

NE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

EXCITEMENT BREWING
OVER NEW VINITA RESTAURANT



OCTOBER 2021



Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

NE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Northeast Connection is published monthly to communicate with the members of Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative.

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BUSINESS HOURS

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Offices are closed Saturday, Sunday and holidays.

DISPATCHING AVAILABLE 24 HOURS AT

1.800.256.6405

If you experience an outage:

1. Check your switch or circuit breaker in the house and on the meter pole to be sure the trouble is not on your side of the service.
2. When contacting the cooperative to report an outage, use the name as it appears on your bill, and have both your pole number and account number ready.

Please direct all editorial inquiries to Public Relations at 800.256.6405 or email publicrelations@noec.coop

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MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

Cooperative Principle #3 in Action

Connie Porter
Controller, Finance

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, Inc., is a member-owned, not-for-profit cooperative.

Unlike investor-owned utilities, or "IOUs," cooperatives operate at-cost. This simply means that excess revenue, or margins, are returned to members in the form of capital credits, as opposed to earning a profit for shareholders, as is the case with IOUs.

As a member, you don't have to do anything special or pay a fee to become a member-owner of the cooperative. That happens when you establish electric service.

Throughout the year, your kilowatt-hour (kWh) usage is cumulated along with its costs. At the end of each fiscal year, after an audit has been completed and the amount of excess revenue is determined, our board of trustees approves an allocation of margins to your capital credit account. Capital credit is allocated based on your kWh usage for that specific year.

Your capital credit account reflects the recorded amount for each year's allocation, which is paid at some point in the future.

After the allocation process and once capital credits are retired, excess revenue/margins over the cost of doing business is used by the cooperative as operating capital. These monies are used to finance the cost of operations, construction, maintenance, and power restoration. Reinvesting these margins helps us keep borrowed funds at a minimum, which in turn helps us keep member rates as low as possible.

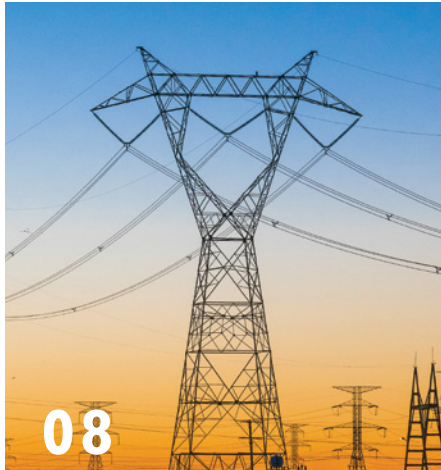
Capital Credit retirement occurs when our board of trustees determines the financial condition of the cooperative will not be impaired in any way and is otherwise in compliance with mortgage requirements and loan covenants. Once the retirement amount is approved, eligible members will receive a check once the amount is \$10 or greater. If money is owed on a disconnected account an adjustment will be made to the member's account.

Should you discontinue service, your capital credit account will remain on the books until the full amount is paid to you through general retirements. Therefore, it is extremely important that the cooperative has your current address on file to ensure you receive all future capital credit refunds.



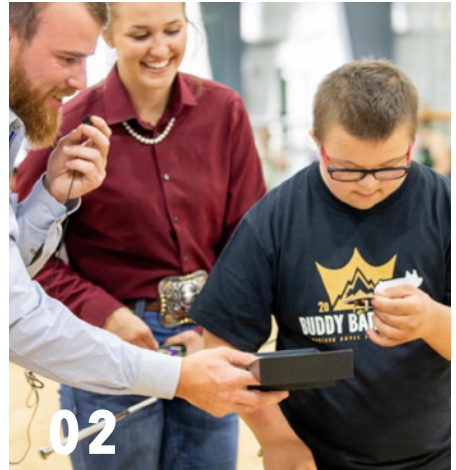
04

EXCITEMENT BREWING



08

RESPONSIBLE ELECTRICITY



02

ORDER GIVING BACK



07

FEATURE RECIPES

Events are published as space allows and must be submitted at least 60 days in advance. Send information, including phone number for publication, to Northeast Connection Events Calendar, PO Box 948, Vinita 74301 or email to publicrelations@noec.coop

\$100 IS HIDING!

Search the pages of NE Connection for a 6-digit account number with an asterisk on each side. For example: *XXXXXX*. Compare it to your account number, which appears on your monthly electric bill. If they match, contact the cooperative at 918.256.6405, by October 1, 2021, to claim a \$100 credit on your electric account.

OCTOBER 2021 EVENTS

NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL FISHING LEAGUE

Oct 1-2 | Grove
Grand Lake

38TH ANNUAL PELICAN FESTIVAL

Oct 7-10 | Grove
Wolf Creek Park

ROUTE 66 CAR SHOW

Oct 9 | Vinita
Downtown

VINITA OKTOBERFEST

Oct 9 | Vinita
Holy Ghost Catholic Church

JAY FALL FEST

Oct 9 | Jay
327 S 5th St, Jay, OK 74346

NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ART SHOW

Oct 10-15 | Pryor
Graham Community Center

WALKING WITH ANGELS & CHUCKWAGON DINNER

Oct 16 | Grove
Har-Ber Village Museum

SILENT MOVIE WEEKEND

Oct 16-17 | Miami
Coleman Theatre

ROCKTOBERFEST 2021

Oct 18-20 | Disney
Pensacola Dam

GHOSTS OF GROVE

Oct 22-23 | Grove
104 W 3rd St, Grove, OK 74344

ROUTE 66 PECAN & FUN FEST

Oct 26-27 | Claremore
The Nut House

839603

October events are subject to date change or cancellation. Please contact the host for most current event information.

ORNDER GIVING BACK

NOEC EMPLOYEE IMPACTING LIVES



Galations 6:9-10a “Let us not grow weary in well doing, for in due time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone...”

When Jake Ornder was given an opportunity to make the lengthy trek from Oklahoma to northwest Montana for a good cause, he didn't blink. The decision didn't require lengthy deliberation or any special incentives. There was no “let me think about it and get back with you.”

His reply? “I'd be honored.”

There was no hesitation.

Ornder, a journeyman lineman/serviceman for Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, accepted the invitation because he knew what was waiting for him at the Montana Royal Junior Livestock Show. Smiling faces, pure joy, and lives forever changed. And he was right.

Ornder was asked to be an evaluator for the Montana Royal Junior Livestock Show's first-ever Buddy Barrow event. Buddy Barrow Shows provide an opportunity for youth with disabilities to show market hogs. These are individuals who have intellectual or physical disabilities that may preclude them from having a traditional animal project. This special showmanship opportunity pairs a buddy with an experienced exhibitor and hog, for a chance to show in a ring in front of an evaluator.

Ultimately, all buddies are crowned champions and receive a trophy buckle.



Jake Ornder presenting trophy buckle to participant

"It was a very rewarding experience," Ornder remarked. "To say I had a blast would be an understatement. I worked with some great kids—mentors and champions. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity. It meant so much to me. It brought joy to my heart to see these kids smiling and laughing and to hear the names they give the pigs. Every minute of the show was nothing short of extraordinary. It just blew me away. I'm so glad and thankful to be able to do it."

Ornder spent his youth raising and showing champion hogs with his family. He participated in Buddy Barrow Shows in Coffeyville, Kansas, back in high school. He recalls his experience as a mentor being positive for all involved. When he approached Vinita High School FFA Advisor Carolyn Piguet several years ago about bringing Buddy Barrow events to Craig County, she thought it was a great idea. His dreams became a reality and he is credited with founding the Buddy Barrow Show in Craig County.

Fast forward to 2021 and Ornder is now flying across the country as an ambassador for Buddy Barrow Shows. He has even been contacted by two other shows in Montana, one in Washington State and another in Oklahoma.

Inga Lake, event director for the Montana Royal Junior Livestock Show, praised Ornder for his involvement.

"I can tell you beyond a shadow of doubt that the Buddy Barrow Show was hands-down the most rewarding part of any show I've ever attended," said Lake. "We had nine mentors and seven buddies who had the time of their lives showing pigs. The inspiration for this show, Jake Ornder, came all the way from Oklahoma to help us get it off the ground for the first year. Jake takes tremendous pride in his ability, and truly enjoys helping today's youth find their passion for driving pigs. We were beyond fortunate to have him with us—not only to spend time with our top-notch exhibitors, but also to help us facilitate our first Annual Montana Royal Buddy Barrow Show. It was a tremendous success and something we plan to do for years to come. I'm so incredibly proud of the people we've surrounded ourselves with. They are the best of the best."



Top right: Ornder presents another trophy buckle to participant, bottom: participants with their awards

EXCITEMENT BREWING OVER NEW VINITA RESTAURANT

Retirement means different things to different people. For one longtime Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative member, retirement means finding new and exciting ways to stay busy.

Recently retired from a 40-year teaching career, Vinita resident Carolyn Piguet is already writing the next chapter of her story. In this chapter, we find her embracing a new profession as a restaurateur. If the successes she experienced in her previous career are any indication, her new venture will be something special.

In other words, the next chapter of Piguet's story will be well worth reading.

Piguet's Prime Time is coming this fall to Vinita and excitement is already building over what will be a one-of-a-kind dining experience. Although the restaurant won't officially open until construction on its building is complete, three outdoor preview events have offered patrons a sneak peek.

All three branded "Steak Under the Stars!" events were sellouts with 200 diners welcomed at the first event on June 5 and a seating capacity of 150 reached at the July 3 and August 7 gatherings.



"The feedback we've received from our preview events was very encouraging," Piguet remarked. "Everyone has been very supportive. They are telling us how excited they are for the restaurant to open. I really feel like it will be a nice addition the community."

Piguet's Prime Time will offer a truly unique approach to dining. The restaurant will feature top-quality, wood-fired steaks and fresh, locally-sourced items in a concept Piguet describes as "farm to fork."

The Piguet family farm will be responsible for much of the steak provision. Beef will come from either Carolyn's herd of Angus/Hereford cross bred to Wagyu bulls, or from the Angus/Hereford cross raised on daughter Kelli Mitchell's Bar M Ranch outside of Afton.

"We will seek out clean, locally-grown products and integrate them into delectable meals," she explained. "We also cater all types of events—large and small."

Those familiar with Carolyn's penchant for perfection know exactly what to expect from this endeavor.

"I feel that my food speaks for itself," she said. "Our patrons can always expect exceptional steaks and dishes crafted with flair and favor."

Culinary creativity and a willingness to share her love of food is nothing new for Piguet.



"I LOVE PEOPLE THROUGH FOOD," SAID PIGUET. "I LOVE TO READ RECIPE BOOKS FOR ENTERTAINMENT AND MY TELEVISION IS ALWAYS TUNED TO THE FOOD NETWORK. THIS HAS ALWAYS BEEN AN INNER PASSION OF MINE."

Piguet grew up in the very rural Kingfisher County community of Omega and attended school at Lomega, a consolidation of the Loyal and Omega schools. She graduated from Lomega High School with a dozen classmates and went on to attend college at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford, where she obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Biology Education with a minor in Botany.

Piguet landed her first teaching job in 1981. It brought her east to Adair, where she taught various sciences at the high school.

"I had never been to eastern Oklahoma before accepting the teaching job in Adair. I came this direction because my college friend/roommate and I were both looking for teaching positions and Adair had English and Science positions open."

Carolyn met late husband Jerry in 1983 and they married in 1985. It was about that time that Carolyn began burning the midnight oil, putting in long hours during evenings and summers, to obtain a Master's Degree in Counseling and an administration certification from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah before going to work for Vinita Public Schools in 1992.

During her tenure with Vinita Public Schools, Piguet served as a counselor, grant coordinator, Alternative Education Principal and, for the ten years before retiring, the Agricultural Education Instructor/FFA Advisor, rounding out her 40 years as an educator.



The ten years she spent as Vinita High School's FFA advisor were epic. Her forward-thinking approach helped shape the chapter into a powerhouse that received state and national acclaim while garnering numerous awards.

PIGUET'S PRIME TIME

440622 E 230 Rd, Vinita, OK

Phone **918.244.0864**

Web **piguetsprimetime.com**

Facebook **@piguetsprimetime**

Hours **Friday & Saturday, 5p.m. to 11p.m.**

Directions **Two miles north of the Highway 2 & Hope Road stoplight and then a ½ mile west on 230 Road.**

Along with all of the more traditional FFA activities, students planted and maintained extensive gardens, operated a weekly Saturday morning Farmers Market, and even ventured into the retail market with its own privately-labeled food products. Add to that a catering team that handled food service for weddings and other large events. In addition, the chapter maintained a “Gold Table” program that featured complete, packaged meals that included fresh veggies and herbs from the chapter gardens. Vinita FFA also had a food truck.

“We were definitely non-traditional,” she said. “We were true to our roots but also added a slight marketing twist for this century. Our students worked more with food and food production and learned how to market it effectively utilizing modern methods. I feel like we were on the cutting edge of futurist agriculture and our students learned how to be industry leaders.”

She added: “We definitely moved up to the top shelf in our programs. People trusted that we would be professional. We catered high-end meals and received rave reviews. We had more than 200 people visit our Saturday morning markets each week. We were known far and wide—across the state and the nation—for what we were doing here.”

The old “Plows, Sows and Cows” adage didn’t come close to encapsulating Vinita FFA under Piguet. Kids here were trendsetters.

“With changes in population and technology, it is important to keep up with the trends,” Piguet explained. “The catering, farmers markets, food truck and Gold Table meals centered around a production agricultural concept combined with entrepreneurship. We tried to stay trendy, think outside the box. The world’s population is predicted to grow by nine billion people by the year 2050. Students need to know how to feed themselves and others.”

Many may not know that Piguet’s knack for teaching life lessons with food actually pre-dates her FFA involvement.

“I actually began providing catering services as an administrator at Attucks Alternative Academy,” she said. “I developed the program to provide culinary experiences for the alternative students while helping them build some entrepreneurial spirit. I carried the concepts, and connections over to the FFA when I changed positions.”

She added: “The food business has always been an interest for me. I have a passion for great food and have always pushed myself to learn as much as possible.”

Jerry passed in 2018 after succumbing to a tough, six-year battle with a terminal illness. His legacy inspired Carolyn to take the next step pursuing her dream of opening her own restaurant.

“I WANT THIS BUSINESS TO HONOR JERRY’S MEMORY,” CAROLYN SAID. “HE LOVED HAVING PEOPLE OVER TO EAT. HE LOVED A GOOD PARTY—SO PRIME TIME WAS NAMED IN HIS HONOR.”

When construction is complete later this fall, the restaurant’s permanent home will be a 70-foot x 52-foot structure situated on 20 peaceful acres of picturesque Craig County prairie. It will seat 120 in the main dining area. A spacious outdoor seating area will accommodate 50 additional diners. The building will double as a venue for specialty events.





FEATURE RECIPES

HALLOWEEN FUN



Prep: 15 minutes

Cook: 15 minutes

Servings: 6

MUMMY ENGLISH MUFFIN PIZZAS

PARTY DISH

INGREDIENTS

- 1 package English muffins
- 1 jar pizza sauce
- 1 small handful green pimento-stuffed olives, sliced
- 1 package cheese slices, such as provolone or mozzarella style Slices

Step 1: Pre-heat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Step 2: Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Split each English muffin with a fork, and place on the baking sheet with the insides facing up.

Step 3: Place a dollop of pizza sauce on each muffin. Smooth out the sauce in a thin layer using the back of a spoon.

Step 4: Place two olive slices on each muffin for the eyes.

Step 5: Slice the cheese slices into quarter-inch ribbons. Carefully place the cheese ribbons on the pizza to look like mummies. Use the widest ribbons in the middle. You can slightly overlap a ribbon with the olive eyes to make sure they stay on the pizzas.

Step 6: Bake the mini pizzas for 8 to 12 minutes, until cheese looks melted and the muffins are hot on the bottom.



MONSTER POPCORN

PARTY DISH

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup popcorn kernels
- 1 Tbsp oil
- 1 package candy melts
- Sprinkles

Step 1: Cook popcorn using preferred method.

Step 2: Pour popcorn into a bowl.

Step 3: Melt your candy melts according to instructions and add to popcorn, stirring to combine.

Step 4: Immediately pour popcorn onto baking sheet and top with sprinkles.

RELIABLE, AFFORDABLE, RESPONSIBLE ELECTRICITY

MATCHING RESPONSIBLE GENERATION WITH THE NEED FOR RELIABLE, AFFORDABLE POWER

by Mark Viguet | info@ruralmissouri.com

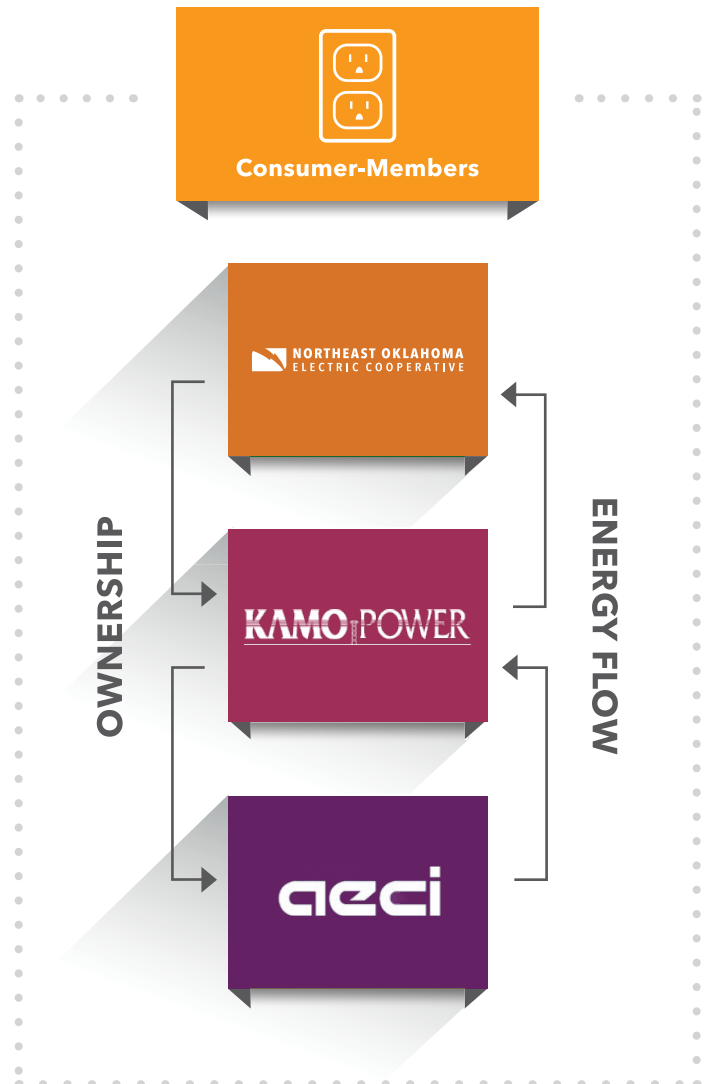
From the White House, a proposed plan to cut greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030 and create a carbon-free power sector by 2035 means power generators like Associated Electric Cooperative must intensify efforts to maintain reliability and affordability with responsibly generated electricity.

Associated is owned by and provides wholesale power to six regional transmission cooperatives who provide that power to 51 local electric distribution cooperative systems in Missouri, southeast Iowa and northeast Oklahoma that serve 2.1 million member-consumers. Their priorities are clear.

“Our mission mirrors the priorities of the member-owners served by our system, who want reliable, low-cost electricity,” said David Tudor, Associated’s CEO and general manager. “We have successfully navigated many changes in presidential administrations, policies and regulations over many years and will continue to do the right things, for the right reasons, at the right times.”

Renewable Leadership

A cornerstone of any plan to reduce carbon includes increasing renewable power sources like wind, which are variable, not reliable – only available when the wind is blowing or, in the case of solar power, when the sun is shining. Today, no battery technology exists that duplicates the reliability of traditional generation like nuclear, coal or natural gas plants.



The people behind your power: Associated Electric Cooperative generates the energy that powers your life.



Associated and the six transmission cooperatives built and maintain one of the largest co-op grids in the nation, ensuring reliability.

Renewable Leadership Continued

Associated has been a renewable power leader for Missouri, bringing the first utility-scale wind farms to the state in 2007 by contracting to buy all the power produced by the wind farms. Since then, Associated has increased its total to eight wind farms. The two most recent wind farms were added in 2020. Hydropower is another Associated renewable resource, purchased through a long-term contract with the federal government.

Reliability Concerns

“Associated’s renewable resources have been carefully located and integrated into our owner’s transmission systems so they can be supported with reliable coal and natural gas plant resources,” Tudor said.

“You can find no greater example of the value of those 24/7 power sources – coal and natural gas – than the February winter storm, where cooperatives avoided rolling blackouts as utilities all around our system put customers in the dark.”

Affordability a Key Member Priority

Rural America needs affordable power supply for their homes, farms and businesses. That much is plain from triennial survey results where members say it’s one of their top priorities – and concerns. Associated ranks among the lower cost wholesale power suppliers in the country and that is by design, not accident.

“When we make decisions, cost is near the top of the list: does this make good economic sense for our members?” Tudor explained. “By keeping that goal prominent, we’ve delivered power that is affordable while also generating responsible power with a balanced resource mix.”

Implementing a Realistic Plan will Take Time and Money

Associated is working hard to preserve member benefits in a changing industry with increasing challenges. The cooperative has been educating state and federal legislators about the realities of an overly aggressive White House plan and the choices power generation companies face.

“Technology that doesn’t exist today must be developed to store renewable energy effectively and affordably, while high-voltage transmission networks need upgrades to handle the changing generation mix reliably,” Tudor said. “Both of those key elements will take time and money, and lots of both. We are working to make sure our legislators understand this.”

Associated added about 470 mega-watts of wind energy in 2020, taking its contracted wind energy resources to more than 1,240 megawatts of nameplate capacity. This led to new wind production records in 2020.



COLD WEATHER PREPAREDNESS

ELECTRICAL SAFETY & ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIPS

SAFETY TIPS FOR ELECTRICAL DIY

Locate cables in your wall

A common DIY error is accidentally drilling, nailing or screwing things into cables hidden inside your walls. A quality cable detector can help you to track buried cables before you start work and avoid the risk of an electric shock.

Use an RCD (residual current device)

An RCD can save your life by cutting off the power in the event of an electrical fault caused by a DIY blunder. Make sure you have one fitted in your fusebox. Where necessary use a plug-in RCD.

Shut off the power

If you're doing work near electrical wiring or power supplies, shut off the power in your fusebox and use battery powered tools. To be sure that power is off plug in an appliance into sockets and try switching on the lights.

Check power tools and watch for cord

Before using power tools, check that the cord and plug are in good condition. If you see signs of damage (such as frayed wires) make repairs before using it. Watch out for the power cord at all times so you don't accidentally cut through or trip over it.



COLD WEATHER ENERGY SAVING TIPS

Invest in a smart thermostat

Wi-Fi enabled systems learn your habits and temperature preferences. They automatically adjust settings to create the most comfortable environment while you're at home and conserve energy while you're asleep or away from home.

Lay down rugs on hardwood floors

This as an easy, efficient way to add an extra layer of insulation to your home and save money on your energy bill. Not only do rugs help your feet stay warm, but they help trap cold air underneath and prevent it from circulating around the room.

Clean the vents

Your heating system will function most effectively when there's an unobstructed flow of air coming from your returns and vents. To ensure it has a clear path, clean these vents routinely to remove dust or other debris that may have settled.

Use ceiling fans

They're not just for summertime. With most ceiling fans, you can flip the directional switch so the blades turn clockwise. Run fans on low speed in occupied rooms to create an updraft. This method will gently circulate the warmest air, which congregates near the ceiling.