



the **COOPERATOR**

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A supplement to Oklahoma Living



"Getting lights"

Kay Electric member recalls when electricity came to his family's Noble County farm

Bart Brorsen was 12 years old when his life changed forever. That year, his family's farm northeast of Perry received electricity.

For the first six years of his education, Brorsen attended a rural one-room school. As a boy, he remembers the stir of neighbors and farmers talking about "getting lights."

"They didn't say electricity, they used the expression, 'Are you going to get lights?'" he recalls.

As a child today might watch with fascination as construction crews operate heavy machinery, Brorsen remembers watching as men set high-line poles and wired his home for electricity.

"I remember the holes for electric poles being dug by hand," he says.

In the absence of machinery they used a long-handled tool called a banjo to dig the hole, "a spoon" to remove the dirt once the pole was set, and a tamper to set the dirt around the pole.

"I was so impressed with the fellas digging such a big hole by hand with these long handled tools that a few years ago, I was at an auction and saw the tools and bought them."

In 1944, his family finally "got lights." To shatter any nostalgia around the occasion, Brorsen says he doesn't recall the moment the electricity first came on, but

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OUR MISSION

Founded in 1937, Kay Electric Cooperative remains focused on our primary mission: to provide safe, affordable and reliable power for our member-owners. Today, our service territory includes 2,400 miles of line and more than 5,800 meters located in Kay, Grant, Noble, Osage and Garfield counties.

CONTACT US

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REPORT AN OUTAGE

Call 800-535-1079 or use Kay Electric's SmartHub at www.kayelectric.coop or download the SmartHub app for smartphone or tablet.

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MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Peak Day Double Play

Jason Boesch, CEO

Baseball has the famed double play. A single hit but two outs. Efficiency at its finest. A pitcher's dream come true.

The electricity industry has its own version of the double play: peak days. A casual following of Kay Electric's website or Facebook this summer and you know there have been many peak day alerts. Hot temperatures combined with fuel costs have led to higher electric bills, and while 2011 was the hottest summer on record, 2022 is giving it a close run for second.


Peak days are determined by Kay Electric's energy supplier Western Farmers Electric Cooperative (WFEC). WFEC, on a daily basis, will determine if conditions warrant an increase in energy load. Those conditions could be a result of weather, other environmental conditions, operational factors such as maintenance or a plant failure, fuel shortages, or other concerns. If the conditions line up, then WFEC notifies its member cooperatives that a peak day is in effect. That notice occurs the morning of, and Kay Electric in turn immediately notifies our members in turn by posting to our website and Facebook.

Once a Peak Day is identified, Kay Electric undertakes this communication to encourage voluntary conservation and thereby help decrease the anticipated daily load, particularly during the peak time window of 3 to 7 p.m. Supply and demand drives prices up during these critical times of energy shortage. In conjunction, family members are returning to the home from school or work, with a natural inclination to lower the thermostat for a comfortable temperature level. This is also when daily activities of laundry, dishwasher, watching TV, playing



"Hot temperatures combined with fuel costs have led to higher electric bills, and while 2011 was the hottest summer on record, 2022 is giving it a close run for second."

video games, and cooking dinner commences. While these activities begin for the day, most business, commercial, and industrial consumers are still using the same amounts of power they had been all day. All this additional energy usage means demand is at its greatest while costs are at their highest.

Therefore, the less our member consumers use during high priced periods, our overall power bill will be less when we divide it up in outgoing member bills for payment. Of course, while your individual electric usage plays a factor in your bill, so does the overall energy charge which in a way is shared by everyone. That's the double play; if your household usage is less, it also helps keep the price down for everyone on those peak days to balance supply and demand. Usage and price make for big savings on your Peak Day bill. Batter up. 



Bart Brorsen stands outside his Perry, Oklahoma, home holding a "spoon." He explains that when early lineworkers set poles by hand, they used a long-handled tool called a "banjo" to dig the hole, followed by a spoon to remove the dirt from the hole. Brorsen has memories of men using these tools when electricity first came to his family's farm in the 1940s. Photos by Cyndi Mitchell

BART BRORSEN | Continued from Page 1

he does remember practical concerns of the day.

"People would say, 'It's going to cost over \$3 per month for having these electric lights,'" he recalls. "Most people just thought about the monthly bill was going to be."

At the time, Brorsen didn't realize that electricity would be useful for many things on the farm—not just lights.

Before electricity, they had used a milk machine with a gas-powered engine to milk their 18 cattle, "If the engine didn't start, you were in trouble." Each day, his family sold the cream to a local ice cream plant.

He recalls that scooping grain became easier with the help of an electric auger.

"All of the things you see on the farm today, powered by electricity, came gradually," he says.

Inside the home, one of his memories was of the electric toaster. "People were quite impressed with that."

They also upgraded to an electric washing machine, and once plumbing was in place, an electric water pump on their well.

After graduating from Perry schools, Brorsen attended OSU (then Oklahoma A&M) and earned a degree in animal husbandry. While in college, he won a Farmer's Union speech contest. His prize: a bus tour to Washington, D.C., New York City and Niagara Falls. It would be the first of many trips to Washington.

Brorsen married Lanora in 1954. (Lanora passed away in 2022 after 68 years of marriage.) Back in Perry, they raised three sons and three daughters. He ran a heifer breeding operation and farmed wheat.

"My wife and children were very much involved to make it successful," he says.

His sons participated in FFA, and he served as president of the Oklahoma FFA Association.

Brorsen spent seven years as state director of the Farm Services Administration, headquartered in Stillwater. He served under presidents Nixon, Ford, Reagan, and Bush, Sr., and worked on the Farm Bill alongside Sens. Bellmon, Nichols and Lucas. This role would take him on several trips to Washington D.C.

He says he values the friendships he made from that work, as well as the ex-

perience of "learning how to work with people and accomplish things in a pleasant manner."

A lifelong champion for rural Oklahoma, Brorsen appreciates what Kay Electric has meant to North-Central Oklahoma.

"Kay Electric has always operated as a place of integrity. The early directors intended to pay the [REA] loans off. That's significant," he says. "Some co-ops never intended to pay their loans off and haven't."

His son Verl, serves as vice president of the Kay Electric board of directors and represents District 9.

Though Verl and Brorsen's grandson, Wesley, have taken over the farming operations Brorsen, age 90, stays active.

"We loaded out the 50 bred heifers to go to Texas Panhandle this morning," he says.

Asked whether he thinks back to days before electricity when he turns on the lights, he replies, "No. I flip it on and go right on with my business." 🇺🇸

GOOD COOKIN'

Pumpkin Spice Chex Mix

2 cups Honey Nut Chex
2 cups Wheat Chex
2 cups mini pretzel twists
1 cup honey-roasted peanuts
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
1/4 cup light brown sugar, packed
2 tablespoons light-colored corn syrup
1 1/2 tablespoons pumpkin pie spice
1/2 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup dried cranberries
3/4 cup candy corn and/or M&Ms

In a large, microwave-safe bowl add the Honey Nut Chex, Wheat Chex, pretzels, peanuts, and stir to combine. In a medium microwave-safe bowl, add the butter and heat on high power to melt, about 30 seconds. Add the brown sugar, corn syrup, pumpkin pie spice, salt; stir to combine. Place measuring cup in the microwave and heat until mixture is bubbly and boiling, about 30 seconds. Evenly drizzle brown sugar mixture over the dry ingredients and stir to combine. Place bowl in the microwave and heat on high power for 3 minutes, stirring each minute. After the mix has cooled for about 5 minutes, add the cranberries, candy corn, and stir to combine. Serve immediately.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

FRAN FAST

MEMBER SERVICES

Fran Fast has worked as a member services representative at Kay Electric for the past two years. Each day, she is on the front lines of serving KEC's members, and is happy to fill this role. "I enjoy the work, so it's not hard to get up in the morning," she says. Fran was born in Winfield, Kansas, graduated from Arkansas City, and has lived in Central Kay County for the last 29 years. She is married to Kurt, and they have three sons: Jared, 26, is married to Jori; Tyler, 24, and Justin, 16. She enjoys participating in their ag projects, and watching their games and shows; she says that they are her proudest accomplishment. Thank you, Fran, for your service to Kay Electric!



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OU, OSU AND
NEWKIRK SPORTS



ENJOYS
PINTEREST



ROLE MODELS:
HER GRANDPARENTS

Images: courtesy flaticon

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