

SWRE POWER SOURCE

A Supplement to Oklahoma Living



INTERNATIONAL ELECTRIFICATION

LIGHTING A NEW PATH

SWRE Lineman Brings First-Time Electricity to Guatemalan Village

For the first time, the lights are on in La Montanita de la Virgen, Guatemala. Oklahoma’s electric cooperatives – in partnership with Colorado’s electric cooperatives and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association’s philanthropic arm, NRECA International – brought first-time electricity to the isolated village in the region of Jalapa, east of Guatemala City.

Sixteen volunteer linemen, including Justin Marsh with Southwest Rural Electric, spent three weeks in early September at the project site building powerlines and wiring 84 structures, including one elementary school and two churches. The project consisted of 77 poles in approximately 5.5 miles of line and six transformers installed by the linemen. Each home received four lightbulbs, two light switches and two electrical outlets.



*Justin Marsh
District Lineman*

The local partner for this project is the Empresa Eléctrica Municipal de San Pedro Pinula, a municipal utility, now responsible for the maintenance of the newly built infrastructure. The predominant fuel source in Guatemala is hydro generation.

The locals live in extreme poverty conditions without running water, plumbing and food refrigeration. The villagers depend on farming operations for economic sustenance; they produce corn, beans, rice, coffee, potatoes, pepper, tomatoes and onions.

Continued...



Jeff Simpson, CEO

// The holiday season is finally here. Some call it the most wonderful season of all. That's because we associate it with family traditions and gathering with friends and loved ones. It's a time of giving and spreading joy.

But giving back reminds me of the many good things we have right here in our community and why it's so important to spread the good as far as we can, especially to the most vulnerable in our local area. I'm also reminded of how wonderful our community is and what a big impact we can have when we work together.

SWRE members help us spread the good throughout the year. Through our charitable foundation, Operation Round Up, your donations help local charities and SWRE members in need. SWRE members who are enrolled in Operation Round Up contribute an average of 50 cents a month, or six dollars a year, to the foundation. Members can enroll one or multiple accounts, and many members opt into *ORU Plus*, contributing an extra \$1, \$5, etc. a month.

When you "round up" your monthly bill from SWRE and donate to this fund, you're making a big difference in someone's life. You are you helping to meet an immediate, critical need, but just as importantly, you are telling the community that SWRE members care. Over the years, Operation Round Up has supported local schools and volunteer fire departments, fed hungry families, assisted SWRE families with disaster recovery and so much more.

You've likely heard me say that the cooperative principle 'concern for community' is part of SWRE's DNA. It defines who we are as an organization. When we first brought electricity to this community in 1937, the quality of life improved. But other things also need to be addressed and through the years, this co-op has been at the forefront of bringing improvements to the quality of life in our communities. It's why we created Operation Round Up.



To date, with your small change, we've given over \$165,000 back to local charities and SWRE members in need through this program. Across the country, more than 350 electric co-ops have an Operation Round Up program, and together, we've raised millions for local communities. This shows that small donations from electric co-ops like ours, over time, can collectively make a big impact.

As a local cooperative, we have a stake in this community. We hope you will think of SWRE as more than your energy provider, but also as a catalyst for good in our community.

I hope all our members have a joyous holiday season. May it be merry and bright!

To learn more about Operation Round Up, visit SWRE.com/RoundUp. //

LIGHTING A NEW PATH *Continued...*

Justin Marsh says he was positively impacted by this mission and came home with a changed outlook on life.

“This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and it truly humbled me,” says Marsh. “It was a privilege to use the linework trade to make a positive difference in the lives of the people of La Montanita. Their simplicity, joy, and friendship were truly a gift.”

The staff and board of directors at SWRE supported Marsh’s participation in the project.

“We are proud of Justin for selflessly giving his time for an extended period of time to help our neighbors in Central America,” says Jeff Simpson, SWRE’s CEO. “This is a powerful way to display one of the cooperatives’ core principles, ‘Concern for Community,’ at home and across the borders.”

Electric cooperatives have a long-standing tradition of bringing lights where there are none. More than eighty years ago, cooperatives brought power to rural America and its countryside; given its origins, electric co-ops are willing and well positioned to help other areas that do not have access to electric power.

“Bringing electricity to remote areas in developing countries takes electric cooperatives back to their roots,” says Chris Meyers, general manager of the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives. “It reinforces our commitment to improve the quality of life for local communities at home and abroad. Access to electricity will bring economic empowerment, better access to health care and education and enhanced safety for these villagers. It’s a life-changing gift.”

Collectively, Oklahoma’s electric cooperatives have made possible nearly 700 first-time electric connections in seven villages in Central America and South America.

Oklahoma’s electric cooperatives have established a 501(c)3 not-for-profit, The Oklahoma Energy Trails Foundation, to support this cause; five projects have been sponsored since 2016. All contributions to the foundation are tax-deductible. Learn more at [OAEC.Coop/Co-op-Difference/Energy-Trails](https://www.oaec.org/Coop/Co-op-Difference/Energy-Trails).



Photographs courtesy of Studio1441.

Trading Post

For Sale: Wingback chair, asking \$100. Assorted vintage crate boxes, asking \$25 each. Assorted hurricane lamp bases, make an offer. Call or text (580) 512-6674 for more information or pictures.

For Sale: Medline four-wheel rollator walker, brand new, heavy duty and excellent for rough terrain, asking \$150. Also, shower chair in excellent condition, asking \$25. Located in Altus. Call (580) 471-9118 for more information.

FREE classified non-commercial ad submissions are available for SWRE members only. Submissions must include the account holder's name and account number to be eligible. Ads are also posted on SWRE.com/Trading-Post.

Send your ad to the marketing department by mail, e-mail or phone!

*MAIL: P.O. Box 310, Tipton, OK 73570
E-MAIL: marketing@swre.com
PHONE: 1-800-256-7973*

Holiday Hours

Our office will be closed Friday, **December 23** and Monday, **December 26** to observe Christmas and Monday, **January 2** to observe New Years.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from your cooperative family!



CHRISTMAS WREATH CHARCUTERIE BOARD

INGREDIENTS:

Fresh greenery (like rosemary)	Black olives, cured and pitted
Cheddar cheese, cubed	Green olives, cured and pitted
Pepper jack cheese, cubed	Salami
Colby cheese, cubed	Green and/or purple seedless grapes
Fresh mozzarella balls	
Cherry tomatoes	

DIRECTIONS:

1. Use a large platter or wooden cutting board as the base (round is best). Start carefully placing each of your ingredients on the board. Make sure as you are adding, plan them out using a mix of colors!
2. Place the cheeses (mozzarella balls, cheddar, pepper jack and colby) in each of the four corners of the wreath to spread out the colors/like ingredients.
3. Add black and green olives. Then, place your tomatoes and grapes (round ingredients tend to roll, so just be careful as you place them).
4. Lastly, add your meats. Fold your meats in half, and then again to make a rosette. Place them between other items on the board to allow them to stand up. You can also make a roll rosette by using the edge of a champagne glass, layering the sliced meat around the edge until you make a rose.
5. Once you get all the ingredients placed, cup in the edges carefully to round them out. Use sprigs of fresh greenery to decorate the edge and inner circle of the wreath.
6. Serve with crackers, pretzels or bread chips!

Source: You can find this recipe and substitution ideas by Brittanie at simplisticallyliving.com/christmas-wreath-charcuterie-board.

Southwest Rural Electric

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Rebecca Chambless, *Power Source* editor

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