

Powerline Press

NEWSLETTER



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August 2023

LRTC COMPLETES FIBER BUILD-OUT

Lake Region Technology & Communications (LRTC), a subsidiary of Lake Region Electric Cooperative (LREC), is thrilled to announce the completion of a three-phase build-out of its fiber-to-the-home network. A special event, “Celebration of Completion,” was held in Hulbert on June 16th with all Lake Region employees and several special guests.

“Members came to their trusted local electric cooperative asking for help, with providing a service unavailable to a majority of our electric members. We understood there was a need for fast, reliable internet, both residential and businesses. This was when the Lake Region Board of Trustees and Management stepped up to the plate and elected

to move forward with a fiber optic network on our existing electric grid to provide a service no one else was providing at the time,” said Glen Clark, Director of Marketing.

“The project was launched in 2013 to provide access to the best broadband service around to every rural community within our LREC electric service territory. As the project is now completed, Lake Region is proud to offer high-speed internet across our service area. You can get the best internet around from your local co-op. We have constructed over 3,000 miles of fiber optic and connected roughly 11,500 homes and businesses,” added Larry Mattes, Communication Specialists.

Fiber Build Out Continues ▶



Several LREC and LRTC employees pose for a photo with Representative Bob Ed Culver and Senator Blake Stephens after the celebration of completion event held on June 16.

Broadband Build Out

▶ Continued from page 1

The event was well attended by several special guests, including State Rep. Bob Ed Culver, R-Tahlequah; State Sen. Blake “Cowboy” Stevens, R-Tahlequah; Cherokee Nation Secretary of State Tina Glory-Jordan and husband CN District 1 Councilor Rex Jordan; Cherokee Nation Spencer Risenhoover, Broadband Programs Manager, contractors, partners, and vendors, current and retired LREC employees; as well as Mike Sanders, Oklahoma Broadband Office executive director.

“Connecting rural Oklahoma to affordable and reliable high-speed internet is the most important infrastructure effort of this generation, and I think it seems only appropriate that electric co-ops such as Lake Region would be leading the way because of their essential role in another important improvement ... the Rural Electrification Act of the 1930s,” said Sanders.

Internet access is needed to get telehealth, education through our schools, and, honestly, just to do business in this particular global economy. The pandemic taught us that you can actually own and operate a multibillion-dollar company from your porch, but you’ve got to be able to be connected,” added Sanders.

Through a competitive process, Mike Sanders, Oklahoma Broadband Office, is working to deploy nearly a billion dollars in funding to rural areas across Oklahoma. This funding was made available from the recent American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

As some may have noticed on our internet service map, we have areas where we do not provide service. We do not own and operate the electric infrastructure in these communities: Okay, Porter, Braggs, Wagoner, and Tahlequah. These are some of the communities Lake Region has applied for ARPA funding. We hope to hear from the Oklahoma Broadband office soon on who is selected as the recipient of this broadband funding. As this information is released from the state, we will announce it in our newsletter and website.

Our deepest gratitude goes out to all our members who have



Mike Sanders, Oklahoma Broadband Office executive director, speaks at the LRTC celebration event on June 16.

patiently waited throughout the 10+ years of construction and all our past and present employees who stepped up their workload to provide these added services for our members. Thank you to everyone who makes up Lake Region; now, thousands of residents and businesses can take advantage of rural high-speed internet.

The time has come for residents and businesses to experience the benefits of Lake Region high-speed fiber internet. If you still need to sign up for service, visit our website, www.LakeRegionFiber.com, or call us today. We take pride in providing these services. It has enhanced the day-to-day lives of thousands of residents and businesses. We have been your trusted local electric provider for nearly 75 years and now want to be your local trusted internet provider for the next 75 years.

What is Next?

LRTC has applied for ARPA funding to construct fiber in Okay, Porter, Braggs, Wagoner, and Tahlequah communities. LRTC currently services the internet all around these communities. We will look at extending our broadband infrastructure into these communities if we receive these grants.

LREC's Tax Contributions Enrich Education in Our Communities

As the back-to-school season approaches, the significance of a quality education cannot be overstated. Lake Region has long been a staunch supporter of school districts within its coverage territory. While electric cooperatives are not-for-profit businesses, it's important to note that LREC is not tax-exempt. Each year, LREC pays gross receipts tax to the Oklahoma Tax Commission, with a remarkable 95 percent of these funds distributed to schools based on the miles of electric lines in each school district.

In 2022 alone, LREC proudly contributed a total of **\$948,419.85** in gross receipts taxes, benefitting our 33 local schools within its service territory. To visualize this distribution, refer to the accompanying chart on the right.

When it comes to supporting education through tax contributions, electric cooperatives and their members stand out from other electric utilities. On a percentage basis, co-ops consistently contribute more tax dollars to local school districts than other utilities, illustrating the co-ops' dedication to fostering educational growth within our communities. **1726203**

School	Miles of Line	Amount
Wagoner	381.29	\$114,434.87
Tahlequah	357.36	\$107,252.82
Hulbert	269.73	\$80,954.17
Coweta	256.86	\$77,090.40
Keys	222.19	\$66,684.83
Porter	194.45	\$58,360.20
Locust Grove	159.23	\$47,788.84
Peggs	155.46	\$46,657.84
Grandview	137.89	\$41,383.70
Lowery	131.70	\$39,527.91
Fort Gibson	124.62	\$37,403.87
Norwood	97.16	\$29,161.26
Oaks Mission	87.13	\$26,152.24
Braggs	76.56	\$22,978.56
Briggs	74.51	\$22,363.15
Inola/Gregory	69.77	\$20,941.40
Shady Grove	69.90	\$20,979.71
Okay	66.52	\$19,966.16
Woodall	66.35	\$19,913.55
Kansas	49.82	\$14,954.99
Broken Arrow	20.20	\$6,064.75
Haskell	19.97	\$5,993.55
Catoosa	18.84	\$5,655.50
Chouteau/Mazie	17.17	\$5,155.48
Westville	14.47	\$4,344.15
Webber Falls	12.73	\$3,823.49
Muskogee	3.24	\$974.06
Wickliffe	1.61	\$488.57
Leach	1.26	\$379.41
Gore	0.88	\$266.78
Tenkiller	0.79	\$237.67
Jay	0.16	\$48.71
Moseley	0.13	\$41.24
33 Schools	3160.12	\$948,419.85

Set Your Thermostat Higher In The Summer

Save up to \$90 per year

Cooling can account for a large portion of your home's summer energy use. Many members see a spike in their energy bills during the hot summer months. The smaller the difference between the indoor and outdoor temperatures, the lower your overall cooling bill will be. To save energy and money, raise your thermostat by 5-8°F. Also, bump up your thermostat when away on summer trips.



MORE WAYS TO SAVE > www.touchstoneenergy.com

Youth Tour Winners Spend an unforgettable week in Washington, D.C.

Three area teens recently returned from an unforgettable trip to Washington, D.C. known as Youth Tour. The all-expenses-paid, seven-day trek through America’s Capital inspires hard-working students who earn themselves this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. 69 students, and 11 chaperones sponsored by Oklahoma Electric Co-ops, traveled to the Capital to see the awe-inspiring monuments up close and personal in June. LREC’s Youth Tour delegation included Shelby Tannehill from Hulbert High Schools, Hayley Albin from Wagoner High School, and Zade Younes from Tahlequah High School. These students were awarded this trip after successfully completing an essay contest and interview process in March.

“Every year, this contest attracts the most inspired and determined students in our service territory, “ said Juanita Keener, Youth Programs Coordinator. “We always have the best and brightest youth complete for this trip. I was honored to have them represent LREC this year.”

At the Capital, students toured historic sites and monuments, attended an interactive question and answer session with Oklahoma Congressional delegation, and made life-long friends while learning about what it means to be a youth advocate in their communities. Students also attended Youth Day with 1,500 other Youth Tour winners from around the United States.

Among a packed schedule, students visited Arlington National Cemetery, The Pentagon 9/11 Memorial, and a tour of the Smithsonian museums. Oklahoma U.S. Congressman Markwayne Mullin continued his tradition of giving the Oklahoma group a private tour of the Capital.

Congratulations to LREC’s three well-deserved Youth Tour winners. More information will be announced this following school year for those interested in entering the 2024 Youth Tour Contest. You can contact Juanita Keener at LREC or your local school counselor about the opportunity to win this great trip next year.



Left to right: Shelby Tannehill, Zade Younes, and Haley Albin

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Hidden Account Number

Look for your account number hidden in this issue of the *Powerline Press*. If you find your number, Lake Region Electric will credit your next bill. To claim your credit, notify LREC’s Hulbert office by phone during the month of publication.

The amount increases by \$10 with each issue your prize goes unclaimed to a maximum of \$50.

Cooperative bylaws are available upon request at Lake Region Electric Cooperative’s office in Hulbert.

