

# VVEC LINE LIFE

JANUARY 2025 | PUBLISHED FOR THE MEMBERS OF VERDIGRIS VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE | A SUPPLEMENT TO OKLAHOMA LIVING | WWW.VVEC.COM



## 2024 Employee of the Year

Danny Bement was voted the 2024 Employee of the Year by his fellow colleagues, an honor that was announced at the employee Christmas dinner.

Danny started his career at VVEC in 1998 as a construction lineman. Since that time, he has worked as construction assistant foreman / bucket operator, a junior and lead lineman on a 2-man maintenance bucket truck, and is now the Director of Operations and Engineering Services.

Danny is married to his wife, Deana, and together, they have two daughters - Morgan and Kendall. Outside of work, he enjoys hunting, precision rifles and spending time with his family and friends.

Congratulations on a job very well done, Danny!

*"I'm in shock, humbled and so appreciative because there are so many deserving of this award. I'm thankful to work at such a great place with such great employees -- truly blessed beyond measure."*



## Years of Service

Employees celebrating benchmarks in their Years of Service during 2024 were celebrated during the Employee Christmas dinner.

Pictured left to right are:

- Cole Potts - 5 years
- Chance Stephenson - 10 years
- Annie Stout - 10 years
- Dan Cluck - 15 years
- Sharon Mendell - 30 years
- Michael McClellan - 15 years
- Misti Frazier - 15 years
- Kyle Sears - 20 years
- Kyle Kester - 10 years
- Logan Wells - 20 years
- Bill Gillespie - 30 years

Not pictured:  
Ricky Rimpley - 20 Years

*Congratulations!*





**F**our VVEC linemen were recognized in December for successfully completing the OAEC Journeyman Lineman Program. Receiving this distinct honor were Archie Agnew, Chandler Hurst, Kyle Gerber and Thomas Fisher.

Linemen who complete this program have met or exceeded the following national and state certification requirements:

- 6,400 hours of on-the-job training
- 4 years of education with Northwest Lineman College



Pictured in top photo, left to right: Danny Bement, Archie Agnew, Jeff Lorton, Thomas Fisher, Chandler Hurst and Josh Jackson

Pictured in bottom photos, left to right: Bill Gillespie, Archie Agnew, Jeff Lorton; Bill Gillespie, Chandler Hurst, Thomas Fisher, and Josh Jackson

Not pictured: Kyle Gerber

**CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR OUTSTANDING ACCOMPLISHMENT AND ALL YOUR HARD WORK IN ACHIEVING IT!**

**2025**  
HAPPY NEW YEAR

HELLO  
*january*

- 1.01 New Year's Day - Offices Closed
- 1.20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day

**2025**  
HAPPY NEW YEAR



**District 2 - Jack Bogart**



**District 4 - John Hibdon**



**District 6 - Dennis Lenox**

**Trustees Retain Positions on Board**

Members in Districts 2, 4 and 6 met in November to elect trustees; however, a quorum was not reached at any of the meetings and, therefore, the trustees will retain their positions for the upcoming three years. Cooperative bylaws require that at least 5 percent of the members in any district must register their attendance in order for business to be conducted.

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



## DAWNA MARTIN



This month's spotlight is shining brightly on Dawna Martin and the seven years she's been in the cooperative family! Dawna started out as a billing representative then transferred to capital credits, operator, data services, billing, and she is now our Office Services Secretary.

Dawna has been married to her husband, Brett, for 26 wonderful years and together they have two sons, Jakob (20) and Dylan (13).



Life outside of the co-op consists of spending time with family and friends... and a whole lotta sports! Jakob and Dylan have been active in football, wrestling and baseball most of their lives so evenings and weekends are usually spent at a sporting event. She also enjoys photography and helping her sister-in-law make quilts!

Congrats on a job very well done, Dawna!

*"I really enjoy the people I work with and helping our members every day!"*



**January Mystery Picture!** Do you know where this is? Be the first to correctly guess the location during the month of January and receive a \$50 bill credit! Call Megan Jackson at 918-586-6241 to submit your guess!

December's Location correctly guessed by Gary - Sandridge Air Park, Collinsville

Tree crews will be working to clear right-of-way on the Javine substation - north and east of Skiatook - as well as the Collinsville substation.

VVEC Brush Coordinator:  
Chub Brewer 918-586-6208

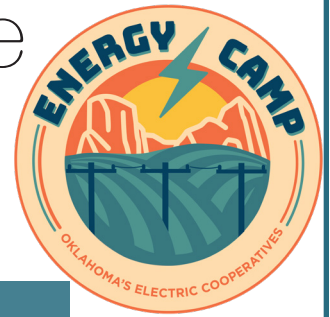


Is your account number 1111400206  
If so, call Megan Jackson at 918-586-6241 during the month of January and claim your \$50 bill credit! **CONGRATS!**





# let the adventure *Begin!*



Verdigris Valley Electric is proud to offer two once-in-a-lifetime trips  
-- YOUTHPower ENERGY CAMP AND WASHINGTON YOUTH TOUR --  
to eligible students in our service area.

## Youth Tour | June 13-19, 2025

Students on Youth Tour learn about electric cooperatives, experience American history and witness our government in action. They participate in National Youth Day, visit with members of our Congressional Delegation, and tour many famous Washington D.C. sites such as the U.S. Capitol, Arlington Cemetery, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Washington Monuments, Smithsonian Institution, and the Pentagon!



## YouthPower Energy Camp | May 27-30, 2025

The camp's eighth grade participants experience first-hand the exciting world of rural electrification by electing board members, working in small groups to discuss real-life issues and concerns for their communities and developing leadership skills. They witness safety demonstrations, get to take a ride in the bucket of a co-op service truck, and even climb a utility pole, while wearing appropriate climbing gear, of course.

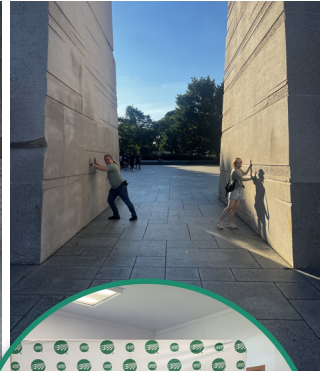


### THE 2025 ESSAY CONTESTS BEGIN JANUARY 2, 2025.

Official rules, regulations and essay topics may be found by scanning the QR codes, going on our website at [www.vvec.com](http://www.vvec.com) or by contacting Misti Frazier - Youth Programs Coordinator at 918-371-2584 / [mfrazier@vvec.com](mailto:mfrazier@vvec.com).











# PEAK POWER:

New generation projects support rural reliability

by Mark Viguet | [info@ruralmissouri.coop](mailto:info@ruralmissouri.coop)

**W**hen winter temperatures plunge or summer heat soars, how important is the electricity you depend on? New natural gas generating units are underway in Oklahoma and Missouri, designed to ensure reliable electric service when electricity demand spikes and rural electric cooperative members need it most.

Associated Electric Cooperative, the power generator for six transmission cooperative owners and their distribution cooperatives across Missouri, northeast Oklahoma and southeast Iowa, is working to make sure co-op system reliability continues to be the norm—not the exception.

## RECORD-SETTING MEMBER ENERGY DEMAND UNDERSCORES NEED FOR ADDITIONAL GENERATION

Building new power generation is not a decision made lightly. The big question: How can the cooperative responsible for providing reliable and affordable power to rural communities best meet that mission? Extensive analysis shows Associated needs additional generation capacity to serve members reliably during peak weather conditions, such as winter storms or extreme summer heat. The need for additional generation has been underscored as the Associated system set a new summer peak demand record and its highest three winter peaks from 2021–2024.

“The data and upward trend are very clear. Energy use during severe weather is growing and more power is needed when demand peaks for rural electric cooperatives,” said Sean Wright, Associated vice president, construction of new generation projects. “To make sure we have power in the future when it will be needed and avoid power

disruptions, new generation facilities must be built now. These generating units can take up to six years from start to finish and we’ve been working on them for three years now.”

In 2022, Associated’s member-led board of directors authorized the cooperative to add up to 900 megawatts (MW) of new natural gas generation to best serve member needs for reliable power. Associated is constructing two energy centers — one in Oklahoma and one in Missouri — that will each provide 420–445 MW of power when the system needs it most.

“These types of units can start quickly and be up to full generating capacity in minutes, which is exactly what is needed during energy demand spikes,” Wright said. “Natural gas is much cleaner-burning than other fossil fuels while still being available on-demand.”

Associated developed and applied for all required air, water and land permits for both locations, which are in various stages of rigorous regulatory review. Construction and commissioning will take approximately two years with a total project cost of more than \$500 million per energy center. Associated plans to finance the projects with the Rural Utilities Service, a division of the USDA.

## RIPLEY ENERGY CENTER: OKLAHOMA’S MOST ADVANCED NATURAL GAS GENERATOR

The Ripley Energy Center is being built on 160 acres near Stillwater, Oklahoma, and started initial construction activities in October 2024. About 20 acres will be allocated for the energy center’s footprint, with the rest kept in hay production. The strategic location near gas supply pipelines, water supply and transmission lines allows for the new facility to be built at a lower cost to members.



*“These types of units can start quickly and be up to full generation capacity in minutes... Natural gas is much cleaner burning than other fossil fuels while still being available on-demand.”*

-Sean Wright,  
vice president, construction  
Associated Electric Cooperative

The Ripley Energy Center will be the most advanced natural gas generation facility in Oklahoma, employing 300-400 workers during construction and ultimately home to six to eight permanent employees. Ripley is projected to start generating power in 2026.

A similar project is planned for an 82-acre parcel that was purchased by Associated near Turney, Missouri. Construction of the Turney Energy Center, which features the same type of generator as Ripley, is anticipated to begin in 2025 with the unit generating power in 2027. When complete, both projects will deliver power into the Associated member-owned transmission system, ultimately serving more than 2.1 million people in rural areas.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT A PRIORITY IN GENERATION DEVELOPMENT

An important part of the new generation development process is working with the local community around the site locations to make sure they understand why it is needed, what is being built, and the safeguards being put in place for the local environment. Project information developed and distributed describe the need for the project and the technical and environmental aspects of the peaking energy centers. Informational webpages are online for the projects at [www.AECI.org](http://www.AECI.org).

“Meetings with our G&T member-owners, local distribution cooperatives, community leaders and other stakeholders are conducted early and often. We work closely with them to better understand the local area and sensitivities to make sure our projects are accepted and welcomed by the community,” Wright said. “We don’t want there to be any surprises for local residents. We want them to be an engaged, active part of this process.”

## PUBLIC MEETINGS EDUCATE AND INFORM MEMBERS

A public meeting was held in December 2023 in the Ripley, Oklahoma, area to meet with interested cooperative members, make project subject matter experts available and distribute materials providing a comprehensive look at the Ripley Energy Center. In September 2024, Associated hosted a public meeting in the Turney area. At both meetings, attendees asked questions and learned about the many facets of natural gas peaking stations.

“We are member-owned and member-led. We don’t forget that as we work to build these projects that are so important to keep power supply reliable,” Wright said.



SCAN ME

# Committed to community

**Land stewardship:** About 37 acres of the 82-acre Turney site will be allocated for the energy center’s footprint, with the remaining tract kept in agricultural production. Existing wetlands will be left intact. To prevent disturbing culturally significant land, Associated conducted more than 800 shovel tests with archaeologists.

**Air quality:** The latest emission-reducing technology will ensure the energy center meets all regulations for air quality. Selective catalytic reducers will be installed and are capable of providing an industry-best reduction of nitrogen oxide emissions.

**Water use:** Water used by the energy center will be treated water supplied by a non-rural water district based in Lathrop. Water will be safely returned to the environment through an outfall, with discharge regulated by a water permit from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

**Noise mitigation:** The energy center will be equipped with features to reduce noise. Associated’s goal is to keep sound levels at homes in the vicinity equivalent to the volume of a typical person-to-person conversation.

**Lighting mitigation:** The energy center will have exterior lighting for safety and security. Lighting will be shielded and directed downward to reduce its visibility from nearby properties.



Associated’s Sean Wright explains the plans for the Ripley Energy Center during a public meeting this past September



## VVEC BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- District 1: Jim Brackett - 720-4531
- District 2: Jack Bogart - 371-9587
- District 3:
- District 4: John Hibdon - 847-2320
- District 5: Jimmy Lambert - 760-7029
- District 6: Dennis Lenox - 289-5961
- District 7: Charles Huerter - 914-1498
- District 8: Ken Howard - 724-9965
- District 9: Buddy McCarty - 272-5364

**General Manager:** Alice Lawson

## CONTACT US

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**Mailing address**  
P.O. Box 219, Collinsville, OK 74021

**Phone number**  
918-371-2584 or 1-800-870-5948

**Office hours**  
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Mon-Fri

**Line Life Editor:**  
Megan Jackson

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You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to:

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Director: Office of Adjudication  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410  
Fax: 202-690-7442  
Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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**8 | LINE LIFE**

## Perfect Apple Crumble

*Cozy and classic, it stars a golden, crunchy topping over a layer of warm-spiced fruit.*



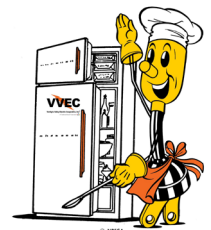
- 2 pounds sweet tart crisp cooking apples, about 6 cups diced (like Pink Lady, Honeycrisp, Granny Smith, Jonathon or Jonagold)
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon, divided
- ½ teaspoon ginger
- ½ teaspoon allspice
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup light brown sugar, packed
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- 7 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

**Preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit. Core, peel and dice the apples into 1/2-inch chunks. Combine the apples with the lemon juice, cornstarch, granulated sugar, 1 ½ teaspoons of the cinnamon, ginger, and allspice in a large bowl and toss until well coated. Pour into a round 9-inch pie pan, 9 x 9 inch baking dish or 7 x 11 baking dish.**

**Make the topping: In a medium bowl, add the flour, brown sugar, the remaining ½ teaspoon cinnamon, baking powder and kosher salt. Mix together with a fork. Pour in the melted butter while mixing with the fork until a crumbly mixture forms. Use your fingers to sprinkle the crumbles evenly over the filling.**

**Bake for 45 to 50 minutes until the top is evenly golden brown and the filling is bubbly. Cool for 1 hour, then serve. Store at room temperature covered for 1 day, refrigerated for 4 days, or frozen for up to 3 months. Reheat in a 350 degree oven until bubbly.**

*Enjoy!*



### WINTER RESIDENTIAL RATES

October through March usage;  
November through April billing

**Customer Charge | \$40.00**  
**Energy Charge | \$.08279/kWh**

A power cost adjustment (PCA) will be applied to all bills when the actual cost of power purchased exceeds or is less than 62.088 mills per kWh.

In addition, a gross receipts tax of 2% of revenue will be included, plus additional taxes, if applicable.

### IN CASE OF AN OUTAGE

- First, check your fuses or circuit breakers. Every service is different. You may have fuses or circuit breakers in your house, on the side of your house, under your meter, or all three places. Check to see if your neighbors have electricity.

- Then, call the co-op at 371-2584 or 1-800-870-5948. Have your account number, name as it appears on the account, and address handy to give to the dispatcher. If you should get a recording, leave your information; every message will be answered.

- Download the SmartHub app at [www.smarthubapp.com](http://www.smarthubapp.com) to report outages from your smartphone.