

“Hotlines”

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



It's time again for school buses to dot the landscape. Watch for the kiddos!



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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Area News Briefs



Remember, water safety...

The last summer holiday is Monday, September 1-- Yahoo! Labor Day!

**SCHOOL DAYS
REMINDER!
CALL FOR AN A/C
CHECK-UP!
(ALWAYS A SMART
CHOICE..)
AEC SERVICES, INC.
(580) 596-2638 or
1-800-853-4969**

**SEE
AEC ON
FACEBOOK**

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

To place brief announcements in “Hotlines” please call (580) 596-3333 EARLY

Director of Operations, Ron Shafer soon to retire after forty-one years

Sometimes it's hard to say good-bye. Remember graduation when you couldn't wait to get your diploma but you knew that life would never be the same again? Ron Shafer's retirement from AEC is like that.

A few still remember when Ron worked at the local grocery store, carrying the heavy sacks to the car that Cherokee citizens bought every week.

Ron started his real career in AEC's warehouse July 9, 1973. “I wasn't really the foreman, I was the only person working in there. Less than six months later there was an opening on the line crew so I applied and was accepted.”

“There was no training required at that time. It was all ‘on the job training.’ I remember that I lost several pairs of pliers”...

In 1976, AEC asked Ron to become an Area Lineman in Kiowa, Kansas. The job required a move from wife Josie's hometown and it would be “different” for the kids. The Shafers moved, anyway and for almost nine years, called Kiowa their home.



Ron Shafer, retiring from AEC.

In 1984 the family returned to Cherokee when Ron was named Director of Operations. Other titles have been added since then, including Editor of **Hotlines** (but he really didn't want it advertised.) Youth Tour was another job he chaired, watching scores of high school students compete for fabulous trips and scholarships.

A few years ago Ron began to visit the second and third grade classes for “Safety Smart” programs. AEC visited approximately fifteen area grade

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ALTERNATING CURRENTS...



Introducing SmartHub

The new Self-Service Portal

Since 2004, Alfalfa Electric's members have been able to pay their electric bills online. 10 years later, members want to be able to pay their bill, view an image of their bill, monitor their daily usage, report an outage, receive email or text alerts, and update their contact information. Effective August 1, 2014, SmartHub will allow our members to do all of these things as well as monitor their hourly electric usage and view their billing history. It is account management at your fingertips.

Not only does SmartHub make all these things possible through the link on AEC's website (www.aec.coop), but members are also able to accomplish the same things on their smartphones or tablets. The SmartHub app is available for free in the iTunes App Store or the Google Play Store. Download the SmartHub app and search for Alfalfa Electric Cooperative. You must sign up for an online account before gaining access to the SmartHub app.

If you previously used Alfalfa Electric's e-bill system to pay your bill or view account information, you can access SmartHub using the same e-bill login and password. If you have not used AEC's e-bill system previously, then you must create a SmartHub account. Whether you have used the e-bill system before or not, you will need to use the new link (<https://alfalfaelectric.smart-hub.coop/>) to login to SmartHub and be able to view and pay your electric account.

To sign up for SmartHub online (www.aec.coop), you will need your Alfalfa Electric account number, last name or business name, and an email address. Your account number(s) can be found on the remittance stub on your electric bill in the lower left section of your monthly invoice. You may also call AEC's Customer Service Representatives at 580-596-3333 or toll free at 888-736-3837 for help in enrolling in SmartHub (Monday – Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm).

Changing lanes...

As members get older, changes occur. Some of these changes are not met with joy—illness, handicaps from strokes, hearing loss and joint stiffness from arthritis.

Veterans may also return from active duty with life-changing amputations or limited limb function. Victims mourn the life that was before as they prepare themselves for a grounded existence, depending on others for transportation to doctor's appointments, running errands, or just socializing. Now, relief has come for some. Being "handicapped" shifted. It isn't what it used to be.

A paralyzed veteran or palsied individual may now have a choice of hand controls for driving. A variety of aids are available for any vehicle—from a van, transporting a motorized chair, an SUV, to any car or truck on the lot.

Some models have ramps, carriers for motorized chairs above the roof, large swivel chairs (for vans) and electronic pads for driving controls.

One of the most amazing transitions is the application for a person who can no longer drive with his right foot. This impairment can be devastating, limiting independence.

Fortunately a portable appliance is now built to cover the right accelerator and open a gas pedal on the left side of the brake. With the alteration, the brake and gas pedal can be accessed on the left side. The appliance is reversible, quickly and safely, returning the car back to normal right-foot driving.

Driving with the left foot **does take a bit of concentration** to become a *natural* action. For this reason, candidates who require alterations on their vehicles must take a specially-designed driver safety course and pass a driver test to be



Left foot accelerator.

issued a special drivers license. With this license, a driver's own vehicle can be altered.

Unfortunately, the driving transition is not free. Prices for the driving course vary, depending on where you live. John McGivern does travel all over the state, instructing drivers with various impairments. He can be reached at **405-834-3877**.

- Special driving instruction with vehicle alteration (\$325-\$1,000)
- Vehicle alteration. (The left-foot accelerator alteration is about \$875.)
- The driver's test is free
- The driver's license is free (**for anyone over 65.**)

Most graduates of the program report it was definitely worth it.

Kansas drivers can find assistance for altering vehicles in Wichita at **Wichita Mobility** or **Jay Hatfield Mobility**.

Oklahoma drivers contact Jim at jim@newbyvancemobility.com in Guthrie.

Depression overtakes an active person who can no longer drive, especially if active previously. Gaining back independence can lengthen a life or at least sweeten it.



Gross Receipts Tax Allocation for year ending- December 31, 2013

SCHOOL DISTRICT	ALFALFA ELCTRIC CO-OP	WESTERN FARMERS CO-OP
ALINE-CLEO	72,405.13	64,004.12
ALVA	113,056.61	120,349.18
BURLINGTON	75,820.59	93,338.27
CHEROKEE	68,678.10	57,825.82
CHISHOLM	1,825.28	0.00
CIMARRON	19,791.52	0.00
FREEDOM	62,453.46	50,575.25
HENNESSEY	2,035.17	0.00
KREMLIN/HILLSDALE	11,020.89	6,152.77
MEDFORD	68,746.24	22,977.15
POND CREEK/HUNTER	14,322.17	0.00
RINGWOOD	61,338.21	28,772.49
TIMBERLAKE	116,118.34	61,655.34
WAYNOKA	51,678.61	53,255.92
TOTALS	\$739,290.32	\$558,906.31
2013 TAXES		
BARBER COUNTY, KS	28,765	
HARPER COUNTY, KS	10,887	

AEC encourages fan clubs in August



Ceiling fans make a difference.



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www.aec.coop

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Join our fan club! Ceiling fans are the most economical way to cool off your home. Fans are plentiful and come in a variety of styles and sizes to suit your decor. Some include a large light or an arrangement of small lights. Others are fans, only. Choose whatever fits your particular room but select one that is quiet, stable and easy to operate.

If the wiring in your home is not conducive for a wall

switch, select a battery-powered switch which could also dim your ceiling light. These switches operate similar to a garage-door opener.

A ceiling fan will lower your energy bill and your blood pressure. Circulating the air is helpful when Mom burns a roast or junior finally brings his gym clothes home from school.

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Shafer retires

schools each spring and added other groups upon request. Oil companies, scouts and senior citizens asked for special demonstrations over the years and Ron did those.

But Ron's chief responsibility has been supervising the linemen. He has witnessed many changes, mostly regarding equipment.

"Today we hire linemen out of the line schools," says Shafer. "They come better educated (knowing how to climb poles, and the basics of electricity.) The operation is more mental today with all the computer operations."

"We had a lot of pride in climbing the poles forty years ago," continues Shafer. "There is not

as much climbing today. It takes less people to do a job because more can be done with better equipment."

Shafer will be "starting phase II of a long career" which remains to be secret. He would like it to be at the Daytona Speedway, testing cars but some doubt that...

Mostly Ron will be spending more time with his children, Brian of El Reno; Brandon of Edmond; and Tina of Enid. He claims to have 15½ grandchildren whom he **does not** plan to babysit. He will not be watching t.v. or fishing either.

There are no more guesses. Cherokee already has a new sheriff...