

country living

FOR MEMBERS OF EAST CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Shining Together: The 10-Year Story of Give-A-Watt

This year marks the 10th anniversary of East Central Electric Cooperative's Give-A-Watt program—a decade of neighbors helping neighbors keep the lights on.

Much like an Angel Tree, Give-A-Watt allows members and employees to quietly share the warmth of generosity during the Christmas season. Members can nominate a neighbor that could use a little help with their electric bill. Each nomination is anonymously assigned a red, numbered, lightbulb-shaped ornament, placed on the Christmas tree in the ECE Lobby throughout the month of December.

Members and employees who wish to give select a bulb from the tree, visit the cashier, and pay any amount of their choice toward that member's balance. Every contribution, no matter the size, goes directly toward easing the burden for a fellow member of our co-op community.

The Give-A-Watt program was created in 2015 by ecoLINK Marketing Coordinator Amy Nix.

"I created the Give-A-Watt program because I wanted to address the real-life challenges faced by those who may not qualify for traditional assistance or who might be hesitant to seek help due to pride," Nix said.

"The core value of the cooperative, 'to improve the quality of life for others,' shines through in the Give-A-Watt program. It exemplifies the idea that our cooperative is not just about providing electric or internet service, but is deeply committed to the well-being of its members," Nix said.

Over the past ten years, Give-A-Watt has brightened hundreds of homes and hearts across our service area.

In 2024, the program raised \$2,673.23 with all funds applied directly toward the electric bills of 46 members in need.

What began as a simple idea has grown into a shining example of what it means to be a Cooperative.

If you find yourself in the position to lend a hand this year, consider donating to the Give-A-Watt program. If you have questions about the program please give us a call at 918-756-0833.

notes from the chair

An Unforgettable Experience*By Lowell Hobbs, President, East Central Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees*

Quite an excellent treat—I poured out 11.5 inches of much needed rain October 17-25, 2025, with no flooding!

We had a successful F.O.R.E. tour of the Bald Hill substation. It was ECE's first substation and was energized in late 1939. Today we serve 37,754 meters with approximately 6,458 miles of line. We have averaged 59 new members per month for the last 4 months, so our Co-op continues to grow. In January of 1984 we had 80 employees—at the end of September, 2025, we had 109 employees and 1,082 days without a lost time accident.

At a recent NRECA (National Rural Electric Cooperatives Association) meeting in Round Rock, Texas, we learned NRECA is the most effective trade organization in Washington, D.C. Our legislators know when they hear from NRECA they are hearing the truth from 42 million Co-op members, including you and me, from all across the U.S.

As I was driving back home one morning several years ago, I saw a strange car leaving from near our house occupied by 4 young males. I quickly wrote the tag # down as I usually do. Grandsons Bryce and Eli were working close to my house, and we elected to go to Haskell for lunch. As we passed a neighbor's house the same unidentified car was sitting in the roadway—just beyond that house with only 2 males in the car. We knew the owner was not at home and suspected they were burglarizing her home.

We verified the tag # as the one I had recorded earlier. Bryce watched the south side of her house while Eli watched the north side while I was calling Sheriff Eddy Rice. The driver got out and approached my pickup and asked what I was doing. I told him I was reporting the car information, etc. to the sheriff. He jumped in his car and left going South as fast as he could. Eli called out, “they came out of the house and are running west across the field.”

We drove down the road, through another gate, across the field, and got to a fence line about the same time the 2 would-be thieves got there. I had a 4:10 shotgun in the back seat. The 2 would-be thieves turned back and started to run toward the house. I fired a shotgun blast up in the air and yelled for them to stop or I would surely shoot them. One did stop, the other first threw up his hands then accelerated and disappeared down in the creek area. We had the other fellow lay down in the tall grass. He asked why he should lay down and I told him so he could live! A deputy came and arrested that one. Meanwhile law enforcement from several posts showed up. The 2 in the car were quickly identified and arrested and the one that ran into the creek came out to the road about 2 miles toward Haskell, and the D.A. investigator captured him. I have heard that 2 of the 4 have died tragic deaths, one is in prison, and I don't know about the 4th. My 2 grandsons had an unforgettable experience that day.

Lowell Hobbs, District 2
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To learn more about your elected trustees, or to view a district map, please visit ecoec.com. To contact your trustee, please call 918-756-0833.

**The Trip of a Lifetime**

The Oklahoma Rural Electric Youth Tour is an annual, week-long, all-expense-paid leadership experience in Washington, D.C., that is open to high school juniors who attend schools located in the co-op service area.

The 2026 trip will take place June 13-19.

The application deadline has been moved to January 26, 2026. Learn more and apply at ecoec.com/youth-tour.



12 Efficiencies of Christmas

1. Upgrade lighting to LED bulbs.
2. Lower thermostat by one degree.
3. Optimize your cooking habits.
4. Limit space heater use.
5. Weatherize your home.
6. Adjust water heater temperature.
7. Use timers on all lighting.
8. Install a smart thermostat.
9. Optimize your laundry schedule.
10. Ensure refrigerator door seals are tight.
11. Keep the oven door closed while baking.
12. Power down devices.

Follow along on social media for the first 12 days of December as we elaborate on how these small changes can make a huge difference in lowering your home's winter electric usage.



You can provide a light in the darkness for a neighbor struggling to make ends meet.

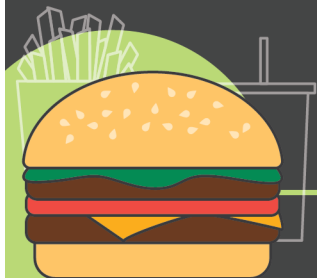
Every donation to Give-A-Watt helps neighbors in need pay their winter electric bill. Recipients and donors remain anonymous.

To participate please:

- Drop your donation at the ECE drive-thru window or night drop at 2001 S. Wood Drive in Okmulgee.
- Mail your donation to East Central Electric Attn: Give-A-Watt PO Box 1178 Okmulgee, OK 74447-1178.

If donating by check, please make your check payable to East Central Electric and write Give-A-Watt in the memo area.

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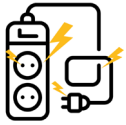
average daily
cost of power



Electricity is expressed on a daily basis using EIA 2024 Average U.S. Monthly Residential Bill of \$142.26.

Big Mac® is a registered trademark of McDonald's Corporation. McDonald's Corporation does not endorse or sponsor this material.

Sources: Economist.com and EIA, Dec. 2024 data.



ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Always be aware of overhead power line locations when carrying or using ladders or stringing holiday lights. Imagine a 10-foot circle around a power line, and do not let any body part or item enter that 10-foot area.

SOURCE: SAFELECTRICITY.ORG



One of the foundational principles of all co-ops is that every member gets a voice and a vote.

That is also the foundational principle of the United States of America and all her citizens.



**Check your
voter
registration
status and
exercise your
rights!**

[HTTPS://OKLAHOMA.GOV/
ELECTIONS.HTML](https://oklahoma.gov/elections.html)

<https://vote.coop>



Crustless Cranberry Pie

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 C. flour | 1 C. chopped pecans |
| 1 C. sugar | 1/2 C. butter, melted |
| 1/4 tsp. salt | 3 eggs, beaten |
| 2 C. cranberries | 1 tsp. almond extract |

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease 10" pie pan. Combine flour, sugar and salt. Add cranberries and nuts, toss and coat. Stir in the butter, eggs and almond extract (mixture will be thick). Spread batter into pan. Bake 40 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean. Serve warm with whipped cream or ice cream.

SOURCE: ECE 85TH ANNIVERSARY COOKBOOK



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