

NE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



GRAND MERIDIAN RESORT
A COMMUNITY LIKE NO OTHER

APRIL 2022



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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TEAMING UP TO MEET YOUR TECHNOLOGY NEEDS

Jamie Bodine
Director of
BOLT Business Services

BOLT Fiber Optics has an amazing team of employees that specialize in serving the diverse technology

needs of area businesses and even community institutions such as schools and libraries. Our customers know us as *BOLT Business Services*. We are proud of the work we do here in northeast Oklahoma and beyond.

Some of you may remember back when we were called *RECtec Technology & Communications*. It seems like forever ago that we were a dial-up internet service provider. We also handled sales, installation, and service for two-way radio equipment.

My how time flies.

As we've all experienced, the technological demands of today's digital world are much different than they were just a few short years ago. If you blink, you may miss something important since the needs of businesses and educational institutions are constantly evolving.

BOLT Business Services recognizes that today's consumer relies on high-capacity services. More than just a convenience, school and students need bandwidth to support the requirements of today's educational curricula. Libraries are no longer just buildings where we simply "check out books." They are now centers for technology that provide convenient, reliable internet access to their patrons.

As these institutions have changed with the times, so has *BOLT Business Services*. We now serve clients with dedicated high-bandwidth internet access, point-to-point fiber circuits that connect multiple locations, network infrastructure, and end user devices.

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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 May 2, 2022, to claim a \$100 credit on your electric account.

APRIL 2022 EVENTS

FREE Line Dancing Classes

All Month | Grove

Grove Community Center

Farm, Ag, & Ecology Days

Apr 8-9 | Grove

Har-Ber Village Museum

Anglers in Action Bass Fishing Tournament

Apr 9 | Grove

Wolf Creek Park

Dennis James on the Mighty Wurlitzer: "Blood and Sand" at the Coleman Theatre

Apr 9 | Miami

Coleman Theatre

Nichols Marine Tour Series

Apr 10 | Grove

Wolf Creek Park

US Anglers Choice

Apr 14-16 | Grove

Wolf Creek Park

Wonder City Wordfest

Apr 16 | Locust Grove

Rural Oklahoma Museum of Poetry

Jay Easter Egg Hunt

Apr 16 | Jay

Jay City Park

2nd Annual Civil War Era Historical Days

Apr 22-24 | Grove

Har-Ber Village Museum

Marketing U

Apr 26 | Grove

NEO A&M Campus

Miami Prom

Apr 26 | Grove

NEO A&M Campus

Mural Fest 66

Apr 30 | Miami

Downtown Miami



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

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TEAMING UP

CONTINUED FROM INSIDE FRONT COVER

BOLT Business Services provides its clients with internet options that are among the fastest and highest capacity in the nation. Fiber circuits are connected directly to core routers that guarantee availability of access to support educational needs 24 hours a day. To help defray the high cost associated with delivering this type of service, the federal government recently expanded its E-Rate (Education Rate) program to provide funding that supports this level of service. Additionally, benchmarks have been established and guidelines created that more accurately address the educational needs of today's student. These actions have allowed schools to increase capacity to support daily on-site and distance learning services.

BOLT Business Services has a highly trained and specialized team of engineers, service technicians, licensed security specialists, and product advisers who possess the expertise needed to deliver these premium services such as VoIP telephone, network equipment, firewalls, web filtering (that ensures age appropriate content), and wireless access points. We also offer the daily support needed to make these services work in unison and guarantee the nation's best services right here in rural Oklahoma.

BOLT Business Services is committed to doing what is necessary to meet the growing and changing demands of its customers.



**LOOKING FOR
BUSINESS SOLUTIONS?**

Call us at 844.256.BOLT or visit boltfiber.com.



LANDLORD OPTIONS

NEW OFFERING FOR PROPERTY OWNERS

DO YOU HAVE RENTAL PROPERTY SERVED BY NOEC? IF SO, THIS INFORMATION MAY PROVE IMPORTANT TO YOU.

If you have questions and would like to speak with an NOEC representative regarding your options, please call us at 800-256-6405. Happy renting!

NOEC wants to offer landlords and tenants options when it comes to electric service. We understand a landlord's need to be in control of their property, but also understand the tenant's right to privacy while occupying a property. The specifics on how a property is managed and used is strictly between the landlord and tenant, but NOEC has options that can accommodate your arrangements. We also recommend tenancy agreements include a section on utility payments and responsibilities so there are no surprises along the way for either party.

Service in the name of the tenant

Many rental property owners have the tenant place utilities in the name of the tenant during their occupancy. Points to consider:

- You may be unaware if the tenant becomes delinquent and service is disconnected, resulting in potential damage to your property. We cannot contact you and provide the status of the account, nor can you inquire and receive information.
- The tenant is a member of NOEC and may participate in business meetings, as well as receive capital credits.
- With this tenancy arrangement, the landlord may want to request a "stay-on" agreement with NOEC. A new offering by NOEC, a stay-on agreement keeps electricity from being disconnected by transferring payment responsibility and membership rights to you, the property owner. If you want to ensure electric service is always supplied, complete this new agreement with NOEC.

Service in the name of the property owner

As a property owner, you may prefer to keep the utilities in your own name, rather than that of your tenant. Things to consider with respect to the electric service are:

- The tenant may not conserve energy because they are not the responsible party for the bill.
- NOEC cannot provide information on the account to the tenant because it is not in their name.
- You may not legally collect more from a tenant than the actual amount of the bill for electric service.
- If the tenant or any other occupant of the property has an outstanding bill with NOEC, the unpaid amount will be transferred to the account providing service to the property. This may mean the property owner ends up paying the past bill of their tenant.



"We have been here at Grand Meridian since November 2019. We love the support of this little community that we call family. You can't beat the events, live music, food trucks, fire pit nights, and most of all the people here." -Jason Faulconer, resident

MORE THAN A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

GRAND MERIDIAN RESORT A COMMUNITY LIKE NO OTHER

It all started with a conversation between two friends. Looking out now over the sprawling property—dotted with shiny new cabins, tiny homes, and RVs—it's hard to imagine that this was little more than pasture just five short years ago.

Back in early 2016, Greg Knotts was living in Pryor and spending leisure time in his RV on Grand Lake. When friend and business associate Jerry Brother heard that Knotts was looking to relocate his RV, he mentioned the possibility of Knotts moving to his property. There was no actual RV hook-up present, but that could be remedied. Go ahead and install an RV site, Brother told Knotts. And, hey, while you're at it, why not install a few others? Who knows? Maybe other people will want to move here too.

Knotts laughs now when he thinks about how that casual conversation with Brother led to what is now known as Grand Meridian RV, Cabin & Tiny Home Resort.

"Jerry said let's put in ten sites and I put in 22 because I apparently can't count very well," Knotts recalls with a laugh. "It hasn't slowed down since. This has been the craziest, wildest ride I've ever been on."

Knotts had just sold a small trucking company and wasn't necessarily looking for something to do, but he also wasn't running from opportunity. This particular opportunity certainly found the right person.

"I came over here with a little 25-horsepower tractor with a five-foot brush hog and began mowing a spot to get started," Knotts said. "There were no roads, no water, no sewer, no electricity, no nothing."

He added: "We grew this from nothing. We had 42 acres here. There were a few storage buildings that Jerry had built. So we put in 22 RV sites and honestly had no clue what was going to happen next."

Knotts said he and Brother "never planned on this thing blowing up like it did."

He said: "We put in 22 RV sites before Christmas of 2016 and had those full in no time. Then we put in a few more. We built restrooms, showers, a laundry facility, and installed a storm shelter. To be honest with you, ever since then we can't build stuff fast enough."

Grand Meridian doubled in size after purchasing 45 acres of land to the south. The property is now home to 103 RV sites and 26 custom homes, cabins, and tiny homes. There are also five rental cabins and 130 storage units.

From RV hook-ups to custom cabin and home construction, all aspects of business are going gangbusters at Grand Meridian. Residents pay a fee that includes lawn maintenance, water, sewer, trash service, and use of all resort amenities. Home buyers, meanwhile, receive a dwelling deed and a 99-year renewable, perpetual lease.

"Right now we have two RV sites available," said Knotts. "We are building 24 more sites as we speak and have 24 more in the plans. The five rental cabins stay booked up. We have three indoor storage units available, and then we have an enclosed outdoor storage area that's about fifty percent full."

Perhaps the most notable addition to the Grand Meridian property came with the construction of a 3,000 square foot clubhouse/event center (with 1,000 square foot outdoor veranda) in October 2018. The indoor portion of the facility has a 200-person capacity and is used for local events, meetings, and special occasions. A 42,000-gallon swimming pool and expanded playground were added in 2019.

"I went to Jerry and said 'I need a half million dollars to build a swimming pool and clubhouse,'" Knotts chuckled. "Of course, we had to revive him first, but he went with it and I think that was a huge addition for the park to really make it take off and grow."

Knotts can't speak about the good things going on at Grand Meridian without mentioning the people. He says the residents are laid back and friendly. He describes the Grand Meridian community almost as if they are family.

"We have the coolest people here," he said. "They come from all walks of life. Everyone hangs out together. Everyone here just gets along so well."

Quarterly resident meetings also give a voice to those living at Grand Meridian.

"We want input from our people here to know what's important to them, what they want to see, what direction they would like to see the park go," said Knotts. "Our resort family is very conscientious. They've really taken ownership of the park."

Evidence of the camaraderie at Grand Meridian can be found with the music events and fundraisers the park hosts on occasion. Park residents rally around these events.

June 24-25 will mark the 5th Annual Grand Jam Music Fest that is expected to draw more than 4,000 people to the park throughout the weekend. Ten bands will perform, and food trucks and vendors will be on site. Highlighting the weekend is a "Tribute to the Troops" that honors area troopers, police officers, firefighters, and first responders.

"One of the big draws for us has been our live music," Knotts confirmed. "We've done live music events ever since day one and have never quit. People love it. The first year we had our clubhouse and event center we did a big fundraiser for Ketchum Schools one Saturday and raised right at \$15,000. Then we had a fundraiser for a family that was having some medical issues. That event brought in around \$13,000."

Access to BOLT Fiber Optics internet service is another big draw for Grand Meridian residents. Knotts said the park saw the potential and made the initial investment by installing the necessary infrastructure for its residents.



“Our people absolutely love having BOLT Fiber Optics here,” Knotts said. “We have BOLT at every site and every cabin. When everything was closed down for two years during the pandemic and people were working from home, our people weren’t working from home, they were working from the lake and loving it. A lot of them didn’t want to go back to the office.”

He added: “We use BOLT every day as a selling point and people absolutely love having it available here because it is such good internet service.”

Knotts says about 25 percent of Grand Meridian residents live on-site full time.

“Up to this point we have geared our marketing more toward people who leave their RVs here year around. It’s really worked out very well for us,” he said, adding “but some of the new sites we’re currently building will be dedicated to overnight and weekend sites in order to accommodate more of those people.”

Every day it seems like there is one more reason for Grand Meridian residents to love where they live. A dedicated music venue and strip mall along the main highway are now being discussed as potential additions at Grand Meridian.

And to think all of this began with a casual conversation between friends.

“It’s been absolutely amazing and our community has been very supportive,” said Knotts.

He added: “After we put in those first 22 RV sites, we got serious about things. And it doesn’t take us long to get stuff done. At first it was kind of like we’ll throw them in there. If we rent them, fine. If we don’t, fine. Jerry had enough money to pay for them so we didn’t have to take out a loan. When we saw how fast they filled up, then we began looking at the long-term goal of actually building a destination resort property.”

Ultimately, Brother’s backing, said Knotts, took the vision from drawing board to reality.



Greg Knotts, General Manager

FOR MORE INFORMATION

About Grand Meridian RV, Cabin & Tiny Home Resort call Knotts at 918-864-2417, visitmeridiangrandlake.com, or find them on Facebook @GMRVRESORT.

“He’s the controlling partner,” Knotts said. “Without him having the financial ability to do all of this, none of it would have been possible.”

Knott loves being a part of it all.

“After I sold my company, I hadn’t really decided for sure what I was going to do when this opportunity came along,” he said. “I work seven days a week, but I don’t feel like I ever go to work, if that makes any sense. I’ll do this as long as I can physically and mentally because I love it. I tell people that I feel like I’ve actually worked maybe four or five days in the last five and a half years. I never go to work because I love doing what I’m doing.”

“I think the best word I could use to describe Grand Meridian is ‘community.’ It’s the feeling you get whether you are there for an event or as a resident. That also flows over into supporting everything in the area. The support that is given to our first responders, educators, and any family in need is just awesome. The park and its residents really take pride in being a part of this. The theme is always to get together as family and make fun memories. This I feel is a huge part of why the park has grown like it has over the last five years. Along with keeping a safe, clean, and family-oriented park for all to enjoy.” -J.D. Davenport, resident



UNCLAIMED DOLLARS COULD BE YOURS

Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative members are entitled to a portion of any profit made by the company. As approved by the NOEC board of trustees, refund checks were mailed to members in September 2021. These checks represented the following patronage capital retirement:

- 100% of remaining unretired patronage from 1988 totaling \$412,475
- 50% of 1989 patronage totaling \$310,866
- 9.59% of 2020 patronage totaling \$494,289
- Estate closings totaling \$151,000

Checks totaling \$10 or more were mailed to eligible members. Checks were not mailed to members whose patronage capital accounts totaled less than \$10. These accounts will continue to accumulate funds with each retirement. When an account reaches \$10 or more, a check will be issued following the next retirement. NOEC makes every effort to ensure members receive patronage capital that is rightfully theirs. To accomplish this, it is important for NOEC to have your current mailing address. Checks are often returned marked "undeliverable." Many of these do not have the correct 911 address. A partial listing of unclaimed checks is provided at right. Future issues of Northeast Connection will contain additional listings. If you see your name, claim your check by calling 800.256.6405, extension 9313. A complete list of returned checks is available online at www.noec.coop. Visit the link or scan the QR code below with your smartphone camera to access the listing.



SCAN ME!

DYE, BETTY J - GROVE OK
 DYER, JAMES - GROVE OK
 DYSART, RUSSELL/TAMMIE L - DISNEY OK
 EARP, DEAN - JAY OK
 EARP, L B - VINITA OK
 EASLEY, JAMES T/REGINA F - TULSA OK
 EASTMAN, BRAD - JAY OK
 EAVES, STARLYN K - GROVE OK
 ECK, ALBERT D - BLUEJACKET OK
 ECKIWAUDAH, REGINALD - SALINA OK
 ECKLES, DENNELLE A - WELCH OK
 EDEN, O E - AFTON OK
 EDENS, CURTIS L - VINITA OK

EDMONDSON, R D - SILOAM SPRINGS AR
 EDWARDS, KELLY A - KETCHUM OK
 EGNOR, ARCHIE - BIG CABIN OK
 EHLERS, TRACY - TULSA OK
 ELDER, ERIC - JAY OK
 ELK RIVER MARINA - JOPLIN MO
 ELLER O D/JO L - TULSA OK
 ELLIOTT, CLIFF - VINITA OK
 EMMER, WILLIAM B - TULSA OK
 ENGLAND, CHARLES - KANSAS OK
 ENSTEN, DIXIE L - WYANDOTTE OK
 ENYART, BOBBY - HOLIDAY ISLAND AR
 ENYART, DON D - VERONA PA
 ENYART, RONNIE - VINITA OK
 EPHROM, GLENN O - MIAMI OK
 EPPERSON, CLYDE K - BLUEJACKET OK
 ERBE, TERRI L ANDERSON - GROVE OK

ERNST, EDITH R - JAY OK
 ERVIN, ALVIE S/LUCILLE - VINITA OK
 ESKEW, TERRY L - GROVE OK
 ESLICK, DONNA S - JAY OK
 EUBANKS, IRVIN - LOCUST GROVE OK
 EUBANKS, JIM L - FAYETTEWILLE AR
 EUBANKS, OREN H/JOYCE E - MCALESTER OK
 EUBANKS, PAUL G - COLCORD OK
 EUBANKS, TYSON/BOBBIE - WELCH OK
 EVANS, BILL JR - FAIRLAND OK
 EVANS, CARLA J - COLCORD OK
 EVANS, EULA D - AFTON OK
 EVANS, GREGORY P - JOPLIN MO
 EVANS, LESLIE B/MILDRED - MCALLEN TX
 EVANS, RON E - COLCORD OK
 EVANS, WESLEY E - KETCHUM OK
 EVE, DON - TULSA OK
 EVINS, CALVIN - KANSAS OK
 EXCALIBER INC - PRYOR OK
 FAIR, MICHAEL R - PRYOR OK
 FAIRCHILD, HOUSTON - MUSKOGEE OK
 FANSLER, DESIREE - GROVE OK
 FARLIN, THOMAS - GROVE OK
 FARMER, BILLY M - SALINA OK
 FARMER, JOHN W - SILOAM SPRINGS AR
 FARQUHAR, TONY - TULSA OK
 FARRAND, ART - WAYNOKA OK
 FAUCETT, DONALD L - WYANDOTTE OK
 FDIC RECEIVERSHIP/DON PHELPS - OKC OK
 FDIC/HAROLD JACKSON - OKC OK
 FEAR, DAWN - AFTON OK
 FEDERAL LAND BANK - VINITA OK
 FELLINGER, BEVERLY A - DISNEY OK
 FENCER, TONY A - LOCUST GROVE OK
 FENTRESS, DENTON C - ST LOUIS MO
 FERNSIDE, THOMAS J - JOPLIN MO
 FERRELL, DONNA J - LOCUST GROVE OK
 PERSON, MONICA - CARTERVILLE MO
 FIDELTY FEDERAL SAVINGS - CLAREMORE OK
 FIELDEN, RICHARD C - WAGONER OK
 FIELDS, CONNIE - GROVE OK
 FIELDS, LORETTA J - GROVE OK
 FIELDS, M W - GROVE OK
 FIELDS, RICHARD - KANSAS OK
 FIELDS, RICHARD - TWIN OAKS OK
 FIELDS, RICK - TWIN OAKS OK



FEATURED RECIPES

MAYES COUNTY



GARY D. & DENITA SHAMEL | SALINA

CINNAMON PICKLES

INGREDIENTS

DAY ONE:

- 2 gallons prepared cucumbers: peeled, seeded and cut into sticks
- 8 1/2 quarts water
- 2 cups pickling lime

DAY TWO:

- 1 tbsp alum
- 2 cups vinegar
- 1 1/2 oz red food coloring
- 10 cups sugar
- 6 sticks cinnamon
- 8-10 oz red hots
- water to cover cucumbers

Step 6: On the third day pack the heated pickles into heated canning jars. This recipe makes 12 pints.

Step 1: Soak prepared cucumbers in lime water for 24 hours.

Step 2: Drain and wash 3 times in cold water.

Step 3: Combine alum, vinegar, water, food coloring, sugar, cinnamon, and red hots in a large pot to make syrup. Add drained cucumbers and add enough water to cover. Then simmer for 2 hours.

Step 4: Let stand overnight.

Step 5: The following day drain off syrup and reheat. Once heated pour over pickles and let stand. Repeat this step for 3 days!



BOBBI ORANGE | CHOUTEAU

RICK'S CONTRACTOR CABBAGE

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb ground breakfast sausage
- 1 head of green cabbage
- 2/3 cup brown sugar
- 2 cups water
- salt and pepper to taste

Step 1: Chop cabbage to desired size.

Step 2: Using a 4 to 6 quart stock pot brown sausage and drain off the fat. Then add water, chopped cabbage, and brown sugar. Cook until cabbage is soft and wilted.

Step 3: Season with salt and pepper to taste and garnish as desired. Great served with fried potatoes.



DAVID BRESHEARS | PRYOR

MEXICAN CHICKEN

INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs cooked chicken, diced or shredded
- 1 can RO-TEL
- 1 family size can cream of chicken soup
- 2 bags original Doritos, crushed
- 2 cups shredded cheese mix
- 1 cup chicken broth

Step 1: Spray a 9x13 pan with non-stick spray and layer bottom with half of the chips, chicken, and cheese.

Step 2: To a bowl add RO-TEL, cream of chicken, and broth. Stir to combine. Then pour half of the mixture into the pan.

Step 3: Add one more layer of chips, chicken, and cheese to pan and pour remaining half of RO-TEL mixture on top.

Step 4: Bake at 350°F for 40 minutes and enjoy!



HAVE A RECIPE TO SHARE?

Email it to publicrelations@noec.coop for a chance to be featured in an upcoming *Northeast Connection*.

STORM SAFETY CHECKLIST

With the start of the spring season, it's time to start thinking about storm safety. Being proactive with storm preparedness can make all the difference when it comes to safety.

Start by having a plan. Next, practice your plan. Finally, work your plan. Staying up-to-date on the latest weather conditions and having a safe place to ride out the storm should be an important part of any storm preparedness plan.

Unfortunately, spring storms can cause power outages and sometimes downed power lines. All downed power lines should be considered energized. Stay away from all downed and low-hanging lines and contact Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative immediately.

Another part of your plan may include the use of an electrical generator during outages. Be aware that improper installation and use of electric generators can be very dangerous. Two factors to consider are carbon monoxide exposure and backfeed.

Avoid carbon monoxide exposure by making sure your generator is only operated outside of your home in a well-ventilated area. A carbon monoxide detector would also be a wise investment.

Backfeed is created when an electric generating source that is improperly installed not only supplies electrical current to your house but also feeds back onto Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative's lines—even lines that are laying on the ground. This can present hazards not only to you and your family, but to the general public, first responders, pets, livestock, and employees of the cooperative who are responding to outages and downed power lines. Contact a qualified electrical contractor if you have any concerns regarding the proper installation of your generator.

TIPS & TRICKS

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Is air flow restricted to your climate control system?

The climate control system in your home requires a certain amount of air flow to operate at its full efficiency. Two things get in the way of that: a dirty filter or a filter that is "too tight." A dirty filter becomes clogged with dust and slows down the intake. A "tight" filter is designed to capture more of the air particles but can reduce the flow of air. An extremely dirty filter could cause air to be drawn from around the edges of the frame and deposit the pollutants on the coils/fins and further decrease the efficiency of the unit. Left in place, a dirty filter could easily lead to a costly repair bill.

Help prevent the problems above by purchasing inexpensive filters and change them every 30 days.

971989

FOLLOW US!

Follow Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative on Facebook to stay in the know regarding storm related outages.

