

# Powerline Press

## NEWSLETTER



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

May 2022

## Say Hello to LREC's New CEO

NRECA Executive Search and The Board of Directors of Lake Region Electric Cooperative are pleased to announce the appointment of John Lee as General Manager and CEO.

John Lee joins LREC as the organization's ninth General Manager and CEO and succeeds Hamid Vahdatipour who served in the role for the previous 30 years. Lee, a South Dakota native, has a wife and a daughter, is active in his community, and has served as a member of Spearfish, SD City Council.

LREC Board Chairman Scott Manes said, "We are excited to announce that John Lee joined the LREC team on April 4, 2022. He shares the same cooperative values that we value and will continue leading LREC towards meeting our members' needs."

Prior to joining LREC, Lee served as General Manager and CEO of Butte Electric Cooperative in Newell, SD, a position he held since 2012. Prior to his tenure as CEO there, he served as the Member Services Manager position at the cooperative since February of 2006.



Mr. Lee's educational and executive accomplishments include a bachelor's degree in Business Administration earned from Black Hills State University of Spearfish South Dakota. He has also completed NRECA's Management Internship Program (MIP).

## It's time for Spring Cleaning! Keep Your Contact Info Current

Spring is here! Now is the perfect time to update your contact information and secure access to our SmartHub App! Providing accurate contact information ensures that you continue to receive important messages from your Cooperative and can report outages quickly. We schedule automated calls to notify members of planned outages or pending disconnects. We also mail deposit checks or capital credit checks to the address we have on file.

### Updating your contact information is easy!

- |                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1. Login to SmartHub App  | 1. Go to <a href="http://www.lrecok.coop">www.lrecok.coop</a> |
| 2. Tap Settings           | 2. Select member services                                     |
| 3. Select Billing Address | 3. Select update contact info                                 |
| 4. Update Contact Info    | 4. Complete online form                                       |
| 5. Select Save            | 5. Submit   |

**Thank you for keeping your information current.  
We look forward to connecting with you!**

# IT'S BACK! 2022 Youth Tour Winners

Lake Region Electric Cooperative is delighted to announce the selection of three delegates to participate in the 2022 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C.

“After taking two years off from awarding this trip to our local youth, we are excited it is back! LREC proudly supports the Oklahoma Youth Tour trip and is happy these students were selected and will get to experience a great trip,” added Juanita Keener, Youth Tour Coordinator.

The winners were selected based on essays written on the topic of Oklahoma rural electric cooperatives. The local schools selected their top two finalists from the essays to compete in the final question and answer session held at the LREC Youth Tour Banquet at the Sequoyah Lodge in Hulbert. A panel of three judges and co-op industry experts interviewed the students based on their subject knowledge, personality, speaking ability, and presentation.

The Youth Tour competition is available to all students in LREC’s service territory who are completing their junior year in high school.

Juanita Keener, Youth Tour Coordinator, visited local schools in the service area with a presentation about the electric cooperative history and the Annual Youth Tour trip.



Left to right: Juanita Keener, LREC Youth Tour Coordinator, Layton Haught, Dillion Stillwell, Eli Smartwood, and Glen Clark, LREC Director of Marketing & Member Services.

LREC is proud to have these three students representing our co-op for the 2022 Youth Tour: Layton Haught of Coweta High School, Dillion Stillwell of Hulbert High School, and Eli Smartwood of Coweta High School.

The trip will begin June 17th, when they join other winners from across Oklahoma for a “Get Acquainted Banquet” in Oklahoma City. The delegates will board a plane the following morning and fly to Washington, D.C.

If you are interested in more details regarding the LREC Annual Youth Tour contest and trip, please, call Juanita Keener at **918-772-6940** or visit **[www.lrecok.coop/youth-tour](http://www.lrecok.coop/youth-tour)**.

## Dry multiple loads in a row for maximum efficiency.



Speed up the chore of doing laundry and save energy in the process. Drying multiple loads back-to-back gives you a jump-start on every load by putting the heat remaining in the dryer to good use. The leftover heat minimizes the time it takes your dryer to heat up and how long you’ll have to run it, so your machine becomes less of a drain on your household energy use.

**MORE WAYS TO SAVE > [www.touchstoneenergy.com](http://www.touchstoneenergy.com)**

# Preventing Outages One Tree at a Time

One of the most significant contributors to power outages for our members and unexpected costs for LREC is damage to our local grid caused by unchecked vegetative growth, aka trees. LREC has always worked to keep our right-of-way clear.

Our vegetation management / right-of-way program is critical to keeping our infrastructure running. Through an increased budget, contractor diversity, strict vegetation management guidelines, and working with our three in-house tree trimming crews LREC is actively mitigating the risk factors associated with unchecked vegetative growth in our power distribution system.

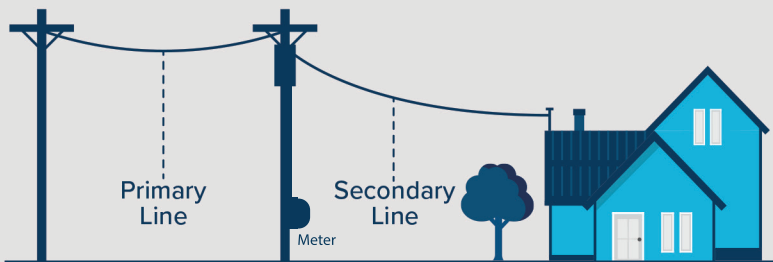
As with any vegetation management program, its primary purpose is risk management. For LREC, this means power reliability, safety, fire mitigation, and associated costs. James Cook, LREC's Right-of-Way Supervisor, addresses these risk factors with our implemented five to seven-year circuit tree trimming strategy. The approach focuses first on removing potentially hazardous trees. If removal is not an option, LREC will then trim trees hanging into our right-of-way to the extent that they will only need to be cut again in five to seven years. LREC thoroughly covers the entire 3,000+ miles of electric lines and fiber cables across our service territory in a methodical

and repetitive pattern preventing issues before they arise.

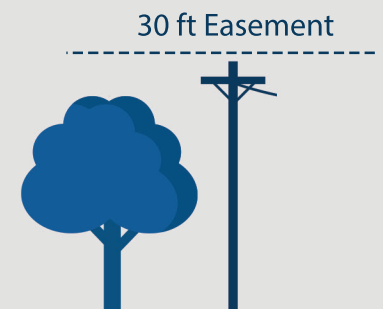
Members regularly see our crews with their trucks and chippers clearing trees and other vegetation on county roads and residential streets. Our tree crews will also climb trees to prune and remove them in harder-to-reach areas. Investing in our vegetation management program is a testament to your LREC Board of Directors' commitment to reliability, risk management, and cost containment.

When planting a tree, you can help save your cooperative money and help keep your lines clear by planting the tree outside the easement. A good rule is 25 ft away from LREC power lines, and ONLY shrubs or smaller trees (less than 20 feet tall) should be planted near power lines. There is always a chance if they grow into the lines, they will be removed. Also don't plant any vegetation around LREC underground equipment, such as transformers, junction boxes or fiber pedestals.

You can report trees growing into LREC lines or equipment at [www.lrecok.coop/right-of-way](http://www.lrecok.coop/right-of-way) Never trim these trees yourself.



LREC right-of-way crews are responsible for maintaining all primary lines. It is the property owner's responsibility to maintain secondary lines that run past the transformer / meter to the home.



LREC will remove all trees inside the right-of-way easement, 15 ft each side of power line with a total 30 ft easement.

# Congratulations Jeff



Left to right: Hamid Vahdatipour, CEO and Jeff Rankin, SCADA Coordinator at retirement party.

LREC's (SCADA) Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition Coordinator Jeff Rankin recently retired after 24 years. Jeff has been a vital part of the LREC engineering and electric operations. He held a position in the meter shop before becoming the SCADA coordinator.

"I enjoyed installing and maintaining all the automated power line equipment and communications, plus troubleshooting and fixing it when something wasn't working correctly," said Jeff.

"For me, some memorable experiences were the major outages, working many hours helping dispatch and operations gather data to help restore power efficiently to our members," added Jeff.

The co-op will miss Jeff Rankin and his years of experience. LREC would like to wish him the best of luck in his new chapter in retirement. Thank you for your time at LREC and all your years of service.

After retirement, Jeff mentioned he plans to take care of his land and his long-term plan is to buy a boat and navigate the Atlantic Intracoastal waterway someday.

## REBATE REMINDER

You save. We pay.

LREC offers a variety of rebate programs designed to help both homeowners and business owners save money on their electric bills.

LREC's rebate programs are designed to help members save money on their electric bill, while also removing inefficient appliances and equipment off our lines. The majority of the funding for our rebates is made available through our wholesale power provider, 293600 Associated Electric Cooperative.

Members can get money back for installing advance programmable thermostats, electric water heaters, heat pump water heaters, mini-split air conditioners, energy star window unit and heat pump heating and cooling systems.

### Advance Programmable Thermostats



Get a \$50 rebate back from your co-op on your electric bill!

All rebates and forms can be found at [www.lrecok.coop/rebates](http://www.lrecok.coop/rebates)

#### Your Board of Trustees

Scott Manes.....President  
Lynn Lamons.....Vice-President  
Randall Shankle.....Secretary-Treasurer  
Jack Teague.....Asst. Secretary-Treasurer  
James Walls ..... Trustee  
Gary Cooper .....Trustee  
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#### Staff

John Lee.....CEO  
Ben McCollum .....Director of Finance  
Logan Pleasant.....Director of Operations  
Glen Clark .....Director of Marketing  
Larry Mattes.....Communications  
Tina Glory-Jordan .....Attorney

#### Office Hours

Monday-Friday  
8:00 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

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.

