

Chub Brewer Selected as 2009 Employee of the Year p. 3

Fluorescent Fridays

We're Giving Away Free CFL Bulbs Every Friday in February

When you think of February, you may think red valentines and chocolate candy. But this February, we want you to think fluorescent. Fluorescent Fridays, in fact.

Each Friday in February we are giving away packages of four CFL light bulbs. We will have a light booth in the lobby of our headquarters facility; all you need to do is come in on a Fluorescent Friday and ask for your package of CFL light bulbs.

Every member is eligible for one package of four bulbs for the duration of the program.

The bulbs are equivalent to 75-Watt bulbs, and each package is valued at over \$7.

**Co-op
Free
Lights**

"A CFL bulb is a smaller version of a standard fluorescent tube, and can provide the same amount of light as standard incandescent bulbs," explains Paula Lanni, VVEC member services representative.

She goes on to say CFLs use 75 percent less energy than standard incandescent bulbs and

last up to 10 times longer.

"They generate less heat, which makes them safer to operate.

"Since lighting can account for about 20 percent of the average home's electric bill, using just two CFLs can save an average of about \$60 in energy costs over the lifetime of the bulbs," she says.

So, pick a Friday and go fluorescent!

Come by our office at 8901 E. 146th Street N. in Collinsville, on any Fluorescent Friday in February to pick up your package of four CFL light bulbs.



CFL Facts and Figures

If every American home replaced just one light bulb with an ENERGY STAR qualified bulb, we would save enough energy to light more than 3 million homes for a year, more than \$600 million in annual energy costs, and prevent greenhouse gases equivalent to the emissions of more than \$800,000 cars.

In 2007, Americans saved \$1.5 billion by switching to ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs. The energy saved could light all the households in a city the size of Washington, D. C. for over 30 years.

Put another way, changing these bulbs removes as much greenhouse gas pollution as planting 2.85 million acres of trees or taking 2 million cars off the road each year.

Using ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs result in less mercury in our environment. A coal-fired power plant produces 13.6 milligrams (mg) of mercury to power one 16-Watt incandescent bulb, but only 3.3 mg to power an equivalent CFL. Even with 5 mg of mercury inside, using CFLs results in 5.3 fewer mg of mercury compared to incandescent bulbs.

NEWS

Work Continues on Co-op Connections® Card



We're continuing to enhance the Co-op Connections® Card program and to enlist the services of local businesses.

If you have questions about your card or participating businesses, we encourage you to visit these Web sites: www.connections.coop or www.vvec.com, or to call our office.

And we will continue to include information about the program's progress in upcoming issues of *VVEC Power Circuit*.

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Monday through Friday

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Thanks for a Good Job



VVEC management recently recognized several employees and a trustee for their years of service to the co-op and its members.

Starting at the top of the stairs are Clyde Willard, 30 years; Kim Swango, 30 years; Ed Rake, 30 years; trustee Vernon Lewis, 25 years; Sharon Mendell, 15 years; Mike Martin, 25 years; Debbie Riley, 5 years; Jon Van Pelt and Chub Brewer, 20 years.

Front row, (left to right) are Kyle Sears, Ricky Rimpley, Robert Cornett and Logan Wells, all 5 years; Kathy Calico, 20 years, and Jan White, 10 years.

Not pictured are David Sandstrom, 30 years; Carla Brown, 25 years; Bill Gillespie, 15 years; Carolyn Blakeman, 10 years; and Vivian Rabbit, 5 years.

What to do if Your Power Goes Off

1. Check your fuses or circuit breakers. Every service is different. You may have fuses or circuit breakers in your house, on the side of your house, under your meter, or all three places. Check to see if your neighbors have electricity.
2. Call the Co-op at 371-2584, or 1-800-870-5948 if the call is long distance for you. Have your account number, name as it appears on the account, and address handy to give to the dispatcher. If you should get a recording, please don't hang up; leave your information. It will be retrieved and given to the correct department. Every message is answered.



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Employees Select Chub Brewer

2009 Employee of the Year

Receiving awards is always nice. But recognition given by one's peers carries a special meaning.

VVEC employees voted Member Services Representative Chub Brewer the 2009 Employee of the Year. The annual award is presented during the employee Christmas party.

Chub started in VVEC's operations department, on one of the brush crews, in September 1989. Since then he has been a construction lineman, maintenance lineman, assistant foreman on a construction crew, and chief mechanic.

In 2006, Chub moved into the member services department where he works with members by conducting energy audits, responds to member questions about electric usage, works with the appliance and equipment rebate program, assists with Youth Tour and Energy Camp programs, community programs and member meetings, and serves on the board of directors for the Oologah Chamber of Commerce.

"Chub has a tremendous work ethic," says Paula Lanni, member services representative. "He is respectful and humble when dealing with both the members and his fellow employees. But he also has a great sense of humor, and doesn't mind telling you like it is."


"He is one of those people you just always enjoy being around," she says.

"Chub could probably be in the running for Employee of the Year every year," says Mike Hall, VVEC's director of operations services, engineering and purchasing.

"Chub is always on call for anyone who needs help, with no questions asked. That's why he was so modest when he and his son responded to the request for help when the little girl was lost near Oologah last summer. That family was fortunate Chub and Chaz responded, and

ultimately found the little girl."

Randy Riddle, VVEC manager of operations and technical services, says "Chub has always been a very willing employee. During his days in the line department, no job was left undone if Chub was asked to do it. He is always willing to help. Even after he left the line department, he kept up his climbing credentials so he could help during outages or special jobs that required a lot of pole climbing."

When Chub isn't working, he enjoys spending his free time ranching, fishing and hunting. But his favorite activities are the ones he shares with his wife Christi, daughter Kalyn, son Chaz, and grandson Ty. 



Chub Brewer




The blizzard that blew through Green Country Christmas eve made history. High winds accompanied record amounts of snow, making travel almost impossible.

Despite those blizzard conditions, WVEC experienced a relatively low number of outages.

According to Mike Hall, WVEC director of operations services, engineering and purchasing, a single-phase pole was blown down by the high winds, resulting in power being interrupted to about 674 members. Hall says crews were dispatched immediately and power was restored in about two hours.

"We have to credit our maintenance program with keeping the number of outages low and the length of the outages brief," he says. "We work throughout the year to keep our rights-of-way clear, and our equipment in good shape so we won't experience massive outages when Mother Nature hits us with something like this."

"And as always, our members were understanding about what caused the outages and were appreciative of our repair efforts. We thank them for their patience and understanding." 

How Much is Too Much?

Are your electrical outlets overstuffed with power strips, extension cords and outlet splitters? That's not just an unsightly tripping hazard. It's a fire hazard.

Plugging more appliances, lights and electronics into a single outlet than its circuit is meant to handle causes the receptacle or cords to overheat and potentially start an electrical fire. The Consumer Product Safety Commission attributes 3,500 fires each year to outlet issues.

How do you know if you're pushing your outlet to the brink? Check for these common indicators of potential electrical hazards:

- **Hot outlets:** If you can't touch a cord, plug or faceplate for more than five seconds without saying, "Ouch!" the

outlet is overloaded.


- **Shocks:** Small shocks from touching appliances or outlets could point to danger.

- **Blown fuses:** If fuses continue to blow after you replace them, or circuit breakers constantly trip, the wiring cannot handle the outlet's load.

- **Flickering lights:** Flickering or dimming lights could indicate an overloaded outlet.

- **Wavering screens:** Similarly, if your computer or TV screen wavers when a large appliance is plugged in, it could mean the outlet is overstressed.

- **High-wattage appliances:** Never plug a high-wattage appliance, such as a refrigerator or dryer, into an extension cord.

Any of these symptoms could mean your home's wiring can't keep up with the increasing energy demands of your large appliances and electronics. Call a licensed electrician to give you an estimate for wiring repairs or upgrades. 



RECIPE

Toasted Cheese Sandwiches

1&1/3 cups grated cheddar cheese
 1/3 cup sour cream
 2&1/2 tsp. Dijon mustard
 Sea salt and freshly ground pepper
 8 slices of bread
 Butter

Combine cheese, sour cream, mustard, salt and pepper. Spread onto 4 slices of bread, top with four more slices, then spread a little butter over the outsides of the sandwiches.

Cook in a non-stick skillet over medium heat until golden and crisp.

YIELD: 4 sandwiches.

Need Caulk? Do It Yourself

Caulking is an easy, inexpensive way to seal drafts around your home and make it feel warmer in the winter. Beyond keeping your house more comfortable, caulking can pay for itself through energy savings in only one year. The best part? It's a do-it-yourself job.

Most caulking compounds come in disposable cartridges that fit in half-barrel caulking guns. Look for a caulking gun with an automatic release for the smoothest application. Caulk forms a flexible seal and

works best for cracks and gaps less than a quarter-inch wide. To make your first caulking job a breeze, follow these application tips:

- Before application, remove old caulk and paint from the area using a putty knife. Clean and dry the area to avoid sealing in moisture.
- Hold the gun at a consistent 45-degree angle along the crack. This angle will help force the caulk immediately into the crack as it is applied.

- Caulk in one straight, continuous line. Avoid starts and stops.

- Release the trigger before pulling the gun away to avoid excess caulk. An automatic release will help avoid this problem.

- Make sure the caulk sticks to both sides of the crack. If it oozes out, push it back in with a putty knife.

- If the caulk shrinks, re-apply it to seal the crack completely. 