

## Inside

In the Beginning....2 & 3

New Office.....4

# Hot Watts

Published monthly by Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## First “Hot Watts”



The first CHEC newsletter was published in September 1950 with the title “YOU NAME IT.” Member Charles Thomas promptly submitted a name for consideration. The second issue was published the following month, with the new title “Hot Watts.” Mr. Thomas’ title continues to this day.

Congratulations!  
**Teri Cooper**  
is our online survey winner.

**CHEC Offices will be closed September 1st in observance of Labor Day.**

## Annual Meeting Slated for October

Registered members will receive a \$20 electric credit

Please mark your calendars for the Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative’s 66th Annual Meeting. The meeting is scheduled for Saturday, October 4, 2014, at the Sallisaw High School Gymnasium. Registration will open at 10:00 a.m. with the business meeting starting at 11:00 a.m.

Annual meetings are designed to be enjoyable and entertaining for the members. The Ritter’s Family Band will return this year and will provide entertainment prior to the business meeting. Each Cookson Hills Electric (CHEC) member who registers at the meeting will receive a gift bag and a \$20 credit per membership. Additional prizes include cash and gifts made available by our material suppliers and contractors. As a member you can help make that process easier by bringing your annual meeting notice that you receive in the mail to the registration table at the meeting. Your name must be on the membership account and you must be present to vote and claim prizes. Also, you must have a photo ID to claim prizes.

Please join the employees and the board of CHEC for the 66th annual meeting. We hope to see you there!

*The first Annual Meeting was held at Stigler in 1948*



Former CHEC Trustee, Lee H. Tyler at the 1950 Annual Meeting in Stigler.



Members attend 2013 Annual Meeting at Sallisaw.

**Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

Headquarters Office  
PO Box 539 • 1002 E. Main  
Stigler, OK 74462  
800-328-2368

Branch Office  
PO Box 587 • 1800 KOA/Power Drive  
Sallisaw, OK 74955  
918-775-2211

**Pay-by-Phone: 1-888-678-1937**  
**www.cooksonhills.com**



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

William T. Mills, <i>President</i>	District 4
Joe Falleur, <i>Vice President</i>	District 3
Kenneth Kelley, <i>Sec.-Treas.</i>	District 5
Vacant	District 2
Rocky Woods, Sr., <i>Trustee</i>	District 1
Joe Ogle, <i>Trustee</i>	District 6
Ronnie Pevehouse, <i>Trustee</i>	District 7

**STAFF**

Kendall Beck, *General Manager*  
Eric Johnson, *Assistant General Manager*  
Dalen Garner, *Director of Operations*  
Brett Orme, *Director of Engineering*  
Juli Orme, *Chief Financial Officer*  
Amy Smith, *Manager of Accounting Services*  
Kristie Cash, *Manager of Office Services*

Bill V. Wilkinson - *Attorney*

Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc. welcomes members to submit photos, and articles which will be subject to editing. Cookson Hills reserves the right to publish or modify any article. Companies and individuals featured in the Hot Watts newsletter do not necessarily reflect the official policy, position, or view of Cookson Hills.

Donna Rhodes, *Editor*  
E-Mail: drhodes@cooksonhills.com



**If You Find Your Account Number  
Hidden in This Issue of the *Hot Watts*  
You'll Receive a \$25 Credit on  
Your Electric Bill**

# Rural Elec

## *First Board of Trustees*

W.L. Brockman, Vian  
James Humphrey, Muldrow  
F.E. Butler, Kinta  
Alex Foreman, Sallisaw  
Leonard Miller, Kinta  
Lee Tyler, Keota  
Russell Overstreet, Cartersville

*A Board of Trustees  
meeting in the early  
years*

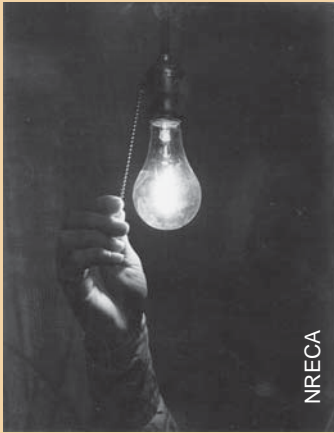


## *Current Board of Trustees*

William Mills, President	District 4
Joe Falleur, Vice President	District 3
Kenneth Kelley, Sec.-Treas.	District 5
Rocky Woods, Sr.	District 1
Joe Ogle	District 6
Ronnie Pevehouse	District 7

## *General Managers*

W.L. Brockman: 1948 – 1949  
F.E. Butler: 1949 – 1950  
Kent Randall: 1950  
Jeff Montgomery: 1951 – 1956  
James C. Reid: 1957 – 1970  
Orville Dennis: 1970 – 1972  
Herman Driscoll: 1972 – 1982  
J. Chris Cariker: 1982 – 1996  
Kendall Beck: 1996 to present



# Electric In the Beginning

In the early 1940's, rural Sequoyah and Haskell County were without electric service. The farmer took care of the farm chores by hand and with the flickering, undependable light of a kerosene lantern. His wife labored over the wood range and washboard.

After seeing the needs in the rural areas, President Roosevelt signed an executive order on May 11, 1935, establishing the Rural Electrification Administration (REA), bringing electricity to isolated rural areas not serviced by private utilities. The idea of providing federal assistance to accomplish rural electrification gained ground rapidly. After World War II ended, rural electric systems multiplied and began supplying electric service to rural areas across the nation.

CHEC began when a group of farmers decided to bring electricity to their rural area. On July 11, 1945, a representative from Sequoyah County met with 48 rural leaders at the Sequoyah County Courthouse. Following a full explanation of the Rural Electrification Program by an REA representative from Stillwater, the farmers voted to accept a plan to proceed to obtain memberships in an electric cooperative and to run electric lines to southeastern Oklahoma.

Many volunteers spent long hours soliciting prospective members. A total of 450 members paid a \$5 membership to join the organization within the first three weeks.

After redistricting and dividing territories, the Articles of Incorporation were filed on October 8, 1945. The first meeting of the Board of Trustees was held October 16, 1945. On March 13, 1946, the REA approved the first loan for \$305,000 for construction of 200 miles of electric distribution and service lines.

In January 1947 the Board of Trustees authorized the purchase of one acre of land for \$100 to build a substation in Haskell County. In October of the same year, a deed was accepted for property donated by the City of Sallisaw to build a substation in Sequoyah County.

Supplies such as poles, copper wire, and transformers were used for the war effort. After the war ended there was a serious shortage of materials. The determined farmers continued their quest, and their determination paid off. The coop's lines were finally energized on June 28, 1948, bringing Southeast Oklahoma out of the darkness. A total of 187 miles of line was energized to serve 502 members. Electricity spelled a new kind of life for farmers and residents of our area.



*A new pole goes up in 1955*

Today our electricity is generated by Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc., and transmitted through KAMO Power's transmission lines to 14 substations in all or parts of Sequoyah, Haskell, Cherokee, Adair, Pittsburg, LeFlore and Muskogee counties. CHEC is serving over 17,703 meters and operate 2,901 miles of line from those substations.

CHEC is a member-owned not-for-profit electric cooperative and is governed by a seven-member board of trustees. At the end of each year, margins are allocated to members in the form of capital credits. As of December 31, 2013, CHEC has paid back all margins to members through the year of 1994. In December of 2013, CHEC retired \$444,764.61 in patronage capital to its members.

The legacy of Cookson Hills Electric is etched in our minds, from our meager beginnings to where we are today. We are grateful for those before us who made our cooperative what it is today. We look forward to the future of CHEC and of the members and communities we serve.

*“REA was the best thing that ever happened to rural people.”*

*- Maxine Driscoll*

---

---

# CHEC Opens New Headquarter's Office

CHEC is happy to announce the opening of the new headquarters office at 1002 East Main Street in Stigler, which is at the same location as the previous office building.

The first headquarters building that CHEC operated from was a single-story stone building located on Highway 82 in Stigler. The building was constructed as a WPA (Works Progress Administration) work program project and leased by CHEC from the City of Stigler in March of 1946. The building sat on what is now the Kibois parking lot. Former long-time employee Maxine Driscoll remembers working in the WPA building. "I remember the dirt was bad because all the roads were dirt at the time. We had a big fan in a west window, and when we opened the windows, the fan blew dirt throughout the office."

In May of 1960 CHEC constructed a new building and warehouse at the current headquarters location. Maxine recalls moving into this facility as well. "We were so appreciative of a new place to work." This building held many memories for our employees, our members, and for the community at large. In 2012 after years of wear, it became necessary to begin construction on the new facility you see today. During the second week of December 2012 the old office was demolished with only the warehouse remaining. A new garage was attached to the warehouse and temporary offices were set up until the new office headquarters could be built. On July 25, 2014, CHEC opened the doors to the new facility.

Newcomb Associates Architects and Engineering is responsible for the design and construction of the building. The design of the building will allow for expansion for additional employees as well as for needed equipment. The CHEC Stigler workforce totals 32 employees. The administrative, accounting, billing, customer service, engineering, and operations departments are housed at the Stigler location. The Sallisaw workforce has 22 employees serving in customer service, member services, engineering, and operations.

CHEC plans to host an open house at the new headquarters office later this year. Please watch your Hot Watts for announcements regarding this event!



*First CHEC Headquarter's office: March, 1946 - May, 1960*



*CHEC Headquarter's Office: May, 1960 - December, 2012*



*New Headquarter's Office: Opened July 25, 2014*