

"Hotlines"

Published Monthly
for the Members of
Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Cherokee, OK
www.aec.coop



July, 2013

Celebrate safely!

Number 7 Volume 68

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Area News Briefs

**Thursday,
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AEC Offices
will be closed
to celebrate!**

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Max Ott receives national, statewide award

Former AEC General Manager Max Ott received a prestigious award in Oklahoma City recently. A beautiful plaque signifying a 37 year career at Alfalfa Electric Cooperative--first as an electrical engineer and later as General Manager. Ott was also recognized for his service at the



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Board Members Dennis Ferrell, Joe Hise, Steve Eck and Debbie Ferguson join former AEC General Manager, Max Ott at presentation.

KAMO takes AEC's night calls and dispatching

What happens when an outage occurs after hours at AEC? According to Mapping, Metering and Technical Services Supervisor, Douglas Conrady, calls are now answered by KAMO, a generation and transmission company similar to our familiar WFEC (Western Farmers Electric Cooperative.)

The answering service also dispatches workers necessary for the restoration of power.

Because KAMO (Kansas, Arkansas,

Missouri and Oklahoma Electric Cooperative) is accustomed to the challenges of weather-related events, AEC feels confident the Vinita-based company will be a good fit.

"KAMO has a schedule of employees to dispatch and is prepared to handle large outages when they occur due to ice storms or tornadoes," says Conrady.

"The Cooperative is always interested in ways to better serve our consumers. This is a smoother operation."

ALTERNATING CURRENTS...

New Summer Intern

By Ron Shafer



Anthony (Tony) Forrer, a student at Manhattan Area Technical College in Manhattan, Kansas, is working as an intern at Alfalfa Electric this summer. All students are required to successfully complete an internship to receive their Electric Power & Distribution Program degree.

Tony is a native of Ohio but landed in Kansas fresh out of the military a couple of years ago. He is married to wife Carolyn with no children yet. He was raised on a dairy farm, which he loved, but is very excited to begin a new career as an electrical lineman. AEC is pleased to have Tony with us this summer and we will strive to make this an educational, as well as enjoyable, experience for him.

con't from page 1 Max Ott award

Statewide and National levels.

AEC Board Members Dennis Ferrell, Joe Hise, Steve Eck and Debbie Ferguson, were in attendance to support and cheer Ott as a friend and electrical comrade.

Max and his wife Vickie have moved to St. Louis, MO, to be near their daughters and grandchildren but they do visit friends and relatives in the area frequently.



Max Ott, former General Manager of AEC accepts recognition for 37 years of Cooperative service. Right: The award is pictured.

AEC helps restore power to Moore after tornados

During the past month our fellow Oklahomans in the Moore area have suffered the aftermath of destructive tornados. Alfalfa Electric Cooperative sent a crew to help restore electricity. Those dispatched to work a week amid the primitive conditions were Kevin Lingemann, Scott Cudmore, Matt Gibson, Kody Gibson and Courtney Roberts.

We have no photos of the crew and their success with the restoration. The men claimed their work schedule did not allow time for photography.



A tornado funnel tearing a path through farmland and electric lines.

When faith precedes the miracle

Fran Bruce and her husband Dale dedicated 20 plus years to a jailhouse ministry before focusing on one undeniable fact: **Women in prison are unprepared to deal with life outside the razor wire.**

Most inmates lack education. (Some cannot read.) Discharged women are overwhelmed finding a job, budgeting finances and integrating into their families again.

Some prisoners mother minor children with custody issues and others fear returning to substance abuse.

In 2008 the recidivism rate for women prisoners in Oklahoma was 16.1 % within three years of incarceration. That is very low compared to other states but Oklahoma does have more women in prison per population than any other state--134 per 100,000.



Fran Bruce, Director of the Gettin' Place and Melmarie Coulter, resident pose under the hand-made crosses defining the Christ-centered program.



The sign (lovingly made by Linda and Jim Warner) is a warm welcome. Someday perhaps flowers will be growing underneath...

The Bruces focused on a crazy idea: Why not find a big "boarding-house-type" building and make it a transition place for women adapting to lives on the outside. The couple thought "If they found it, they would come."

Sadly, Fran lost her husband, Dale a few months ago but by then there was no turning back as the old nursing home in Helena, Oklahoma was already converted. The crosses on the wall of the reception area spell out the first rule of the program--It is Christ-centered. Recipients must attend church services and be willing to focus on humanitarian causes. Helena is also the home of the Crabtree Correc-

tional Facility for men so folks there are not intimidated by a transitional center.

The rules are clear: "Prospective residents apply for the program but we have some guidelines," says Fran. **"We will take no sex offenders or participants of violent crime."** It is a volunteer program and we have AA and NA counselors available if we need them.

The Gettin' Home Place is a environment where former inmates learn skills to help them become self-sufficient. They learn to cook, clean and manage. The facility has just added a commercial laundry.

"We wash linens for the oilfield workers in Cherokee," says Fran. "We hope to eventually expand the business to include work clothes. To save time and gas, pickups and deliveries are done early Sunday morning on the way to church services."

Family time is reserved for weekends when children can stay in their mothers' rooms. Some residents are embraced by loving families and others have no responding relatives at all.

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Fran shows a beautifully decorated bedroom.

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When faith precedes the miracle...

Currently Melmarie Coulter is a resident with another former inmate expected soon. Melmarie is managing the laundry and doing most of the cooking for volunteers who help with various projects.

"We are so glad Melmarie is here," explains Fran. "She is an excellent cook and runs the laundry now."

Clubs and civic groups in the area have contributed greatly by beautifully decorating the bed-



Bundles of clean linens are ready for delivery to oilfield "man-camps."

rooms. Fran appreciates the many volunteers who have given time, money and love, making the facility homey and comfortable as well as attractive for the residents who choose to stay there.

And prospective residents *must choose* to be a part of the program by a written application.

Residents must keep their rooms neat and clean, be willing to engage in education tailored to fit each resident, attend whatever counseling deemed necessary and be cooperative as the transition helps them to become self-sufficient.

The residents learn survival skills-- budgeting, computer programs, on-line classes and a few must learn to read and count change correctly, depending upon their formal education.

The Gettin' Place helps with building a wardrobe through the aid of volunteers and vouchers for used clothing stores in the area. New Terry-cloth robes and half-slips are still needed...

A five-member panel carefully selects candidates--a law enforcement officer, a pastor, a woman sensitive to the needs of an inmate who transitions, a citizen of the community, and a Board Member who does not vote unless there is a tie.

"If a candidate is not chosen we do not turn them away completely but refer them to another agency," says Fran.

It is a one-year program. Goals are:

1. **To change the resident's life for the good.**
2. **To have money in the bank, enough for the first and last month's rent.**
3. **To have a mentor in the community to act as a friend and helpmate, helping the resident become more productive and independent.**

Volunteers are still needed. If you and a friend are good painters, Fran could use you. She also has lists of simple items needed for the bedrooms--like bulletin boards, journals and stationary.

The Gettin' Home Place is grateful for the volunteers and "special friends" who help in many ways. (Fran can't name them for fear of forgetting one.)

Call **316-519-8946** if you can donate old.cabinets to replace sad ones.

Fran could use a kind farmer with a tractor and leveler.

A commercial gas stove would be a blessing, also...

Fran knows all about blessings.



Melmarie Coulter enjoys the aquarium.



The **Hotlines** is published monthly by
Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, Inc.
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Cherokee, OK 73728

www.aec.coop

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