

# THE LAMP



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# TIME'S RUNNING OUT:

## ON FILLING THE GENERATION GAP

**E**lectric co-ops have important energy choices to make. We can't stall

or wait for a magic "electricity" bullet. Tighter government regulations—and the high cost to comply with new rules—may signal lights-out for many of the nation's older coal-fired power plants at a time when forecasters predict energy demand will eventually outpace supply. We're approaching crunch time on our ability to keep the lights on—we need to build new power plants.

The recent economic turmoil, terrible as it was, provided some much-needed breathing room on addressing our growing energy needs. But as the economy rebounds, so will our nation's hunger for electricity. The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) predicts when the final 2010 numbers are tallied, energy use will shoot up 5 percent from 2009 levels.

We've encouraged you to be energy efficient both for your sake (lower electric bills) and to help mitigate the need to build new generation sources. You've certainly done your part; between 1980 and 2006, the average amount of energy each American used dropped 2.5 percent. But with an ever-expanding population, these measures are not enough to completely offset escalating energy demand.

The North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), the nation's bulk power grid watchdog, estimates we need to build 135,000 MW of new generation by 2017 to meet demand. Generation facilities on the drawing board, though, will only deliver 77,000 MW—leaving a generation gap.

One NERC-commissioned report claims new government rules could force utilities to retire or retrofit 33,000 MW to 70,000 MW of generating capacity by 2015. Meanwhile, every year we delay building new plants drives up construction costs. If we wait too long, we could see power shortages by the end of this decade.

Traditional power plants (coal, natural gas, nuclear) take between three years and a decade to build not leaving much wiggle room before shortages become a reality. Renewable energy resources, notably wind farms, can be constructed more quickly, but they're not perfect options. It may sound cliché to say the wind doesn't always blow, but it's the truth and you wouldn't be satisfied with only having power 40 percent of the time.

At Indian Electric Cooperative (IEC) we're focused on affordability. Our nation needs to build new power plants before the need for electricity outstrips current generation resources. Although IEC doesn't build and operate power plants as a distribution cooperative, we focus on delivering power to you. We're working with wholesale power suppliers like KAMO Power and AECI to find the best fuel mix solution for your future. We appreciate your support as we make these critical and time-sensitive choices. Balancing your energy needs with electricity reliability and affordability is one more way we're looking out for you. ♦

*New government rules could force utilities to retire or retrofit 33,000 MW to 70,000 MW of generating capacity by 2015*

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# WANDA FOSTER

## A PIONEER OF THE TIMES

By C.L. Harmon



**T**hey call me the pioneer woman,” she said of her fellow board members who sit on OAEC's Board of Trustees. To most this might seem an insult to a woman in her mid-seventies, but to Wanda Foster, it's just a term of endearment. Maybe even a form of respect for this woman who is the oldest seated on the board, its oldest trustee with 20 years of experience and the current vice-president.

Foster is the third in a series of stories written to give co-op members a window in which to see those who represent them...an introduction of sorts. It's also a way for members to see how IEC works for its members based upon the ideas they cultivate and grow into policy.

Policy is where Foster appears to play a large role. Ironically, “pioneer woman” also

*“They call me the pioneer woman,” Wanda Foster*

seems to fit her in the traditional sense of pioneering ideas, which there have been many over the years both as a board member and unique hobbyist.

Want a unique hobby? How about raising bears for a unique hobby? Yes I said Bears! Those big furry, strong and ferocious beasts that one never wants to run into while strolling through the woods on a nature hike. Well Foster keeps a couple in her backyard; Snuggie and Huggie I believe she calls them. Each one weighing 500 pounds and will eat peppermint from her hand.

Like most of her ideas, Foster looks at a situation, determines what, if anything, is wrong, decides it needs to be fixed and then says, “oh why not.” From that point on she jumps head first and always lands on her feet.

As for her background, Foster taught school for 30 years in Tulsa after being an economist for PSO. But keeping with her belief that slowing life down only speeds up the end of it, she decided to run for a director's position 20 years ago and won by only four votes. Seeing as how she kept the position all these years, it appears she has won over many of those voters she didn't have in the first election.

When she first took her position, one of the main problems was with tree trimming. She explained that she supported the concept of bringing the program in house which has turned out to be one of the board's best decisions in her opinion. It would seem that at least two of

the fellow board trustees concur as both Greg Fielding and Mike Spradling both mentioned the same success in their story interviews.

She considers herself a community leader, but not in an arrogant way. She said that her compulsion to correct what she deems wrong just unintentionally places her in that position; probably that school teacher mentality. An example of her efforts would be in the establishment of the Silver City Fire Department. Fires, which were a big problem in that area, combined with the problem of not having a local fire department just seemed wrong and so, along with others in the area, she helped to establish one.

An interesting fact about her efforts for the fire department is how she utilized a program through IEC to make it a reality. The project was funded by using Federal grant money given to the co-op to further economic development. The trustees have been using the \$300,000 grant to fund economic development over the last ten years. The funds are used as a revolving account being lent out and paid back over and over again.

“This program has been very successful. In the ten years since we received the grant, we have helped economic growth. But it's the fire station I'm most proud of,” she said. Speaking of fire departments, another of her accomplishments is the option for people to pay their fire dues through their IEC bill. Since she helped initiate the program, 13 fire departments have signed on. And the best thing, it doesn't cost the co-op anything, because the interest on the money collected pays for the cost of the program, according to Foster. This is the other thing she is proudest of, she added.

Back to co-op business, Foster is very concerned with the rising cost of power. She opted not to talk about specifics such as coal prices and EPA regulations since both Spradling and Fielding covered those concerns so well in their stories and she doesn't want to bore readers. So instead, she illustrated it through a re-

cent event. While in the post office, she noticed an elderly woman sobbing. When she inquired as to why, the lady showed her a \$56 gas bill and relayed that she didn't know how she would pay it. Foster snatched the bill from the lady's hand and drove directly to city hall and paid the bill.

“I can't do that every month, but I could that month,” she quipped. She has the same concern for members during meetings.

“They (fellow board trustees) laugh at me because I really watch the expenses. Someone suggests chain saws and I'm thinking what! Why? What's wrong with the ones we have?” She then has a laugh at her own expense.

Since many of Foster's quests become accomplishments, it should also be noted that she just completed a term as the first woman to ever serve on the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperative's Board of Trustees. A position which she, “really enjoyed,” she said. Other honors/accomplishments include being voted the Outstanding Young Woman of Oklahoma for 1970 and the Outstanding National Senior Citizen for 2001. For the 2001 honor, she received \$20,000 and donated half to the Oilton Chamber of Commerce.

In her final remarks, she spoke extremely high of IEC's Round Up Club, which is a program that takes the difference from participants' bills that is needed to round the bill up to the next dollar amount, and then uses that money as an assistance fund for IEC members. Oh, and she added that she may be 75 years old but she acts 55 and she's going to stay with the board until someone beats her out of her position.

An interesting footnote about Foster: Remember those bears mentioned in the beginning of this story. They have produced 35 offspring which Foster has raised. All of those bears have been placed in zoos throughout the country. In addition, she has raised llamas and apes too. Why?...Why not! ♦

*In addition, she has raised llamas and apes too. Why? ... Why not!*

# OPERATION ROUND-UP<sup>®</sup> REPORT

## YOUR PENNIES MAKE THE DIFFERENCE FOR SO MANY LIVES.

The IEC Foundation, Operation Round-Up<sup>®</sup> awarded assistance grants to 10 families in need this January. The grants assisted with mortgages, rent, car payments, car repairs, car insurance, gasoline as well as clothing needs. The grants ranged from \$100.00 to just under \$670.00.

These grants are made available by IEC Cooperative members voluntarily allowing IEC to round-up their electric bills to the next dollar. The rounded up value, as little as one penny to 99 cents for a maximum total of \$11.88 a year, goes into this important fund.

IEC would like to thank the members who are contributing. Your donations make the difference for so many people.

IEC invites all members to become Operation Round-Up<sup>®</sup> contributing members.

For additional information or to begin donating you may enroll on line at [www.iecok.com](http://www.iecok.com) clicking on the Operation Round-Up<sup>®</sup> link at the top of the page. You may sign up, increase your monthly donation or make a one-time donation.

Grant applications for individuals or non-profit organizations are reviewed the third (3rd) Monday, monthly, by the IEC Foundation Board. All applicants participate in an interview with a foundation board member prior to the grant meeting. Applications are available in customer service at both IEC offices, or by contacting Clara Eulert, 918) 358-2514. ♦

### Recipe: Hot and Spicy Dip

1 pound ground beef	3/4 cup chopped onion
2 cloves garlic, minced	3/4 cup chopped green bell pepper
2 jalapeno peppers, seeded and chopped	3/4 cup blanched slivered almonds
1 (2 ounce) jar pimento peppers, drained and chopped.	3/4 cup raisins
1 (8 ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained	1 (6 ounce) can tomato paste
2 tablespoons white sugar, or to taste	1 tablespoon dried oregano
	2 teaspoons salt

Crumble beef into a large skillet over medium heat. Cook until starting to brown. Add onion, garlic, bell pepper and jalapeno pepper. Cook until meat is no longer pink. Drain excess grease. Fill the pan with enough water to cover the beef, cover, and simmer over low heat for 30 minutes.

Stir in the almonds, pimentos, raisins, tomatoes, tomato paste and sugar. Season with oregano and salt. Simmer over low heat, stirring occasionally for at least 1 hour.

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