



SWIRE linemen are (front, l to r) Gerald Simpson, David Ball, Jim McPherson, Justin Marsh, Jimmy Westover and Bo Lesley. Back, Austin Huff, Jacob Cope, Kelby Boyd, James "Redbird" Stephens, James Aldridge, and Calvin Flood.

April 10 is Lineworker Appreciation Day

Monday, April 10, 2017, is designated as National Lineman Appreciation Day at rural electric cooperatives throughout the United States.

The job of an electric lineman isn't always easy. At any time of the day or the middle of the night, in all kinds of weather, he can be called to work and must be ready to respond.

He works in extreme conditions that are often miserable. Heat. Cold. Wind. Rain. Snow. Sleet. Mud.

During extended outages he works days at a time, with little rest and no days off.

Always, he works to get power restored as quickly as possible, but is always mindful of safety and safe work practices.

He never forgets that he has a dangerous job.

He's committed to co-op members, doing whatever it takes to get their power back on – and keep it on.

His job requires years of specialized education to become a Journeyman Lineman, and ongoing training throughout his career, especially in areas that relate to safety. His work is specialized and his education is never complete.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Board unanimously adopted the following resolution proclaiming the special day:

"Whereas linemen leave their families and put their lives on the line every day to keep the power on; Whereas linemen work 365 days a year under dangerous conditions to build, maintain and repair the electric infrastructure; Whereas linemen are the first responders of the electric cooperative family, getting power back on and making things safe for all after storms and accidents; and Whereas there would be no electric cooperatives without the brave men and women who comprise our corps of linemen;

"Therefore be it resolved that NRECA recognizes the Second Monday of April each year as National Lineman Appreciation Day. We proudly recognize all electric linemen for the services they perform around the clock in dangerous conditions to keep power flowing and protect the public's safety."

SWIRE General Manager/CEO Kenneth Simmons expressed support for the resolution.

"Electric linemen do not often receive the recognition they deserve," Simmons said. "They work all hours of the day, often in hazardous conditions far from their families, going above and beyond to restore power to our co-op's members. Our linemen, as well as linemen across the nation, truly do deserve this special day of recognition."

SWRE Manager's Report

Job of Lineman is Demanding



It takes a special individual to be a lineman.

They have to like hard, difficult work – sometimes many hours or days of hard work at a single stretch with little or no rest.

They can't be afraid of terrible working conditions – ice, mud, rain, wind, or any other forces that Mother Nature can conjure up.

They have to be educated about how to work in dangerous conditions that would terrify most folks, and they must always be alert. Electricity, for those who are untrained or careless, can kill.



Austin Huff

They have to be willing to answer the call to get out of a warm bed, leave their wife and kids, and venture out to work. During the night. During family events. During holidays.

Above all, they have to believe in service – service to the people who are counting on them to “keep the lights on”.

Yes. It does take a special individual to be a lineman.

That's why I'm pleased to observe National Lineworkers Day on April 10.

I'm proud of all our SWRE employees, but I am especially pleased to recognize and honor the service of our SWRE linemen. They are a great bunch of men whose work and service is the backbone of our co-op.

Becoming a career journeyman lineman is not easy.

When SWRE or other cooperatives hire linemen, they traditionally first assume the position as an apprentice lineman with the agreement that they will pursue certification as journeyman lineman. It's a rigorous course of study that typically takes several years to complete.

I'm pleased to tell you that Austin Huff, a member of our Oklahoma lineman crew, has recently completed his accreditation training and will receive his journeyman certification in a ceremony to be held this month in Oklahoma City. It's a big accomplishment.

Austin joins 12 of his fellow SWRE workers who hold journeyman certification. Four apprentice linemen are currently pursuing the accreditation.

The journeyman certification program is through Northwest Lineman's College, and the coursework is rigorous.

“It's been tough”, Austin said about the process. “It involved lots of studying for a lot of tests. I studied a lot at home whenever I could get spare time and I took the tests on days off. I tried to take two tests a month.”

The coursework involved taking more than 40 written, timed tests, in addition to many observable benchmarks.

According to Austin, some of the tests were particularly challenging.

“We had to know OSHA codes,” he said, “but the codes were constantly changing. I'd study the codes, and then

receive a book with new codes. Three new National Electric Safety Code books were issued after I received my study manual. It was hard to keep track of the codes and numbers for them.”

The coursework isn't limited to just electrical issues, but also includes things like weights and limits. Several of the tests required complicated calculations.

As an example, “Pole weight tests were difficult,” Austin said. “We had to figure weights of wood for different species of poles.”

Rope strength calculations were also part of the testing curriculum.

The journeyman accreditation process traditionally takes four years to complete, but candidates can advance through the coursework at their own schedule. Austin was able to complete the course in three years and two months.

Austin and his wife Whitney live in Tipton and are parents of two boys, Daytyn, 7, and Warryn, 5.

The couple grew up in Tipton, attended school in the same class, and have known each other all their lives. They married soon after high school.

“I always wanted to be a lineman,” Austin said. “I was interested in electricity and SWRE is a big company in Tipton. I wanted to work for the co-op.”

Before being hired by SWRE in 2013, he worked installing pivot irrigation systems for a dealership. “I built pivots for them, wired machines, put water wells in the ground, and hooked up underground pipe.” It was good preparation for work at SWRE.

The best part of his co-op job, Austin said, is working with people – both SWRE members and his co-op coworkers. “Every day is different,” he said. “I might work at the big rock crusher (near Snyder) one day, at an irrigation well the next day, and doing a pad mount the day after that. I'm always on the move and there's always something to learn.”

About his fellow linemen he said, “There's not better people anywhere than the guys who work at the co-op. Everyone looks out for each other and takes care of each other.”

In his spare time, Austin likes to hunt, fish, and spend time with his two boys.

I would like to personally extend congratulations to Austin on this major achievement of becoming a journeyman. I also offer encouragement to the apprentice linemen who are currently involved in the process.

There's no doubt that the process is rigorous, difficult and demanding, but it's part of the preparation for providing “Safety, Service, Satisfaction... One member at a time.”

I hope you join me in extending special good wishes and appreciation to our journeyman linemen and SWRE operations personnel on National Lineworkers Day and every other day, too.

Kenneth E. Simmons

Capital Credit Addresses Needed

SWRE mailed capital credit checks in December, but checks from the following accounts have been returned. Many of these accounts existed in the 1970s and account holders and/or heirs have moved or are deceased. These individuals or heirs should contact SWRE with mailing addresses – 1-800-256-7973.

ALTUS – Aboussie & Shadid; Joel W. Appleby; C.R. Barrett & Sons; William H. Beebe; W.H. Billings; F.E. Blackstone; Billy Wayne Boyd; Franklin D. Brandon; George Green; Edwin D. Guthrie; Janice Hardwick; Bobby J. Heitz; Baxter Henry; Robert Hetrick; Robert Howland; Jerry E. Killian; Andrew

Electricity theft impacts all members

Electricity theft is a reality for co-ops across the nation and SWRE is no exception.

Stealing electricity is not just a theft against the co-op, but every member-owner of the organization. Theft increases electricity losses and raises overall costs for other customers.

SWRE takes cases of meter tampering or theft seriously and will prosecute violators to the limits allowed by law.

AMR meters can make theft highly detectable, and SWRE employees are on alert for signs of theft.

Co-op members who know cases of power theft or tampering are encouraged to contact SWRE, office of the general manager, at 1-800-256-7973.

E. King; Wanda Lankford; Bruce McDonald; Mark Construction.; Bobby Marple; Sammie Nash; Vernon Phillips; Pixley Leasing Co.; Don Ragan; Monte J. Roberts; Carl Frutledge; Terry M. Sanders; Morris J. Speck; Ed Sullivan; Kirk Tigert; Edith Weeks

BLAIR – John W. Bidy; James Duncan; Betty Griffin; Roland Hawkins; Lonnie W. Lake; Clifford McElroy; Ronnie Shotswell; Louin. W. Roberts

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HARROLD – Bethel Baptist Church; Bobby Crews; Grace Kelly

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IOWA PARK – James Billingsley; Marilyn Walker

MANITOU – Tommy G. Dempsey; Max Meadows

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TIPTON – Jim Dickey; Mack Dickey; David Franck; Warren Newman; M.L. Rooke; Christine Seamster

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24-Hour Dispatching Emergency Service
1-800-256-7973

Payments can be made at SWRE, 700 North Broadway, Tipton, OK 73570.

Online payments can be made at www.swre.com or utilizing the SWRE app for phones and tablets. Payments may be made by telephone at 1-855-980-6821.

Payments may also be made at the following area banking institutions:

Oklahoma

Altus – Frazer Bank, National Bank of Commerce

Blair – Peoples State Bank

Snyder – All American Bank

Frederick – BancFirst, Frazer Bank

Texas

Chillicothe – American National Bank

Crowell – State Bank

Electra – Waggoner National Bank

Vernon – Herring Bank, Waggoner Bank, Bank of the West

NOTE: When paying at a bank, allow 10 days prior to the bill's due date.

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SWRE is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

What's Cookin' in the SWRE Kitchen

An easy one-pot recipe from Texas Co-op Power's *The Best of Typically Texas Cookbook*

Sausage Bean Chowder

- 2 lbs. ground sausage
- 4 cups water
- 2 cans (15 oz. each) pinto beans
- 2 cans (14.5 oz. each) stewed tomatoes
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 potatoes, peeled and diced
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic salt

Directions

1. Brown sausage and drain.
2. Add all ingredients in large pan and simmer for one hour.
3. Remove bay leaf before serving.

Cook's note: if you want the chowder to be hot and spicy, use hot sausage and diced tomatoes with green chilies

NOTE: This and more than 700 other great recipes submitted by Texas Electric Cooperative cooks are available in a great cookbook. To order it by mail, send a check or money order for \$29.95 to *The Best of Typically Texas Cookbook*, 1122 Colorado Street, 24th Floor, Austin, Texas 78701.



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Ads are online for 45 days & updated daily at www.swre.com

For Sale: 2000 Airstream. 19-ft Bambi. \$15,500. Call 940-839-9094

For Sale by Owner: House and 10 acres located in the country southeast of Snyder, OK (3 miles south of HWY 62, and 4-1/2 miles east of HWY 183). Approx. 980-square-ft, two bedroom, one bath, and open kitchen-dining-living room design. Built in 2013. Asking \$40,000 and selling as is. For info, contact Jennifer at 580-569-4658

FREE PUPPIES AND DOGS: Border collie mix puppies, six weeks old. Four black and white males. One red and white female. Ready on about March 23. Also have free adult mixes to give away. Adults are one black and white Pointer-looking male; one black and white Pit looking female w/ one blue eye; two black/white/tan Border Collie mix (one male and one female); one black and white Border Collie mix, female; two black/tan/white German Shepherd mixes (one male, one female). Really need to give them away to good homes.
Call 580-471-7182 or 580-471-7183

For Sale: 13-ft. John Deere tandem disc plow; 13-ft. John Deere 8300 grain drill; 12-ft. Craus chisel plow; John Deere 705 power rake; 12-ft. New Holland swather; New Holland 664 baler; 10-ft. Mohawk shredder; 2013 Massey Ferguson 4609L tractor w/ brushhog loader. 200 hours. Like new. Call 940-357-9677. Email for prices and pictures: cbmi7766@sbcglobal.net

For Sale: 470 Brent grain cart, \$4,750; 1500-gallon diesel skid tank w/ pump, \$1,000. Near Vernon. Call 940-631-1287

For Sale: Marco power sprayer. P 50-3. Two tanks, 50 gallon and 66 gallon. On trailer. Spray gun and hose. \$900. Vernon. Call 940-553-3143

For Sale: Sears 10-inch contractor table saw. \$500. Vernon. Call 940-553-3143

For Sale: Jack Russell Puppies for sale. Vet checked, wormed, first shots. 580-480-5692 or 580-301-0253

For Sale: Ford tractor, 800 model. New tires. New shade canopy. A-1 condition! \$3,300. Call 580-704-4645

Wanted: Gentle barn kitties. Contact 940-552-0424

For Sale: Commercial building in Tipton on four corner lots with a 20'x48' warehouse. For more information, call 580-667-5466 or 580-305-0904

Free to a Good Home: Large neutered mixed breed yard dog. He's a great dog but needs a new home because we are moving and can't take him with us. He's beautiful and is great with kids. He needs a good country home. Call 580-450-6088

NOTE: To be included in the print issue of SWRE News, ads should be received by the 10th of the previous month.

FREE classified non-commercial ads available for SWRE members only
MAIL ADS TO JOE WYNN AT P.O. BOX 310 TIPTON, OK 73570. E-MAIL THEM TO JOEW@SWRE.COM, OR CALL 1-800-256-7973.