

VALLEY LIVING

Smart Grid, Smarter Communities: AVECC Invests in Reliability and Resilience

Smart grid improvements are currently underway in the Arkansas Valley Electric Cooperative Corporation (AVECC) service territory. The Department of Energy (DOE) GRIP grant awarded AVECC with \$18 million in 2023 to strengthen the resilience, reliability and affordability for members across 14 counties.

The smart grid project began in 2018 with a system wide fiber buildout which was completed earlier this year.

Now, the next step is the implementation of the “Beyond AMI to True Grid Intelligence with Distributed Automation” project.

“Grid resiliency and modernization are a priority of AVECC,” said CEO Al Simpson. “We began our Smart Grid project in 2018, and we are fortunate to be awarded this critical funding to advance and accelerate our ultimate goals of providing safe, reliable, and affordable power.”

During this project, AVECC will:

- Replace 66,000 meters with advanced smart meters.
- Install 2,400 fiber mini-aps to expand communication capabilities.
- Upgrade 1,200 reclosers, 200 regulator panels, and more than 150 capacitor panels to improve outage response and voltage regulation.

System Engineer Samantha Renard said, “Being able to build out this infrastructure really gets to serve our members. They not only get the data for their energy usage, but we can also make them a more efficient grid which allows us to always provide reliable and responsible power, while reducing costs and putting dollars back in their pockets.”

Engineering Manager Chris Howe added, “From the membership standpoint, it’s going to be

a lot better reliability coming along. The metering is going to start reporting automatically, letting us know when things are off. The amount of data we’re getting back is tremendously more than what we have now.”

The updates will be completed in phases over the next four years. An approximate timeline is:

Smart Grid - Reclosers, Capacitors and Regulators

2026 Johnson, Newton, Pope, Sebastian, Franklin, LeFlore, Crawford, Adair and Logan counties

2027 – Franklin, Johnson, Logan, Yell, Crawford, Sequoyah and Sebastian counties

2028 – LeFlore, Crawford, Sequoyah, Scott, Pope, Johnson, and Sebastian counties

2029 – Crawford, Adair, Sebastian, Franklin, Logan, Scott and Yell counties

Smart Grid - Metering

2026 – Franklin, Crawford, Johnson, Newton, Pope, Sebastian, LeFlore, Logan, Yell and Madison counties

2027 – Sequoyah, Crawford, Adair, Sebastian and Scott counties

Engineering and Operations Director, Barret Ewing shared, “Our ultimate goal is to make the best decisions for our membership and make sure that this co-op is here for 85 more years. We want to set ourselves up in a way that we are innovative and make sure that we continue to be progressive and not stagnant.”

AVECC’s commitment to improving the members’ experience is paramount and the core of our motto, Changing the Communities We Serve.

FROM THE CEO'S DESK

“As colder weather approaches, it’s important for our members to prepare their homes to stay warm without driving up energy costs. Simple steps like sealing drafts, insulating pipes and maintaining your heating system can make a big difference. As your local cooperative, we’re here to help you stay safe, warm and efficient this winter. Our goal is to keep your power reliable and your bills manageable. Together, we can weather the winter with confidence and care for our community.”



Al Simpson,
AVECC CEO

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Small Heaters Can Lead to Fires, Bigger Bills

By Derrill Holly

During winter, for many of us, comfort at home means heat.

Space heaters get seasonal use, but they are responsible for 25,000 residential fires a year, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, which pegs the annual mortality rate at 300 a year. Burn injuries associated with surface contacts with room heaters send about 6,000 people to emergency rooms every year, and most of those incidents don’t result in fires.

Because the devices are designed to give off heat, they should always be set in locations clear of all flammable materials and out of reach of small children, pets or anyone with impaired mobility.

“Space heaters are not the ideal solution for heating homes,” said Brian Sloboda, a senior program manager for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). “For every unit of electricity that is consumed by these devices, they produce one unit of heat.”

While adding several space heaters to supplement your central heating system is also likely to drive up your energy costs, selective use may help you save some money.

According to analysts at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the key is using space heaters in smaller rooms that are occupied infrequently, in conjunction with lower thermostat settings on your central system.

Lowering thermostat settings from 70 to 65 degrees and using a thermostat-controlled space heater to heat 10% of a home’s conditioned floor space will save a heat pump user an estimated \$67 a

year. But the EPA cautions that space heaters can actually waste energy, causing increased electric bills, if consumers try to heat too much area with the devices.

There are currently no space heaters among the EPA’s list of ENERGY STAR®-rated products. Agency officials said they have evaluated several models but have no plans to include such products in the labeling program in the near future.

Still, high-end space heaters are heavily marketed during the winter months. An energy-efficiency expert at your local electric co-op can help determine if a space heater is right for your home.

“They may suggest other alternatives, like sealing air leaks, adding insulation or tuning up your heating system so it operates more efficiently,” said Sloboda. “Those are just a few of the options that won’t increase your overall energy use.”



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

LISA FREEMAN

Payment Processing Specialist | 20 Years



"In my position, I handle everything from mailed checks to bank drafts, returns and electronic payments. For 20 years, I've helped keep accounts accurate and members' payments flowing smoothly behind the scenes. While my work may not always be visible, it plays a vital role in ensuring the cooperative runs efficiently and serves members well.

What I enjoy most about working here is the sense of family and camaraderie, especially when everyone pulls together during outages to support both linemen and members. Being part of a team that goes above and beyond for our community is something I'm proud of every day."



Scan here to listen to Getting to Know Lisa Freeman available now on iTunes and Spotify.



Lisa's Lemon Sheet Cake

Cake Ingredients

1 package lemon cake mix (regular size)
4 large eggs, room temperature
1 can (15-3/4 ounces) lemon pie filling
1 teaspoon of lemon extract (put in cake mixture)

Frosting

8 ounces cream cheese, softened
1 stick butter, softened
2 cups confectioners' sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Optional: Assorted yellow sprinkles and colored sugar

Directions:

Heat oven to 350

1. In a large bowl, beat the cake mix and eggs until well blended. Fold in pie filling.

2. Spread into a greased 15x10 baking pan. Bake until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 18-20 minutes. Cool on a wire rack.

3. In a small bowl, beat the cream cheese, butter and confectioners' sugar until smooth. Stir in vanilla extract. Spread over cake. If desired, top with sprinkles and colored sugar. Store cake in the refrigerator.

**All AVECC offices will
be closed Nov. 11 in
recognition of Veterans
Day.**

**All AVECC offices will
be closed Nov. 27-28 to
celebrate Thanksgiving.**



JOHN LEE
CEO

The Season of Giving

Powering communities with year-round generosity

As the holidays approach, we're reminded that this truly is the season of giving. It's a time for gratitude, generosity and looking out for one another — and at Ashley-Chicot Electric, that's something we take to heart year-round.

You've probably heard us talk about our concern for community. More than a nice phrase, this is one of the core principles that makes cooperatives like

ours different. We're not just here to keep the lights on (though, of course, we're always working hard to do that). We're here to make life better for the members, neighbors and friends we serve.

Over the years, we've faced challenges together, and every time, our co-op family has stepped up. We've come together to support those in need, to keep our community strong and to build something better for the future. That spirit of generosity is never more evident than during the holiday season.

We're also proud to support local students through the Youth Tour program, where we send some of our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C., to see democracy in action and dream big about their futures. That's giving in the most meaningful way — by investing in tomorrow's leaders.

And because we care deeply about safety, we also spend time visiting schools throughout the communities we serve, holding demonstrations and teaching folks of all ages how to stay safe around electricity. We believe knowledge is a gift, and we love sharing it.

You'll also find our team out in the community beyond work, coaching youth sports, volunteering at local events, serving on nonprofit boards and partnering with our Chamber of Commerce to keep our local economy strong. Because when you're part of a co-op, giving back is what we do.

While the holiday season is a festive time, we understand these can be tough times for many. If you need advice on saving energy to reduce your energy bills, want to explore payment plan options or you simply have questions, please don't hesitate to reach out at (800) 281-5212. Helping our members is what we do in every season.

We believe concern for community is more than a value — it's the heart of who we are. And during this season of giving, we're especially grateful to be part of such a caring, generous community.



Magician Scott Davis partners with the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas to present his "Making Accidents Disappear" show, using magic tricks to teach children vital lessons about electrical safety.



Each year, Ashley-Chicot Electric sends local students on Youth Tour, an educational trip to Washington, D.C.

Sparkle Smarter

Fun and safe holiday decorating hacks

'Tis the season to deck the halls, but let's be honest — holiday decorating can either feel like a magical Hallmark movie or trying to assemble IKEA furniture without instructions. Luckily, with a little planning (and a dash of common sense), you can keep your home festive, fabulous and safe.

Bright ideas

Still clinging to those old incandescent string lights? Time for an upgrade. The Department of Energy says LED holiday lights only bump your energy bill by about \$5 to \$7, compared to a whopping \$33 or more with those vintage heat traps. That's extra cookie money!

Fiber optic trees, wreaths and centerpieces can use a single LED to illuminate an entire decoration. They look magical and sip electricity compared to multiple light strands. For bonus efficiency, plug your lights into a timer or smart plug — no more 2 a.m. "Did I leave the lights on?" panic.

Inflatables with care

Those giant lawn inflatables are fun, but they can be power hogs. If you use them, run them only when people are around to see them, and switch them off during the day.

Solar power to the people

Want to make your outdoor display shine without sending your electric meter into

orbit? Solar-powered spotlights and pathway lights are your new best friends. They soak up the sun by day and dazzle by night, keeping your display merry and bright.

Bring the outside in

Instead of covering every surface in glitter (which will haunt you until June), bring nature inside. Fresh greenery, dried fruit garlands and pinecones add rustic charm without the plastic overload. Plus, they smell amazing — instant holiday aromatherapy.

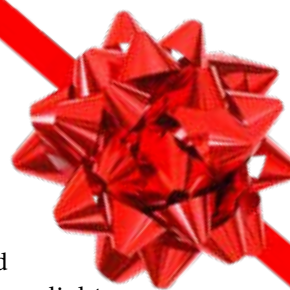
Safety sleighs

Holiday decorating hazards are real. Keep cords away from walkways (no one wants to trip mid-cookie dash), and always water real trees so they don't turn into tinder.

Less stress, more sparkle

Remember, more lights don't equal more joy. Pick a theme, focus on a few dazzling focal points, and let your home's natural charm do the rest. Put the brightest lights and biggest displays where they'll have the most impact — front windows, entryways and yard focal points. You'll use fewer lights overall while still making a statement. A little restraint can go a long way toward keeping things elegant and efficient.

This year, light smarter, decorate safer and let your holiday spirit shine without the chaos.



ADDRESS

307 E. Jefferson St.
Hamburg

BOARD MEMBERS

Emory Austin
Martha Pennington
Andrew Hartshorn
Justin Green
Mark Pieroni
Mike Huggins
Richard Stock

CONTACT US

During office hours
8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday
through Friday
(870) 853-5212
(800) 281-5212
communications@
ashley-chicot.com

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**Ashley-Chicot
Electric will be
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Nov. 27, and
Friday, Nov. 28, for
Thanksgiving.**





Efficiency Pays

Double your Black Friday savings

BY MITCH ROSS

To help reduce energy costs, shoppers can use energy-efficient products to cut bills. Buying items on sale, combined with energy savings, means you save two ways.

From LED lights to insulation, these upgrades pay for themselves over time, and Black Friday may be the perfect time to snag them at a discount. Here's how to shop smart for savings this holiday season.

LED lighting: Bright savings

LED bulbs use up to 80% less energy than incandescent and last 20 times longer. A single LED bulb can save \$100 or more over its lifetime. On Black Friday, many retailers often slash prices on LED packs by 20-40%. Stock up on quality brands for bulbs that will last and that fit every fixture, from warm white to daylight tones, ensuring long-term savings on your electric bill. Also look for LED Christmas lights and décor to celebrate the season without bumping up the bill.

Caulk and weatherstripping: Seal the deal

Drafts around windows and doors can account for 10-20% of home energy loss, especially in the coming colder winter months. Caulk and weatherstripping are affordable fixes — costing as little as \$5-\$15 per tube or roll. Deals often include bundles or discounts on silicone caulk and foam weatherstrips. Applying these in a weekend can save up to \$200 annually on heating and cooling by preventing air leaks.



Spray foam: Expand your savings

Spray foam insulation, like Great Stuff or Touch 'n Seal, fills gaps in walls, attics and crawlspaces, reducing energy loss by up to 20%. A \$10 spray foam can might save \$50 or more yearly on energy bills. Look for specials at hardware stores, where bulk kits or multi-packs are often discounted 15-25%, making it an ideal time to tackle those hard-to-reach spots.

Insulation: Wrap up efficiency

Proper insulation can cut energy costs by 30% in poorly insulated homes. Fiberglass batts or blown-in cellulose are cost-effective options, with savings of \$200 to \$500 per year. Stores may offer deals on insulation rolls or bags, sometimes with free rental of blowing machines, maximizing your investment.

This season prioritize energy-efficient products to shrink your utility bills and double your shopping savings! With sales slashing prices, you'll save upfront and for years to come. Check circulars or websites early, compare deals and invest in a more efficient home.

Mitch Ross is the energy efficiency manager for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas.



If you haven't made the switch to LED holiday lights, it's time. LEDs can last 40 holiday seasons, and they're more energy efficient than incandescent holiday lights.

**DAVID VONDRAN**

CEO/GENERAL MANAGER

The Season of Giving

Powering communities with year-round generosity

As the holidays approach, we're reminded that this truly is the season of giving. It's a time for gratitude, generosity and looking out for one another — and at C & L Electric, that's something we take to heart year-round.

You've probably heard us talk about our concern for community. More than a nice phrase, this is one of the core principles that makes cooperatives like ours different. We're

not just here to keep the lights on (though, of course, we're always working hard to do that). We're here to make life better for the members, neighbors and friends we serve.

Over the years, we've faced challenges together, and every time, our co-op family has stepped up. We've come together to support those in need, to keep our community strong and to build something better for the future. That spirit of generosity is never more evident than during the holiday season.

This year, we sponsored a free movie night for the community on the Star City square. We're also proud to send students to Washington, D.C., through Youth Tour to see democracy in action. And our employees help organize and coordinate Angel Tree donations for needy local families each Christmas. And because we care deeply about safety, we also spend time visiting schools throughout the communities we serve, holding demonstrations and teaching folks of all ages how to stay safe around electricity. We believe knowledge is a gift, and we love sharing it.

You'll also find our team out in the community beyond work, coaching youth sports, volunteering at local events, serving on nonprofit boards and partnering with our Chamber of Commerce to keep our local economy strong. Because when you're part of a co-op, giving back is what we do.

While the holiday season is a festive time, we understand these can be tough times for many. If you need advice on saving energy to reduce your energy bills, want to explore payment plan options or you simply have questions, please don't hesitate to reach out at (870) 628-4221. Helping our members is what we do in every season.

We believe concern for community is more than a value — it's the heart of who we are. And during this season of giving, we're especially grateful to be part of such a caring, generous community.



Employees of C & L Electric volunteer at community events, support local youth and help with worthwhile projects like Angel Tree.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF C & L ELECTRIC

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Hours:
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12:30 p.m.-5 p.m.

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Friday, Nov. 28, for
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C&L Electric Cooperative Corporation

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In most cases, improving your home's energy efficiency will also improve your comfort. Most people look for measures they can take inside their homes to make improvements. However, there are things you can do outside your home that can also make a difference. One of those things is strategically planting trees. How can trees improve the energy efficiency of your home?

Shading

When you consider the energy-efficiency advantages of trees, shading is probably the first thing you think about, and for good reason.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, carefully positioned trees can reduce a household's energy consumption for heating and cooling by up to 25%.

You might think that planting trees to the south of your home would be best, but be mindful of the sun's position in the sky when shading is most needed. Planting trees to the east and west of your home, instead of the south, is more beneficial during summer and winter months. The sun is high midday summer, and trees will not cast a long shadow. If you avoid planting trees to the south of your home, this will allow the sun to help keep your home warm during the winter.

Consider planting a tree that will prevent direct sunlight from adversely affecting your outdoor air conditioner or heat pump. A tree that loses its leaves during winter would be ideal. The leaves will help block direct sunlight during summer and allow the sun to warm your heat pump during winter.



Adobe Stock

Windbreaks

Evergreen trees planted to the north and northwest of your home will help break cold winter winds. The percentage of your home's conditioned air that is replaced by unconditioned outside air through the cracks and crevices of your home (all homes have them) is increased as wind speeds increase. If you can slow down the wind before it strikes the surface of your home, you will slow your home's leakage rate. This, in turn, will cause your heating system to operate less and cost you less money on your energy bill.

Safety

At Carroll Electric, the SAFETY of our employees and the public is always our top priority. Please be mindful of overhead and underground power lines when planting trees. Know how big your tree will be (height and radius). Ensure that when the tree is fully mature, it will be a minimum of 15 lateral feet from any overhead power line. Also, dial 8-1-1 before you dig to avoid coming into contact with underground power lines.

For more energy efficiency and conservation tips, visit carrollecc.com/energy-saving-tips or call (800) 432-9720, and ask for Member Services.

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED LEVELIZED BILLING?



With Levelized Billing, your electric bill will be approximately the same each month - even throughout peak cooling and heating periods.

Levelized Billing is a free service to Carroll Electric members. Begin to enjoy the peace of mind that comes from planning ahead.

To learn more about eligibility or enroll, please contact Customer Service at (800) 432-9720 or visit one of our local offices.



Carroll Electric's offices will be closed Thursday, Nov. 27 and Friday, Nov. 28.

Payments may be made online or in the night depositories. Our office addresses and online bill payment options can be found at **carrollecc.com**.

Emergency service is always available by calling (800) 432-9720.

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Future lineworker in the making: *Meet Bentlee Dobbins*

Since the age of 6, Bentlee Dobbins of Maynard has been captivated by electricity. His interest began after a storm blew through, leaving power lines tangled in the trees. From that moment, the fascination sparked — and it hasn't stopped since.

In his own backyard, Bentlee has built an impressive “mini-grid” complete with single-phase and three-phase lines, even guy wires placed in just the right spots. Before showing off his setup, he gave a quick reminder of the No. 1 rule learned along the way: “Safety first.”

So where does a 7-year-old learn all this? Bentlee says most of his knowledge comes from watching YouTube videos, asking his family and even experimenting through the popular video game Minecraft. His mom laughs that no trip to Home Depot is complete without buying a few new dowel rods — which Bentlee proudly uses as “utility poles” for his ever-growing electric station.

This passion has turned into a family affair. His dad and mom have been helping him build and expand his grid for the past year, while his Pawpaw continues to add insulators to Bentlee's growing collection whenever he finds them. Together, they've turned the backyard into a little training ground for a future lineworker.

Bentlee's passion runs so deep that he even asked for insulators for Christmas. And his enthusiasm hasn't gone unnoticed. One day, when Clay County Electric lineworker Eric Landreth stopped by the Dobbins' home to repair a light, he found Bentlee waiting outside, eager to watch and learn. Impressed by the backyard setup, Eric gave him a plastic hard hat on the spot. But word quickly spread — and the Clay County crew knew that just wouldn't cut it. Soon after, Bentlee was surprised with his very own real hard hat, just like the lineworkers he looks up to!

Bentlee says his dream is clear: “One day, I want to be a lineworker and work for Clay County Electric.”

With his determination, knowledge and love for the trade, it looks like the power is already flowing in that direction.



Bentlee Dobbins, 7, of Maynard says: “One day I want to be a lineworker and work for Clay County Electric.”



Get Ready for the New Year!

Arkansas Living 2026 CALENDAR

CLAY COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CORP. MEMBER OF THE MEMBERS WE SERVE

Stop by our offices to pick up a 2026 Arkansas Living calendar while supplies last.

Capital credits returned to members

The Clay County Electric Board of Directors approved a capital credit retirement of \$508,393. With this year's retirement, Clay County Electric has retired approximately \$24 million to our members since 1938. Members should receive their capital credit checks by mid-December.

While this year's retirement amount is lower than some previous years, it reflects the financial impacts of multiple storms and the lack of FEMA funding for the March storms. Despite these challenges, Clay County Electric remains committed to returning margins to our members whenever possible.

The retirement of capital credits is a tangible demonstration of your ownership in Clay County Electric. As a member-owned cooperative, we operate as a not-for-profit utility. This is accomplished through the retirement of capital credits.

Welcoming our new board member: *Doin R. "Trey" Bowers III*

After careful consideration, the Clay County Electric Board of Directors has appointed Doin R. "Trey" Bowers III as the new Director for Area 2, Zone 2.

Trey succeeds Todd Young, who sadly passed away late last year. Todd's dedication, leadership and service to Clay County Electric left a lasting impact, and he is deeply missed by all who had the privilege to know and work with him.

As we honor Todd's legacy, we are grateful to welcome Trey into this important role. Trey brings a strong background in business and a deep understanding of the value of member engagement — qualities that will serve our cooperative and its members well. We look forward to the insight and energy he will bring to our board.

Please join us in welcoming Trey Bowers to the Clay County Electric Board of Directors.



Doin R. "Trey" Bowers III



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ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE CORP.**

ADDRESSES

Corning
3111 Arkansas 67

Pocahontas
2302 Old Country Road

Rector
2650 Arkansas 49

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Efficiency Pays

Double your Black Friday savings

BY MITCH ROSS

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Spray foam: Expand your savings

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Proper insulation can cut energy costs by 30% in poorly insulated homes. Fiberglass batts or blown-in cellulose are cost-effective options, with savings of \$200 to \$500 per year. Stores may offer deals on insulation rolls or bags, sometimes with free rental of blowing machines, maximizing your investment.

This season prioritize energy-efficient products to shrink your utility bills and double your shopping savings! With sales slashing prices, you'll save upfront and for years to come. Check circulars or websites early, compare deals and invest in a more efficient home.

Mitch Ross is the energy efficiency manager for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas.



If you haven't made the switch to LED holiday lights, it's time. LEDs can last 40 holiday seasons, and they're more energy efficient than incandescent holiday lights.

MAX BENDER


JUSTIN ETTER

EXECUTIVE VICE
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF
OPERATING OFFICER

Tees for Tuition

Co-op Cares Golf Tournament tees up support for students

On Oct. 11, friends, members and community partners gathered at the Trumann Country Club for a day of golf, good food and great company — all in support of local students.

The Co-op Cares Scholarship Fund Golf Tournament organized by Craighead Electric and **empower** employees, was a huge success, and it wouldn't have been possible without the incredible support of our sponsors,

teams and volunteers.

A special thank-you goes to our presenting sponsor, Central Chevrolet, for their outstanding partnership and generosity. Their commitment to our community helps make events like this possible and ensures more students across our service area can pursue their education with confidence and financial support.

From tee-off to awards, the day was filled with friendly competition, laughter and a shared sense of purpose. Every dollar raised will go directly toward the Co-op Cares Scholarship Fund, which provides educational opportunities for students in our region. To all who played, sponsored, donated or cheered from the sidelines — thank you. Your support reflects what makes our cooperative and community so special: Neighbors helping neighbors and investing in a brighter future together.

Money raised through the Co-op Cares Scholarship Fund Golf Tournament helps support scholarships for local high school students.



Connecting communities under the Friday night lights

There's nothing quite like a fall Friday night in Northeast Arkansas — the energy, the rivalries and the shared love of high school football. On Oct. 10, Craighead Electric Cooperative and **empower** Broadband came together to host a community tailgate at Brookland High School as the Bearcats took on the Greene County Tech Eagles.

This event was more than just a pre-game celebration. It was about bringing neighbors together from both sides of the field. Members, students and families from across the area gathered to enjoy



Employees at Craighead Electric and **empower** host a tailgate party for local high schools.



Sonic, games for kids and free T-shirts for both teams while supplies lasted. The laughter, conversations and sense of camaraderie made it clear: Community pride runs deep here.

At Craighead Electric and **empower**, we're committed to more than powering homes and connecting broadband lines. We're about powering relationships, too. Events like this remind us that the best part of being a cooperative is the people we serve. Whether cheering for the Bearcats or the Eagles, we were proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with our members, celebrating the spirit that makes our communities strong.

Craighead Electric upgrades poles in Trumann

Craighead Electric Cooperative is beginning a major infrastructure project in Trumann to improve electric reliability and prepare the community for future broadband and telecommunications services.

The project, which began in late September and is expected to continue through the spring, will replace poles in several sections of the Trumann area.

"These upgrades will strengthen our ability to deliver safe and reliable power to our members while also laying the groundwork for broadband access," said Donnie French, Director of Engineering Services at Craighead Electric Cooperative.

Member Impact

The work will be performed by CECC contractors and, in some cases, crews may need to access poles located in members' backyards. If this applies to your property, a CECC representative or contractor will reach out to you directly to discuss the next steps.

Our teams are committed to treating each property with care and respect. If any adjustments are needed to allow access, crews will coordinate with you in advance and work to ensure everything is put back in order as quickly as possible.

Community Benefits

This project reflects Craighead Electric's ongoing commitment to reinvesting in the communities it serves. By upgrading poles and preparing for broadband deployment, CECC is ensuring that Trumann residents not only have safe, dependable electric service today but also the infrastructure needed to support future growth and connectivity.

Project Contact

For questions about the Trumann pole replacement project, members may contact our office at (870) 932-8301 or email memberservices@craigheadelectric.coop.



ADDRESSES

4314 Stadium Blvd,
Jonesboro

7277 Hwy 69,
Paragould

477 Hwy 12,
Walnut Ridge

BOARD MEMBERS

Terry Rorex

Len B. Nall

Keith Mosbey

Dwight England

Steve Kueter

Bobby Wade

Bill Elliott

CONTACT US

(800) 794-5012

PAY BILL

craigheadelectric.smarthub.coop

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CONNECT ONLINE

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**CRAIGHEAD ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC.**

Living our cooperative values at United Way's Day of Caring

It's amazing what can happen when people roll up their sleeves together. This year's United Way Day of Caring gave Craighead Electric and **empower** employees a chance to do just that — spend a day giving back to the community we're so proud to serve.

Our volunteers worked at Forrest L. Wood Crowley's Ridge Nature Center pulling weeds, cleaning up the grounds and putting in a full day of service and heart. While the work itself may have left us a little dirty and tired, it also left us feeling inspired and connected to the people and places that make Northeast Arkansas special.

"Concern for Community" isn't just one of the seven cooperative principles. It's something we strive to live out every day. Taking part in events like Day of Caring is a reminder that the power of cooperation doesn't end when the lights come on or the internet

connects; it continues through moments of teamwork, service and shared purpose.

We're grateful to United Way for organizing such an impactful day, and to every volunteer who stepped up to make a difference. Together, we're building a stronger, brighter community — one act of service at a time.



Craighead Electric and **empower** employees participate in the United Way's Day of Caring.



Sprucing up the Forrest L. Wood Crowley's Ridge Nature Center was one of the tasks at the Day of Caring.





LARRY BRIGHT
GENERAL MANAGER

The Season of Giving

Powering communities with year-round generosity

As the holidays approach, we're reminded that this truly is the season of giving. It's a time for gratitude, generosity and looking out for one another — and at Farmers Electric, that's something we take to heart year-round.

You've probably heard us talk about our concern for community. More than a nice phrase, this is one of the core principles that makes cooperatives like ours different. We're not just here to keep the lights on (though, of course, we're always working hard to do that).

We're here to make life better for the members, neighbors and friends we serve.

Over the years, we've faced challenges together, and every time, our co-op family has stepped up. We've come together to support those in need, to keep our community strong and to build something better for the future. That spirit of generosity is never more evident than during the holiday season.

We're also proud to support local students through the Youth Tour program, where we send some of our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C., to see democracy in action and dream big about their futures. That's giving in the most meaningful way — by investing in tomorrow's leaders.

And because we care deeply about safety, we also spend time visiting schools throughout the communities we serve, holding demonstrations and teaching folks of all ages how to stay safe around electricity. We believe knowledge is a gift, and we love sharing it.

You'll also find our team out in the community beyond work, coaching youth sports, volunteering at local events, serving on nonprofit boards and partnering with our Chamber of Commerce to keep our local economy strong. Because when you're part of a co-op, giving back is what we do.

While the holiday season is a festive time, we understand these can be tough times for many. If you need advice on saving energy to reduce your energy bills, want to explore payment plan options or you simply have questions, please don't hesitate to reach out at (870) 523-3691. Helping our members is what we do in every season.

We believe concern for community is more than a value — it's the heart of who we are. And during this season of giving, we're especially grateful to be part of such a caring, generous community.



Employees of Farmers Electric volunteer at community events, support local youth and help with worthwhile projects in our service area.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF FARMERS ELECTRIC



Sparkle Smarter

Fun and safe holiday decorating hacks

'Tis the season to deck the halls, but let's be honest — holiday decorating can either feel like a magical Hallmark movie or trying to assemble IKEA furniture without instructions. Luckily, with a little planning (and a dash of common sense), you can keep your home festive, fabulous and safe.

Bright ideas

Still clinging to those old incandescent string lights? Time for an upgrade. The Department of Energy says LED holiday lights only bump your energy bill by about \$5 to \$7, compared to a whopping \$33 or more with those vintage heat traps. That's extra cookie money!

Fiber optic trees, wreaths and centerpieces can use a single LED to illuminate an entire decoration. They look magical and sip electricity compared to multiple light strands. For bonus efficiency, plug your lights into a timer or smart plug — no more 2 a.m. "Did I leave the lights on?" panic.

Inflatables with care

Those giant lawn inflatables are fun, but they can be power hogs. If you use them, run them only when people are around to see them, and switch them off during the day.

Solar power to the people

Want to make your outdoor display shine without sending your electric meter into

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Safety sleighs

Holiday decorating hazards are real. Keep cords away from walkways (no one wants to trip mid-cookie dash), and always water real trees so they don't turn into tinder.

Less stress, more sparkle

Remember, more lights don't equal more joy. Pick a theme, focus on a few dazzling focal points, and let your home's natural charm do the rest. Put the brightest lights and biggest displays where they'll have the most impact — front windows, entryways and yard focal points. You'll use fewer lights overall while still making a statement. A little restraint can go a long way toward keeping things elegant and efficient.

This year, light smarter, decorate safer and let your holiday spirit shine without the chaos.



ADDRESS

300 Highway 367 N
Newport

BOARD MEMBERS

Kenny Falwell
Darrell "Sam" Houston
Todd Hulett
Candace Shirley
Michael Honey
Scott Mears
Scott Foushee

CONTACT US

(870) 523-3691
(800) 834-9055

PAY BILL

payments.farmersecc.com

REPORT OUTAGES

(870) 523-3691
(800) 834-9055

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FARMERS ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE

**Farmers Electric
will be closed
Thursday, Nov. 27,
and Friday, Nov. 28,
for Thanksgiving.**

Keep holiday meals joyful — avoid fires and injuries

Deep-frying a turkey can be delicious, but it's also one of the riskiest ways to cook. Before you plug in or fire up a fryer, follow these safety tips:

Set up safely

- Use outdoor fryers at least 10 feet away from buildings, garages and overhangs.
- Place the fryer on a flat, sturdy surface and don't move it once it's heating.
- Never leave a fryer unattended.
- Keep children and pets at least 3 feet away.

Prevent burns and fires

- Wear oven mitts and use long utensils to avoid contact with hot surfaces and oil.
- Test the oil level before cooking. Fill the fryer with water and lower the turkey in to see how much liquid is needed. Dry everything completely before adding oil.
- Use a fully thawed and dry turkey — never fry a frozen one.

Monitor temperatures

- Use a thermometer to make sure oil is at the recommended temperature.
- Avoid overloading outlets if using an electric fryer; unplug other appliances before use.

Smart Tip:

Consider using an electric fryer or going oil-free with an air fryer for safer indoor cooking options.



Round Up and Make a Difference

Operation Round-Up® awards \$35,500 to local nonprofits

At First Electric, we believe that when neighbors lend a hand, our whole community shines a little brighter. That's the heart behind Operation Round-Up®.

By choosing to round your bill to the next dollar, you're joining thousands of fellow members who give just a few cents each month to help local nonprofits, fire departments, food programs and youth organizations. It may feel small, but together it adds up to life-changing support — more than \$1.7 million invested back into our communities since 1998.

Please enroll today and help us keep the spirit of cooperation strong. Call 800-489-7405 or log in to the First Electric app to join. Your pocket change really can make a big difference.

First Electric Cooperative's Operation Round-Up® board of trustees reviewed 28 applications this quarter and awarded \$35,500 in grants to organizations making a difference in the communities we serve.

This quarter's recipients include:

- Altrusa International of Hot Springs Village, AR, Inc. – \$1,500
- Antioch Volunteer Fire Department – \$1,500
- Apple Seed, Inc. – \$500
- Arkansas Learning Through The Arts – \$1,000
- Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund (ASPSF) Faulkner County – \$500
- Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund (ASPSF) Monroe County – \$250
- Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund (ASPSF) Perry County – \$1,000
- Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund (ASPSF) White County – \$1,000
- Avanza Arkansas – \$1,000
- Boys & Girls Club of Jacksonville – \$2,500

- Cleburne County 18 & Under Fishing Championship Scholarship Program, Inc. – \$1,000
- Cleburne County Historical Society – \$2,500
- Commission Fields – \$500
- Drasco Fire Department – \$2,500
- Friends of Cabot Animal Support Services – \$1,000
- Friends of Fisher House Arkansas – \$1,000
- Garland County Imagination Library – \$250
- Grand Prairie JOB Center – \$1,000
- Habitat for Humanity of Saline County – \$2,500
- Jacksonville Senior Wellness & Activity Center, Inc. – \$1,000
- Northwest Perry County Volunteer Fire Department – \$2,500
- Petit Jean Mountain Volunteer Fire Department – \$2,500
- Prevention Education Programs, Inc. – \$1,000
- TEP 4610 DBA The Impact One Foundation – \$1,000
- Village Walk for Cancer Research – \$2,500
- Wilburn Fire & Rescue Department – \$2,000

Each of these organizations represents the cooperative spirit — neighbors helping neighbors, communities lifting one another up and local volunteers making lasting impacts.



Habitat for Humanity of Saline County was awarded a \$2,500 grant from Operation Round-Up®.



Stay powered with GenerLink during outages

A GenerLink makes powering your home with a portable generator safe, simple and convenient during an outage. Installed directly behind your electric meter, it allows you to connect a generator without the hassle of extension cords or rewiring. With GenerLink, you can run essential appliances and lights at the flip of a switch, keeping your family comfortable and secure until power is restored. Visit firstelectric.coop/generlink for more details.



Veterans Day 2025

Honoring our veteran employees and all who served our country.



Alex Williamson



Ben Spencer



Brad Fear



Brett Kennedy



Hunter Gullick



Jackson Teague



Jen Leos



Johnny Bradley



Kane Waymire



Kevin Dixon



Kyle Sanders



Luke Irving



Mark Hamby



Mitch Swann



Nate Roberts



Shawn Barry



Tel Webster



Tim Hendricks

Not pictured: Jordan Lott, Lee Charles and Matt Goetz

More co-op news on page 26



**THE POWER
TO SERVE YOU.**

106,172

ACCOUNTS SERVED

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tracy Hudspeth, Chairman
tracy.hudspeth@fecc.coop
Heber Springs District

Todd Prothro, Vice Chairman
todd.prothro@fecc.coop
Heber Springs District

Karissa Rushing, Secretary/
Treasurer
karissa.rushing@fecc.coop
Benton District

Brock Brewer
brock.brewer@fecc.coop
Stuttgart District

Rick Love
rick.love@fecc.coop
Jacksonville District

David Luebke
david.luebke@fecc.coop
Jacksonville District

Robert Maertens
robert.maertens@fecc.coop
Benton District

John Roland
john.roland@fecc.coop
Perryville District

Larry Wood
larry.wood@fecc.coop
Jacksonville District

LEADERSHIP
Mark Snowden,
President/CEO
mark.snowden@fecc.coop

First Electric
firstelectric.coop
800-489-7405

(Option 2 for outage reporting)

Connect2First
connect2first.net
833-411-2234

(Option 2 for outage reporting)



CONNECT2First
Powered by First Electric

FALL INTO CONNECTION

Make the most of every moment. Stay connected this holiday season with Connect2First Internet.



AARON GRIZZELLE
FIBER SPLICER

MEMBER BASICS: Joint vs. Single Membership

At First Electric Cooperative, every member account is set up as either a single membership or a joint membership.

Single Membership – One name appears on the account and bill. Only that person can access account details, request changes to service or vote in the cooperative's annual election.

Joint Membership – Two members are listed on the account. Either person can access account information or make service changes. While each membership is still entitled to only one vote, either person may cast it.

Need to update your membership type? Call us at 800-489-7405 during business hours.

A member service representative will explain the process and inform you of the required forms and documents.



Thanksgiving Holiday

First Electric Cooperative and Connect2First offices will be closed on Thursday, Nov. 27, and Friday, Nov. 28, for the Thanksgiving holiday. Crews will remain on call and ready to respond in the event of an outage.

We wish you and your family a safe, warm and festive Thanksgiving!

**HAPPY
THANKS
GIVING**



BRAD HARRISON
PRESIDENT/CEO

The Season of Giving

Powering communities with year-round generosity

As the holidays approach, we're reminded that this truly is the season of giving. It's a time for gratitude, generosity and looking out for one another — and at Mississippi County Electric, that's something we take to heart year-round.

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More than a nice phrase, this is one of the core principles that makes cooperatives like ours different. We're not just here to keep the lights on (though, of course, we're always working hard to do that). We're here to make life better for the members, neighbors and friends we serve.

Over the years, we've faced challenges together, and every time, our co-op family has stepped up. We've come together to support those in need, to keep our community strong and to build something better for the future. That spirit of generosity is never more evident than during the holiday season.

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While the holiday season is a festive time, we understand these can be tough times for many. If you need advice on saving energy to reduce your energy bills, want to explore payment plan options or you simply have questions, please don't hesitate to reach out at (870) 763-4563. Helping our members is what we do in every season.

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Employees of Mississippi County Electric volunteer at community events, support local youth and help with worthwhile projects like food drives.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MCEC



Sparkle Smarter

Fun and safe holiday decorating hacks

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ADDRESS

474 E. State Highway 18
Blytheville

BOARD MEMBERS

Neil Burge
David Wildy
Diana Holmes
Charles Brown
Robert Lynn Davis

CONTACT US

(870) 763-4563

PAY BILL

mceci.smarthub.coop

REPORT OUTAGES

(800) 439-4563

CONNECT ONLINE

mceci.com

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Mississippi
County Electric
Cooperative, Inc.

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Efficiency Pays

Double your Black Friday savings

BY MITCH ROSS

To help reduce energy costs, shoppers can use energy-efficient products to cut bills. Buying items on sale, combined with energy savings, means you save two ways.

From LED lights to insulation, these upgrades pay for themselves over time, and Black Friday may be the perfect time to snag them at a discount. Here's how to shop smart for savings this holiday season.

LED lighting: Bright savings

LED bulbs use up to 80% less energy than incandescent and last 20 times longer. A single LED bulb can save \$100 or more over its lifetime. On Black Friday, many retailers often slash prices on LED packs by 20-40%. Stock up on quality brands for bulbs that will last and that fit every fixture, from warm white to daylight tones, ensuring long-term savings on your electric bill. Also look for LED Christmas lights and décor to celebrate the season without bumping up the bill.

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Drafts around windows and doors can account for 10-20% of home energy loss, especially in the coming colder winter months. Caulk and weatherstripping are affordable fixes — costing as little as \$5-\$15 per tube or roll. Deals often include bundles or discounts on silicone caulk and foam weatherstrips. Applying these in a weekend can save up to \$200 annually on heating and cooling by preventing air leaks.



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MAX BENDER



MEL COLEMAN
CEO

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We believe concern for community is more than a value — it's the heart of who we are. And during this season of giving, we're especially grateful to be part of such a caring, generous community.



Employees of North Arkansas Electric Cooperative volunteer at community events, support local youth and help with worthwhile projects throughout our service area.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF NAEC



HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

VETERANS DAY

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



**NORTH ARKANSAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE THANKS
THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED OUR COUNTRY.**



HEADQUARTERS

225 S. Main St.,
Salem

DISTRICT OFFICES

824 Hwy 56,
Ash Flat

1520 Hwy 62/412 E.,
Mountain Home

CONTACT NAEC

(870) 895-3221
info@naeci.com

PAY/VIEW BILL

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REPORT OUTAGE

(870) 895-3221
(844) 335-4461

NAEC App

naeci.com ► Outage Viewer

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**Get Ready for
the New Year!**

Arkansas Living
2026 CALENDAR

NAEC
North Arkansas
Electric Cooperative, Inc.
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

(870) 895-3221 • naeci.com

Spring Station • Wade Jones, Mountain Home

Stop by our offices to pick up a
2026 Arkansas Living calendar
while supplies last.

**Happy
Thanksgiving!**
Our offices will be
closed Nov. 27-28.
A dispatcher will
be on duty, and
personnel will
be on call in the
event of an outage.
Report an outage
by using the NAEC
app or by calling
(870) 895-3221.



Efficiency Pays

Double your Black Friday savings

BY MITCH ROSS

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Spray foam insulation, like Great Stuff or Touch 'n Seal, fills gaps in walls, attics and crawlspaces, reducing energy loss by up to 20%. A \$10 spray foam can might save \$50 or more yearly on energy bills. Look for specials at hardware stores, where bulk kits or multi-packs are often discounted 15-25%, making it an ideal time to tackle those hard-to-reach spots.

Insulation: Wrap up efficiency

Proper insulation can cut energy costs by 30% in poorly insulated homes. Fiberglass batts or blown-in cellulose are cost-effective options, with savings of \$200 to \$500 per year. Stores may offer deals on insulation rolls or bags, sometimes with free rental of blowing machines, maximizing your investment.

This season prioritize energy-efficient products to shrink your utility bills and double your shopping savings! With sales slashing prices, you'll save upfront and for years to come. Check circulars or websites early, compare deals and invest in a more efficient home.

Mitch Ross is the energy efficiency manager for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas.



If you haven't made the switch to LED holiday lights, it's time. LEDs can last 40 holiday seasons, and they're more energy efficient than incandescent holiday lights.

MAX BENDER



SHAWN DORFLINGER
MANAGER

The Season of Giving

Powering communities with year-round generosity

As the holidays approach, we're reminded that this truly is the season of giving. It's a time for gratitude, generosity and looking out for one another — and at Ouachita Electric, that's something we take to heart year-round.

You've probably heard us talk about our concern for community. More than a nice phrase, this is one of the core principles that makes cooperatives like ours different. We're not just here to keep the lights on (though, of course, we're always working hard to do that). We're here to make life better for the members, neighbors and friends we serve.

Over the years, we've faced challenges together, and every time, our co-op family has stepped up. We've come together to support those in need, to keep our community strong and to build something better for the future. That spirit of generosity is never more evident than during the holiday season.

We're also proud to support local students through the Youth Tour program, where we send some of our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C., to see democracy in action and dream big about their futures. That's giving in the most meaningful way — by investing in tomorrow's leaders.

And because we care deeply about safety, we also spend time visiting schools throughout the communities we serve, holding demonstrations and teaching folks of all ages how to stay safe around electricity. We believe knowledge is a gift, and we love sharing it.

You'll also find our team out in the community beyond work, coaching youth sports, volunteering at local events, serving on nonprofit boards and partnering with our Chamber of Commerce to keep our local economy strong. Because when you're part of a co-op, giving back is what we do.

While the holiday season is a festive time, we understand these can be tough times for many. If you need advice on saving energy to reduce your energy bills, want to explore payment plan options or you simply have questions, please don't hesitate to reach out at (877) 252-4538. Helping our members is what we do in every season.

We believe concern for community is more than a value — it's the heart of who we are. And during this season of giving, we're especially grateful to be part of such a caring, generous community.



Employees of Ouachita Electric Cooperative volunteer at community events, support local youth and help with worthwhile projects throughout our service area.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF OECC



GOOD NEWS!

Your cooperative is returning capital credits

Ouachita Electric Cooperative is excited to announce that our board of directors has approved the retirement of approximately \$1 million in capital credits this November! This retirement includes patronage from the years 1997, 1998 and 2024.

Here's how it will work:

- If your retirement amount is less than \$25, it will be applied as a credit on your November bill.
- If your retirement amount is \$25 or more, you'll receive a check in the mail sent on Nov. 1.

Capital credit retirements are one of the many benefits of being a member-owner of your electric cooperative. It's our way of saying thank you for being part of Ouachita Electric!

If you have any questions, we're happy to help. Please give us a call at 877-252-4538.



HOW CAPITAL CREDITS WORK

Electric co-ops are not-for-profit and operate at cost. Capital credits are a financial benefit of co-op membership.



**Ouachita Electric
Cooperative Corporation**
700 Bradley Ferry Rd, Camden • (877) 252-4538 • oecc.com



Members pay their electric bills, and we track their kWh purchased each month.

The co-op pays operating expenses throughout the year and allocates any leftover operating revenue as capital credits.



When financial conditions permit, the co-op board votes to retire (pay) a portion of allocated capital credits to the members.

We send members their share of capital credits as a check or apply the credit to the member's account.



ADDRESS

700 Bradley Ferry Road
Camden

BOARD MEMBERS

Danny Adams
Kelly Belt
Lisa Hendrix
Sheila Johnson
David Kelley
Dr. Corbet Lamkin
David McLeane
Beau Morgan
Walt Pigott

CONTACT US

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onlineportal/
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**OUACHITA ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE**

**Ouachita Electric
will be closed
Thursday, Nov. 27,
and Friday, Nov. 28,
for Thanksgiving.**



Efficiency Pays

Double your Black Friday savings

BY MITCH ROSS

To help reduce energy costs, shoppers can use energy-efficient products to cut bills. Buying items on sale, combined with energy savings, means you save two ways.

From LED lights to insulation, these upgrades pay for themselves over time, and Black Friday may be the perfect time to snag them at a discount. Here's how to shop smart for savings this holiday season.

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Mitch Ross is the energy efficiency manager for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas.



Get Ready for the New Year!

Arkansas Living
2026 CALENDAR

Quachita Electric Cooperative Corporation
477-342-4100

Stop by our offices to pick up a 2026 Arkansas Living calendar while supplies last.

OZARKS CARES GIVES BACK

\$61,638 Distributed to Local Nonprofits

Ozarks Electric Cooperative's Ozarks Cares program is once again making a difference in the region, distributing \$61,638 to support nonprofits that serve vulnerable populations across Arkansas and Oklahoma.



Saving Grace NWA

Each year, Ozarks Electric employees contribute a portion of their paychecks, with every dollar matched by the cooperative. The combined total is then awarded to local organizations working on the front lines of need. This year's Arkansas recipients span causes from youth development to homelessness and community support.

Grant Recipients and Their Missions

Saving Grace NWA — \$18,734

Saving Grace provides safe, stable housing and wraparound services for young women ages 18-25 who have aged out of foster care or face homelessness. In addition to dorm-style housing, the program equips participants with life skills coaching, educational and employment support, financial literacy training, mentoring and counseling. The goal is to break cycles of instability and equip young women for successful, independent adulthood.

With this year's support, Saving Grace can expand its spaces, strengthen mentorship opportunities and enhance resources to help participants transition into thriving independent lives. The

organization is also in a "Phase II" expansion, a growth project aimed at increasing capacity so even more young women can be welcomed into its safe and supportive community.

CASA — \$10,000

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) works through trained volunteers to advocate for the best interests of children in the foster care and child welfare systems. Volunteers are often the one constant presence in a child's life as they navigate court hearings, foster placements and uncertain family situations. The Ozarks Cares gift will help CASA recruit, train and support these volunteers, ensuring that more children have a trusted adult by their side who is committed solely to their well-being and future.

Our website just got a new look!

Check out the new
ozarksecc.com today



What's NEW:

- + Easier navigation to help you find what you need faster
- + Cleaner design and faster performance
- + A dedicated section for news and updates
- + Better search results when used



Scan to visit



Intersection NWA — \$23,734

Each week, Intersection NWA provides thoughtful, home-cooked meals designed with intention and respect. But their care extends far beyond the dinner table. Over the years, they have helped neighbors with urgent medical needs, funerals, jobs and even transportation. Most importantly, they have offered kindness, consistency and a place where every person is seen, known and treated with dignity.

With this grant, the program can expand its reach, increase consistency in service and strengthen connections among neighbors across Northwest Arkansas.



Impact and Vision

Every dollar given to Ozarks Cares puts resources directly into trusted organizations doing hands-on work where the need is greatest. When employees participate, they aren't just making a donation, they are investing in their own communities and neighbors.

As we enter the holiday season, a time to reflect with gratitude and give back, Ozarks Cares highlights what can be accomplished when generosity is put into action. November is also recognized as National Philanthropy Month, a reminder that when individuals and organizations come together with a spirit of giving, communities are transformed.

Ozarks Cares is proof of what can be accomplished when an organization and its people unite around a shared purpose to uplift and strengthen the places they serve.



ADDRESS

3641 Wedington Drive
Fayetteville, AR 72704

CONTACT US

(479) 521-2900

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ozarksecc.smarthub.coop

REPORT OUTAGES

(800) 521-6144

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ozarksecc.com

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**Ozarks Electric
Cooperative**



ADDRESS

3641 Wedington Drive
Fayetteville, AR 72704

CONTACT US

(479) 684-4900

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OzarksGo

Our offices will be closed
on Thursday, Nov. 27
and Friday, Nov. 28 for

Thanksgiving



\$ave Money Now! Heat Pump Water Heater Rebate

Switching to an ultra-efficient heat pump water heater is a smart way to save energy and money. Now you can save even more with a rebate up to \$500 on an eligible ENERGY STAR® heat pump water heater.



ozarksecc.com/rebate-forms
479-521-2900





ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE YOUTH TOUR

AN ALL-EXPENSES-PAID TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C., FOR JUNIORS
June 13-19, 2026

- ✓ Visit historic landmarks
- ✓ Meet elected officials
- ✓ Develop lifelong friendships



Apply Today!
Scan to learn more.

Arkansas Youth Tour delegates in front of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool.

Applications Due January 15

www.ozarksecc.com

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RELAX.
RESET.
FALL BACK.

Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday, November 2

Saluting all military veterans

This November, Petit Jean Electric Cooperative salutes all military veterans who have served our great country, the United States of America. We express our deepest gratitude for all those who faithfully discharged their duties across various branches – land, sea and air – serving our country, some paying the ultimate price for our great democracy and its freedoms.

“Some Gave All”

Country music recording artist Billy Ray Cyrus sings, “Some Gave All” (scan

QR code). The song features a veteran named Sandy Cane who represents all military veterans and the sacrifices they have made for our freedoms. The song narrates Cane’s transformation from a boy to a man through service, highlighting the cost of freedom and the importance of remembering those who served.

It emphasizes that many veterans stood firm for the “red, white and blue,” with some making the ultimate sacrifice. The lyrics call on citizens to love their country, live with pride and never forget those who died defending it (see words below).

Honoring individual veterans and employees

Recently, Petit Jean Electric Cooperative honored



ANGELA HUTCHINS

Petit Jean Electric Cooperative CEO Michael Kirkland presents a plaque to Jack Owens during his 100th birthday celebration to honor his courage and devotion to duty in both the European and Pacific War Theaters during World War II, earning two Purple Hearts for his bravery.

Jack Owens, one of our own World War II veterans who celebrated his 100th birthday. Owens served as a First Scout in both the WWII European Theater and Pacific Theater, earning two Purple Hearts for his sacrifice.

Petit Jean Electric Cooperative also takes this time to recognize and thank all our employees who wore our nation’s uniform and faithfully discharged their duties.

“Some Gave All” by Billy Ray Cyrus

I knew a man, called him Sandy Cane
Few folks even knew his name
But a hero, yes, was he
He left a boy, came back a man
Still, many just don't understand
About the reasons we are free

I can't forget the look in his eyes
Or the tears he cried
As he said these words to me

All gave some and some gave all
Some stood through for the red, white and blue
And some had to fall
And if you ever think of me

Think of all your liberties, and recall
Some gave all

Now, Sandy Cane is no longer here
But his words are oh so clear
As they echo throughout our land
For all his friends who gave us all
Who stood the ground and took the fall
To help their fellow man



Michael Kirkland
U.S. Marine Corps
4 years of service



Jeff Stephenson
U.S. Marine Corps
6 years of service



Jared Parish
U.S. Navy
10 years of service



Tom Nowlin, (middle)
U.S. Navy
6 years of service



Josh Baker
U.S. Marine Corps
4 years of service



Kyle Goodwin
Army National Guard
6 years of service



Ben Bittle
U.S. Navy
5.5 years of service

Love your country and live with pride
And don't forget those who died
America, can't you see

All gave some
And some gave all
And some stood through for the red, white and blue
And some had to fall

And if you ever think of me
Think of all your liberties, and recall
Some gave all

And if you ever think of me
Think of all your liberties, and recall, yes recall
Some gave all
Some gave all.

Songwriters: Billy Ray Cyrus / Cindy Cyrus Some Gave All lyrics © BMG Rights Management, Universal Music Publishing Group



ADDRESS

P.O. Box 37
270 Quality Drive
Clinton, AR 72031

CONTACT US

(501) 745-2493
(855) 938-3576

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pjecc.com

REPORT OUTAGES

(855) 938-3576

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**Petit Jean Electric
Cooperative, Inc.**

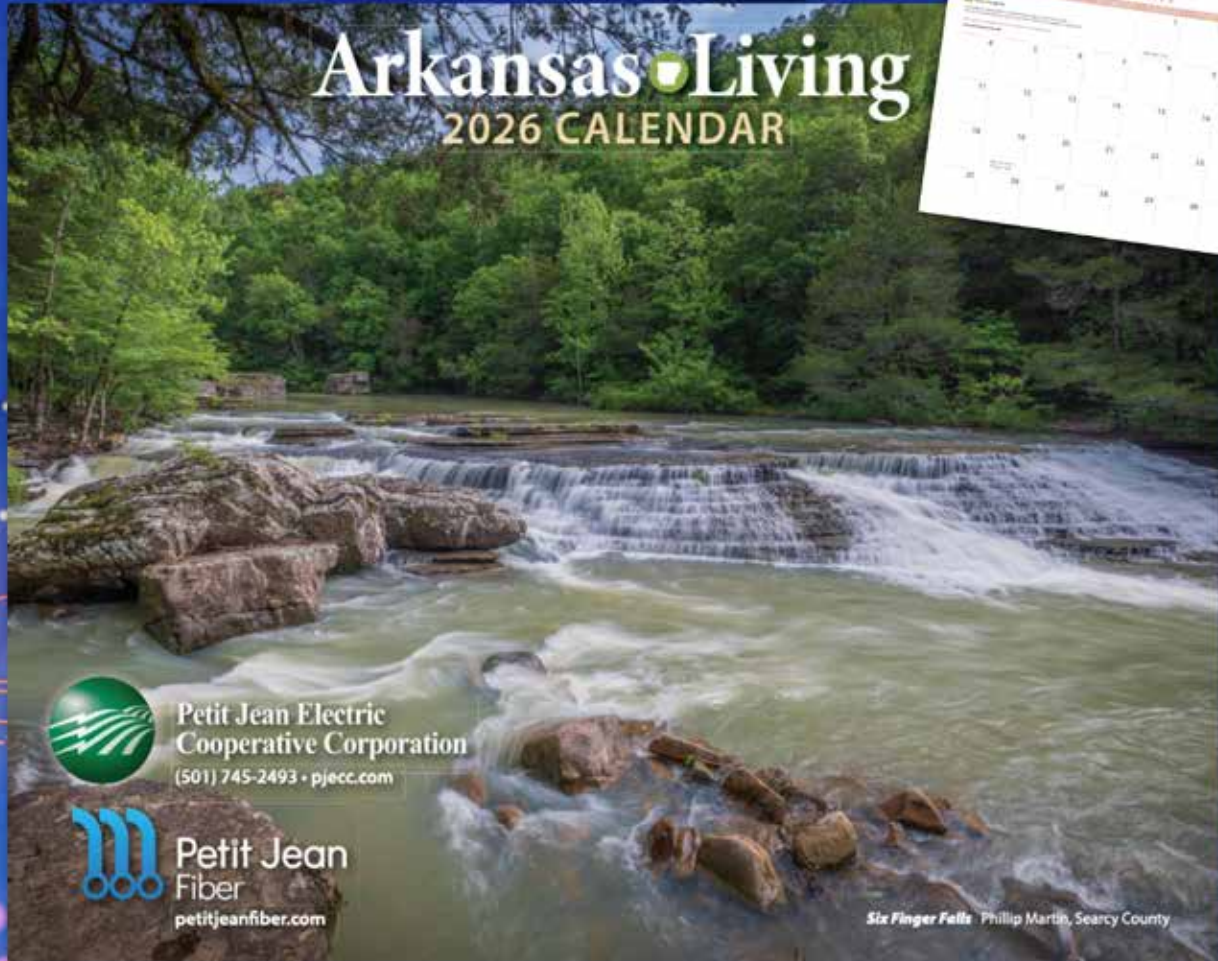
HOLIDAY CLOSINGS:

**Petit Jean Electric
will be closed
for the following
holidays:**

**VETERANS DAY
Tuesday, Nov. 11**

**THANKSGIVING
Thursday, Nov. 27
Friday, Nov. 28**

Get Ready for the New Year!



Stop by our offices to pick up
a 2026 Arkansas Living
calendar while supplies last.



BRAD CASTOR
PRESIDENT/CEO

IMPORTANT NOTICE: 2024 Patronage Capital

Notice is hereby given members of Rich Mountain Electric Cooperative, Inc. that, in accordance with the provisions of the bylaws of the cooperative, patronage capital for the year 2024 has been credited to the capital account of each member.

The Cooperative's total margins will be allocated to the residential, commercial/industrial and special contract member-consumer classes based on each class' revenues (excluding taxes) less purchased power costs. The factors for the residential, commercial/industrial and special contract member-consumer classes are \$0.2693381468, \$0.2608710721 and \$0.2608710661 per kilowatt-hour, respectively. As an example, if a residential member consumed 12,000 kilowatt-hours in 2024, the amount credited to the member's

patronage capital account for the year is $12,000 \times \$0.2693381468$ or \$3,232.06.

Any member who desires specific information regarding the amount credited to his patronage capital account may obtain this information on request. This notice is only a statement regarding the assignment of patronage capital.

The Cooperative Difference

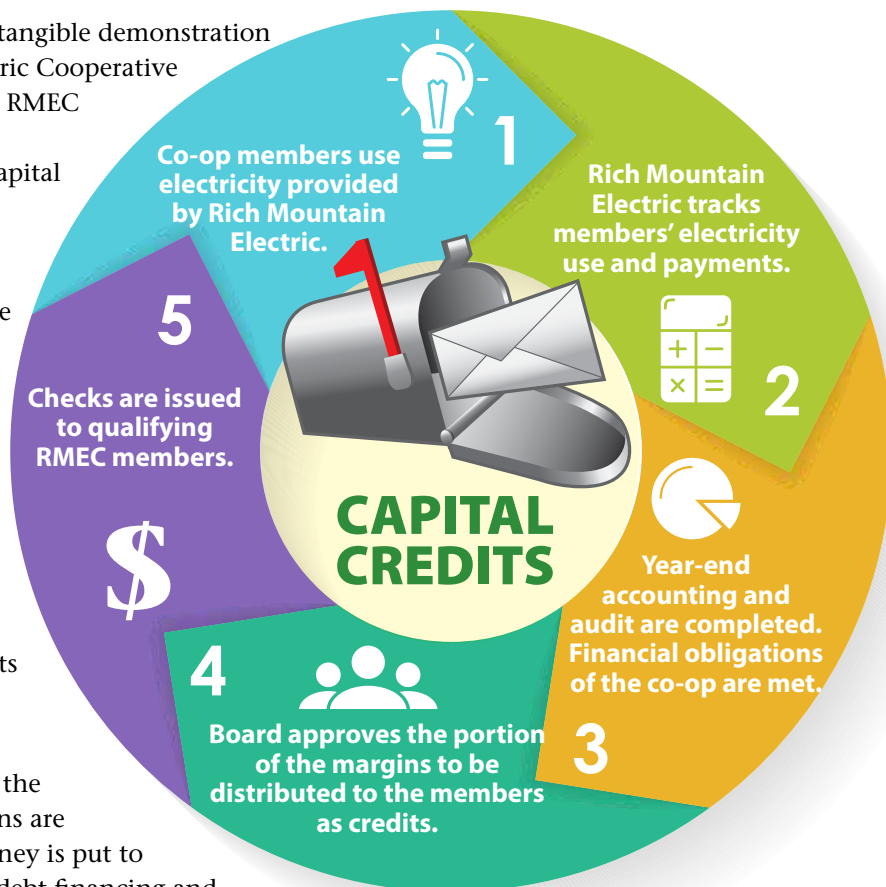
The retirement of capital credits is the tangible demonstration of your ownership in Rich Mountain Electric Cooperative (RMEC). As a member-owned cooperative, RMEC operates as a not-for-profit utility. This is accomplished through the retirement of capital credits.

What are Capital Credits?

Any profits made by the cooperative are referred to as margins. At the end of each year, the margins (profits) are allocated to each member in proportion to the amount of electricity purchased. The more electricity purchased, the greater the share of the margin allocation that will be made to the member's capital credit account. When the allocated funds are returned as capital credits to the cooperative's members, those capital credits have been retired.

Assets of the cooperative are owned collectively and held in common by all of the member-owners. From the time the margins are generated until they are returned, this money is put to work within the cooperative, minimizing debt financing and strengthening our financial position.

Before distributing the capital credits, your board of directors at RMEC must first consider the financial condition of the cooperative and the needs for capital funds for the coming years. The amount of the retirement set by the board of directors is an amount that will maintain the financial integrity of the cooperative.



Cooperative's Nominating Committee meets

The cooperative's Nominating Committee met at the Mena office on Monday, September 15, 2025 to name candidates for the director's position. This position will be filled by the mail balloting that will precede the 2025 Annual Meeting, to be held on Wednesday, November 26, 2025. Committee members present were Farrell Cole of Holly Springs; David Donica of Hatfield; Phillip Hatley of Potter; Ricky Pinkerton of Umpire; Reginald Fryar of Cove; Stan House of Mena; and Wendell Garner of Dierks.



Nomination for director

District	Term	Nominee
District 1	9 years	Hershel Bell

Nominating Committee members pictured: (left to right) Front row: David Donica, Farrell Cole, Wendell Garner, Stan House, Brad Castor, President/CEO, Rich Mountain Electric. Back row: Ricky Pinkerton, Reginald Fryar, Phillip Hatley.

Incumbent Hershel Bell has been representing District 1 on Rich Mountain Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors since November 2008.

Hershel was raised on a poultry and cattle farm at Vandervoort, Arkansas. He graduated from Cove High School and has lived in the Cove area for most of his life. Hershel and his wife, Pam, are members of Vandervoort First Baptist Church. Pam retired from teaching at Cossatot River High School, and Hershel is currently working as a real estate agent in Mena.

Due to publishing deadlines, we regret any omission of other possible candidates that might be later nominated by petition. If any additional nominations are forthcoming, the candidate's names will appear on the official ballot.

Rich Mountain Electric Members: Please notice!

Around November 7, 2025, you will receive a ballot by mail, by which you may vote for one director to serve a nine-year (9) term on the Rich Mountain Electric Cooperative Board.

Please return your ballot promptly. You will have a chance to win a \$500 Visa gift card. Simply mark and return the official "Vote by Mail" ballot enclosed with the Annual Report, which will be mailed to each member. Also, we would appreciate you taking the time to fill out the member questionnaire attached to the ballot.

To be eligible to win, you must return the official ballot, properly marked, in the special envelope provided before noon, Tuesday, November 25, 2025.





Efficiency Pays

Double your Black Friday savings

BY MITCH ROSS

To help reduce energy costs, shoppers can use energy-efficient products to cut bills. Buying items on sale, combined with energy savings, means you save two ways.

From LED lights to insulation, these upgrades pay for themselves over time, and Black Friday may be the perfect time to snag them at a discount. Here's how to shop smart for savings this holiday season.

LED lighting: Bright savings

LED bulbs use up to 80% less energy than incandescent and last 20 times longer. A single LED bulb can save \$100 or more over its lifetime. On Black Friday, many retailers often slash prices on LED packs by 20-40%. Stock up on quality brands for bulbs that will last and that fit every fixture, from warm white to daylight tones, ensuring long-term savings on your electric bill. Also look for LED Christmas lights and décor to celebrate the season without bumping up the bill.

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MAX BENDER

**COLBY WELLS**

CEO

The Season of Giving

Grateful for the power of community

As the holidays approach, we're reminded that this truly is the season of giving. It's a time for gratitude, generosity and looking out for

one another — and at South Central Arkansas Electric, that's something we take to heart all year long.

We talk often about our Concern for Community, but it's more than just words. It's one of the core principles that sets cooperatives like ours apart. We're not only here to keep the lights on (though, of course, we're always working hard to do that). We're here to make life brighter for the members, neighbors and friends we serve.

Over the years, we've faced challenges together, and every time, our co-op family has stepped up. We've come together to support those in need, to strengthen our communities and to invest in a better future. That spirit of generosity is never more evident than during the holiday season.

This year, we're especially thankful for our members — because without you, none of this would be possible.

Your participation, engagement and support allow us to:

- Provide scholarships and leadership opportunities, including the POWERful Youth program and Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.
- Support local foster families with Thanksgiving meals, ensuring every family can gather around the table.
- Host school visits, demonstrations and safety programs that spark learning for students of all ages.
- Volunteer our time and energy at community events, youth sports and local fundraisers — because giving back is at the heart of who we are.

While the holiday season is joyful, we also know it can be challenging. That's why we're here to help with energy-saving advice, flexible payment options and the support you need. Helping our members isn't just what we do during the holidays — it's what we do in every season.

At South Central Arkansas Electric, we believe generosity is more than a value — it's the heart of who we are. And during this season of giving, we're proud — and thankful — to be part of such a caring, connected community.



Enter the South Central Arkansas Electric and South Central Connect CHRISTMAS CARD CONTEST

South Central Arkansas Electric and South Central Connect are looking for elementary students (kindergarten through fifth grade) to submit a Christmas card design. The winning design will be used for the official 2025 South Central Christmas card! These cards are mailed to friends of South Central, legislators and businesses across the country!

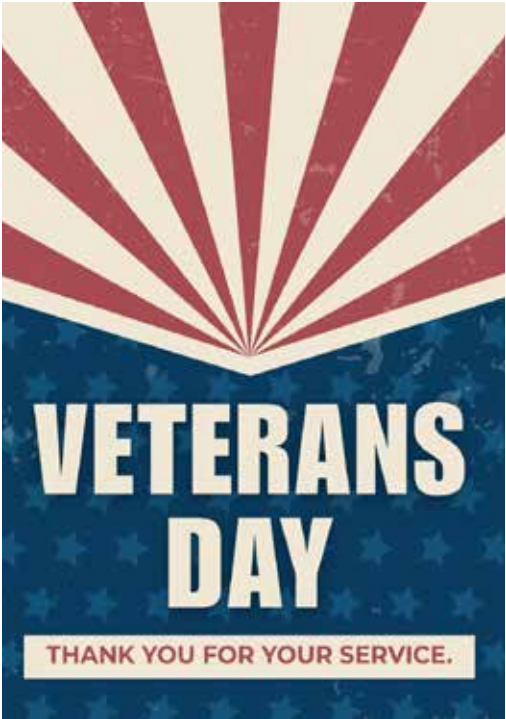
Get your entry form, rules and more information at our website (scaec.com) or pick up the form and rules at any of our offices. Hurry! The deadline to enter is Nov. 20.

SEND ENTRY FORMS AND ARTWORK —

By email to: scholarship@scaec.com
 Or mail to: South Central Arkansas Electric Cooperative
 Shelley Tucker
 P.O. Box 476
 Arkadelphia, AR 71923



The 2024 Christmas Card Contest winner was Gini Kait Smithpeters.



ADDRESS
 4818 Highway 8 West
 Arkadelphia

BOARD MEMBERS

- Brian Kirksey (President)
- Scott Clark (Vice President)
- Karen Kirkpatrick (Secretary-Treasurer)
- Mark Batson
- Danny Buck
- Ricky Francis
- Kevin Jester
- Shelley Loe
- Tim Trout

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SOUTH CENTRAL ARKANSAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

SOUTH CENTRAL CONNECT

South Central Arkansas Electric will be closed Thursday, Nov. 27, and Friday, Nov. 28, for Thanksgiving.

Give Thanks Food Drive

BENEFITING LOCAL FOSTER FAMILIES

DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

Bank of Delight - Prescott
First State Bank - Gurdon
Southern Bancorp - Gurdon
Diamond Bank - Glenwood
Southern Bancorp - Glenwood
Bank of Delight - Delight
Southern Bancorp - Bismarck
Patterson Federal Credit Union - Arkadelphia
Southern Bancorp - Arkadelphia
Citizens Bank - Arkadelphia
South Central Electric Co-op - Arkadelphia

ITEMS REQUESTED

Mac & cheese cups	Oatmeal
Ramen noodles	Granola bars
Chef Boyardee cups	Canned soup
Fruit cups	Slim Jims/beef jerky
Fruit snacks	Canned vegetables
Vienna sausages	Rice/dried beans
Tuna packets	Boxed pasta
Cheese/PB crackers	Cornbread mix
Cereal boxes	Gravy mix/stuffing mix
Peanut butter	Boxed cake/dessert mix
Cheez-Its/crackers	

PRESENTED BY



South Central Arkansas
Electric Cooperative, Inc.



SOUTH CENTRAL
connect.



CASA
Arkansas Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN
TRI-LAKES CASA

NOV. 1-19

**KECIA WOLF**

PRESIDENT/CEO

The Season of Giving

Powering communities with year-round generosity

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You'll also find our team out in the community beyond work, coaching youth sports, volunteering at local events, serving on nonprofit boards and partnering with our Chamber of Commerce to keep our local economy strong. Because when you're part of a co-op, giving back is what we do.

While the holiday season is a festive time, we understand these can be tough times for many. If you need advice on saving energy to reduce your energy bills, want to explore payment plan options or you simply have questions, please don't hesitate to reach out at (870) 772-2743. Helping our members is what we do in every season.

We believe concern for community is more than a value — it's the heart of who we are. And during this season of giving, we're especially grateful to be part of such a caring, generous community.



Employees of Southwest Arkansas Electric volunteer at community events, support local youth and help with worthwhile projects in our service area.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SWAEC

Sparkle Smarter

Fun and safe holiday decorating hacks

'Tis the season to deck the halls, but let's be honest — holiday decorating can either feel like a magical Hallmark movie or trying to assemble IKEA furniture without instructions. Luckily, with a little planning (and a dash of common sense), you can keep your home festive, fabulous and safe.

Bright ideas

Still clinging to those old incandescent string lights? Time for an upgrade. The Department of Energy says LED holiday lights only bump your energy bill by about \$5 to \$7, compared to a whopping \$33 or more with those vintage heat traps. That's extra cookie money!

Fiber optic trees, wreaths and centerpieces can use a single LED to illuminate an entire decoration. They look magical and sip electricity compared to multiple light strands. For bonus efficiency, plug your lights into a timer or smart plug — no more 2 a.m. "Did I leave the lights on?" panic.

Inflatables with care

Those giant lawn inflatables are fun, but they can be power hogs. If you use them, run them only when people are around to see them, and switch them off during the day.

Solar power to the people

Want to make your outdoor display shine without sending your electric meter into

orbit? Solar-powered spotlights and pathway lights are your new best friends. They soak up the sun by day and dazzle by night, keeping your display merry and bright.

Bring the outside in

Instead of covering every surface in glitter (which will haunt you until June), bring nature inside. Fresh greenery, dried fruit garlands and pinecones add rustic charm without the plastic overload. Plus, they smell amazing — instant holiday aromatherapy.

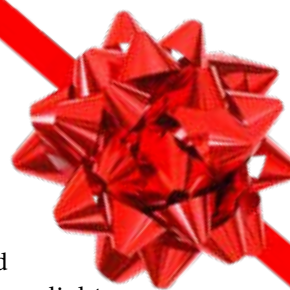
Safety sleighs

Holiday decorating hazards are real. Keep cords away from walkways (no one wants to trip mid-cookie dash), and always water real trees so they don't turn into tinder.

Less stress, more sparkle

Remember, more lights don't equal more joy. Pick a theme, focus on a few dazzling focal points, and let your home's natural charm do the rest. Put the brightest lights and biggest displays where they'll have the most impact — front windows, entryways and yard focal points. You'll use fewer lights overall while still making a statement. A little restraint can go a long way toward keeping things elegant and efficient.

This year, light smarter, decorate safer and let your holiday spirit shine without the chaos.



BOARD MEMBERS

Rusty Pendergraft
Alan Green
Andy Youngblood
Jim Alford
Tommy Isbell, DVM
Brett Renfro
Stacy Womack
Paula Mounts
Brannon Collier

CONTACT US

(870) 772-2743

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Southwest
Arkansas Electric
will be closed
at 3 p.m. on
Wednesday,
Nov. 26, Thursday,
Nov. 27, and
Friday, Nov. 28,
for Thanksgiving.

Fiber Powers Your Local Business



Four States Fiber has the power to help streamline and optimize your small business operations.

Four States Fiber offers businesses access to fast, reliable, fiber-optic internet, which can dramatically improve your operations. With high upload and download speeds, you can support cloud services, real-time backups, video conferencing, VoIP phone systems, and seamless Wi-Fi across your establishment without worrying about congestion. Because Four States Fiber is a local cooperative-based provider, you also gain the advantage of responsive, local support and network maintenance. That means less downtime, fewer service interruptions, and quicker resolution when issues arise - helping you keep your business running smoothly and professionally.

As you plan for the holiday shopping season, don't underestimate the importance of **Small Business Saturday on November 29, 2025** (or on the Saturday following Thanksgiving). With Four States Fiber behind the scenes, your online presence and in-store digital initiatives (e.g. point-of-sale systems, mobile checkout, digital promotions) can function at full capacity to serve increased foot traffic and web traffic. You'll be able to run flash sales, mobile payments, online ordering, and social media campaigns without fear of network lag or outages, giving your customers a smooth, modern shopping experience that encourages them to "shop small" and support your local venture.



**FOUR STATES
FIBER INTERNET**

844.847.8283
fourstatesfiber.com



MICHAEL SWAN
PRESIDENT/CEO

The Season of Giving

Powering communities with year-round generosity

As the holidays approach, we're reminded that this truly is the season of giving. It's a time for gratitude, generosity and looking out for one another — and at Woodruff Electric, that's something we take to heart year-round.

You've probably heard us talk about our concern for community. More than a nice phrase, this is one of the core principles that makes cooperatives like ours different. We're not just here to keep the lights on (though, of course, we're always working hard to do that). We're here to make life better for the members, neighbors and friends we serve.

Over the years, we've faced challenges together, and every time, our co-op family has stepped up. We've come together to support those in need, to keep our community strong and to build something better for the future. That spirit of generosity is never more evident than during the holiday season.

We're also proud to support local students through the Youth Tour program, where we send some of our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C., to see democracy in action and dream big about their futures. That's giving in the most meaningful way — by investing in tomorrow's leaders.

And because we care deeply about safety, we also spend time visiting schools throughout the communities we serve, holding demonstrations and teaching folks of all ages how to stay safe around electricity. We believe knowledge is a gift, and we love sharing it.

You'll also find our team out in the community beyond work, coaching youth sports, volunteering at local events, serving on nonprofit boards and partnering with our Chamber of Commerce to keep our local economy strong. Because when you're part of a co-op, giving back is what we do.

While the holiday season is a festive time, we understand these can be tough times for many. If you need advice on saving energy to reduce your bills, want to explore payment plan options or you simply have questions, please don't hesitate to reach out at (870) 633-2262. Helping our members is what we do in every season.

We believe concern for community is more than a value — it's the heart of who we are. And during this season of giving, we're especially grateful to be part of such a caring, generous community.



Employees of Woodruff Electric volunteer at community events, support local youth and help with worthwhile projects like food drives.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF WOODRUFF ELECTRIC

DOWNLOAD THE WECC MEMBER APP TODAY!

HOW DO I FIND THE APP? You can find the app in both the App Store on Apple devices or the Google Play Store on other devices. Type "Woodruff Electric" in the search bar and hit search.

HOW DO I ADD MY ACCOUNT? Once the app is downloaded, this will be the first screen that you will see. Click "add account" button. You can add your account by your account number, the phone number tied to your account or meter number. You must give your account a nickname.

CAN I ADD MORE THAN ONE ACCOUNT? Yes! You must go to the profile tab located in the bottom right corner. Then, you will see in the top right corner a button, "add account." You will add an account in the same manner that you added your first account.

CAN I REPORT A PROBLEM USING THE APP? Yes, you may select "report a problem" and will be prompted to select from a list of options for the nature of the problem. If you have multiple accounts, you must select the affected account before reporting the problem. Member comments are optional to further explain the problem.

WHAT DETAILS ARE INCLUDED IN THE OUTAGE MAP? The map will list the number of members affected by outages, and the outage area will be shaded. You may click on the shaded area for more details about the outage.

CAN YOU VIEW ENERGY USAGE INFORMATION?

- Non-prepay accounts – On the usage tab, you select the account, and you can view your usage in kWh or the dollar amount. You may view your usage and cost on a month-to-month basis, going back up to one year.
- Prepay accounts – On the usage tab, you will be able to view your daily usage and charges going back up to 30 days. This helps you to determine how much money you need to add to keep your electric service on.

CAN I MAKE A PAYMENT USING THE APP? Yes, you may pay with card or e-check using the app.

Non-prepay Account
12 Month History View
(cost or usage)



Prepay Account
Monthly History View
(cost or usage)



ADDRESS

3201 Highway 1 N.
Forrest City

BOARD MEMBERS

Bill Rushing
Jerry Brown
Chris Burrow
Shelia Banks
Brent Ponder
Joe Whittenton, III
Wayne Beadles, Jr.
Keith Freeland

CONTACT US

(870) 633-2262

REPORT OUTAGES

(888) 559-6400

(870) 633-7100

E-MAIL

info@woodruffelectric.com

CONNECT ONLINE

woodruffelectric.com

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Efficiency Pays

Double your Black Friday savings

BY MITCH ROSS

To help reduce energy costs, shoppers can use energy-efficient products to cut bills. Buying items on sale, combined with energy savings, means you save two ways.

From LED lights to insulation, these upgrades pay for themselves over time, and Black Friday may be the perfect time to snag them at a discount. Here's how to shop smart for savings this holiday season.

LED lighting: Bright savings

LED bulbs use up to 80% less energy than incandescent and last 20 times longer. A single LED bulb can save \$100 or more over its lifetime. On Black Friday, many retailers often slash prices on LED packs by 20-40%. Stock up on quality brands for bulbs that will last and that fit every fixture, from warm white to daylight tones, ensuring long-term savings on your electric bill. Also look for LED Christmas lights and décor to celebrate the season without bumping up the bill.

Caulk and weatherstripping: Seal the deal

Drafts around windows and doors can account for 10-20% of home energy loss, especially in the coming colder winter months. Caulk and weatherstripping are affordable fixes — costing as little as \$5-\$15 per tube or roll. Deals often include bundles or discounts on silicone caulk and foam weatherstrips. Applying these in a weekend can save up to \$200 annually on heating and cooling by preventing air leaks.



Spray foam: Expand your savings

Spray foam insulation, like Great Stuff or Touch 'n Seal, fills gaps in walls, attics and crawlspaces, reducing energy loss by up to 20%. A \$10 spray foam can might save \$50 or more yearly on energy bills.

Look for specials at hardware stores, where bulk kits or multi-packs are often discounted 15-25%, making it an ideal time to tackle those hard-to-reach spots.

Insulation: Wrap up efficiency

Proper insulation can cut energy costs by 30% in poorly insulated homes. Fiberglass batts or blown-in cellulose are cost-effective options, with savings of \$200 to \$500 per year. Stores may offer deals on insulation rolls or bags, sometimes with free rental of blowing machines, maximizing your investment.

This season prioritize energy-efficient products to shrink your utility bills and double your shopping savings! With sales slashing prices, you'll save upfront and for years to come. Check circulars or websites early, compare deals and invest in a more efficient home.

Mitch Ross is the energy efficiency manager for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas.

