

Change Is Good

Lessons learned from CEC Annual Meeting.

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Let CEC help you avoid high bills, late fees, and disconnects.

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For members of **Choctaw Electric Cooperative**

NOVEMBER 2020

80^{YEARS} CEC **inside your co-op**



Brent Franks, president of the Choctaw Electric Cooperative board of trustees, addresses members at the 2020 CEC Annual Meeting. PHOTO/KAITLYN MOFFATT, CEC.



Annual Meeting Prize Winners

\$500 Bill Credit

Anna Gross, Garvin

\$500 Bill Credit

Wayne and Treva Clardy, Idabel

\$1,000 Bill Credit

C. F. Henagar, Atoka

Storm Shelter

Tammi Smith, Antlers

Congratulations, winners!

Taking Care Of Business In The Time of Covid

Innovative options ensured CEC's 2020 Annual Meeting drew a quorum

How does a co-op carry on its annual business with members during a pandemic? By doing things a little differently.

This year, Choctaw Electric offered online and drive-through registration options, Members could also stay in their vehicle and listen to the business meeting on the radio. The changes worked, and by all measures, the CEC Annual Meeting, held September 26 in Idabel, was a success.

"We had a smaller crowd at the meeting, but more than 2,300 members registered online or voted by mail. That's more than double the amount needed for a quorum," said Kooney Duncan, CEO of CEC.

Co-op bylaws require at least five percent of members to register for the meeting in order to conduct business. Without a quorum, another meeting must be held within 90 days.

"Our members stepped up, and we were able to hold our elections, and celebrate our 80th anniversary," Duncan said.

Members approved the following trustees for the CEC board of trustees:

- District A - Jarred Campbell
- District B - Jana Burris
- District C - Stacy Nichols
- District G - Brent Franks

Nichols and Franks are incumbent trustees who ran unopposed. Jarred Campbell will

serve the remainder of the term vacated by George Burns, who retired from the board so he could run for state senate. Jana Burris will replace Joe Silk, who moved out of the district. Neither candidate faced opponents.

Duncan gave a comprehensive review of the past year, including achievements in right of way maintenance and CEC's ongoing efforts to control expenses and reduce debt. Board President Brent Franks reminded members of CEC's contribution to the area economy, and Treasurer Mike Brewer reported on CEC's healthy financial condition.

Thanks to members who participated online and in person. You made our day! 🙌

MANAGER'S REPORT



Change Is Good

Lessons learned from Annual Meeting

BY KOONEY DUNCAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Thanks to Covid 19, normal is something that happened last year. In 2020, life is a little bit different. Take your Choctaw Electric Annual Meeting, for instance. We created new ways for members to participate in the meeting that reduced Covid risks.

Online and drive through registration options— plus a live meeting broadcast that members could listen to in their cars— helped us reach the all-important member quorum.

Without a quorum of five percent of members registered, co-op bylaws require us to schedule another annual meeting within 90 days. We avoided this extra expense, and we owe it the members who participated. Thank you, from all of us at CEC.

Even small changes can be stressful, and the new Covid-safe processes at the meeting weren't without challenges. We sure learned a lot, though. These lessons will help us integrate what worked into our next annual meeting.

For instance, some members expressed disappointment that many of our prize winners weren't there to claim their gift in person. Now, we are brainstorming ways to adjust the prize drawing so that members who participate online and in person enjoy themselves equally.

“In the long run, the changes we made to our meeting this year gave us better insight into what works for our members today.”

In the long run, the changes we made to our meeting this year gave us better insight into what works best for our members today. We know from the number of registrations that these new options increased member participation by making it easier for more members to get involved. That's important.

We hope to get more feedback from members who fill out our annual meeting survey. If you participated in the meeting, please pick up a survey at your nearest CEC office. Return it by December 1, and you could win a \$25 bill credit.

In the meantime, if you have suggestions that will help Choctaw Electric serve you better, please let us know. Send suggestions to customerservice@choctawelectric.coop, or give us a call. We take all suggestions to heart.

Choctaw Electric Cooperative

Serving members in Choctaw, Pushmataha, Atoka, McCurtain, Bryan and Leflore counties.

Monday-Friday • 8 am - 5 pm

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24 Hour Outage Hotline

800-780-6486

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Brent Franks, *President*

Stacy Nichols, *Vice President*

Mike Brewer, *Secretary Treasurer*

Bill Woolsey	Debbie Cody
Jana Burris	Ken Autry
Perry Thompson Jr.	Jarred Campbell

MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

Kooney Duncan, *Chief Executive Officer*
Jennifer Boling, *Executive Assistant*
Jia Johnson, *Director of Public Relations*
Tiffany Hempsted, *Chief Financial Officer*

Lucky Acct #8159600

If this account number belongs to you, contact CEC by the 5th of the month to claim your \$100 bill credit. Unclaimed bill credits roll over each month by \$25 for a maximum credit of \$100. To claim your credit, please call 800-780-6486, ext. 207.

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF YOUR CEC BOARD MEETING

Scan this code with your smartphone or tablet to read the monthly minutes of your co-op board meeting. Minutes are also available at any CEC location and online at www.choctawelectric.coop.

To scan the code, install a Bar Code Scanner app, available at the App Store.



Tools for Schools

CEC Makes Energy Education Fun

Ask CEC about bringing a virtual or live presentation to your school or daycare.



With students back in the classroom, Choctaw Electric Cooperative (CEC) wants to encourage teachers, daycare leaders, and others to take advantage of its special energy education programs.

CEC's Tools for Schools includes several fun, interactive presentations led by CEC staff. Each course can be customized to meet the age and skill set of students, preschool to high school. A choice of virtual or in-person instruction makes it doable for everyone.

Each Tools for School module uses interactive aids and experiments that teach students about energy production and delivery, renewables, energy conservation, and electrical safety. The presentations are free, and include all learning materials and instruction.

Please contact us today to schedule a presentation. For more details, visit www.choctawelectric.coop, or give us a call at 800-780-6486, ext. 209.

Four Customized Science Modules

► **Danger Ranger.**

Teaches elementary school students the importance of electrical safety. The curriculum uses video games to make learning about electrical safety entertaining and fun.

► **Get Powered!**

This course for middle schools uses information, experiments, and activities to teach students the many forms

of energy, how to use it efficiently, and how wise energy use helps the environment.

► **Watt's Up With Green?**

Teaches students about different forms of energy, how to use energy efficiently, and how wise energy use helps the environment.

► **Go ECO.** This class teaches students about alternative energy, including nuclear and

bio-mass power. The transfer of electric current is covered from kinetic to mechanical energy, with a wide range of hands-on tools to help students understand how electricity is generated, transmitted, and delivered to consumers. Students also learn how to be safe around electricity inside and outside the home.

Find more details at www.choctawelectric.coop.

THE HOME Energy DETECTIVE

By Brad Kendrick, CEC Energy Use Specialist



Gunk In The Lint Trap Can Increase Electricity Usage

Do you clean the lint trap every time you use the dryer? There are good reasons to make it a habit:

1. Your dryer exhaust duct can clog over a period of time. Because lint is highly flammable, it can ignite and cause fires.
2. Dryer ducts clogged with lint make your dryer work harder, which affects your electricity usage, and increases your bill.

Just recently I visited a member's home and found the vent clogged with a dirt dauber nest and lint that blocked the air flow. Be sure to check your dryer vent from time to time and clean the lint trap after each use. It makes a difference.



Do you have questions for CEC's energy sleuth? Please call Brad Kendrick, CEC energy use specialist, at 800-780-6486, or email questions to: bakendrick@choctawelectric.coop.



Choctaw Electric Cooperative is grateful for the opportunity to serve you. Please have a safe holiday!

**Holiday Hours: Closed Veteran's Day, November 11
Closed for Thanksgiving, November 26-27.**

Winter Is On The Way

Let Choctaw Electric help you manage winter heating bills—and avoid late fees and disconnects.

When the leaves fall and a chill is in the air, we know that winter is right around the corner. For most homeowners, the change in seasons brings higher home heating bills as we crank up the thermostat and spend more time indoors. College kids and visiting family over the holidays mean more cooking, TV watching, and laundry washing. It adds up.

If you find yourself facing unusually high bills this winter, please contact Choctaw Electric Cooperative (CEC) immediately. Our home energy specialist can check your hourly usage and perform a thorough on-site review of your home to help you

find the source of energy loss. In most cases, the problem is an easy fix that will bring your bill back to normal.

If you find yourself struggling to pay your electric bill, please contact your co-op before your bill is overdue. We understand these are tough times, and are happy to help you with payment arrangements that avoid mounting late fees or the loss of service.

Please call CEC today to learn more about these options. We can help you reduce your energy costs—and make your bill more manageable. Call **800-780-6486** or visit www.choctawelectric.coop for more details.



No Surprises.

Sign up for average monthly payments with CEC, and avoid the jolt of seasonal high bills.

High winter heating and summer cooling bills can wreak havoc on any household budget. CEC's Average Monthly Payment Plan (AMP) is designed to level out the peaks and valleys so your monthly electric costs remain more consistent.

Call CEC today to learn more about the AMP advantage—or find information about AMP and other payment options. Members who enroll now can avoid the higher bills that typically accompany winter.

800-780-6486
www.choctawelectric.coop

80^{YEARS} **cec** **CHOCTAW ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**