

# “Hotlines”

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



**POWER OUTAGE?**  
**(580) 596-3333 OR**  
**1-888-736-3837**

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



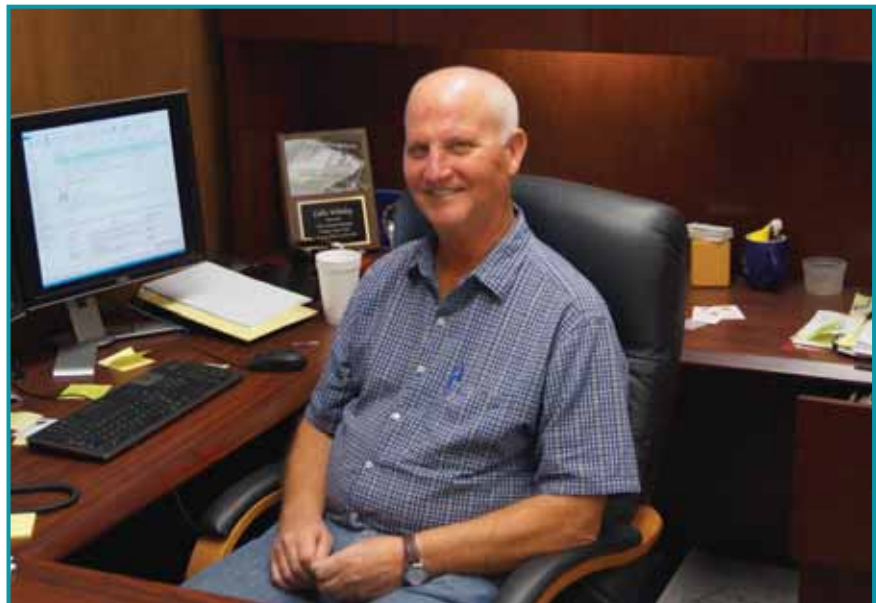
## AREA NEWS BRIEFS

**Sept. 5 Labor Day** This is a national holiday honoring the work force in the United States. Government offices and many businesses are closed for this holiday.

**Sept. 11 Grandparent's Day** Honor grandparents and help others become aware of the guidance and information older people can and do offer.

**Sept. 22 Safety Program** High school students attend a safety demonstration at the fairgrounds in Cherokee.

**HOT TEMPERATURES ARE STILL HERE. CALL TO GET YOUR A/C RUNNING EFFICIENTLY. CALL AEC SERVICES, INC. (580) 596-3333 or 1-800-853-4969**



CEO Colin Whitley leaves Alfalfa Electric Cooperative to be closer to his family.

## It's all about family

By Colin Whitley

A little over four years ago, I was offered the opportunity to serve as General Manager here at Alfalfa Electric Cooperative. Since accepting this opportunity, we have experienced both good and difficult times.

During my first year here, we experienced one of the largest winter storms ever to impact our electric system, losing over 700 poles and resulting in outages that lasted for weeks for many of our members. However, we restored service, and following

the storm, we completed projects to strengthen our system and the ability to back feed areas when outages occur. In the past year, we have dealt with two ice storms and a large wildfire that destroyed hundreds of poles across our system. Once again our employees restored service and rebuilt electric circuits to strengthen our system and enhance our ability to respond to outages caused by major storms.

We have also experienced the largest growth in sales ever in our history due

*(continued on page 2)*

## ALTERNATING CURRENTS...

**Thomas Wessels**  
AEC Services  
Contractor



Born and raised in Cherokee, Thomas looks to be a permanent fixture at AEC Services. He enjoys working on the family farm when he can. Hunting and fishing are two hobbies that Thomas finds relaxing. He is a proud member of the Cherokee Volunteer Fire Department.

Thomas attended Autry Technology Center. He has been employed by AEC Services for 10 ½ years. He was an HVAC intern for 6 months and then an apprentice laborer for a year. After 7 years as an HVAC journeyman technician, Thomas was hired as AEC Services' contractor.

Thomas appreciates meeting people and helping them with their heat/air problems. He enjoys working with his customers. Those who work with Thomas know that he has a dry sense of humor and likes to joke around.

Marrying his high school sweetheart Adrienne might be Thomas' best accomplishment. They have a chocolate lab, Bama and a heeler, Newly. Thomas enjoys watching the OSU Cowboys and OKC Thunder. Someday he would like to go elk hunting in Canada.

Thomas is proud of becoming the contractor for AEC Services. He is glad to be working at one of the best workplaces with the best people. His dad and grandpa taught him that goals in life can be achieved through hard work, dedication, and maybe a little luck. Thomas is certainly a dedicated hard worker; however, AEC is the lucky one, Thomas.

(continued from page 1) to the oil boom in our region. In 2015, Alfalfa Electric Cooperative's growth in sales was the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest among cooperatives in the United States with total sales of almost \$80 million. Oil prices have dropped, and with that so has our growth in sales, however our sales remain strong in 2016.

You can take comfort in the fact that Alfalfa Electric Cooperative has some of the best linemen and employees that I have ever worked with. All the success we have experienced these past four years is due to their commitment to you, our member owners.

Alfalfa Electric Cooperative is truly a special place to work. In many ways, AEC is a family. Our employees care about one another and the members we serve. Because of this, I believe the service we provide is second to none.

This past month, I was offered the opportunity to manage another electric cooperative, one located near my family and my wife's family.



Colin and his wife Jackie enjoy some time at home as they prepare for their future at Canadian Valley Electric Cooperative.

Family is important to us, so it is with mixed emotions that I have accepted this new opportunity. We are excited to have the opportunity to live closer to our families, yet we will certainly miss working with the AEC family.

It has been my honor to serve as the General Manager of Alfalfa Electric Cooperative these past four years, and I thank you for the opportunity. May God bless each of you and Alfalfa Electric Cooperative.



Colin entertains guests at AEC's Christmas Party. He was known for sharing his song that was a family favorite. Employees will miss this sing-along.

# AEC sends students to Colorado

Nick Nakvinda, from Ringwood and McKayla Holson from Waynoka were selected to attend the 40th annual Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, Colo. From July 16-22, Nick and McKayla joined approximately 100 youth from Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming and Oklahoma for the week-long camp that combines education about the cooperative business model with traditional camp pastimes.

McKayla and Nick were selected through AEC's Youth Tour Program. Information on the program was shared with students and teachers within AEC's seven county service area (5 in Oklahoma and 2 in Kansas). Six students were selected from their winning essays. Those students then went through a short interview where judges selected the winners.

Alfalfa Electric Cooperative is proud to be a participating sponsor of the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp and send our local youth to develop essential leadership and teamwork skills. Through this trip, AEC hopes local students will learn how our electric cooperatives work and how co-ops and their employees support the communities they serve.

At Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp, the campers participated in daily membership meetings where they established committees and elected a general manager and board of directors. Campers also had time to enjoy area activities including visits to Fish Creek Falls and Steamboat Springs, river rafting and participating in camp activities such as volleyball, swimming

and a talent show.

The youth learned about the workings of electric cooperatives through a variety of activities: Yampa Valley Electric's linemen led a high voltage safety demonstration, campers competed in building a model transmission line out of craft



McKayla and Nick enjoy the scenic areas in Colorado while attending the Leadership Camp.

supplies, and they toured the Trapper Mine and Craig Power Plant.

McKayla Holson shared some thought about the camp. "Camp was a blast! It wasn't anything like I expected. There's truly something for everyone, whether that's learning leadership skills, rafting, making lifelong friends, or dancing to some

pretty sweet music. The Craig Power Plant helped me realize just how many different people are needed in this industry. It has sparked an interest in me to pursue a career in that field. I encourage everyone to attend this camp."

Nick Nakvinda also enjoyed the camp. "The level of brotherhood we have experienced in a matter of only a couple of days has impacted me a great deal. Most camps do not bring people together like that. Meeting new people and learning leadership skills are two parts of this camp; however, there is much more to experience at this camp. The camp was a great experience."

At the end of the camp, participants elected ambassadors from their group of peers who will return to camp next year as junior counselors. Elected to serve in that capacity are Brian Martinez, Southern Pioneer; Mitchell Porter, FreeState; and Oklahoma youth Emma Hayhurst. As ambassadors, the students will facilitate camp leadership activities and serve as role models for the incoming campers.

Overall, the campers said they left CYLC with a new sense of leadership and a basic understanding of how their local electric cooperatives operate and how they contribute to the betterment of the communities they serve. Alfalfa Electric Cooperative is proud to provide this opportunity for these students. Our future is in today's youth, and AEC is excited to be a part of the leadership enrichment.



**AEC OFFICES  
WILL BE CLOSED  
MONDAY  
SEPTEMBER 5TH  
FOR  
LABOR DAY**



While touring Trapper Mine, a surface mine for coal, the Kansas and Oklahoma campers pose for a picture with one of the massive pieces of equipment used at the mine located in Craig, CO. This is just one of the exciting moments that AEC's Youth Leadership students experienced at camp.

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PO Box 39, 121 E. Main,  
Cherokee, OK 73728  
[www.aec.coop](http://www.aec.coop)

## 2015 TAX ALLOCATION NOTICE

### Staff

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and General Manager

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Manager of Engineering  
and Operations

**Gail Ridgway**  
Manager of Finance  
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**Brandon Wright**  
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Hotlines Editor

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Cleo Springs, OK  
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Cherokee, OK  
District 8

The Notice of Patronage Taxable Income Allocation for Tax Purposes is issued in accordance with the Bylaws of Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, Inc. The amount of patronage taxable income for the calendar year 2015 that exceeds patronage book income due to 2015 net temporary book/tax differences is \$11,414,362. The allocation factor is .2573501390.

To determine the amount of your allocation, multiply the allocation factor by the total dollar amount charged for KWH usage on your electric bill in 2015. This allocated amount is not immediately available as either cash or credit on your

electric bill.

These notices are redeemable only at the discretion of AEC's Board of Directors, and are not required to be reported by you for income tax purposes until redeemed for cash and then only if you receive an income tax deduction for the payment made to the cooperative during 2015. Accordingly, it is unlikely that residential patrons will be required to report such allocations even when paid to them in cash or credited to their electric bill.

If you have any questions concerning this allocation please contact Christy Schanbacher at (580) 596-3333 Ext. 117.