

Christmas spirit or a power trip?

► Some in Tulsa feel it's not if you have electricity, but how you use it.

By RHETT MORGAN
World Staff Writer

Mike Fairchild stood Friday on the stoop of his downtown home, thankful that his power was back on — but annoyed at his neighbor.

"It's kind of irritating to see Christmas decorations," said the Tulsa attorney, whose electricity was restored about noon Thursday.

"If you're sitting in the dark and your neighbor's house is all lit up with Christmas tree lights, it's just like throwing it in somebody's face. It's not good sportsmanship."

Tulsa's massive power outage left the bulk of the city trembling in the dark. But for those with electricity, it raised a question.

What to do when you aren't doing without?

Lonna Adams is inviting three guests who didn't have power to stay at her downtown residence.

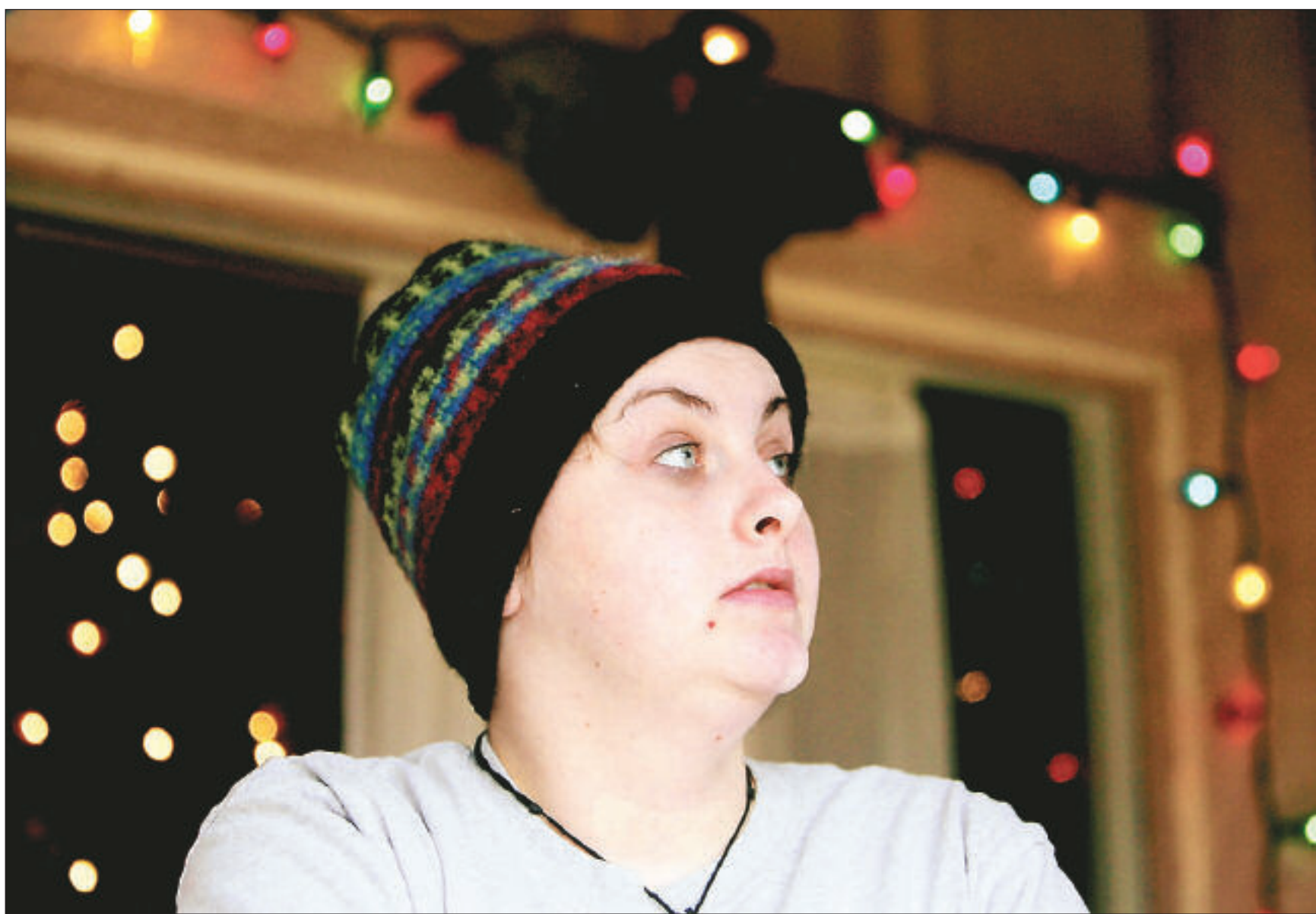
"I think I have a home for the wayward and homeless, anyway," she said. "So, all my friends are welcome to stay here if they had lost power."

Without electricity for several days until Thursday, Adams had been living at her sister's apartment in Tulsa and at her parents' home in Wagoner, she said.

A lighted Christmas tree could be seen through her front window, and lighted decorations adorned her property.

"I'm so happy to be back in the house," she said. "I've been, like, cheering."

In the cul-de-sac where Tif-



MIKE SIMONS / Tulsa World

Tiffany Wade never lost her power during the ice storm, and she isn't apologizing for her Christmas lights.

fany Wade lives, near Yale Avenue and 35th Street, Christmas lights and inflatables adorned every yard.

Wade never lost electricity during the ice storm, and she wasn't apologizing for her yuletide spirit.

"Keeping the lights on in every house," Wade said, "it's for people that don't have anywhere to go and still want to enjoy Christmas."

"It gives people something to do. Everybody's out searching for places to go."

Bethany Luethje, who also never lost power during the storm, works at a cookie store at the Promenade Mall.

"People kept coming and kept coming because they were cold sitting around and didn't have electricity," she

said. "I realized, 'What am I complaining about?' These people don't have anything. I should be grateful for what I have."

Wade agreed.

"I feel bad that other people don't have power," she said.

"It's a really sad thing.

"We're really grateful that we have it. But we have a lot of empathy for the people who don't."

Rhett Morgan 581-8395
rhett.morgan@tulsaworld.com



Photos by MIKE SIMONS / Tulsa World

Keenan Meadors and his father, Hudson, are looking forward to getting back to a normal life when electricity is restored to their homes.

FIRST:

Little things are left by the wayside without power: laundry, a nice shave.

FROM A-1

"I'm going to grow grass now that I have sunlight," a chuckling Smith said of his struggling lawn. "You have to be optimistic."

The couple has been sleeping on a pallet near a gas fireplace.

"We're stationed in the living room," Smith said. "Everywhere else is bone cold."

Ann Matthews: Across the street, Ann Matthews pined for a way to deal with her dirty clothes.

"Laundry, laundry, it's piling up without electricity," the 80-year-old said.

With a disrupted phone line, Matthews also can't wait to get on the horn. "I didn't realize it but my social life depends on that telephone," she said.

Hudson and Keenan Meadors: A few miles away, gray whiskers poked through the face of Hudson Meadors, 78, who was looking forward to grabbing a proper shave.



Ann Matthews crosses the street to talk to a neighbor Friday. Matthews says she looks forward to doing laundry once she gets her power back.

"I haven't shaved since this started," said Meadors, whose electricity has been out all week. "I haven't been able to keep up with anything. I've been trying to survive."

Meadors stood near Mohawk Boulevard with his son, Keenan, trying to jumpstart a van. Keenan, who has a wife with multiple sclerosis, was able to return home Thursday after spending three days in a hotel, he said.

After locating a generator, the younger Meadors was able to get his central heat on the same day.

"I don't look at this as a negative deal," said Meadors, a Tulsa police officer. "I knew it would be a little bit taxing. We are just helping other folks and they are helping us."

His wish list is short: normalcy.

"You just want to get back on your routine," Meadors said. "This thing makes you think about ways to get the same things done you did before. We just thank God we could stay warm."

Rhett Morgan 581-8395
rhett.morgan@tulsaworld.com

Classes resume Monday

By ANDREA EGER
AND NORA FROESCHLE
World Staff Writers

Tulsa Public Schools officials have announced that classes will resume at as many schools as possible on Monday.

Other area districts that missed the entire week because of the ice storm also planned to be back in session Monday, although some building concerns remained.

As of Friday at noon, more than half of the TPS schools had either full or partial power restored. TPS officials expect utility crews to have power restored to most schools by Sunday afternoon, said spokeswoman Tami Marler.

Superintendent Michael Zolkoski will meet with other administrators Sunday afternoon to determine whether some schools will need to be closed Monday. In that case, students may be asked to attend class at an alternate site.

The district would provide free transportation to those students, Marler said.

Parents can find out what schools, if any, will be closed from local media outlets, checking www.tulsaworld.com/tps, or by calling 746-6500.

At the height of the widespread power outages in the Tulsa area, TPS lost power to 70 of 89 school sites.

Broken Arrow Public Schools still had four sites without power as of 4:30 p.m. Friday, spokesman Keith Isbell said. Administrators had not made a decision when students will return to classes, he said.

Owasso Superintendent Clark Ogilvie said Friday that two sites in the district remained without power, but he believed they would be up and running in time for classes Monday.

Jarod Mendenhall, assistant superintendent for sup-

port services at Union Public Schools, said as of late Friday, two of the district's elementary schools were without power, and he could not say whether school would be in session Monday if the situation did not change.

Jerry Burd, superintendent at Sperry, said the district is set to have school Monday, but about 200 fourth- and fifth-graders will attend classes on the main campus because their building did not have power Friday.

Skiatook Superintendent Gary Johnson on Friday said the plan was to have school on Monday.

"All buildings are up and everything's working, unless we have a major storm that comes in over the weekend," he said.

Andrea Eger 581-8470
andrea.eger@tulsaworld.com

Nora Froeschle 581-8310
nora.froeschle@tulsaworld.com

Schools' food supplies saved

By NORA FROESCHLE
World Staff Writer

The one thing school districts wanted to keep on ice this week was their food supplies.

At one large district, the maintenance staff volunteered to pull graveyard shifts to rotate a generator from site to site, making sure the food in storage stayed cold.

Many found that although some perishables such as milk had to be thrown out, most frozen items were preserved.

Tulsa Public Schools' food storage warehouse near Pine Street and Memorial Drive did not lose power, so its supplies were never in danger, said Hossein Akhtarkhvari, district manager for Sodexo, the district's child nutrition contractor.

Leonard's school secretary Debbie Shanks said her husband, Nathan Shanks, and a neighbor volunteered to keep the food in freezers frozen with generator power.

"He's just kind of one of those that likes to help out," Shanks said Friday.

Maintenance workers at

Jenks Public Schools moved perishable food to the district's warehouse near Jones Riverside Airport, said Tara Thompson, spokeswoman for the district.

"What couldn't be moved, we were able to save by using the generator," Thompson said.

Workers were not asked, but they volunteered to rotate a portable generator from site to site, ensuring that no food would be lost, Thompson said.

Keystone Middle School Principal Phil Winfield said his district lost some refrigerated items, but the frozen pizza survived.

"The kids are here; they're warm, and they're getting food. We're having a great time," he said.

Winfield estimated that about half of the students who attended school Friday were still without power at their residences.

Gary Johnson, superintendent at Skiatook Public Schools, said the district lost some milk and other perishables.

"Nothing major. It's not going to hamper our ability to

feed the kids Monday," he said.

Owasso Superintendent Clark Ogilvie said the district's loss of perishable food was minimal because the main storage areas had power returned soon enough to preserve most of it.

Liberty Public Schools did not lose a lot of food, but it did sustain a loss. When Superintendent Kent Holbrook returned to the school Wednesday, he noticed the door to the school's art room was open.

"They got a SMART board, a SMART board projector, two computers and the teacher's personal video camera," Holbrook said of the thefts.

A SMART board is an interactive, electronic tool teachers use to project lessons and activities onto a screen visible to an entire classroom.

"It is an unusual item. . . . What pawnshop is going to want a SMART screen projector?" Holbrook said.

He said administrators are not sure what the total value is for the lost items.

Nora Froeschle 581-8310
nora.froeschle@tulsaworld.com