

# Powerline Press

## NEWSLETTER



A Supplement of Oklahoma Living Published by Lake Region Electric Cooperative for its members. **December 2025**

## TOYS FOR TOTS OF CHEROKEE & ADAIR COUNTY RECEIVES OPERATION ROUND-UP GRANT



*Rhonda Pruitt and Chris Pruitt, local coordinators of Toys For Tots.*

Toys for Tots in Cherokee and Adair Counties recently received a generous **\$5,000** grant from Lake Region Electric Cooperative's Operation Round Up program!

This funding will help ensure local children experience the joy and magic of the holiday season during the organization's 13th Annual Campaign. Founded by the U.S. Marine Corps in 1947 and now operated by the Marine Corps Reserve, Toys for Tots collects and distributes new toys to children whose families are experiencing hardship. The Cherokee and Adair County chapter operates with a 100% volunteer team, with 99% of donations staying local to purchase toys for children in need. The remaining 1% supports

### *Cooperative Principle #7* **CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY**

training for the local coordinators. Chris Pruitt local business owner, and longtime partner, will also cover necessary supplies for organizing and distributing thousands of toys throughout the community.

"This award represents more than just financial support—it's a powerful reminder of the compassion and community spirit that defines Lake Region members," said Rhonda Pruitt, Toys for Tots Coordinator. "Because of this partnership, hundreds of children will experience the joy and magic of Christmas who might otherwise go without."

The \$5,000 grant will be used to purchase toys for older children and teenage groups that are often overlooked—ensuring that every registered child receives a meaningful gift.

### *How to Help or Get Involved:*

Donate: Visit [tahlequah-ok.toysfortots.org](http://tahlequah-ok.toysfortots.org) to make a monetary contribution. Toy drop-off locations include Chris Pruitt Auto Sales, BancFirst, Main Street Market, Reed Culver Funeral Home.

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## LREC Lineman Promotes Reading

Lake Region Electric Cooperative (LREC) was proud to take part in the After-School Lights On Literacy event, hosted by Grand View School and the Boys & Girls Club of Tahlequah. LREC Lineman Trent Elliott shared the story *Cat and Duck Electric Safety*, written and illustrated by Patrick Wood, with students participating in the program. Following the reading, Trent talked with the children about the importance of staying safe around electricity and what to do if they ever encounter a downed power line. It was a fun and educational afternoon for everyone involved.



*Trent Elliott, LREC lineman, reading to after school program.*

# Behind the Scenes: Keeping Your Internet Running



*Nathan Elkins, LRTC fiber tech working in fiber hut.*

At Lake Region, our team works tirelessly behind the scenes so our members/customers can stay connected seamlessly. From maintaining fiber huts to troubleshooting network issues in the field, employees like Nathan Elkins, Austin Fletcher, Tyler Rowland, and Cooper Whitlock play a crucial role in delivering fast, reliable internet service to the communities we serve.

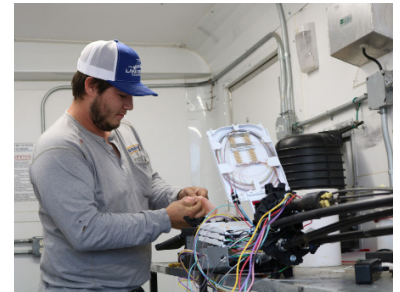
## Keeping Fiber Huts in Top Condition

Pictured at top right is Nathan Elkins, one of our Fiber Technicians, hard at work inside a fiber hut. Nathan performs routine cleaning and maintenance to ensure the equipment stays in top condition—and keeps the hut cooled for optimal performance. 2281500

Fiber huts are critical hubs in our network that house equipment, switches and several fiber optic wires running out to service homes and businesses across the area. Nathan also brings an extra layer of expertise to the role—he's also licensed in HVAC, allowing him to monitor and maintain the cooling systems that protect sensitive fiber equipment. His careful attention to both the electronics and environmental systems



*Left to right: Tyler Rowland, Austin Fletcher and Cooper Whitlock.*



keeps our network running efficiently and prevents outages.

## Quick Response

On October 30, our fiber crews demonstrated the dedication it takes to keep the network running smoothly. Austin Fletcher, Tyler Rowland, and Cooper Whitlock, Linemen/Fiber Techs, went above and beyond to repair fiber lines west of Wagoner after rodents caused damage to the lines, threatening service for local homes and businesses.

The team worked efficiently, taking only a few homes offline at a time, and had everyone back online with reliable, fast internet before 8 p.m. Pictured above, Austin, Tyler, and Cooper took a quick break to chat with our communications specialist and smile for the camera, showcasing the hard work and teamwork that happens behind the scenes at Lake Region.

Our employees' expertise, dedication, and attention to detail ensure that our members continue to enjoy reliable, high-speed internet service, regardless of the challenges that arise. Thank you to all our subscribers. We work hard to provide another service you can rely on.

## Operation Round-Up

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Members who "round up" their monthly bills contribute small amounts that make a big difference locally. To apply for Operation Round Up, Local organizations in need of support can apply for Operation Round Up grants. The next application deadline is January 1, 2026.

## Holiday Hours for December

### Christmas

Closed (noon) Wednesday, December 24  
Closed (all day) Thursday, December 25  
Open Friday, December 26

### New Year's

Closed (all day) Thursday, January 1

*Even with our offices closed, crews are ready in the event of an outage. If you need to report an outage, please call or text OUT to 918-772-2526 or use our Smarthub App.*



# Staying Scam-Smart: *Lessons from Lori Fullbright*

Marketing team members JuaNita Keener, Member Services Representative, and Kristen Mallett, Communications Specialist, recently represented Lake Region at the Women in Business event, hosted by the Wagoner Area Chamber of Commerce at Blue Sky Bank. The featured speaker, Lori Fullbright of News On 6, delivered a powerful and eye-opening presentation on how to recognize and avoid scams—a message too important not to share with our members.

Lori has spent decades covering crime across Oklahoma and speaking with scam victims, investigators, and law enforcement. Her goal is simple: help people spot the warning signs before it's too late. "If something feels urgent or secret, stop and double-check before you act," she advised. She shared seven red flags that should always raise suspicion:



Kristen Mallett, Lori Fullbright, and JuaNita Keener

- ❌ They contact you out of the blue — a random call, text, email, or social media message.
- ❌ Something urgent has happened — your account's been hacked, or a loved one's in trouble.
- ❌ They need you to do something — click a link, call a number, or scan a QR code. Don't!
- ❌ They want money — and it's always untraceable: gift cards, Bitcoin, wire transfers, or cash.
- ❌ They tell you to lie — "Don't tell the cashier why you're buying gift cards." That's a scam.
- ❌ They tell you to keep it a secret — real organizations never ask for secrecy.
- ❌ They tell you to move your money to protect it — it's a scam, every time.

Lori reminded attendees that most scammers operate overseas, making it nearly impossible to recover lost funds. The best protection, she said, is to stay alert, stay skeptical, and never share personal or financial information with anyone you don't know and trust.

At Lake Region, the safety and well-being of our members is our top priority—both online and in everyday life. As technology continues to evolve, so do the tactics scammers use to trick people.

That's why we want to share practical tips for protecting yourself from fraud: LREC never demands immediate payment over the phone. LREC never collects payments in the field. LREC never returns cash for overpayments door-to-door. All LREC employees carry official photo ID badges and drive marked LREC vehicles. Remember: If something feels off, it probably is. Hang up, delete the message, or verify directly with a trusted source before taking action.

## LAKE REGION *Christmas Light Contest*

Would you like to help spread holiday cheer this season? Show off your Christmas spirit and light up your home or business for a chance to win a cash prize and bragging rights! Whether you go big with inflatables and music or keep it classic with twinkling lights, we want to see your festive creations. You can even choose to have your display added to our Lake Region Christmas Lights Map, so everyone can enjoy your holiday

masterpiece! Just indicate you would like to be included when you submit your entry.

This contest is open to LREC members and Lake Region Fiber customers only and is free to enter. Photos of your display must be submitted online at [www.lrecok.coop/christmas-light-contest](http://www.lrecok.coop/christmas-light-contest) by **December 15, 2025**, at midnight. Winners will be announced on December 17, 2025. Full contest details can be found online.



# Local Students Shine at Co-opreneur Day

The Co-opreneur Day competition was an experience for several local students! Seventh- and eighth-grade students from Porter Public Schools and Tahlequah Public Schools spent the day in Oklahoma City designing cooperative businesses to solve community needs. Each team developed a business plan and presented its ideas to a panel of judges. Special congratulations goes to Tahlequah Public Schools' blended team, which took first place—an impressive accomplishment, especially since it was their first time participating!



Left to right: Hailey Payton, Ryt Mead, Ravyn Moore, and Violet Rhea.



Left to right: Adi Damme, Olivia Wright, Paisley Voss, Xander Murray, Asa Campbell, Jonah Sullivan, Caleb Dozier, Cash Utely, Collin Gillmartin, Dixon Davis, Kora McDonald, and Paisley Sherwood

These types of student events are inspired by one of the seven cooperative principles: **Education, Training, and Information**. Through opportunities like Co-opreneur Day, Lake Region helps educate the next generation about the nature and benefits of cooperation and cooperatives.

Teachers who attended also received professional development focused on STEM, economics, energy, and entrepreneurship—making it a meaningful day for both students and educators. If your school's 7th or 8th grade students would be interested in participating in Co-opreneur Day next year, please contact Juanita Keener at **918-772-6940** for more information.

## 2026 Youth Tour Awesome Summer Adventures Await

Lake Region is thrilled to announce the kickoff of our **LREC Youth Tour competition**, open to all current 11th-grade students attending school or homeschooled within LREC's service territory.

This is your chance to win an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C.! Each year, Oklahoma's electric cooperatives sponsor students for this unforgettable, week-long adventure to the nation's capital, **June 13–19, 2026**. The trip covers everything — flights, lodging, meals, tours, and more — completely free! Our Youth Programs Coordinator, Juanita Keener, will be visiting area schools soon to share more about this incredible opportunity and how you can enter. Visit our website for more details or to contact us about the contest at [www.lrecok.coop/youth-tour](http://www.lrecok.coop/youth-tour)



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### Office Hours

Monday-Friday  
7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### Telephone

**800-364-LREC or 918-772-2526**

### Website:

[www.lrecok.coop](http://www.lrecok.coop)  
[www.lakeregionfiber.com](http://www.lakeregionfiber.com)

### Locations

Hulbert, Wagoner &  
Tahlequah, OK.

### Main Office Address

516 S Lake Region Road  
(P.O. Box 127)  
Hulbert, OK 74441

### 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 or at **lrecok.coop**.