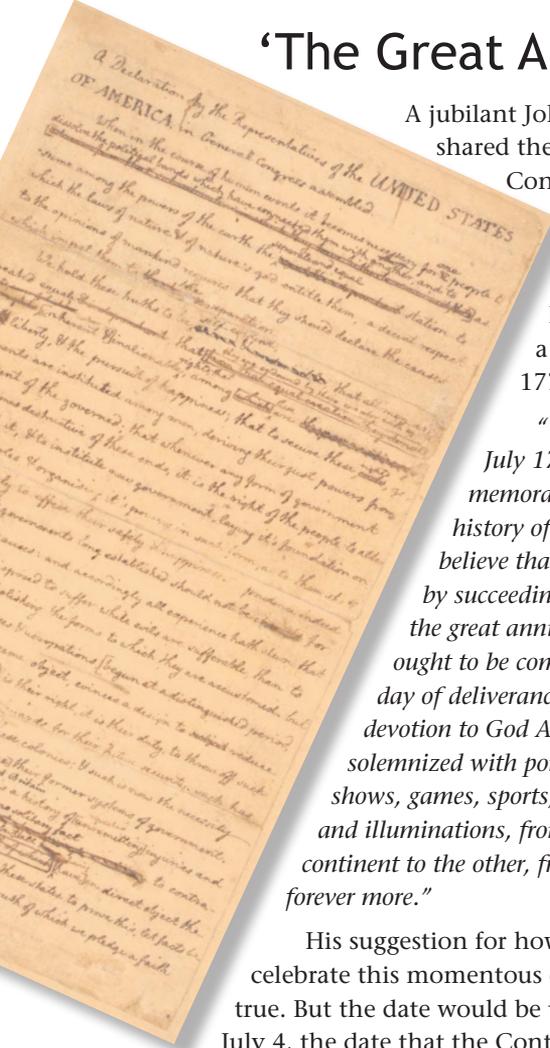


'The Great Anniversary Festival'



A jubilant John Adams eagerly shared the news of the Continental Congress' vote to declare independence from England with his wife, Abigail, in a letter dated July 3, 1776:

"The second day of July 1776, will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forever more."

His suggestion for how Americans should celebrate this momentous decision would come true. But the date would be two days later on July 4, the date that the Continental Congress formally adopted the Declaration of Independence, written by Thomas Jefferson of Virginia. The following year,

the city of Philadelphia, which was home to the Continental Congress, began celebrating what they called Independence Day on July 4 with bonfires, fireworks and the ringing of bells. Congress was adjourned as part of the celebration.

It would not be until after the War of 1812 between America and Great Britain, however, that July 4 would be widely celebrated. On the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, then former President Thomas Jefferson, who was ill, declined an invitation to come to Washington, D.C., to celebrate it. In declining it, he still supported an annual day of remembrance:

"For ourselves, let the annual return of this day forever refresh our recollections of these rights, and an undiminished devotion to them."

Jefferson would die soon after, ironically, on July 4, at the age of 83.

On the same day, five hours later, the 90-year-old Adams, who was both friends and adversaries with Jefferson during their lifetimes, died at his Massachusetts home while Americans celebrated Independence Day, just as he predicted a half century before.

This year marks the 244th anniversary of our nation's declaration of independence (July 4 became a national holiday in 1870). While large gatherings may not be as numerous in this age of the COVID-19 pandemic, we can still safely celebrate "The Great Anniversary Festival" as we pause to remember the courage and hard work of the founding fathers who voted and fought to create the "home of the brave and the land of the free." May we never take our liberties for granted.



David Burns retires

David Burns, Manager of Finance and Accounting, retired on March 23 after working for the cooperative for 21 years. David, the son of the late Horace and Martha Burns, was raised in Star City, graduated from Star City High School, and attend the University of Arkansas – Monticello where he graduated with an accounting degree in 1983. He then worked for Newton, Owen & Smith, CPA firm, for 14 years and became a partner in the firm while there. He came to work at C & L in May 1999 as an accountant for the cooperative.

David and his wife Mary have one son, Jordan. David and Mary are members of First United Methodist Church, Star City, Arkansas. Although David has retired from C & L, you can still find him in a partnership role at Chami, Burns & White, CPAs.

When asked what he is most looking forward to in retirement, David replied, "I plan on fishing and hunting more often and do more yard work, when it's needed." David also expressed his desire to help with the UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) and the Red Cross disaster relief.

C & L greatly appreciates David for his outstanding work ethic and his cooperative attitude. The Board of Directors and employees wish David the very best in his retirement.



Plan for a safe and festive Fourth

Normally the Fourth of July involves big get-togethers and boisterous gatherings. However, this year has been anything but normal due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We're celebrating everything from graduations to birthdays differently in these times of social distancing. And it's possible that we're having to rethink our usual Independence Day parties and plans.

Many of us will be observing our nation's birthday — as well as spending our summers — close to home.

We at C & L Electric Cooperative want to make sure our members focus on safety in addition to fun.

Nothing says "Fourth of July" like a spectacular fireworks display! Some big fireworks events around the state are still happening as scheduled.

If you want to put on your own show at home, first check local laws. Only use fireworks where and when allowed. (In Arkansas, fireworks may be sold and used from June 20 through July 10 and Dec. 10 through Jan. 5, but they cannot be used everywhere.)

Please heed these guidelines from the American Red Cross:

- Always follow the instructions on fireworks' packaging, and never give fireworks to small children.
- Keep a supply of water close by as a precaution.
- Make sure to wear protective eyewear when lighting fireworks.

- Light only one firework at a time, and never attempt to relight a "dud."
- Store fireworks in a cool, dry place away from children and pets.
- Never throw or point fireworks toward people, animals, vehicles, structures or flammable materials.

When it comes to cookouts, make sure your feasts also come with a side helping of safety. The American Red Cross offers these tips:

- Keep children and pets away from the grill.
- Wash your hands before preparing food.
- Don't leave food out in the hot sun. Keep perishable foods in a cooler with plenty of ice or freezer gel packs.
- Always supervise a grill when in use. Don't add charcoal starter fluid when coals have already been ignited. Use long-handled tools especially made for grilling.
- Never grill indoors. Keep the grill out in the open, away from the house, the deck, tree branches or anything that could catch fire.
- Make sure everyone, including pets, stays away from the grill.

However you'll be celebrating this year, C & L Electric Cooperative wishes you a safe and festive Fourth of July!

