan. William Jackson Smart was born in 1842 in Crawford County. After serving in the Civil War, he married his first wife, Elizabeth Harris, with whom he had five children. Sadly, Elizabeth passed away in 1878, and William remarried Ellen Victoria Cheek Billingsley in 1880. Ellen, herself a widow, had three

children from her first marriage. William and Ellen had six more children together, expanding the blended family to 14 children.



In memory of Robert "Bob" Atterberg.

One of those children was Sonora Smart Dodd, born in Arkansas in Sebastian County in 1882. In 1887, the family relocated to Spokane, Washington, and sadly, Ellen died while giving birth to a sixth child. Sonora and her five siblings, who were still at home, were then raised by her twice-widowed father who never remarried.

While hearing a church sermon about the newly created Mother's Day, Sonora felt that outstanding fathers like hers should also have recognition. Sonora proposed the idea for Father's Day in 1910, and it gained national and international recognition. President Richard Nixon made it official by signing a



congressional resolution 62 years later, recognizing the third Sunday in June as Father's Day.

My personal experience is similar but revolves around my stepfather, Robert "Bob" Atterberg, and not my biological father, Tom Hasten. (Loyal readers of this magazine likely remember an early article I wrote titled "Call Tom Hasten.") I grew up in a house with a single mom who struggled to keep a roof over our heads and food on the table. My mom married my stepdad when I was in grade school, which proved to be a pivotal point in my life. I am certain that without him, I would not be typing this article from this office today.

Over 20 million children do not have a father in the home, and they comprise 85% of youth offenders in prison, 71% of high school dropouts, 90% of homeless or runaway children, 71% of adolescent patients in drug or alcohol treatment, and they are four times more likely to live in poverty.

Not long after he and my mom married, I asked if it was OK to call him "Dad," and he said, "Sure." Lest you think that Bob Atterberg was a soft, touchy-feely man, I also recall asking him if I could change my last name to Atterberg, so the other kids would think that he was my real dad. His answer: "It costs \$500 to change your name, and no name is worth \$500. What people call you doesn't matter; all that matters is that you are a good person and people respect you." So, my name remains Buddy Hasten to this day.

A little bit about my dad. My life before him was tumultuous. We moved around a lot, living with other families at times as an alternative to homelessness, and I knew what food stamps looked like and what government cheese tasted like. Like William Smart, my dad had a family of four kids before he married my mom. He took responsibility for me and my brother and ultimately had two more children with my mom. He lags William's pack of 14, but eight kids are nothing to sneeze at.

He taught me life skills, values and the importance of hard work. He didn't have a high school diploma; he got his GED instead and served in the U.S. Air Force and ➤

FOUNDATIONAL FATHERS continued on page 6

Cooperatives represent at Legislative Conference

More than 1,200 representatives from electric cooperatives across the United States, including Arkansas, participated in the 2024 Legislative Conference of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) from April 21-24 in Washington, D.C.

The aim of the annual conference, attended by board members and cooperative employees, is to push for policies that ensure reliable, affordable electricity for rural America.

Bill Gossage, chief external affairs officer for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, said, "At the heart of everything we do is the well-being of our members and the betterment of communities. Representing our members' interests on important issues with key decision-makers is essential to our mission of providing power that is Reliable, Affordable and Responsible."

Gossage moderated roundtable meetings that the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas hosted with the staff members of the Arkansas congressional delegation: Sen. John Boozman, Sen. Tom Cotton, Rep. Rick Crawford, Rep. French Hill, Rep. Bruce Westerman and Rep. Steve Womack.

Electric cooperative leaders discussed five major issues that impact reliability with policymakers. The issues were: reliability; opposition to the Environmental Protection Agency's power plant rule; protection of U.S. Department of Agriculture funding for co-ops; alleviating supply chain challenges; and safeguarding rural electric infrastructure.

Gossage said, "We very much appreciate our delegation for the time and attention they gave to us in April and the dedication that they give to our members and all Arkansans every day."



Madison Erstine, domestic policy adviser for Sen. Tom Cotton, and representatives from the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas participate in roundtable discussions at the 2024 NRECA Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.

.....

FOUNDATIONAL FATHERS *continued from page 5*

the U.S. Navy during Vietnam. He was quiet, a good listener, incredibly wise and possessed an iron-like will to never waver from his beliefs. His ability to see something through, no matter how hard the task because it was the right thing to do, amazes me as I look back.

We had a sign on our refrigerator that simply stated, "Liars get the belt." He was true to his word, and we quickly learned that telling the truth yielded less severe consequences than being caught in a lie. He taught me the value of integrity. He always gave me ideas for ways to make money (mowing lawns, cleaning garages, shoveling snow, paper routes, selling manure, picking fruits and vegetables, farm work, etc.) and supported those ideas. By age 13, I was completely financially independent.

Many of my dad's sayings have been termed "Bobisms," and we are passing those down to the next generation. Here are a few of my favorites: 1) Life isn't fair, get over it. Don't let it make you bitter, let it make you better. 2) People will tell you anything to make you believe something, but if you want to know what they are really all about, just watch where they spend their time and their money, and you will know the truth. 3) Don't believe everything you

hear; use your own mind to critically evaluate things (as an example, he would emphatically state that the world is flat and challenge me to prove him wrong). However, I think the most lasting and important legacy that he left behind is this: He treated me like his own son and never once made me feel like I didn't belong — that is a gift that keeps on giving today.

The statistics related to children who grow up without a father's influence in their life are staggering. Over 20 million children do not have a father in the home, and they comprise 85% of youth offenders in prison, 71% of high school dropouts, 90% of homeless or runaway children, 71% of adolescent patients in drug or alcohol treatment, and they are four times more likely to live in poverty. They don't have a William Smart or a Bob Atterberg to show them the way.

Happy Father's Day to all you fathers and father figures out there. Don't forget the impact that you have not only in your children's lives, but in the lives of their friends and classmates. A good father is an important part of the foundation from which a successful life can be built upon, and thus, my salute to Foundational Fathers this month.

Hoss graduates from Leadership Arkansas

Congratulations to Jen Hoss, vice president and general counsel for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, who became a Class XVIII graduate of



Jen Hoss

Leadership Arkansas in May.

Leadership Arkansas is a unique, nine-month program by the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce and Associated Industries of Arkansas designed to give professionals a comprehensive view of the economic and political challenges that face the state.

Hoss said, "Thank you to the electric cooperatives and the state chamber for allowing me to learn about the exciting things happening in Arkansas, and for allowing me to connect with my classmates and leaders who are dedicated to advancing this wonderful state."



- There are approximately 2 billion parking spaces in the United States.
- Eating an apple can cure garlic breath.
- The Tooth Fairy's average going rate is \$5.84 per tooth, according to Delta Dental. It previously averaged \$6.23 per tooth.
- Pizzly bears, a cross between a polar bear and a grizzly bear, were first discovered in 2006 and confirmed via DNA testing.
- Grocery stickers found on fruits are regulated by the Food and Drug Administration and made with food-safe materials.
- After just his third singing lesson at age 12, Johnny Cash's teacher told him to stop taking lessons and to never deviate from his unique, natural singing voice.
- Red Solo cups are a favorite souvenir of foreign vacationers to the United States.
- GPS costs approximately \$2 million per day to operate. It is a military system funded by general tax revenues and budgeted by the U.S. Department of Defense.
- "When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years." — Mark Twain, humorist and author



Where Is It?

Welcome back to our hidden object game, "Where Is It?"

In the May issue, we hid a sock for National Lost Sock Memorial Day.

Joked one correct reader who found the sock in the photo of a pageant winner: "What's 'afoot' at the Magnolia Blossom Festival? Page 10, top left photo."

In a random drawing of correct answers, the following five winners were selected to receive Arkansas Living insulated cooler bags:

- Rosie Foster, Hope (Southwest Arkansas Electric Cooperative)**
- Reba Altstadt, Cedarville (Arkansas Valley Electric Cooperative)**
- Kim Reece, Farmington (Ozarks Electric Cooperative)**
- Cody McQuay, Pocahontas (Clay County Electric Cooperative)**
- Mike Johnson, Tulsa, Oklahoma (nonmember)**

This month, for our cover story on pollinators, we've hidden a honey jar, and finding it should be an unbee-lievable challenge!

Enter by June 15* via the "Where Is It?" link on the homepage of arkansaslivingmagazine.com, or go directly to arkansaslivingmagazine.com/where-is-it-contest/.

Or mail in entries to:

Where Is It
Arkansas Living
P.O. Box 510
Little Rock, AR 72203.

Include your name, address and electric co-op (nonmembers also are eligible), plus the correct page number.

* If your magazine arrives after the deadline, submit your entry by the 15th of the following month. We'll send a prize to a randomly selected latecomer! April's winner was:

Janie Hester, Witts Springs (Petit Jean Electric Cooperative).





The Birds and the Bees ... and the Butterflies

Appreciating and protecting our pollinators

BY CASEY SHEPARD
PHOTOS BY ARKANSAS LIVING READERS

June is known as Pollinator Month, with Pollinator Week taking place during the third week of the month. This year, it's June 17 to 23. It is a wonderful opportunity to recognize, celebrate and learn more about those creatures that perform the incredible act of pollination, which benefits us all in our daily lives.

Pollination occurs when pollen is moved within flowers or carried from flower to flower by pollinators such as birds, bees, butterflies, beetles, bats and other small mammals.

Pollinators are important as they provide about one in



Striped Butterfly. Steven Popstein, Rogers.



Hummers are Back at Hobbs State Park.

Rita Martin, Rogers.

every three bites of food we eat. Their work ensures stable global and local crop production, and in some cases — like the monarch butterfly — hold cultural significance that spans national borders and generations.

As vital as pollinators are, over 40% of insect pollinator populations are in decline around the world due to several factors, one of which is significant habitat loss and fragmentation.

According to the Encyclopedia of Arkansas, nearly 135 butterfly species might be seen in the state during a typical year. About 350 bird species are regularly seen in Arkansas, with about 145 nesting in the state.

Bees are considered the most important pollinator. According to the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, 400 to 650 species of bees alone are native to The Natural State. Contrary to popular belief, the honeybee is not one of them! Honeybees are native to Europe and Africa, although Arkansas is home to many buzzing bees that greatly contribute to the local and national economy.

Additionally, the ecosystem and pollination services provided by native bees in particular are responsible for approximately \$3 billion in economic value per year in the United States. Whether you rely on a cup of coffee to kickstart your morning, enjoy the comfort of cotton T-shirts or satisfy a



Bees and Lavender. Gabriele Risinger, Piggott.

sweet tooth with a piece of chocolate or a spoonful of honey, you can thank pollinators.

Bee-ing proactive

Here are some ways to support pollinators in Arkansas during Pollinator Month:

1. Add native plants to your landscape. Some suggestions:

- Golden Alexander and Eastern bluestar;
- Milkweeds such as butterfly weed and swamp;
- Spotted bee balm;
- Foxglove beadtounge and Eastern columbine for hummingbirds;
- Black-eyed Susan;
- Lanceleaf coreopsis; and
- Important fall nectar plants like goldenrods.

If you have the space, adding native trees and shrubs can further benefit pollinators and birds. Native oaks, for ➤



example, can support over 400 different species of caterpillars!

Just be sure to do your research. Check if there is a native nursery nearby that can help you and ensure that the plants you purchase are properly suited to the conditions of your selected planting area. No matter how large or small the site, incorporating native plants will support pollinators and wildlife in your local ecosystem.

2. Leave the leaves this fall

Resist the temptation to shred and dispose of fallen leaves, as they provide valuable shelter for bees, butterflies, moths and other pollinators during the winter months. Plus, leaf litter suppresses weeds and retains moisture like wood mulch, but it is free! If you need to clean up gardens that are more public-facing, gently rake whole leaves into a secluded, designated area on your property for overwintering pollinator habitat.

3. Learn some pollinator trivia!

Did you know that only female bees sting? Or that it takes over 20 visits to fully pollinate a strawberry? Most North American bees are solitary, not social! What other fun pollinator facts do you know? Share them with friends! ►



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP

American Goldfinch. Leslie Cramer, Fort Smith.

Bee on a Passion Flower, Carrying Pollen on His Legs. Kolby Rasmussen, Sebastian County.

Tiger Swallowtail on Thistle, with a Bee Waiting His Turn. Debbie Sandidge, Bella Vista.



Summertime Learning: Focus on family fun

Written by Kelli Hilburn, Better Beginnings Program Administrator

Quality early educators

Research tells us the most effective learning happens through play and positive interactions with adults and caregivers.

Better Beginnings trained early childhood educators prepare children for school with positive experiences, research-based curriculum, and learning through play.

Learning fun with family

Families can create learning opportunities any time they are together. Everyday activities such as singing in the car and naming colors help children develop language skills to communicate with others. Every experience is a learning experience. Family fun makes learning memorable.

Better Beginnings has tools to help families put fun and learning together. Visit the Better Beginnings' Family Resource Library or Biblioteca de Recursos for learning tips and activities the whole family can enjoy.

Discover the benefits of play in *Play is Learning* or visit topics such as literacy and science. Our

online resources are directed at learning through play for babies, toddlers and preschoolers. Science activities range from playdough and moon sand to oil and water experiments. Math concepts are conveyed through sorting colors, making number shapes and playing games. Literacy includes activities to build vocabulary and brain development, and insights



Scan the code for free activities and tips for learning in our Family Resource Library and en español en Biblioteca de Recursos.



Every experience is a learning experience.
Family fun helps make learning memorable.

into how to raise a reader. There are also guides to outdoor play and kindergarten readiness.

Partnered with quality early childhood educators, families can help set their children on the path to lifelong learning while they play together.

Looking for your early education partner?

Click the orange banner at ARBetterBeginnings.com to find star-rated quality early educators who help children prepare for school through positive learning experiences.

Better Beginnings is administered by the Arkansas Department of Education.



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4. Participate in community science.

Create a free iNaturalist account, and upload your photo observations to support research in Arkansas and beyond. Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation (AECC) is a host company for the Electric Power Research Institute's Pollinator Power Party — the world's largest virtual party celebrating pollinators — for the fifth year in a row! This year, the party is also hosting a "bioblitz" on iNaturalist, where you can share your pollinator sightings:

tinyurl.com/PollinatorSittings.

Click on "Read More" in the "About" section to find a link to register for the virtual party as well.

Cooperative contributions


AECC, along with several of our distribution cooperatives, are working to support native pollinator habitat on our rights-of-way and solar facilities via practices like Integrated Vegetation Management.

These practices not only improve reliability by targeting woody and encroaching vegetation, but reduce competition from undesirable vegetative growth.

It also saves the cooperatives money by supporting the native plants lying dormant in the seedbeds of our managed lands and reduces the costs of frequent mechanical mowings.

We are very pleased with the work that has been accomplished by the cooperatives during the last few years, and are hopeful about what we will continue to achieve to support pollinators and habitat in Arkansas.

Let us all reflect on this important work and commit to doing our part as we sip coffee, tend our gardens and acknowledge pollinators this month.

Casey Shepard is an environmental engineer for AECC. 



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP

Hummingbird Finding Nectar in the Lotus on Lake Leatherwood. Dena Creamer, Clarksville.

Butterfly Sitting Down So Lightly. Steven Popstein, Rogers.

Doing What Hover Flies Do. Mickey Arlow, Bella Vista.





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and more at arkansasgrown.org.

Accident-Free Off-Roading

Staying safe during ATV adventures

BY MARINE GLISOVIC

While they are fun to drive and useful for work, All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) can also be dangerous, especially if proper safety protocols are not followed.

“Always wear a helmet. It doesn’t matter if you have ridden one for 40 years or it’s your first time riding one,” says Jesse Bocksnick, Arkansas 4-H outdoor skills instructor.

A good rule of thumb is to replace your helmet every five years, he adds.

Bocksnick teaches a “hands-on” rider ATV course through the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service. He says allowing a child to ride an adult machine is a big mistake.

“They put young kids on adult-sized machines, and on top of that, they forget Rule No.1: You need to wear a helmet,” he explains. “They put their youth on machines that are too powerful, too heavy, too large for them to even physically handle.”

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that no one under the age of 16 operate or ride an ATV.

“You have to be 16 years old to operate an adult-sized machine,” Bocksnick says. “What people don’t understand is, the machine is a rider-active machine — especially four-wheelers — they’re rider-active machines, which means you use your body weight and positioning to make four-wheelers handle properly.”

He stresses that people should always follow ATV age restrictions. Some manufacturers make four-wheelers for ages 6 and up with parental controls. Still, Bocksnick says, they will not train anyone under age 10.

A list of safety gear to wear along with helmets includes goggles, gloves, long-sleeve shirts, long pants and closed-toed shoes (preferably without laces).

“In a perfect world, you would even go as far as getting the full riding gear, and that would be all the stuff I mentioned plus a chest protector, a kidney belt, actual riding boots and riding pants — all of those are cushioned, and they’re usually super tough because road rash is a real thing, even in grass and gravel,” Bocksnick says.

Part of the training Bocksnick offers includes emphasizing proper safety protocols, making turns using body weight,

learning how to ride over obstacles and navigating various types of trails.

He says, “Most kids don’t understand that if you’re not riding properly, you might hit a bump, and it will toss you off the machine like a bucking bull.”

Before heading out on the trail, Bocksnick advises telling someone where you’re going and for how long, in case you cannot call 911 during an emergency.

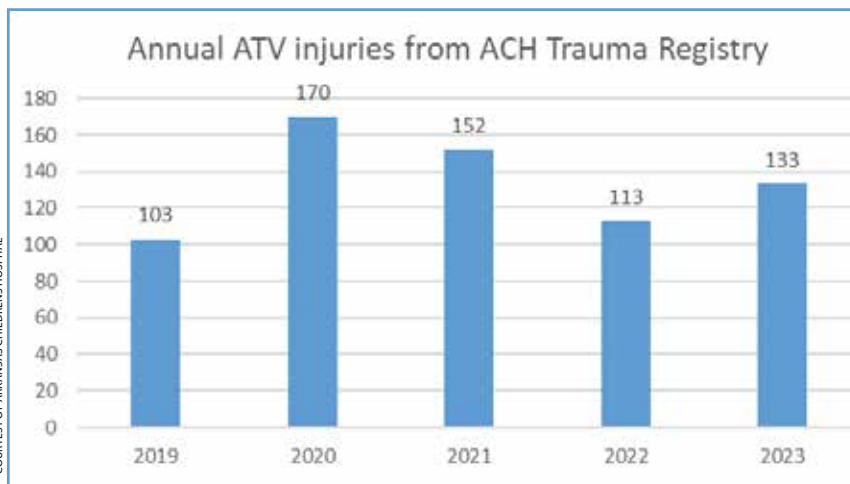
Additional resources can be found at atvsafety.org, the website of the All-Terrain Vehicle Safety Institute.

Marine Glisovic is corporate communications manager for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas.



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

Safety first! Proper training and safety gear are essential for ATV riders.



COURTESY OF ARKANSAS CHILDRENS HOSPITAL

Statistics of ATV injuries from Arkansas Childrens Hospital.

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Part Six: RTOs and Reliability

This is the sixth installment in a multipart series to educate electric cooperative members about power generation and the increased challenges facing electric utilities, including the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas. To read more, visit aecc.com/balance-of-power/.

RTO ... ISO ... FERC ... SPP ... MISO.

A discussion about electric reliability is not possible without a certain amount of alphabet soup.

Let's unpack these acronyms to better understand the players in our vast, interconnected electric grid.

What are RTOs and ISOs?

The terms Regional Transmission Organization (RTO) and Independent System Operator (ISO) are often used interchangeably; for simplicity, we'll use RTO going forward. RTOs are nonprofit organizations that coordinate and control transmission systems. There are seven RTOs in the United States; all but one (Electric Reliability Council of Texas or ERCOT) are multistate and federally regulated.

RTOs were voluntarily developed in the 1990s at the recommendation of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to encourage competitive generation and open transmission access.

Andrew Lachowsky is vice president of market operations for Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation (AECC), the wholesale power supplier for the local electric cooperatives in Arkansas. He explains, "They were trying to make sure that there was fair and open access to transmission grids. When you drive home, you don't want distribution lines to be on both sides of the street. You would like there to be one company that serves you. Same with higher voltage transmission lines; you don't want to see them all over the countryside. So, while monopoly status makes sense for utilities, to ensure access to transmission lines are equitable, regulations are required. The regulators encouraged the RTOs that oversee the bulk transmission grid."

Are the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas part of an RTO?

The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas are members of two RTOs: Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) in the eastern two-thirds of the state and Southwest Power Pool (SPP) in the western third of the state.

MISO operates in all or parts of Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Texas, Wisconsin and Manitoba, Canada.

SPP operates in all or parts of Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska,



New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas and Wyoming Lachowsky says, "We just happen to be one of the states that has two RTOs. The Northeast part of the U.S. has RTOs;

California has one. ERCOT in Texas is an RTO. And then there are still areas in the country that don't have RTOs. Much of the West doesn't function with an RTO, and then the Southeast U.S. does not have an RTO. It's not like every utility must belong to an RTO; there are incentives for organizations to join RTOs."

What else do RTOs do?

AECC Chief Operations Officer Jonathan Oliver says, "We sometimes refer to SPP and MISO as markets. In addition to some of the basic functions that they have about ensuring a fair and open transmission grid, they also operate a power market. We offer generation into this market, and then our energy needs are also bid into the market."

Lachowsky elaborates, "The reason they've developed markets is to optimize the transmission system. It's similar to a highway where there's a limited number of cars that can go on the highway. In the same manner, a limited amount of electricity can go onto large transmission lines. So, the market is set up to optimize the generation to serve energy needs in the most economical way by optimizing use of the transmission system."

How successful have RTOs been with optimization?

To answer that, Oliver says, it's important to discuss planning reserve margins.

"You have your peak demand out there," he says. "And the planning reserve margin is above and beyond that peak



Southwest Power Pool (SPP) and Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) are the two Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs) in Arkansas.

demand to ensure that — should there be wholesale generational outages, should the loads exceed what you expect them to be — that there’s margin to make sure the system remains reliable.”

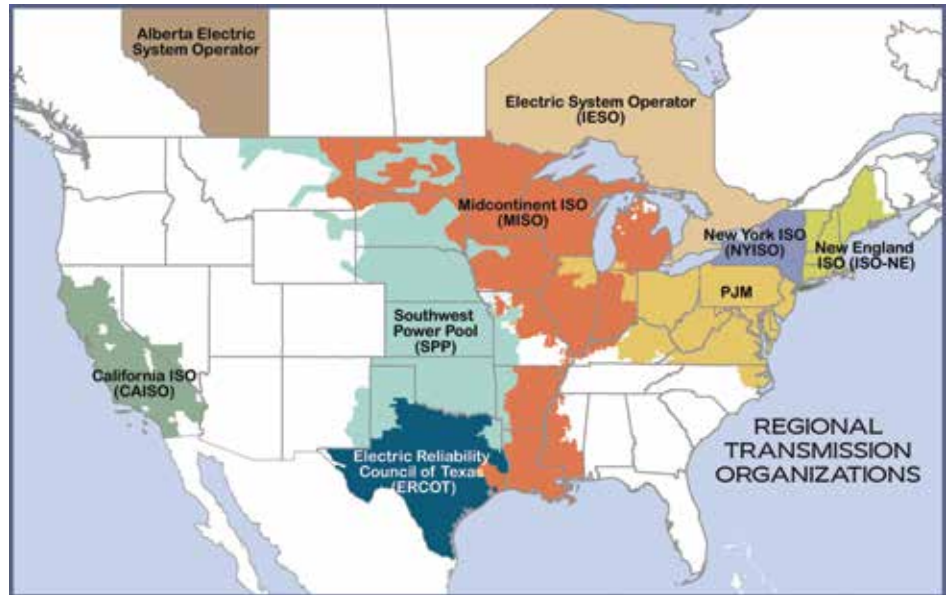
AECC maintained planning reserve margins even prior to RTO membership. In recent years, due to increased intermittent resources like wind and solar, RTOs have discovered that historical planning reserve margins aren’t adequate to maintain reliable operations — a troubling trend considering present-day winter storm outages/curtailments. (It’s also worth noting, when load curtailment is ordered, that is a call made by an RTO; utilities are federally mandated to respond accordingly.)

Lachowsky says, “During Winter Storm Uri and Winter Storm Elliott, curtailments were ordered. Both MISO and SPP have reevaluated their required reserve margins. ... While they’ve maintained similar summer planning margins, there have been significant increases with the winter planning reserve margins. This impacts AECC quite a bit because we have had winter peaks recently. We’ve had higher demand in the winters than we’ve seen in the summers.”

What does this mean for reliability?

This higher demand comes at a time when dependable baseload or dispatchable generation facilities are being prematurely shuttered.

Two coal plants co-owned by AECC — White Bluff Steam Electric Station in Redfield and Independence Steam Electric Station near Newark — will be required to cease operating in 2028 and 2030 respectively. And “renewable”



FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION


Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs) are nonprofit organizations that coordinate and control transmission systems.

intermittent resources like solar and wind, which are only available when the sun shines and the wind blows, do not provide a steady, constant supply of electricity required to provide reliable power. This is why the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas favor a Balance of Power strategy of diversifying power generation.

Oliver says, “Winter storms like Uri, Elliott and Gerri and this influx of intermittent resources basically increases the risk of loss of load, which is why RTOs must increase the planning reserve margin.”

As for what this ultimately means for AECC, Lachowsky says, “There are strong penalties if we don’t have the amount of generation resources needed to meet the required reserve margin. So, we’re now in a position where we’re planning for additional wholesale generation facilities.”

As the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas plan for the future, the organization will always remain committed to the needs, safety and well-being of electric cooperative

members and true to the mission of providing energy that is Reliable, Affordable and Responsible. 



Banking on a Good Catch

“Go Fish” during Free Fishing Weekend, June 7-9

BY KAT ROBINSON



Want to fish but don't have a boat? Arkansas has some of the best fishing holes for casting a line.

Arkansas is home to more than 9,700 miles of rivers and streams and some of the most pristine lakes in the nation. Fishing opportunities abound, and bank fishing is a great way to begin.

Trey Reid, assistant chief of communications for the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC), says you can find bank fishing all over the state.

“There are countless places to bank fish in Arkansas, including the shoreline of every AGFC-owned lake in the state, and many U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lakes have riparian areas that are publicly accessible,” Reid says. “AGFC maintains many public access points along many streams and rivers.”

Some of those are located in areas such as the Spring River, where trout fishing from waters that rush south from Mammoth Spring at the Arkansas-Missouri border, is popular. Others are along Bayou Bartholomew — the longest bayou in the world that stretches south from Pine Bluff. There are larger lakes like White Oak Lake near Prescott and smaller ponds such as Calion Lake in Union County. Many of these lakes are stocked annually or biannually.

“Game and Fish stocks millions of fish in the state each year,” Reid says. “But the biggest benefit for bank fishers comes from AGFC access points, as well as public fishing piers, and AGFC places aquatic habitat near these facilities to attract fish.”

There are other locations not maintained by AGFC where you can sink a line, such as city and county access points, Arkansas State Parks and Army Corps of Engineer sites. However, riverbanks are not considered public land, so if you plan to fish a bank on private property, you need to



A “reel” good time: Fishing at Heber Springs Park on Greers Ferry Lake.



Free Fishing Weekend is June 7 to 9, when anyone can fish in Arkansas waters without a permit.

obtain permission from the landowner.

Before making plans, you'll need a license if you're 16 or older. You can purchase your fishing license at retailers across the state, including bait shops, convenience stores and Walmart stores. You can also purchase licenses online at agfc.com. A Resident Fisheries Conservation license is \$10.50 for Arkansas residents. For those over age 65, it's \$3.50.

If you plan to fish for trout, you'll also need a trout stamp, which runs \$10 each year. “Trout permits are required for anglers 16 and older who

fish in areas where trout are present,” Reid shares. “Funds from the purchase of trout stamps go toward habitat projects in trout streams and fish production at the AGFC's Spring River Hatchery near Mammoth Spring. Funding from the trout permit recently helped fund a major renovation of the Spring River Hatchery, which enables AGFC to stock more trout for anglers to pursue.”

Not ready to commit to fishing but still want to give it a try? Each June, anyone can fish Arkansas waters. This year's Free Fishing Weekend will be held June 7 to 9.

“Free Fishing Weekend is a longstanding tradition in ➤

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Bank fishing is a great way to introduce young anglers.

which a gubernatorial proclamation and AGFC regulations enable anyone to fish without a license from noon on Friday to midnight on Sunday," Reid says. "AGFC, as well as other entities, also host free fishing derbies around the state on Free Fishing Weekend."

What will you need to fish outside the free period? Not a whole lot.

"You need a fishing license if you're 16 or older," Reid continues. "Beyond that, it's up to you. You'll need a fishing pole and bait, and that largely depends on what kind of fishing you're doing. The simplest setup is a pole (such as a cane pole) with a line tied directly to it, with a hook and a worm or cricket for bait.

"Bank fishing is a great way to introduce young people to fishing."

If you're interested in bank fishing, agfc.com can help you locate a place nearby. Asking friends or visiting local bait shops are other ways to find good fishing spots. 🟢

WEB EXCLUSIVE! Read an expanded version of this story at: arkansaslivingmagazine.com

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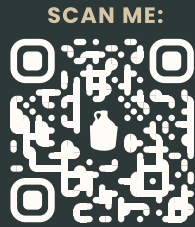
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Join Now and Fight for Reliable Power

New power plant regulations proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) threaten the future of affordable, reliable energy for businesses and families.

Electric cooperatives are driving innovation in low- and zero-emission energy technologies. However, this proposal would require the use of carbon capture and hydrogen technologies that are promising but not yet commercially viable. These regulations would create a significant financial burden for your cooperative.

They would also force the early closure of always available power plants while also making it harder to permit, site, and build critical new power plants.

This proposal will further strain America's electric grid and undermine decades of work to keep the lights on. The EPA must recognize the disruptive impact these requirements will have on the future of reliable energy before it's too late.

We need YOUR help by Tuesday, Aug. 8!

Act today and tell the EPA that keeping the lights on is essential. Join your cooperative in urging the EPA to reconsider these regulations and prioritize policies that ensure a reliable and affordable energy supply for the future.



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voice be heard!

20 local programs funded by member-supported Operation Round-Up program

Operation Round-Up allows First Electric members to help support worthwhile projects in our communities and scholarships for students.

Participating in Operation Round-Up is easy. Each month, First Electric simply “rounds up” the electric bill of participating members to the next highest dollar. For example, a member’s monthly bill of \$52.73 would be rounded up to \$53, with the additional 27 cents going to the Operation Round-Up Trust fund. Members can sign up through our website at firstelectric.coop/operation-round-up, mobile app, or by calling us at 800-489-7405.

In April, the board of trustees met and reviewed applications and funded 20 nonprofit organizations in the cooperatives service areas, totaling \$27,750. The recipients are:



Magen assists Ronon, a client of Beyond Boundaries.

Cleburne County

Breakin Bread Community Kitchen \$2,000
 Sugarloaf Heritage Council, Inc. \$1,000
 The Genesis Project \$2,000

Conway County

Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Conway County \$500

Garland County

Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Garland County \$250

Grant County

Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Grant County \$250

Lonoke County

Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Lonoke County \$1,500
 Beyond Boundaries Inc \$2,000
 Options Pregnancy Center \$1,500

Pulaski County

AR Kids Read \$2,000
 Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Pulaski County \$1,500
 Fishnet Missions \$2,000
 Here To Help Foundation \$2,000
 Methodist Family Health Foundation \$1,000

Saline County

Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Saline County \$1,500
 Imagination Library of Saline County \$2,000
 New Beginnings Pregnancy Center of Saline County \$1,500

White County

Antioch Volunteer Fire Department \$2,000

Yell County

Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Yell County \$250
 Hollis Improvement Council \$1,000

Delegates selected for educational Youth Tour

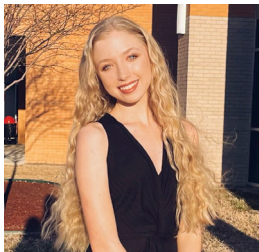
First Electric Cooperative has selected Macey Chambers, Aspen Farley, Grant Griffin and Johnathan Thomas to represent the co-op on the 2024 Youth Tour, an all-expenses-paid educational trip to Washington, D.C.

The group will explore the nation’s capital June 15-21 with delegates from the other Arkansas electric cooperatives.

For more information on Youth Tour, visit firstelectric.coop/youth-tour.



Macey Chambers



Aspen Farley



Grant Griffin



Johnathan Thomas



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Todd Prothro, Vice Chairman
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 Heber Springs District

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 Benton District

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Day.**

Checking out Camden

South Arkansas town has a rich history

STORY BY JACK SCHNEDLER

PHOTOS BY MARCIA SCHNEDLER

The sleek Camark cat peering into a white pitcher is resting in the hands of Danny Harrell, the enthusiastic manager at the **McCollum-Chidester House Museum** in Camden.

“These continue to be quite collectible,” Harrell tells two visitors to the 177-year-old National Register of Historic Places property. He plays a video that shows some of the “climbing cats” attached to the side of a house. They were a trademark creation of Camark Pottery, a prominent firm from 1927 to 1982 in the Ouachita County seat.

Camden is the headquarters for **Ouachita Electric Cooperative**, one of 17 distribution cooperatives of the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas. The community’s history stretches back to 1782, when Spain set up a trading post called Ecore a Fabri along the Ouachita River.

The settlement’s name became Camden in 1842, five years before trader Peter McCollum built his house. Visitors learn that the home at 926 W. Washington St. boasted the area’s first plastered walls, carpeting and wallpaper.

The property was bought in 1862 by stagecoach owner John T. Chidester for \$10,000 in gold. Chidester descendants lived here until the early 1960s, when it was sold to the **Ouachita County Historical Society** (ouachitacountyhistoricalsociety.org).

Ghost-seeking investigations have taken place in the house since the 1960s. In 2020, according to Harrell, “Natural State Paranormal set up cameras and other equipment



The Leake-Ingham Library once served as an office of the Freedman’s Bureau, which helped newly liberated slaves after the Civil War.



The McCollum-Chidester House is one of the original homes in Camden.



Murals in Camden depict local life in past times.

in one bedroom. At the end of the three-hour investigation, a spirit was caught on a ghost-recording camera at the foot of the bed, and it appeared to be holding on to the bedpost.”

Next to the McCollum-Chidester House stands **Leake-Ingham Library**, which has been moved five times since its construction in 1850 in downtown Camden. After the Civil War, it served as an office of the Freedman’s Bureau, which helped newly liberated slaves.

The house and library are located in **Washington Street Historic District**, where Queen Anne-style homes include the 1896 J.W.

Holleman House and the 1900 Reed-Mason House. Notable among the district's other styles is the H.B. Lide House, 522 Washington St., built in 1916 as one of the city's first homes in Craftsman style.

During the Civil War, Camden was briefly held by Union forces in April 1864 during the so-called Camden Expedition. Visitors can drive 12 miles northwest to **Poison Springs Battleground State Park** (arkansasstateparks.com/parks/poison-springs-battleground-state-park), where exhibits detail the April 18 fighting, when Confederate troops captured a 200-wagon federal supply convoy. That loss persuaded Brig. Gen. Frederick Seele to begin the 100-mile retreat back to Little Rock.

Along with its Camark display, **Camden Visitors Center and Museum**, in a former train station at 314 Adams St. SW, (explorecamden.com), exhibits another local product with former prominence. Grapette bottles evoke the widely popular grape soda that came on the market in 1940.

Like many cities during the past decade, Camden has been brightened by murals on public and private buildings. Examples can be viewed along downtown Adams Avenue (Arkansas 7). One of the largest shows vignettes of local life in past eras.

Arkansas' oldest restaurant, open since 1907, is **White House Café**, 323 S. Adams Ave. (tinyurl.com/whitehousecafecamden). Cheerful service adds pleasure to a menu that includes salads, sandwiches, Mexican dishes, steaks and seafood.


Postmasters Grill, 133 W. Washington St. (postmastersgrill.com), operates in the brick National Register of Historic Places building that opened in 1896 as a post office. Its menu features steaks, with jambalaya adding a Louisiana touch. The professional sound stage on its patio offers music performances during warmer months.

Morning beverages at **Perfect Cup**, 1226 Country Club Road (facebook.com/Perfects1Cup/), include coffees, smoothies and frappes, to be paired with muffins and croissants. Lunch is built around salads and sandwiches.

Native Dog Brewing, 125 Madison Ave., (natedogbrewing.com) professes to be the first craft brewery in southern Arkansas. Its owners, Bobby and Lauren Glaze, are pharmacists by profession. The array of beers is supplemented on Fridays and Saturdays by a pizza truck.

The **XOXO Co.**, 322 S. Adams Ave. (shopthexoxoco.com), is a specialty boutique offering clothing, home décor, gifts and accessories. Pick out the perfect gift for any family member, including the furry ones.

The impact of the Civil War still resonates in **Oakland Cemetery**, established in the 1830s as the community's first burial ground. Its Confederate section holds more than 250 graves, each marked with a small white marble headstone.

A tall granite monument at the site carries a poetic inscription on its eastern face: "We care not whence they come, dear is their lifeless clay. Whether known or unknown to fame, their cause and country still the same, they died and wore the Gray." 



Established in the 1830s, Oakland Cemetery is the site of a Confederate burial section and monument.



Opened in 1896 as a post office, Postmasters Grill is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

CAMDEN FACTS

Incorporated: 1844
City population: 10,612
Area: 16.5 square miles
County: Ouachita



Native Dog Brewing is the first craft brewery in southern Arkansas.

Annual Meeting Scheduled

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of the members of First Electric Cooperative will be held on June 27, in the Office of the Cooperative at 1000 South J.P. Wright Loop Road, Jacksonville, Pulaski County, Arkansas, beginning at 10 a.m. for the following purposes:

- To pass on reports for the previous fiscal year;
- To elect one (1) director for the cooperative to serve a term of six (6) years; and,
- To transact such other business as properly may come before the meeting.

This will be a business session only. Any member planning to attend the Annual Meeting who has special needs is asked to contact the co-op at 800-489-7405 prior to the Annual Meeting for assistance.

Respectfully,
Karissa Rushing, Secretary/Treasurer

Director Election



Each year, First Electric members are asked to vote for representatives to serve on the cooperative's board of directors. The nine-member board sets policy and guides the President/CEO.

There is one director's position to be confirmed this

year, representing the Heber Springs district. The candidate selected by the nominating committee is Todd Prothro of Rose Bud.

Todd Prothro retired from the Rose Bud School District, where he taught agriculture education for 22 years. He has worked as a seasonal park ranger for the Greers Ferry Lake Project for more than 20 summers.

Upon retirement, Prothro began working as a home improvement contractor. He has a bachelor's degree in vocational agriculture education from Arkansas State University.

He is a member of Sigma Tau Alpha and is president of the Bethesda Cemetery Board. Prothro received the honorary State FFA Degree at the Arkansas FFA Convention for his years of service in agricultural education. He is a Credentialed Cooperative Director and has his Board Leadership Certificate.

"As a long-time resident of White County, I'm honored to represent our community in ensuring we provide safe, affordable and reliable power to all of our members," Prothro said.

Todd and his wife, Djuana, have two sons and five grandchildren with one on the way!

Nominating Committee selects board candidate

On March 28, the Nominating Committee of First Electric Cooperative met at the cooperative's office in Jacksonville. The purpose of the meeting was to review and select First Electric members as nominee for election to the cooperative's board of directors to serve a six-year term.

The committee selected Todd Prothro of Rose Bud as the nominee for the Heber Springs district, to be voted on by way of mail-in ballots. Ballots will be mailed to all members on June 3.

Committee members present during nominations: Cody Calhoun, Benton; Dearl Dixon, Austin; Ginger Hawkins, Perryville; Tommy Majors, Jacksonville; Dick Hoffman, Alexander; Mark Sandage, Keo; Jimmy Hawkins, Mt. Vernon; Daniel Sanders, Rose Bud; and Graham French, Humphry.

*At press time, these were the candidates selected by the Nominating Committee for a vote by the members.



Member Photo Contest Winner

Hayfield in Floyd. *By Christa Acock*



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Snapshots from our readers



Harrison with his overalls full of beagle pups.
Jessica Holt, Booneville.



Now that's a fancy hen hotel, Reeve!
Kassidy Dorrell, Jasper.



Blakely hugging up to her grandpa, Homer Murphy.
Margie Huckabay, Dover.



Segger, the golden retriever, will follow Brady anywhere.
LaGina Hayes, Hermitage.



Arwen doing some serious corn chomping.
Cheryl L. Borum, Mountainburg



Macy says, "This cool grass feels so good!" Alanna Campbell, Dennard.



Jakobeian with "Bluey," who flies down to visit several times a day. Tatum Williams, Greenwood.



Little Red and the big red hen. Who's walking who?
Pam Goad, Jonesboro.



Whitten doesn't quite know what to think about this odd critter. Jonathan Glover, Arkadelphia.

Share your photos with your fellow Arkansas Living readers! Please submit high-resolution photos with detailed information about the pictures (who took it, where, who is in it, etc.) to: arkansaslivingmagazine.com/submit-a-photo.

Gourd Goals

Plant now for pumpkins this fall




BY JANET B. CARSON

Not many people think about Halloween in June, but now is the time to plant seeds to have pumpkins in time for fall.

Pumpkins aren't difficult to grow, but require a long time to mature and ample space. Pumpkins come in all sizes and shapes — from the traditional orange to white, red, green and striped, from smooth rinds to warty.

Pumpkins are members of the cucurbit family, which means they are related to cucumbers, squash and watermelons. They are normally planted once the soil warms up, or from mid-June to early July for a fall harvest.

Most pumpkins need between 90 to 130 days from seed to harvesting. They need full sun and well-drained soil. Mound up the soil, plant three seeds per mound, and space the mounds 2 to 5 feet apart. Vines are prolific, but if space is limited, they can be trained to grow up a trellis, with support given to the resulting pumpkins. Fertilize at planting and again lightly when plants begin to vine. Don't overdo it with fertilizer or you will get more vines than pumpkins. Mulching can help with weed control. Water as needed.

Pumpkins can be used as decorations or as a food source. Pie pumpkins are traditionally smaller — usually between 3-6 pounds. Pumpkins are low in calories, fat and sodium, and high in fiber. They are good sources of Vitamins A, B and C, potassium and iron. 



JANET B. CARSON

Most pumpkins need between 90 to 130 days from seed to harvesting.

VARIETY	CHARACTERISTICS	DAYS FROM SEED TO HARVEST
Blaze	Yellowish-orange skin with deep orange stripes on a squatty, round pumpkin; up to 3 pounds.	100
Blue Doll	Greenish-blue pumpkin; between 15-20 pounds.	110
Connecticut Field	Heirloom variety; up to 20 pounds, taller than wide.	100
Fairytale	Medium-sized, flatter fruits with a light, dusky tan color. Beautiful and great pie pumpkin; between 12-15 pounds.	125
Hijinks	Uniform perfect shapes with deep orange fruits; between 7-9 pounds. Wide-spreading plants but very productive.	100
Jack-Be-Little	Mini pumpkin; 3-4 inches wide, 2-inches tall, less than 1 pound. Bright orange fruits. Plants are more bush-like and easier to fit in a small space.	95
Jack O'Lantern	Medium-sized orange; taller than wide.	110
Knucklehead	Orange, oval pumpkin with green and orange warts; up to 16 pounds.	130
Pepitas	Light orange fruits with green blotches; 9-12 pounds. It has naked seeds (pepitas) that are great to roast.	90
Orange Smoothie	Smooth, dark orange fruit; between 5-8 pounds. Decorative and good pie pumpkin. Requires less space.	90
Sugar Pie	Heirloom, small-to-medium round fruit; between 6-8 pounds. Very vigorous and considered the best pie pumpkin.	90-100
Super Moon	White pumpkin; between 25-30 pounds. Vigorous plant and disease-resistant.	90



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Summer Lovin'

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RECIPES AND PHOTOS
BY JULIANA GOODWIN

Healthy Veggie Dip

Makes 6-8 servings.

- | | | | |
|-----|--|-----|--------------------------------|
| 1 | cup 2% plain, unsweetened Greek yogurt | 1 | teaspoon dried oregano |
| 3 | tablespoons light mayonnaise | 1 | teaspoon onion powder |
| 2 | teaspoons red wine vinegar | 3/4 | teaspoon salt or more to taste |
| 1/2 | cup fresh basil, sliced | 1/4 | teaspoon pepper |
| 1/3 | cup parsley, chopped | | Pinch of rosemary (optional) |
| 2 | garlic cloves, minced | | Vegetables for serving |
| 2 | green onions, sliced and minced | | |



In a medium bowl, stir all ingredients together until thoroughly mixed, and refrigerate for 12-24 hours. Add a dash of rosemary (optional) before serving. Serve with

assorted vegetables.

Note: Leftover dip is good on grilled chicken or as a sandwich spread.



Light Mango Ice Cream

Makes 4 servings.

- 2 1/4 cups frozen mango chunks
- 1 cup half-and-half or whole milk
- 3 tablespoons honey

Place ingredients in blender, and blend until smooth. Serve immediately.

24-Hour Kale Caesar Salad with Chicken

Makes 5 servings.

Dressing

- 1/2 cup light mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 large garlic clove, minced
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/3 cup Parmesan cheese, shredded (fresh, not canned)
- 3 tablespoons chicken broth or water
- Salt to taste

Salad

- 1 head of kale
- Cherry tomatoes for serving (optional)

Grilled chicken

- 10 chicken tenders
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- Extra Parmesan for garnishing



For dressing: In a medium bowl, stir all dressing ingredients together.

For salad: Wash kale, then strip it off its stalk, and pat dry with paper towels. Cut into small pieces. Place in a bowl and toss with dressing, thoroughly coating it. Refrigerate for 24 hours.

For chicken: Heat grill to medium-high (400-425

degrees). Brush chicken with olive oil. Generously salt and pepper each side. When grill is hot, grill chicken for about 5 minutes per side. Slice and serve on salad.

Before serving, top with tomatoes and extra Parmesan.

Notes: Kale is tough and needs time to sit in the dressing. If you don't have time, make the salad with romaine and serve right away. If you use romaine, you won't need all the dressing.



This month's web exclusive recipe: Quinoa Salmon Salad with Dill

More recipes on our website:
arkansaslivingmagazine.com

Juliana Goodwin is a food columnist, cookbook author and avid traveler. If you have a question, email julianalovesfood23@gmail.com.

Salad Shake-up

Marshmallows? Bacon? Cheese? Yes, 'peas!'

Spinach Salad

Salad

- 12-16 ounces fresh baby spinach
- 6-8 mushrooms, sliced
- 4-5 green onions, sliced
- 3 boiled eggs, sliced
- 1/2-1 pound bacon, cooked and crumbled

Dressing

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1 teaspoon garlic salt
- 1/2 small onion, grated
- 6 tablespoons vinegar
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon celery seed

For salad: In a large bowl, toss all salad ingredients together; set aside.

For dressing: In a separate bowl, whisk together all dressing ingredients. Pour dressing on spinach mixture.

Note: I enjoyed this delicious salad at church potlucks made many times by a precious lady named Cookie; I make it now for my family.
Gina Smith, Paragould



JENNIFER CHRISTMAN, OK

Summertime Sweet Pea Salad

- 1 (12-ounce) bag frozen sweet peas, thawed for 1 hour
- 1/2-1 large sweet onion, chopped
- 4 ounces cheddar cheese, cubed
- 8 pieces bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- Splash of vinegar (if you like it tangy)
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a large bowl, stir together all ingredients. Refrigerate for a few hours, then it's ready to enjoy!

Notes: My family has always made this since I was little, and I continued the tradition. It's great after a long, hot day — something cool and light to eat. I will add garden-fresh chopped tomatoes sometimes.

Cassidy Hurley, Greenwood

Easy Fruit Salad

Makes 8 servings.

- 1 (21-ounce) can peach pie filling
- 1 (11-ounce) can mandarin oranges, drained
- 1 (20-ounce) can pineapple tidbits, drained
- 1 cup miniature marshmallows
- 1 cup grapes, halved
- 2 apples, diced

In a large bowl, mix together all ingredients. Refrigerate overnight.

Note: This recipe is from my grandmother.

Becky Clark, Rogers

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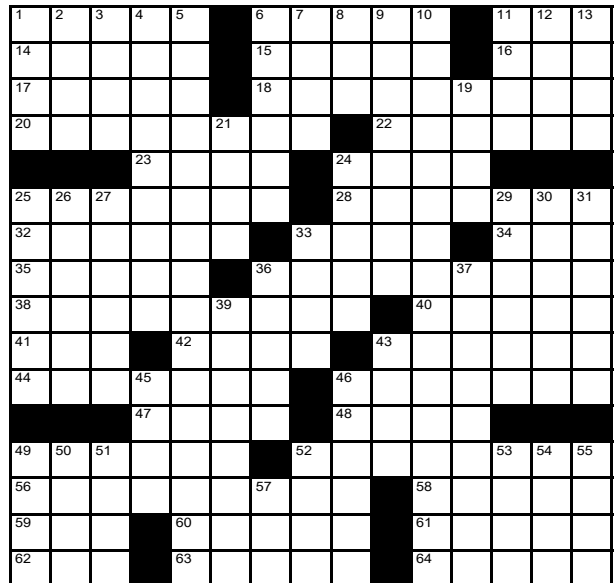
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Freestyle #3 By Victor Fleming

ACROSS

- 1 Sleep spoiler
- 6 ___ nothing
- 11 Loudly weep
- 14 ___ Bartholomew (360-mile waterway through 52-Across and Louisiana)
- 15 River of Paris
- 16 Braggart's issue
- 17 Eye layers with pupils
- 18 Shelter for rams and ewes
- 20 Plant cultivator
- 22 Designated
- 23 Brings an action against
- 24 McIlroy of golf
- 25 Early or speedily, old-style
- 28 Breaking stuff?
- 32 Name for which Izzy might be a moniker
- 33 Comic Jay
- 34 By way of
- 35 Sheet music symbol
- 36 It may inhibit a potential perp

- 38 Exerts vigorous effort toward achievement
- 40 Full of eggs' yellow parts
- 41 Tax collection agcy.
- 42 "Bearded" flower
- 43 One time Army post near Arlington Nat'l. Cemetery
- 44 "... shall not perish but have ___ life"
- 46 "Look, Ma" follower
- 47 Call out
- 48 1993 Pulitzer author Robert ___ Butler
- 49 French brandy
- 52 River that rises in the Rockies
- 56 Among other things (Latin)
- 58 Arsonist, in slang
- 59 Overly
- 60 Nickname that's an alternative to "Gert"
- 61 Lauder of cosmetics
- 62 Ambulance destinations, briefly
- 63 "Deadly sins" number
- 64 Double-check one's math




DOWN

- 1 "Snug as ___ ..."
- 2 Volcano output
- 3 Yesterday, in Cuba
- 4 Locales for rest stops
- 5 After 52-Across, where to see the "Delta Triennial" exhibition, starting June 28
- 6 Put a value on
- 7 Glassmaker's oven
- 8 Tell a whopper
- 9 Low tie in baseball that's impossible in football
- 10 After 52-Across, where to see "Pride & Prejudice," starting June 18
- 11 Baseball feature
- 12 Mean sort
- 13 Dr. No foe
- 19 ___ Mawr College
- 21 "... and ___ the twain shall meet"
- 24 Butler of "Gone With The Wind"
- 25 "Ain't no ___" ("Not a huge deal")

- 26 Go along with
- 27 "Unto the Sons" author Gay
- 29 "Brideshead Revisited" author Waugh
- 30 Sent an eye signal
- 31 Goat-legged guys of myth
- 33 Aloha gifts
- 36 Boot camp workout
- 37 Prominent sniffer
- 39 Dentist's topic
- 43 Art or song preceder
- 45 Baseball's Sandberg
- 46 Great picnic forecast
- 49 Give a quote from
- 50 ___ before deadline
- 51 '70s sporty cars
- 52 Helper on the Hill
- 53 Mlle. in Minorca
- 54 Breezed through, as an exam
- 55 Backyard storage facility
- 57 Valentine candy word

CROSSWORD ANSWERS ON PAGE 39 Email feedback to judgevic@gmail.com

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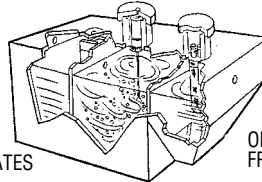

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CROSSWORD ANSWERS

for puzzle on page 38

D	D	V	R	E	R	N	E	L	S	S	R	S	E		
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Farmhouse Café charms in Bald Knob



STORY AND PHOTOS
BY ROB ROEDEL

Kenneth and Debbie Horton opened the Farmhouse Café in Bald Knob in 2018 with a goal of serving quality country cooking. I can attest that they have succeeded.

The couple, married for 48 years, met as students at Bald Knob High School, and they genuinely love their community. As Kenneth and Debbie walked me through their expansive restaurant, I was impressed by the comfortable décor and large mural. The mural gives honor to the U.S. armed forces and provides a glimpse into the history of Bald Knob.



Farmhouse Café in Bald Knob serves quality country cooking.



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Friday-Saturday: 6 a.m.-8 p.m.

They told me that the team prepares made-from-scratch white cream gravy every morning. Kenneth said that is the only way to do it right: “We work for consistency in our food. We try to get as close as possible to providing our customers with a home-cooked meal.”

I was treated to a Reuben Sandwich, served on toasted bread with melted cheese, sauerkraut, corned beef and Thousand Island dressing. The sandwich had great flavor, and I also enjoyed the side of onion rings.

One menu favorite is the Texas Rodeo Burger — a nice-sized beef patty topped with grilled onions, white cheese, barbecue sauce and an onion ring between two slices of Texas toast. Each component added to the overall goodness of the burger.

The daily special during my visit was the Meatloaf. Kenneth told me it was Debbie’s recipe, and it was delicious. The classic comfort food was served with mashed potatoes, green beans and a yeast roll. The daily special rotation includes Pot Roast, Fried Chicken, Chicken-Fried Steak, Fried Pork Chops, Chicken Enchiladas,

Open-Faced Roast Beef Sandwiches and Spaghetti.

The desserts are also made daily and usually include cakes,



A Reuben Sandwich and onion rings make for a classic lunch at Farmhouse Café.

puddings or pies.

Kenneth let me in on a secret: The Farmhouse Café’s Footlong Hot Dog features a chili recipe remarkably similar to one offered at a former area restaurant. He said it is as close as it can be. He recommended the best way to enjoy a Farmhouse Café hot dog is to add chili, cheese, slaw and chopped onions.

The breakfast is extremely popular. Kenneth told me that some groups travel for an hour to enjoy breakfast,



Meatloaf from restaurant owner Debbie Horton’s recipe is one of the daily specials.



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Married for 48 years, Farmhouse Café owners Debbie and Kenneth Horton opened their restaurant in 2018.


which includes both homemade white gravy and chocolate gravy on the menu. Unfortunately for me, breakfast service stops at 11 a.m., and my visit was a bit later. Next time!

I also plan to try the Catfish Plate on a future visit. The fish — available fried, blackened or seasoned with Old Bay or lemon pepper — comes with brown beans, french fries, hush puppies, coleslaw, green tomato relish, onion slices, pickles and a sauerkraut salad.

During strawberry season, the Farmhouse Café offers strawberry shortcake. My visit coincided with strawberry

season, so I enjoyed the dessert, which included berries, ice cream, whipped cream, nuts and pieces of shortcake. How fresh were the strawberries?



Very fresh, as Kenneth owns a strawberry patch a little farther up the road. 

Very fresh, as Kenneth owns a strawberry patch a little farther up the road. 

Dining recommendations? Contact Rob Roedel at rob.roedel@aecc.com.



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Calendar



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Juneteenth in Da Rock



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June 1
World Championship Running of the Tubs
 Hot Springs, hotsprings.org/events

June 1-7
Farm Fest
 Wynne, facebook.com/wynnefarmfest

June 3
Arkansas Country Music Awards
 Conway, arkansasmusic.org

June 7-8
Lum & Abner Music & Arts Festival
 Mena, visitmena.com

Lowell Mudtown Days
 Lowell, lowellarkansas.gov/mobile/mudtowndays/

River Cities Dragon Boat Festival
 Maumelle, rivercitiesdragonboatfestival.com

June 7-9
Arkansas Free Fishing Weekend
 Statewide, agfc.com

Arkansas Anime Festival
 Bentonville, arkansasanimefestival.com

June 10-16
Bentonville Film Festival
 Bentonville, bentonvillefilm.org

June 12-15
Petit Jean Show, Morrilton
 Morrilton, museumofautos.com

June 14-15
Bradley County Pink Tomato Festival
 Warren, pinktomatofestival.com

Spa City Food Truck Festival
 Hot Springs, hotsprings.org/events

June 15
Juneteenth in Da Rock
 Little Rock, arkansasheritage.com/juneteenth

Juneteenth Arkansas 2024 Festival
 Little Rock, facebook.com/juneteentharkansasfestival

Surf the Bay
 Shirley, visitfairfieldbay.com

June 16
Father's Day at the Little Rock Zoo
 Little Rock, littlerockzoo.com

June 17-23
National Pollinator Week
 Little Rock, littlerockzoo.com

June 20
Third Thursdays in the Park
 Sherwood, cityofsherwood.net/490/Third-Thursdays-in-the-Park

June 20-22
Rose Bud Summerfest
 Rose Bud, facebook.com/cityofrosebud

June 21-22
Poultry Festival
 Rogers, thepoultryfederation.com

June 28-29
Buffalo River Elk Festival
 Jasper, buffaloriverelkfestival.com

Red, White & Blue Festival
 Mountain Home, redwhitebluefestival.com



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GENERATION



Hydroelectric Power Generation just flows naturally into the right energy mix for Arkansas.

The **Carl S. Whillock Hydroelectric Generating Station on the Arkansas River in Morrilton**—and one of three hydropower plants operated by the Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation—can generate up to 32.4 megawatts of power. It's a vital part of a flowing energy portfolio that meets the needs of our 1.2 million members on a daily basis. Balanced and supported by the diversity of **reliable** baseload resources—such as natural gas and coal—and assisted by wind, solar and bio-mass energy sources, we're able to continue to **responsibly** deliver **affordable** power to our members.



**Electric Cooperatives
of Arkansas**

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