

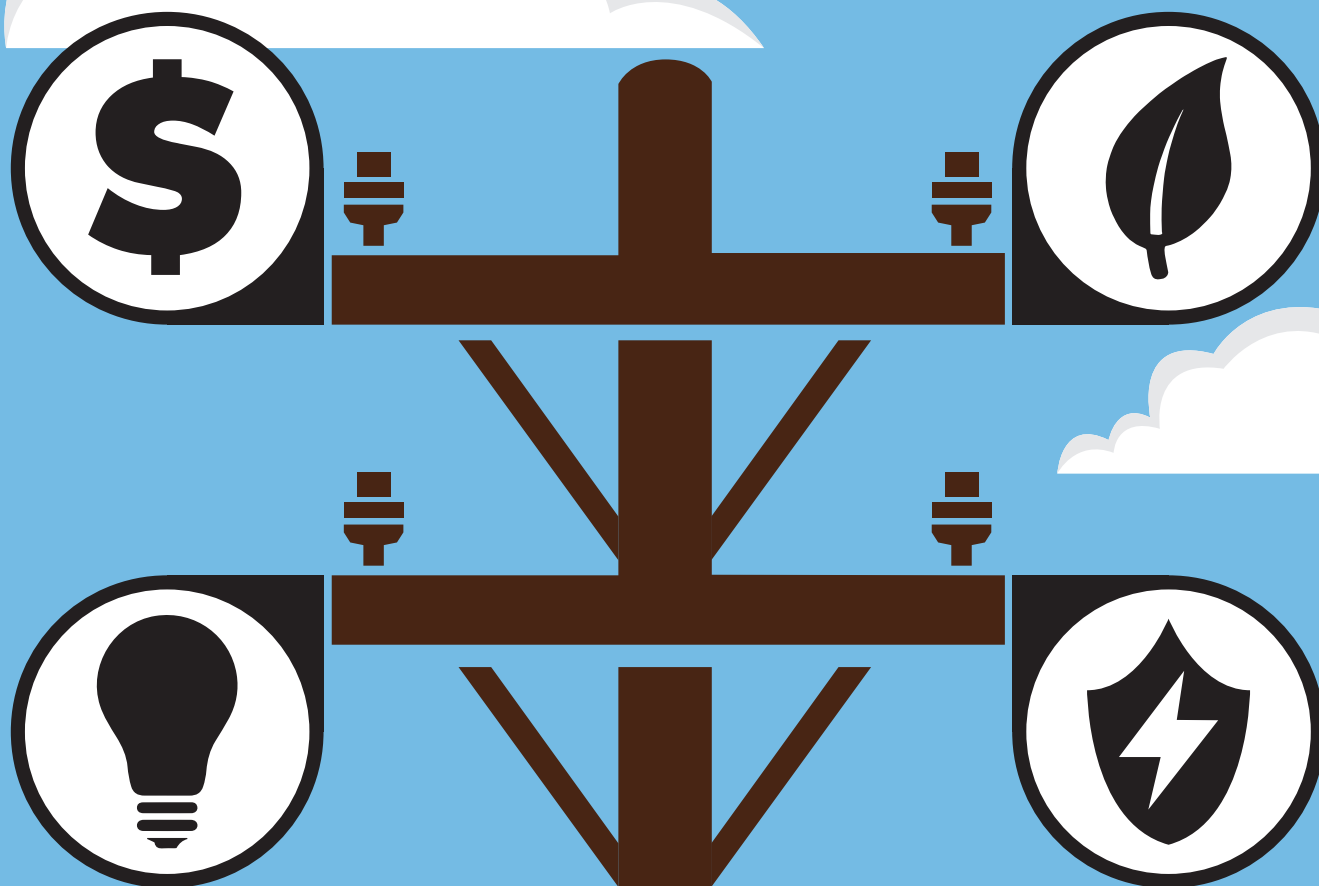
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OCTOBER 2020
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ON THE COVER

Through a concept called beneficial electrification, cooperatives continue an innovative legacy of enriching their communities.

Illustration by Neil C. Jones



News from across the Commonwealth



REMEMBRANCE: President Donald Trump, second from right, participates in the 19th anniversary observance of the crash of Flight 93 in a Somerset County field near Shanksville, Pa., on Sept. 11, 2020. One of four coordinated terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, the crash took the lives of 40 passengers and crew members. Their final resting place is now the location of the Flight 93 National Memorial. To adhere to the Commonwealth's public health guidelines, this year's observance was private; however, the national park opened to visitors following the observance.

2021 Farm Show to be held virtually

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has announced the 2021 Pennsylvania Farm Show will be held virtually with no in-person events or competitions due to COVID-19.

"There are times in the life of a farmer when the risks are too great or uncertain, requiring farmers to make the tough decision to leave a field fallow," said Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding when making the announcement. "To protect our assets — both our people and our resources — from incalculable losses, we have made the tough decision to take a year to lie in fallow. Rather than an in-person Farm Show, we will celebrate Pennsylvania agriculture virtually for 2021 as we prepare for a productive future.

"We'll look at our strengths and where we need to invest together in order to grow and cultivate for tomorrow," he added.

"We'll consider what has become crystal clear during the pandemic — that agriculture is essential for life; our people are resilient and innovative. We will focus on agricultural awareness, education and literacy while highlighting the interconnectedness of our food chain."

Watch Pennsylvania elk online

The Pennsylvania Game Commission has installed a camera on State Game Lands 311 — typically a hub of elk activity during fall bugling season — in Elk County. Video and sound are being live-streamed at pgc.pa.gov through a partnership with HDOnTap and the North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission.

To watch, go to the website and click on the Elk Country Live Stream button. The live stream will run until

the end of bugling season (sometime in mid-October). The best time to see elk on camera is typically late in the afternoon.

PennDOT invites public participation in new program

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) invites participation in a new Safety Citizens program.

PennDOT will introduce bimonthly traffic safety topics, which will include a question for participants to answer. Answers can be submitted via a short video, a poem or an original piece of artwork. Some submissions will be displayed on PennDOT's statewide social media platforms.

Information can be found online at PennDOT.gov.

New Gettysburg book release scheduled

A new battlefield guide, "Bullets and Bandages: The Aid Stations and Field Hospitals at Gettysburg," by James Gindlesperger is being released this year. In early July 1863, 160,000 men fought one of the most fierce battles of the Civil War. After the armies departed, about 21,000 wounded men remained, and this guide is the story of how Gettysburg, a town of 2,500 people, cared for those wounded men.

It includes historical and contemporary photos, as well as stories about the soldiers and the residents who assisted them, and an extensive listing of civilian hospital sites and farm division field hospitals. Gindlesperger is the author of multiple guides to Civil War battlefields, as well as several books about the war. 🌞

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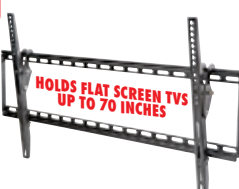
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~~\$12.99~~

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Co-ops and the local communities they serve

By Paul Wesslund

We like the word “local.” We like it because it’s the nearby hardware store where we can get what we need. It’s where we meet friends for coffee. It’s the shop where they look us in the eye and smile. It’s a word of warmth that makes us feel known.

Local also means your electric co-op. It’s as local as you and your neighbors because you own it. It’s grown and changed with you, possibly starting before you were even born. Because it’s made up of you and your neighbors, it’s as unique to each part of the country as you are.

October is National Cooperative Month so it makes sense to use this time to recognize and celebrate the variety that is the essence of being local.

That local heritage for electric co-ops started in the 1930s with neighborly visits, talking about the lights they could see in the city but didn’t have themselves. They weren’t likely to get those modern conveniences because no company saw a profit in stringing wires to power a few lightbulbs in a remote farmhouse.

No such thing as a typical co-op

So, the local farmers took matters into their own hands. They pooled \$5 startup fees, organized member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives, and convinced local politicians to create a federal loan program to help with the rest of the cost.

Today, more than 900 electric co-ops provide electricity to more than 19 million businesses, homes, schools and farms. They cover more than half



the land in the United States. They employ 71,000 people and invest \$12 billion a year in local economies.

It’s hard to describe a typical co-op.

They’re big and small. The largest electric co-op serves nearly 350,000 members; the smallest, 113.

They’re in metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas. While their rural heritage meant they didn’t serve cities, many of their communities have grown over the decades. About 40% serve counties classified as rural and 60% classified as metropolitan.

While those numbers reflect the variety and uniqueness of who co-ops serve, what they do also matters.

Less pollution, more renewable energy

As co-op members became more aware of environmental priorities, co-ops focused on reducing power plant emissions. From 2009 to 2016,

co-ops reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 8%, nitrogen oxide emissions by 24% and sulphur dioxide emissions by 66%. Co-ops also launched energy efficiency programs, many offering home and business “energy checkups.”

Electric co-ops are helping power the growth in alternative energy; 17% of co-op electricity across the U.S. now comes from hydroelectric power, solar, wind and other renewable sources.

Electric vehicles offer a promising technology with special hurdles for co-op territories that are outside of city centers. Some electric co-ops are working to set up charging stations that will be required for a viable electric vehicle industry.

High-speed internet service is increasingly required for a vibrant local economy, so some co-ops around the country are exploring ways their members can get connected.

And now that we’re all faced with the fallout from the effects of COVID-19, electric co-ops are again on the job as the virus changes everything from the national economy to how we say hello to our neighbors.

Electric co-ops are developing payment plans for people out of work. They’re socially distancing line crews. They’re setting up drive-in or virtual membership meetings, and offering virtual energy audits. 🌞

Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation’s landscape.

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Political spotlight

Supporting cooperative candidates

The Action Committee for Rural Electrification (ACRE) — the political action arm of electric cooperatives — endorses the following 10 U.S. congressional and 56 state legislative candidates to represent electric cooperative service areas in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The recommendations are based on the candidates' support for and voting record regarding rural electrification and their stance on various rural and consumer concerns, in accordance with ACRE bylaws.

By voting for these men and women on Nov. 3, you will help ensure your local electric cooperative has a voice before Congress and the state legislature.

Endorsed candidates are listed below. In seats where no action was taken, "No Endorsement" is noted. Electric cooperatives represented are noted after each state House, Senate or congressional district.

U.S. Senate (N.J.)



Cory Booker (D)
(Sussex REC)

U.S. House of Rep. (N.J.)



Josh Gottheimer (D)
5th District
(Sussex REC)

U.S. House of Representatives (Pa.)



Scott Perry (R)
10th District
(Adams EC)



Fred Keller (R)
12th District
(Adams EC, Claverack REC, Sullivan County REC, Tri-County REC, Valley REC)



Guy Reschenthaler (R)
14th District
(REA Energy, Somerset REC)



Mike Kelly Jr. (R)
16th District
(Central EC, Northwestern REC, Warren EC)



Lloyd Smucker (R)
11th District
(Adams EC)



John Joyce (R)
13th District
(Adams EC, Bedford REC, New Enterprise REC, REA Energy, Somerset REC, Valley REC)



Glenn "GT" Thompson (R)
15th District
(Central EC, Northwestern REC, REA Energy, Tri-County REC, United EC, Warren EC)



Conor Lamb (D)
17th District
(Central EC)

Pennsylvania State Senate



John DiSanto (R)
15th District
(Adams EC)



Gene Yaw (R)
23rd District
(Claverack REC, Sullivan County REC, Tri-County REC)



Mike Regan (R)
31st District
(Adams EC)



Wayne Langerholc (R)
35th District
(Bedford REC, New Enterprise REC, REA Energy, Somerset REC, United EC, Valley REC)



Scott Hutchinson (R)
21st District
(Central EC, Northwestern REC, United EC, Warren EC)



Cris Dush (R)
25th District
(REA Energy, Tri-County REC, United EC)



Doug Mastriano (R)
33rd District
(Adams EC)



Kim Ward (R)
39th District
(REA Energy, Somerset REC)

Pennsylvania State Senate, cont.



Joe Pittman (R)
41st District
(Central EC,
REA Energy,
United EC)



Dan Laughlin (R)
49th District
(Northwestern REC)

Pennsylvania State House of Representatives



Ryan Bizzarro (D)
3rd District
(Northwestern REC)



Daryl Metcalfe (R)
12th District
(Central EC)



Joseph Petrarca (D)
55th District
(REA Energy)



Kathy Rapp (R)
65th District
(Central EC,
Northwestern REC,
United EC, Warren EC)



Curt Sonney (R)
4th District
(Northwestern REC,
Warren EC)



Parke Wentling (R)
17th District
(Northwestern REC)



Mike Reese (R)
59th District
(Somerset REC)



Brian Smith (R)
66th District
(REA Energy, United EC)



Brad Roae (R)
6th District
(Northwestern REC)



Frank Dermody (D)
33rd District
(Central EC)



Jeff Pyle (R)
60th District
(Central EC, REA Energy)



Martin Causer (R)
67th District
(Tri-County REC)



Tim Bonner (R)
8th District
(Central EC)



Keith Gillespie (R)
47th District
(Adams EC)



Jim Struzzi II (R)
62nd District
(REA Energy)



Clint Owlett (R)
68th District
(Claverack REC,
Tri-County REC)



Aaron Bernstine (R)
10th District
(Central EC)



Matt Dowling (R)
51st District
(Somerset REC)



Donna Oberlander (R)
63rd District
(Central EC, REA Energy, United EC)



Carl Walker Metzgar (R)
69th District
(Bedford REC,
Somerset REC)



Marci Mustello (R)
11th District
(Central EC)



Ryan Warner (R)
52nd District
(Somerset REC)



R. Lee James (R)
64th District
(Central EC,
Northwestern REC)



Jim Rigby (R)
71st District
(REA Energy)

Pennsylvania State House, cont.

**No
Endorsement**
72nd District
(REA Energy)



**Rich
Irvin (R)**
81st District
(New Enterprise
REC, Valley REC)



Dan Moul (R)
91st District
(Adams EC)



**Karen
Boback (R)**
117th District
(Claverack REC)



**Tommy
Sankey III (R)**
73rd District
(REA Energy,
United EC)



**John
Hershey (R)**
82nd District
(Adams EC,
Valley REC)



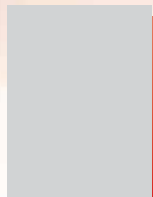
**Dawn
Keefer (R)**
92nd District
(Adams EC)



Kate Klunk (R)
169th District
(Adams EC)



**No
Endorsement**
75th District
(United EC)



**No
Endorsement**
84th District
(Sullivan County REC,
Tri-County REC)



Mike Jones (R)
93rd District
(Adams EC)



**Kerry
Benninghoff (R)**
171st District
(Valley REC)



**Stephanie
Borowicz (R)**
76th District
(Tri-County REC,
United EC)



**Perry
Stambaugh (R)**
86th District
(Adams EC)



Stan Saylor (R)
94th District
(Adams EC)



**Torren
Ecker (R)**
193rd District
(Adams EC)



**Jesse
Topper (R)**
78th District
(Bedford REC, New
Enterprise REC,
Valley REC)



**Rob
Kauffman (R)**
89th District
(Adams EC)



Tina Pickett (R)
110th District
(Claverack REC,
Sullivan County REC,
Tri-County REC)



Seth Grove (R)
196th District
(Adams EC)



**Lou
Schmitt Jr. (R)**
79th District
(Valley REC)



**Paul
Schemel (R)**
90th District
(Adams EC)



**Jonathan
Fritz (R)**
111th District
(Claverack REC)



Barb Gleim (R)
199th District
(Adams EC)



**Jim
Gregory (R)**
80th District
(Valley REC)



The future of energy storage

By Maria Kanevsky

Energy storage technology is extremely versatile — it's small enough to fit in your phone, or large enough to power your entire home.

Many people are familiar with small-scale batteries for handheld devices, but utility-scale batteries take energy storage to a whole new level. The ability to store energy helps to ensure that energy demand meets supply at any given time, making electricity available when you need it.

The most widespread form of energy storage in the U.S. is through pumped hydropower, a form of mechanical energy storage. Pumped hydropower energy storage has been used for several decades now, and currently makes up about 97% of the country's utility storage capacity.

Energy is stored by pumping water uphill from a lower elevation reservoir to store in an upper water basin. When energy is needed, the water is allowed to flow through an electric turbine to generate energy, the same way it flows through a hydroelectric dam. This method is the cheapest way to store large amounts of energy, but it is largely dependent on the surrounding geography and any potential resulting ecosystem issues.

Batteries are quickly gaining attention as another form of energy storage. In 2018, the power capacity from battery storage systems in the U.S. more than doubled from 2010. The most common type of battery chemistry is lithium-ion because of a high-cycle efficiency and fast response time. Ninety percent of large-scale battery system capacity in the U.S. uses lithium-ion chemistry. Some less-common



DENNIS GAINER

GREEN POWER: Energy storage plays a crucial role in incorporating renewable energy into our electric grid. Solar and wind energy are weather-dependent, so when energy demand is low, storing the excess energy makes it possible to use it later when demand is higher.

battery types for utility storage include lead acid batteries, nickel-based batteries and sodium-based batteries. However, each chemistry has varying limitations. Beyond pumped hydropower and batteries, there are a few other forms of energy storage used at the utility scale: thermal, hydrogen, and compressed air.

Energy storage currently plays a crucial role in incorporating renewable energy into our electric grid. Solar and wind energy are weather-dependent, so when energy demand is low but energy supply is high from the sun or wind, storing the excess energy makes it possible to use it later when demand is higher. As renewable energy becomes more prevalent, energy storage will help to create a more resilient grid.

Although battery prices have been

decreasing steadily over the last several years, energy storage can be expensive to attain. Currently, there are 25 gigawatts of electrical energy storage capacity in the U.S., and many experts expect capacity to grow.

As technologies improve, equipment costs decrease and more renewable energy is generated, there is a great potential for utility-scale energy storage to continue expanding in the coming decades. 🌞

Maria Kanevsky is a program analyst for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation's landscape.



Positive power

Cooperatives explore beneficial electrification

Rural electric cooperatives — as the name implies — were formed to bring electricity to areas that existing utilities wouldn't touch because these profit-minded companies found little benefit in electrifying sparsely populated areas. Electrification became the tool cooperatives wielded to help rural Pennsylvanians improve the quality of their lives. Through a concept called beneficial electrification, cooperatives continue an innovative legacy of enriching their communities.

Isn't all electrification beneficial? That's a question fielded often by Keith Dennis, vice president of consumer-member engagement at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association in Washington, D.C., and co-chair of the Beneficial Electrification League (BEL). Beneficial electrification uses electricity in lieu of end-use fossil fuels — such as oil, propane, coal, or natural gas — in appli-

By Michael T. Crawford
Associate Editor

ances or equipment to support a more resilient grid, benefit the environment, improve product quality or quality of life, or save consumer-members money over time without hindering any of the other goals.

"Ten years ago, you wouldn't have a clear path to be pushing for electrification of end-use products," says Dennis, a founding member of BEL. "Today, when you have trends of falling emissions — you have more hydro, more nuclear and renewables together making clean energy — burning fossil fuels in millions and millions of homes and cars isn't the future."

If something runs on a fossil fuel, it's a potential candidate for beneficial electrification. Perhaps the flashiest example of end-use electrification is the rise of electric vehicles (EVs), which

POWER UP: Mike Johnson, key accounts/senior safety specialist at Adams EC, plugs in a hybrid electric vehicle to a charging station operated by the cooperative's subsidiary, Adams Energy Resources, LLC.

on average recharge for one-fourth the cost of refueling a traditional gasoline-operated vehicle.

Lightbulb moment

"My opinion of EVs was that they were a fad," recalls Mike Johnson, key accounts/senior safety specialist at Gettysburg-based Adams Electric Cooperative (EC). "We sat through this New and Emerging Technologies Conference. ... Different organizations all over the country presented on EVs and the benefits to electric utilities, the benefits to society, and the future of EVs. We recognized, sitting there, we were behind the eight ball."

Due to rising efficiencies of appliances, electric sales at utilities had

been relatively flat for more than two decades. Ironically, Johnson realized if sales could be improved at the right time of day, it could benefit consumer-members.

"If we could pick up car chargers off our peak, we stood a better chance of maintaining a steady rate or possibly lowering the rates," Johnson explains. "We realized we had to do something. ... With very little modification in their (members') daily routine, they could get their vehicles off of our peak. That would help us save on having to do system improvements and substation improvements and be able to prolong our existing system without having to do a bunch of advancements to be able to handle that additional load that is coming."

Adams EC realized that to see EV adoption in its territory, more infrastructure was required, and began installing Level 2 commercial charging stations throughout its service territory via its subsidiary, Adams Energy Resources, LLC.

"It was going to be a benefit to our members and the co-op — they were going to be able to save on their fuel

DEMAND RESPONSE: Travis Kuhstos, demand response program manager and staff energy specialist at Valley REC, connects a demand response unit (DRU) to a consumer-member's water heater, below, and secures another DRU to a wall, right.



costs and we were hopefully going to be able to shift and add load in our off-peak times," Johnson says.

EVs aren't the be-all, end-all of beneficial electrification, of course. In fact, a simpler, quieter modification in most members' lives goes a long way toward achieving every goal of beneficial electrification: water heaters.

Multiple benefits

"Most people don't think about it until you don't have hot water or there's a puddle on the floor," quips Steve Koep, general manager of BEL. "But electric water heating is cleaner, it's more manageable, it's safer and it's healthier. It's not only good for the member, it's good for the co-op. It's good for the climate, and it's good for the grid."

Electric water heaters are generally easy to maintain without specialized technical skills and avoid the risk of backdraft, which can result in carbon monoxide leaks, explains Travis Kuhstos, demand response program



SOLAR POWER: Valley REC Vice President of Operations Todd Ross inspects the metering for a solar interconnection at a residence in Juniata Township, Huntingdon County, in 2017. The exposed meter on the left measures the net amount of electricity the rooftop solar array has fed into the co-op's distribution system while the covered meter in the center measures the total amount of electricity produced by the array, much of which is used by the household.

manager and staff energy specialist at Huntingdon-based Valley Rural Electric Cooperative (REC). They are also more efficient, meaning every watt of electricity going into an electric water heater is doing what it's meant to do, as opposed to oil or gas where energy is lost.

"I tell members they're consolidating their bills — they're paying one bill a month covering everything — and in our area, electric is still the cheapest 'fuel' source," notes Kuhstos, a member of Valley REC. "People are getting away from the fossil fuel stuff — I've done the same myself — because it's cleaner. An oil system, for example, could backfire and put soot through the house. ... It's almost weekly where I get a phone call about somebody replacing a 30-, 40- or even 50-year-old water heater."

He adds, "Water heaters have really come a long way. The energy (efficiency) factors for water heaters even 10 years ago are so much different than they are today."

The concept of beneficial electrification, which ultimately plugs more systems into the grid, reverses historic approaches to reducing environmental impacts or even reducing energy costs. These approaches often encouraged homeowners to simply use less electricity.



LISA CARPER, VALLEY REC

Increasing demand for electricity, even with efficient technology, puts additional strain on the energy grid, which can lead to having to repair or replace components more frequently, according to Tony Vincik, manager of energy management systems at Harrisburg-based Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Allegheny).

“Substations and power lines have limits to what can be run through them, and high demand can put transformers at their limit,” Vincik explains. “Sitting at maximum capacity on a hot summer day can damage the equipment over time, but if you can slow the load down, the equipment will last longer.”

Tradition of efficiency

For more than 30 years, Pennsylvania electric cooperatives, in partnership with Allegheny — the wholesale power provider for 14 electric cooperatives in Pennsylvania and New Jersey — have been carefully managing energy demand to minimize the impact of peaks.

The Coordinated Load Management System (CLMS), devised by Allegheny in 1986, has avoided more than \$150 million in power costs since its inception by spreading out the use of electricity to off-peak times, such as at night when most people are asleep or in the middle of the day while most people are away from home.

If that concept sounds familiar, it's because that's exactly how your cooperative utilizes water heaters to reduce peak load. Through a demand response unit, cooperatives can remotely switch

INTERCONNECTED: A technician finishes installation of a battery system for a 12-kilowatt solar array at the home of a Valley REC member. Valley REC has 45 member solar interconnections on its system.

off water heaters when demand for electricity is at its highest to keep costs down. Because modern water heaters are so well insulated, the water stored inside remains heated long enough for demand to decrease and the heater to be switched back on.

Some cooperatives, including Sullivan County REC, based in Forksville, Pa., offer a similar beneficial electrification concept for home heating — electric thermal heating — that allows for heat to persist even if the system is off.

“It's a system that uses a couple of different mediums, brick or water,” explains Tom Eberlin, a member of Sullivan County REC and the cooperative's technical services representative. “They look like an old-fashioned register that water would flow through with ceramic bricks with heating elements that run through them. The bricks



JEFF SPAKO, SULLIVAN COUNTY REC

HEATER METER: An electric meter attached to the home of a Sullivan County REC member monitors energy use of an electric thermal storage system.

absorb the heat, and when the power is off, the bricks hold the heat so it can keep the room warm. With a properly designed system, it will keep your home warm during the longest control periods. We don't shut them off for that long, but they'll have enough stored heat in them so there is no chance of not having heat from avoiding the peak.”

He adds, “It's a great system the way it heats the home, and it is a money saver for the rates and time off the peak. The benefit to the cooperative is it reduces the load during that peak time. It's not just a benefit to our cooperative, but all the cooperatives.”

While not beneficial electrification in and of itself, CLMS enables the concept by helping cooperatives rely more on their own clean energy. In 2019, through Allegheny, cooperative consumer-members received nearly 59% of their energy from the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station (SSES), a two-reactor nuclear plant in Berwick, Pa., and nearly 10% from hydropower via the Raystown Hydroelectric Project and hydroelectric projects located along the Niagara and St. Lawrence rivers in upstate New York. In addition to these large-scale resources, nearly 600 member-owned renewable energy sources — primarily wind and solar energy — contribute to Allegheny's clean energy portfolio.

The more electric cooperatives rely on their own energy portfolio, the less Allegheny has to purchase from the energy market, which typically consists of more than 60% fossil fuels. Clean energy drives beneficial electrification as much as technological efficiencies.

“As the grid gets greener, everything attached to the grid gets greener right along with it,” Koep says. “It can be a big motivating factor for folks with the energy choices that they make in terms of the water heating, space heating and ultimately their next vehicle.”

Times change and with it applications of technology and electricity, but a cooperative's concern for community — its duty to benefit its consumer-members — remains steady. 🌱

REA Energy Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

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Ebensburg Office:

7 - 11 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Monday - Friday

From the President & CEO



‘Power On:’ October is National Co-op Month

By Chad Carrick, MBA, CFPC, *President & CEO*

AS AN electric cooperative, our top priority is always to provide reliable, affordable energy to you, the consumer-members we serve. Because we are a co-op, our mission is to enrich the lives of our members and serve the long-term interests of our local community — and this mission has never been more critical than in recent months. One of the seven principles that guide all co-ops is “Concern for community.” To me, this principle is the essential DNA of REA Energy, and it sets us apart from other electric utilities.

October is National Co-op Month, and electric cooperatives across the country are highlighting the many ways we “Power On.” Keeping this theme in mind, I recognize the essential role we play in serving a special community like ours.

Who would have fathomed in March that COVID-19 would amount to a test of our community and our nation? The changing circumstances due to the pandemic have created both challenges and opportunities. Over the past several months, we’ve all been challenged to operate differently, and REA Energy has stepped up to help our members and strengthen the safety net for our more vulnerable neighbors.


As an essential service, and to ensure reliability of your power supply, we modified our operations to safeguard business continuity. Our line crews began working staggered

schedules to maintain separation. Some staff worked remotely. In the office, we limited and modified meetings and gatherings to allow for safe separation. We also adjusted in-person service calls to ensure the health and safety of our employees and our valued members. In addition, we hosted your annual meeting virtually for the first time ever. For the health and safety of everyone, we think these measures were the prudent course of action for the times.

For our members impacted by COVID-19 who needed help with their electric bills, we waived late fees and worked with those hardest hit to make special payment arrangements. We also offered payment assistance through our Operation RoundUp and Match Assistance programs.

I tell you about all of these efforts not to boast about REA Energy but to explain how much we care about this community — because we live here, too.

We’ve seen other local businesses rising to meet similar challenges during this time, because that’s what communities do. While the challenges caused by COVID-19 have been daunting, I’m heartened to see how everyone is pulling together.

In 1937, REA Energy was built by the community to serve the community, and that’s what we’ll continue to do — Power On. 

Annual meeting wrapup

Stacy Hilliard, CCC, CKAE
Communications & Marketing Manager

REA ENERGY Cooperative, Inc. (REA) held its 83rd annual meeting on Thursday, Sept. 10, in an online format. Nearly 360 members attended the meeting virtually.

Members of the Credentials and Elections Committee who witnessed the meeting included: Virginia Farabaugh (chairman), John T. “Tom” Brady, Patricia Dill, Robert Fairman, Paula Hencel, R. Michael Keith, Shelby Miller, Richard Tronzo, and Michael Wirfel.

Election results

This year, board Districts 3 and 4 were up for regular election, along with a special election for District 1. In District 3, incumbent Michael Bertolino ran unopposed and was declared re-elected to his respective district.

In District 4, Thomas Aurandt won over incumbent Howard Terndrup.

The election held for District 1 was to elect a director to serve out the balance of a current term (three years). Earlier this year, Thomas Beresnyak Jr. was appointed to serve in the interim. In the election, Beresnyak won in a two-way contest over Paul Weston.

Cooperative updates

Board Chairman Michael Bertolino and President & CEO Chad Carrick gave presentations regarding the cooperative.

In the chairman’s report, Bertolino highlighted the many challenges and uncertainties that we have faced in the past several months, as a cooperative and as a community.

He continued by highlighting that as a cooperative, we must always be there for our members’ needs — safely and reliably keeping the lights on. And, as a company, necessary changes were made to help with public and employee safety, such as closing our lobbies to the public, splitting our inside workforce between our two offices, and having some employees telecommute.

He also stated that in 2021 we are planning to resume having in-person meetings as conditions allow and plan to utilize the online format again as well.

Bertolino wrapped up his presentation by stating the following: “At the heart of our cooperative’s mission statement lies the phrase, ‘... Its board and management will work together, as a team, to improve the quality of rural life, now and in the future.’

“We are proud to say that, as a cooperative family, everyone worked together seamlessly to keep the lights on and continue with our daily business. I would like to extend an earnest thank you to the employees and management of the cooperative from the board of directors for a job well done.”

In his report, Carrick welcomed all attend-

ees. He then summarized how the online meeting would operate, along with discussing the following points:

- Most of the meeting was pre-recorded, with some live presentations.
- The cooperative had to change bylaws when it comes to determining a quorum. Now a quorum is a majority of members registered from in-person and online participation.
- Registration was adapted for online participants so the annual meeting gift and door prizes can be distributed.
- For members who were unable to join online, the cooperative is having a Member Appreciation Month in October. Starting Oct. 1, members who did not register for the online meeting can pick up an appreciation gift at the offices on a first-come, first-served basis while supplies last.

Carrick also fielded pre-submitted questions from the members in a town hall format.

Other business

Immediately following the business meeting, the board held a reorganization meeting and elected officers for 2020-2021. They are: Bertolino, chairman; Wayne Farabaugh, vice chairman; and Robert Neese, secretary/treasurer. Rick Shope remained the PREA director as part of a two-year term and Robert Neese will serve as the alternate PREA director. 🌟



Thomas Beresnyak Jr.
District 1



Michael Bertolino
District 3



Thomas Aurandt
District 4

REA Energy Cooperative, Inc. Board of Directors

District 1 Tom Beresnyak Jr.
District 2 Rick Shope
District 3 Michael Bertolino

District 4 Thomas Aurandt
District 5 Robert Neese
District 6 John Learn

District 7 Anthony Enciso
District 8 Wayne Farabaugh
District 9 Sandra Dill

October is National Cooperative Month

Being part of a cooperative means being part of something special. REA Energy will celebrate National Cooperative Month in October, along with more than 40,000 other cooperative businesses serving more than 140 million people nationwide.

This year, REA Energy will be holding Member Appreciation Month throughout October. Members who were not able to participate in the online meeting will need to present their Annual Meeting Member Card (the bottom portion of their Annual Meeting Notice) to receive a gift packet, which includes a hat, calendar and screwdriver. This will be given on a first-come, first-served basis. Only one gift packet per membership will be given, while quantities last. *If you participated in and received the \$10 bill credit for the online meeting, you will not be eligible to get a gift packet.

In the event that the COVID-19 situation in our area requires that our lobbies be closed, members will be able to receive their gift packet at the Indiana drive-thru window. At our Ebensburg Office, members will need to come to the front entrance and an employee will set the packet outside.

If you have any questions, please visit our website, reaenergy.com, or call our office at 724-349-4800 or 800-211-5667.



Rain or shine,
day or night,
we're here for you.

**October is National
Co-op Month.**

#PowerOn

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

On Friday, Oct. 16, 2020, REA Energy's Ebensburg and Indiana offices will close at 11 a.m. Both offices will reopen at 7 a.m. Monday, Oct. 19, 2020. Please call 724-463-7273 or 800-332-7273 to report any power outages. Payments can be placed in the drop box at both locations, or via our online Member Portal at reaenergy.com.

RIGHT-OF-WAY MANAGEMENT/FACILITY CONSTRUCTION NEWS

REA Energy contractors will be completing tree-trimming work in the following areas in October:

- ▶ Contractor crews from Penn Line Tree Service will be trimming the rights-of-way of the Fairview, Georgetown, Latimer, Livermore and Locust Substation areas, in addition to emergency maintenance areas. Notification of work will be made to members in the areas affected. Contractors will perform all right-of-way work per REA Energy specifications. All contractor employees will carry employee identification cards and their vehicles will display their company name.

If you have any questions, call 724-349-4800, or view the specifications at reaenergy.com.

We can all play a part in making our interconnected world safer.

Do Your Part.
#BeCyberSmart.

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month.
Visit staysafeonline.org for cybersecurity tips.

Your Board of Directors



Michael J. Bertolino
Chairman
District 3



Wayne Farabaugh
Vice Chairman
District 8



Robert P. Neese
Secretary/Treasurer
District 5



Sandra Dill
District 9



Thomas Beresnyak Jr.
District 1



Anthony Enciso
District 7



Thomas Aurandt
District 4



John R. Learn
District 6



J.R. "Rick" Shope
District 2

REA Energy is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

7

COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

1 VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP



Cooperatives are voluntary organizations open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2 DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL



Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. The elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote), and cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

3 MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION



Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefitting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

4 AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE



Cooperatives are autonomous, self help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.

5 EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION



Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees so that they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

6 COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES



Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7 CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY



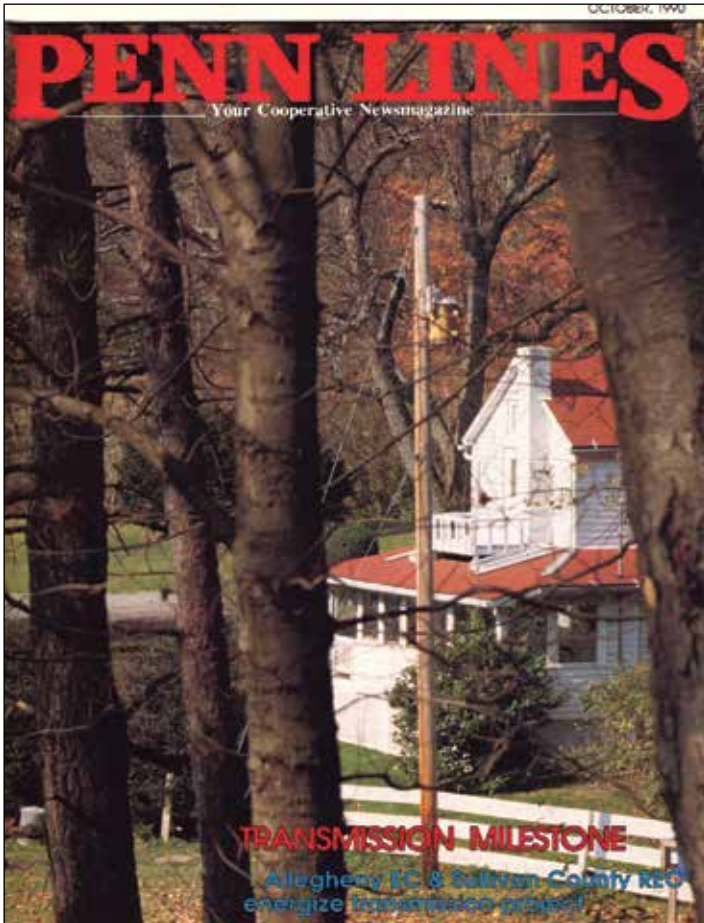
While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) is the national service organization for more than 900 not-for-profit rural electric cooperatives and public power districts providing retail electric service

to more than 42 million consumers in 47 states and whose retail sales account for approximately 12 percent of total electricity sales in the United States. Learn more at NRECA.coop



Your Newsmagazine Through the Years



In 1990, Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Allegheny) and Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative marked a milestone in Allegheny's continuing effort to deliver sufficient power at reasonable rates to its 13 Pennsylvania and one New Jersey member cooperatives.

Allegheny, the wholesale power supplier for the 14 cooperatives, built the Fairfield-Mill Creek Substation and transmission line in Lycoming County to improve service for about 2,000 cooperative consumer-members who for years had suffered from regular outages.

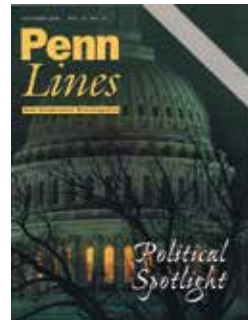
Work on the project began in 1987 with the selection of a construction manager and continued until the lines were energized in the summer of 1990. The project was funded through the Rural Electrification Administration (now known as the Rural Utilities Service) and the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation.

1990



2010

More people are becoming attracted to the idea of generating their own power through a backyard renewable energy system, but know the facts before making a commitment.



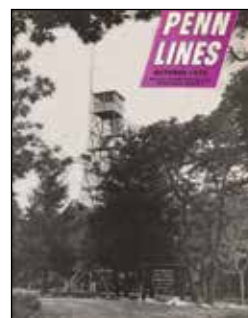
2000

The Action Committee for Rural Electrification®, the political action arm of local electric cooperatives, announces support for 59 federal and state candidates in the fall election.



1980

U.S. President Jimmy Carter and former California Gov. Ronald Reagan, along with Independent John Anderson, are profiled prior to the 1980 General Election.



1970

Greenwood Fire Tower near the Huntingdon County-Centre County line is one of 130 state-owned fire towers charged with preventing and controlling forest fires.

How to make your basement or crawl space more efficient

By Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen

Dear Pat and Brad: I've heard that energy can be lost through my home's basement. Is that true? If so, what can I do to make my basement more efficient? — *Andy*

Dear Andy: Basements can account for a large portion of your home's energy use, especially in colder climates. More importantly, basements are often a key area when you're looking to improve the energy efficiency of your home. Crawl spaces can also waste energy, so we'll address them, too.

Moisture is a common problem in basements and crawl spaces, and can lead to mold, rot, and lowered effectiveness of insulation. It should be noted that as you make efficiency improvements, you can solve moisture problems, but you could potentially make them worse. Look carefully for signs of water damage or moisture buildup. Any untreated wood in contact with a cement floor or wall could be rotting. Crawl spaces can be muddy or even have standing water in them if gutters or the slope of the landscaping drains in the wrong direction. Once drainage problems are solved, the crawl space should have a ground vapor barrier.

If you live in an area where radon has been a problem, you should conduct a radon test through a licensed professional or purchase a do-it-yourself home test kit. Carbon monoxide problems can be deadly. If you have any type of combustion occurring in the basement or crawl space, make sure they have adequate ventilation and that you have working carbon monoxide detectors nearby.

If you have a forced-air heating system, your basement or crawl space is



abundant with opportunities for improving ductwork. Sealing leaks helps your system distribute air more efficiently and should make your home more comfortable. The best way to seal ducts is with duct mastic.

You'll find lots of air leaks in basements and crawl spaces, particularly where pipes and wires enter or exit the space. If you can get to the sill plate, apply caulk around it. You can also increase efficiency by sealing any gaps or leaks around basement windows.

Insulation is an effective tool for reducing energy use and improving comfort, but the applications are quite different in basements and crawl spaces.

The place to begin in basements is the rim joist, which is right above the sill plate on the top of the foundation wall. Rigid foam board can be carefully fitted between the joists.

Insulated basement walls make a room more comfortable. You can insulate the inside of the foundation wall if you're sure moisture is not leaking

through the wall from the outside. Experts prefer sprayed-on foam or rigid foam board applied directly to the foundation wall. A wood-framed wall can be butted up against the rigid foam and insulated with fiberglass or mineral wool batts. The bottom plate of the wall, which sits on the concrete floor, should be pressure-treated wood.

Over the past several years, the most common approach for crawl spaces was to insulate under the floor with fiberglass batts. This allowed the crawl space to be vented to the outside, which alleviated any moisture buildup. If all the right moisture control and drainage steps have been taken, the crawl space can be unventilated, and the insulation can be applied to the foundation walls instead of underneath the floor. 💡

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on making your basement more energy efficient, visit: www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.

PREA announces scholarship winners

Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association Scholarships in Memory of William F. Matson

Nine Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association (PREA) Scholarships in Memory of William F. Matson were recently awarded to outstanding students whose homes are served by rural electric cooperatives.

PREA scholarships are awarded each year to students in rural electric cooperative service areas in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Selection is based on academic excellence, cooperative membership, community involvement and need. The scholarship program is named for William F. Matson, who served for 22 years as president of PREA and Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc., until his death in June 1986. This year, 253 applications for scholarships were reviewed.

The recipients of the scholarships this year are Hannah Van Blarcom, Sussex REC; Kiara Baker, Warren EC; Emma Kissell, REA Energy; Kaitlyn Maxwell, Bedford REC; Ryan Gardner, Somerset REC; Brooke Fry, Northwestern REC; Joshua Lukawski, Sussex REC; Lucas Mattocks, Northwestern REC; and Allyson Ritchey, New Enterprise REC.

Hannah Van Blarcom, daughter of



Justine and Charles Van Blarcom, Sussex, N.J., is a graduate of Vernon Township High School. A student at Quinnipiac University, Hamden, Conn., majoring in biology, she was active in field hockey, marching band, Technology Student Association, orchestra, pit orchestra, track, Health Occupational Students of America, Robotics and Mock Trial in high school. She also was a member of sev-

eral honor societies, including National Honor Society, Science National Honor Society, Math National Honor Society, English Honor Society, History Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, French Honor Society and T-M Music Honor Society. She also volunteers for a number of community service organizations.

Kiara Baker, a student at Taylor



University, Upland, Ind., was homeschooled by her parents, John and Amy Baker, Spartansburg, Pa. She is majoring in biochemistry (pre-med). She played

basketball and volleyball for four years, participated in piano and voice worship teams, worked on her family's farm, volunteered with several community service organizations while taking NPRC dual-enrollment classes, and also participated in a Summer Leadership Internship with Branch Ministries.

Emma Kissell, daughter of Jim and



Deb Kissell, Portage, Pa., is attending Saint Francis University, Loretto, Pa., majoring in physician assistant sciences. A graduate of Portage Area High School, she participated

in varsity girls basketball, volleyball and softball, Math Competition Team, Spanish Club, Student Council, Prom Committee, Envirothon, Science Club, Interact Club, and was a class officer. She volunteers with the Portage Food Pantry, Saint Bartholomew Youth Group and Independent Family Services.

Kaitlyn Maxwell, Class of 2020 valedictorian and National Merit Scholarship Finalist from Everett Area High School, is the daughter of Bruce and Roxanne Maxwell, Everett, Pa. She is a student at Saint Francis University, Loretto, Pa., where she is majoring in



general engineering with a mechanical concentration. She was class chaplain and participated in state Envirothon and Future Business Leaders of America competi-

tions. She was a two-time, first-team, all-state basketball player, medaled in state track and field events, holds the all-time basketball scoring record at her high school and the Bedford County female scoring record, is the all-time scoring leader in soccer at her high school, and holds the school record in the 200-meter, 400-meter and 800-meter competitions. She was named the *Bedford Gazette* Student-Athlete of the Year and the *Altoona Mirror* Co-female Athlete of the Year.

Ryan Gardner, a former NRECA



Youth Leadership Council member representing Pennsylvania, is the son of Jennifer Gardner and Randy Chabol, Friedans, Pa. A graduate of Somerset Area High School, he

is a student at West Virginia University, Morgantown, W.Va., majoring in mechanical/aerospace engineering. While in high school, he was a member of Interact Club, SADD, JETS Team, junior class president, president of the Fly-Fishing Club, a member of Student Council, captain of the varsity swim team, and participated in musicals, senior class play, choir, and choral ensembles.

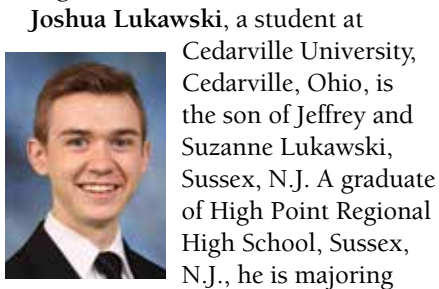
Brooke Fry, daughter of Doug and



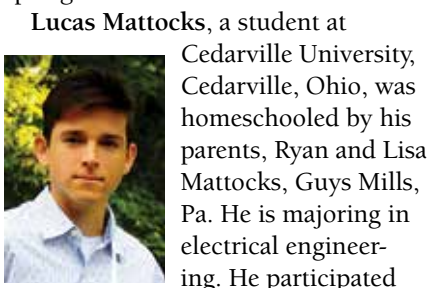
Connie Fry, Titusville, Pa., is a student at Slippery Rock University, Slippery Rock, Pa., majoring in health care administration and management. A graduate of Titusville

High School, she participated in and held offices in Student United Way,

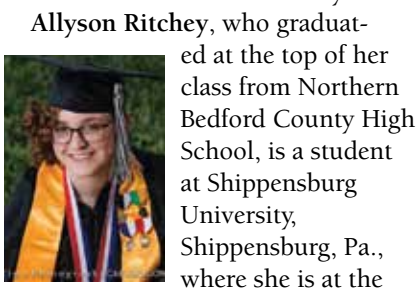
Rotary Interact Club, Varsity Club, SPARK Club, National Honor Society, and the Ignite Mentor Program. She also served as class secretary her junior and senior years, and participated in cross country, swimming, and track and field. She volunteered with Grace Fellowship Church, participated in Titusville Twisters Gymnastics and was a lifeguard for the school district.



Joshua Lukawski, a student at Cedarville University, Cedarville, Ohio, is the son of Jeffrey and Suzanne Lukawski, Sussex, N.J. A graduate of High Point Regional High School, Sussex, N.J., he is majoring in mechanical engineering. In high school, he was president of Student Council, BASIC (Brothers and Sisters in Christ), and Engineering Club, and was a member of Peer Counseling. He also participated in the Ambassador Program, Student Advisory Committee, Fill the Bus Committee and the school's spring musicals.



Lucas Mattocks, a student at Cedarville University, Cedarville, Ohio, was homeschooled by his parents, Ryan and Lisa Mattocks, Guys Mills, Pa. He is majoring in electrical engineering. He participated in Calvary Baptist Christian Academy soccer, MSA travel soccer, CCSI/CBCA basketball, Lyona Bible Church Worship Team and Youth Group, Missionary Athletes International, Czech Outreach, piano, and art. He also coached youth soccer, was a math tutor and worked on his family's farm.



Allyson Ritchey, who graduated at the top of her class from Northern Bedford County High School, is a student at Shippensburg University, Shippensburg, Pa., where she is at the Woods Honors College majoring

in communication/journalism. The daughter of Kerry Ritchey and the late Melissa Benton Ritchey, and the granddaughter of Sylvia Benton, Hopewell, Pa., she was president of the band, National Honor Society, and Future Business Leaders of America, captain of the reading competition team, and a member of the chorus and scholastic scrimmage team. She volunteered with Angels Meals and the Bedford County Historical Society and was named a 2020 National Horatio Alger Scholar.

Jody Loudenslager Memorial Scholarship

Two students selected to participate in past Rural Electric Youth Tours have been named recipients of Jody Loudenslager Memorial Scholarships. They are Kimberly Reisinger, Northwestern REC, and Kaylee Schall, REA Energy.

Kimberly Reisinger, daughter of Pamela and Brian Reisinger, Meadville, Pa., is a student at Gannon University, Erie, Pa., in the physician assistant program. A graduate of Saegertown High School, she was president of the Student Council and National Honor



Society, and captain of both the wrestling and football cheerleading squads. She also was a member of the Junior Fair Board, 4-H County Council, 4-H, Girl Scouts, Key Club, Math and Science Club, Envirothon, Saegertown Area Library Teen Advisory Board, a volunteer emergency medical technician, and a candy striper.



Kaylee Schall, a graduate of Bishop Carroll Catholic High School, is the daughter of Ken and Carol Schall, Ebensburg. She is a student at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, where she is majoring in speech and language pathology with a minor in deaf studies. She is a member of Sign Club and a Gold Member of the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association. She is president of the Catholic Student Association at college and also volunteers at Saint Benedict Parish and Saint Thomas Moore University Parish. ☀

Generate Safely

Safe Generator Operation

Keep this card in your home's emergency kit or with your generator.

- ☐ **Never connect a standby generator into your home's electrical system. There are only two safe ways to connect a standby generator to your equipment:**

Stationary Generator: An approved generator transfer switch, which keeps your house circuits separate from the electric co-op, should be installed by a professional.

Portable Generator: Plug appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator.

- ☐ **Set up and run your generator in a well-ventilated area outside the home. Make sure it's out and away from your garage, doors, windows, and vents. The carbon monoxide generated is DEADLY.**

- ☐ **Use a heavy-duty extension cord to connect electric appliances to the outlet on the generator.**


- ☐ **Start the generator first BEFORE connecting appliances.**



Source: SafeElectricity.org

Developed jointly by the Energy Education Council & Rural Electricity Resource Council

Going the extra mile



ALL IN A DAY'S WORK: Somerset REC Chief Lineman Craig Mitchell sends up a Pennsylvania Game Commission warden in a bucket truck to rescue three bear cubs from a tree in 2012.

Lineworkers are the backbone of the electric cooperative — the ones who do the physical work needed to bring electricity to co-op members. But their efforts to help their communities don't always come in the form one would expect.

In recognizing all co-op employees during National Cooperative Month, we note that sometimes “going the extra mile” for lineworkers means ...

Bringing skills to bear

One summer day a few years ago, the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) reached out to Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) with a unique problem. A bear had been discovered near a dumpster on the outskirts of Hooversville, Pa. After the bear was tranquilized, her three bear cubs were found in a nearby tree.

“It just happened I was on the crew that was in the area that day, so they sent us over there to see what we could do,” says Somerset REC lineworker Bryan Schrock.

While animal rescue isn't exactly in a

By Neil C. Jones
Senior Communications Coordinator

lineworker's job description, their skill with bucket trucks and a familiarity with hoisting personnel into the air for potentially dangerous work is certainly within their purview. On this particular day, it was a representative from the PGC they would be ferrying in their bucket truck to capture the bear cubs.

“They're wild animals, so they were pretty feisty,” Schrock says. “So we put (the game warden) in the basket, and we ran the bucket from the other controls, which was kind of awkward because the cubs would keep running up and down the tree, and we had to kind of chase them around with the bucket. But eventually the game warden got them.”

Schrock recalls assisting co-op members with everything from rescuing cats from trees to adjusting a flag on a flagpole.

“It's just an attitude that we try and help out where we can,” he says. “I think that's a testament to the cooperative movement.”

You ain't screen nothin' yet

When COVID-19 and the subsequent quarantine swept across the country in the spring, the Bedford County Chamber of Commerce started looking for any way they could get back to some semblance of normalcy.

The answer: a drive-in theater.

While an inflatable screen was first considered, they quickly realized they would require something far more sturdy and permanent, and with a Fourth of July opening deadline, they would need a crew that could work under pressure.

“We were approached as far as assisting with the poles and the construction of it, really,” says Brooks Shoemaker, Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative general manager & CEO.

The crew set the poles and built the frame of the structure, but the main difficulty they faced was one that only a lineworker who has set poles for a living would understand.

“Every utility pole doesn't come out of a mold, so they've each got their individual ‘nuances,’ shall we say,” explains Shoemaker, “and it was quite a

challenge for the guys to get them lined up in as straight a line as possible.”

By the time the project was completed, every lineworker at Bedford REC was involved with the project in one way or another, says Gary Diehl, Bedford REC member services manager.

“It wasn’t a hurry-up-and-get-it-done project from the point of our guys,” he adds. “It had an expedient timeline, but they took it very seriously. They put every bit of effort into it that they could.”

“I said to the guys, ‘How many of you learned about constructing movie theaters in lineman school?’” Shoemaker says. “And I just think it’s really cool that the guys were able to take the skills that they use every day and apply them to something totally different.”

After a successful preview showing of “The Sandlot” for the crew and their families, the Silver Lining Drive-In at the Bedford County Fairgrounds opened on time with a showing of “National Treasure.” With a parking area able to accommodate 150 cars to within 300 feet of the screen, it has since shown other classic films such as “Goonies,” “The Wizard of Oz,” “Ferris Bueller’s



CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY: The drive-in screen uses poles and guy wires provided and set by crews from Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative. The Silver Lining Drive-In at the Bedford County Fairgrounds (inset) is ready for a show as night falls.

Day Off,” “Footloose” and “Grease.”

Shoemaker hopes the community sees Bedford REC not only as an energy provider but as an organization of people who are always there to help.

“The local community knows when they reach out to us for something, if there’s any way that we can possibly assist, we do,” he says. “They knew we were here, and they knew we would help. We’re the local guys; we’re the people you can count on.”

Connecting across cultures

The lineworkers of Adams Electric Cooperative (EC) don’t just “go the extra mile.” In fact, they go more than 2,000 miles to Costa Rica to help their sister cooperative, Cooperativa de Electrificación Rural de San Carlos (Coopelesca). Founded in 1965 with just 365 members, by the end of 2013, the cooperative became the first distributor in the country to reach 100% of electricity coverage and the first Latin American carbon-neutral company in the energy industry.

Despite its growth, Coopelesca still turns to Adams EC for training and equipment.

“Traditionally, co-ops in those countries are about 10 to 15 years behind us as far as their tools, equipment and work methods,” says Mike Feathers, Adams EC operations manager. “I think the original premise was to exchange

knowledge and to shorten the gap in time it takes for them to learn to work safer, quicker, and more efficiently.”

The co-op not only sends lineworkers and equipment to Costa Rica, but they also bring Coopelesca crews to Pennsylvania, with the most recent visit in July 2019 to show them the proper procedures for underground work.

“They were getting more developed, putting more lines in underground,” Feathers says. “So they sent a supervisor and five linemen here to learn underground installation and maintenance procedures, a skill where they currently lacked experience. Of course, we host [the cooperatives’ statewide] underground school here at our co-op, so we utilized that training yard and our building here, and we did some training with them. We actually took them out to a couple underground developments we were doing work in and let them get some hands-on experience pulling in underground conductor using our recently acquired underground pulling machine.”

Feathers says these kinds of experiences also create a more well-rounded employee for Adams EC and Coopelesca crews.

“They get exposure to other parts of the world, other cultures, and we’re able to share knowledge,” he says. “It fosters that co-op spirit, not only among co-ops here, but across the world.”



ANOTHER DAY, ANOTHER COUNTRY: Adams EC lineworkers provide instruction to a Coopelesca counterpart during a visit to Costa Rica in March 2015.

All-day granola

By Janette Hess

Granola's not just for breakfast anymore! This fall, bake a big batch of nutty, sweetly-spiced granola to treat yourself first thing in the morning. Then, before indulging in a second bowl full, set aside enough to make snack-friendly Granola Oatmeal Cookies or dessert-appropriate Granola Apple Crunch.

Sweetened with honey and brown sugar, Harvest Granola features a seasonal blend of cinnamon and pumpkin pie spice. These flavors, along with the crunch of the granola, transfer deliciously to bakery-style Granola Oatmeal Cookies. Truly, these are the perfect cookie for fall.

In the recipe for Granola Apple Crunch, granola saves a few steps by standing in for traditional streusel topping. Served warm with an appropriate topping, this dessert will become a new fall favorite. 🍂



A trained journalist, **Janette Hess** focuses her writing on interesting people and interesting foods. She is a Master Food Volunteer with her local extension service and enjoys collecting, testing and sharing recipes.



Harvest Granola

- | | |
|--|---|
| 5 1/2 cups old-fashioned oatmeal, divided | 1/3 cup canola or other vegetable oil |
| 1/2 cup walnut pieces | 2 tablespoons water |
| 1/2 cup pecan pieces | 2 teaspoons vanilla extract |
| 1 cup flaked coconut | 1/4 teaspoon salt |
| 1/4 cup ground flaxseed* | Cooking spray |
| 1/4 cup dark brown sugar | Optional add-ins: |
| 1/2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice | 1 cup raisins or finely chopped dried apples |
| 1 teaspoon cinnamon | 1/2 cup unsalted, roasted pepitas (a type of pumpkin seed) |
| 1/2 cup honey | |

*If desired, substitute an additional 1/4 cup oatmeal, processed to fine, for flaxseed.

Finely process 1/2 cup oatmeal. Transfer to large mixing bowl along with remaining oatmeal, walnuts, pecans, coconut, flaxseed, brown sugar and dry spices. Stir to combine. In separate microwave-proof bowl or large glass measuring cup, whisk together honey, oil, water, vanilla extract, and salt. Heat for 10 to 20 seconds in microwave oven. Whisk to combine and stir into oatmeal mixture. Lightly spray 2 rimmed cookie sheets with non-stick cooking spray. Evenly spread granola mixture on cookie sheets; press down with fingers. Bake at 250 degrees for 40 to 45 minutes, rotating sheets and very lightly tossing mixture with flat spatula half way through cooking process. Remove from oven when mixture is golden brown. Add additional ingredients, if desired. Allow granola to cool completely on baking sheets before bagging or transferring to airtight container. Granola will naturally break into a nice mixture of clusters and loose pieces. Makes approximately 7 cups granola.



Granola Oatmeal Cookies

- | | |
|---|--|
| 3/4 cup (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted, room-temperature butter | 1/3 cup white sugar |
| 2 cups flour | 2 teaspoons vanilla extract |
| 1/2 teaspoon baking soda | 1 egg |
| 1/2 teaspoon salt | 1 egg yolk |
| 1 cup packed brown sugar | 1 1/2 cups oat-based granola, such as Harvest Granola |

Several hours before mixing up cookies, remove butter from refrigerator and allow to completely soften at room temperature. (Do not rush this step.) Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper. Stir together flour, baking soda and salt; set aside. In mixing bowl, beat together soft butter and sugars. Beat in egg, egg yolk and vanilla extract. Stir in dry ingredients before folding in granola by hand. Form dough into 1/4-cup balls and place on lined cookie sheets. Bake at 325 degrees for approximately 15 minutes, or until cookies are set and edges are lightly browned. Allow cookies to cool slightly before sliding parchment paper and cookies onto counter. When cookies have cooled to room temperature, store in air-tight container. Makes 12 to 13 large cookies.



Granola Apple Crunch

- | | |
|--|--|
| 4 or 5 medium apples, peeled, cored and sliced | 1/8 teaspoon salt |
| 1/4 cup water | 1 1/2 cups oat-based granola, such as Harvest Granola |
| 4 teaspoons lemon juice | 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter, cut into small pieces |
| 1/2 cup sugar | Cooking spray |
| 2 tablespoons flour | |
| 1 teaspoon cinnamon | |

Place apples in sprayed 8- by 8-inch glass baking dish. Combine water and lemon juice; pour over apples. Thoroughly combine sugar, flour, cinnamon and salt; lightly toss with apples. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes. Remove from oven and sprinkle with granola. Dot with butter. Return to oven and bake an additional 5 minutes, or until butter has melted. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream, whipped cream or a drizzle of vanilla icing. Makes 9 servings.

How to keep animals from eating your bulbs

By George Weigel

Most of our yards are seriously under-bulbed.

One reason is that spring-flowering bulbs score low on the instant-gratification scale. You plant the things in the fall, then end up with a bare bed for at least four months before anything happens.

Like any plant, bulbs also require some work and expense.

But maybe the biggest discourager is animals eating bulbs and/or the stems and buds before the bulb plants ever bloom a lick.

This is one gardening problem that's easy to solve, mainly because animals zero in on tulips ... and to a lesser extent, crocuses and sometimes hyacinths.

Tulips are beautiful bloomers, which is why they're the most popular of the spring-flowering bulbs.

However, burrowing rodents love the flavor of tulip bulbs, and deer, rabbits, and groundhogs are connoisseurs of the leaves and flower buds.

One way to solve the bulb/animal problem is to simply bypass tulips ... and maybe crocuses and hyacinths, if you've had bad luck with them.

Bulbs that animals hardly ever eat include daffodils, Siberian squill, ornamental onions (*Alliums*), glory-of-the-snow (*Chionodoxa*), snowdrops, fritillaria, striped squill, summer snowflakes and Spanish bluebells.

In case you'd rather not give up tulips, you have options.

The best defense against underground attack is to screen out the pests. A sheet of chicken wire laid over the bed after planting, then covered with mulch, works great. Rodents can't tunnel down through it, but the



PHOTO BY GEORGE WEIGEL

EMERGING BULBS: Tulip shoots poke up through the openings in this animal-preventing net.

bulb shoots can poke up through the thumb-sized openings.

Smarter rodents, however, can tunnel down beside the wire and then go sideways into the bulb booty. You can outsmart even those rodents by building what's essentially a buried cage around the bulbs.

First, excavate the bed down to the planting depth of the bulbs (typically about 6 inches for tulips). Lay chicken wire across the bottom, plant the bulbs and then fold up all four sides of the wire as you backfill the hole with soil. Lay another sheet of chicken wire across the top to completely enclose the planting. Touché, Mr. Vole!

An alternative to wire is making the soil too scratchy for rodent comfort.

Espoma's gritty Soil Perfector (sold in bags at most garden centers) can be mixed into bulb beds to discourage tunneling. Gravel, stone dust or similar crushed rock at about 10% volume also may do the trick at less cost.

When planting, don't leave the papery sheaths of tulips behind. That only advertises via scent that tasty rodent morsels are nearby.

To head off above-ground attacks in the spring, repellents are your best bet.

Lots of commercial products are available to spray on and around emerging bulb plants, including Ropel, Predator Fox Urine, Bobbex, Liquid Fence, Plantskydd, and Deer Out.

Some gardeners have reported success with such homemade repellents as human hair, rotten-egg concoctions, hanging sponge pieces soaked in a bloodmeal/ammonia mixture, and even human urine (a good assignment for the man of the house).

Another effective defense is enlisting an energetic cat or dog. They'll find it great sport chasing rodents and rabbits all day.

And if you're really getting desperate, there's fencing, although that isn't very ornamental for your ornamental plantings. ☀



George Weigel is a Pennsylvania Certified Horticulturist, author of two books geared to gardening in Pennsylvania, and garden columnist for *The Patriot-News/Pennlive.com* in Harrisburg. His website is georgeweigel.net.

Classified Advertisements

ISSUE MONTH	AD DEADLINE
December 2020	October 16
January 2021	November 16
February 2021	December 17

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- ☐ **Non-members** should submit name, address, phone number, and email address, if applicable.
- ☐ **Month(s)** in which the ad is to run.
- ☐ **Ad copy** as it is to appear in the publication.
- ☐ **Heading** ad should appear under, or name of special heading (additional fee). See below for FREE heading options.

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The night Earl snagged the ‘big one’

By Earl Pitts, American

I keep hearin’ ex-samples of how the rest of y’all been comin’ around to doin’ stuff us country folks have been doin’ for years. Yeah, the whole U.S. of A. has done “gone country,” maybe because everyone is broke now.

Well, me and my friends, we been doin’ that stuff for years. Here’s an ex-sample. I heard this story about where the biggest new thing for people who don’t have money and do have extra time is somethin’ called “vampire fishin’.” Only they don’t really fish for vampires. That would be stupid. It’s just night fishin’.

The story goes that some of the biggest fish don’t even come out to feed until after dark. So, there’s boats out there in the misty darkness and there’s all kinds of silent figures dippin’ night-crawlers into the deep.

Yeah, we call that night fishin’. And it ain’t new. Lemme tell you somethin’ — the biggest fish I ever caught in my whole life was at 2 a.m.

See, what happened was that me and my family was campin’ down at Mudd Lake next to my Uncle Burl’s family and my cousin, Russell. Anyways, me and Russell got this brilliant idea to stay up late and night fish.

Let me see if I can do this justice. It was a moonless night with inky blackness everywhere. Couldn’t see your own hand in front of your face. We had a Coleman lantern we used to pick our way down the bank, but then we turned it down. The only thing you could hear was the water lappin’ on the bank and the skeeters buzzin’ in your ears. And maybe every half hour or so, the sound of Russell unwrappin’ another candy bar. That

kid loved his sweets.

I think at one point, Russell got hit in the head by an owl that thought his head was a muskrat. But he wasn’t bleedin’ so we kept goin’. It was three hours and two cans of Deep Woods Off — and still nothin’.

And then suddenly, just when we was real close to packin’ it in, we got a hit. And this wasn’t a nibble. This was a hit. It pulled Russell’s fishin’ pole clean off the Y-stick sideways, and the pole started headin’ into the water. I think Russell screamed. Or it could have been me. Russell grabbed the pole, but there was nothin’.

And then whatever monster it was took my line. It didn’t jerk. It didn’t bend. The whole stinkin’ pole just flew off the bank like I had snagged a passin’ freight train.

We both flew through the air, grabbin’ for that fishin’ pole. And the pole is skitterin’ across the rocks. I jumped it and tried to take control. I righted myself, grabbed for the reel, and started what ended up to be a two-hour, life-and-death struggle.

You ever seen that show, “Wicked Tuna?” It was like that, only we was on dry land, and nobody was gonna pay you \$6,000 for anything you hauled out of Mudd Lake.

It was a 38-pound catfish. It took two of us to pull that bad boy out of the water. We had our picture took with it the next mornin’. And the guy at the bait shop put it in a wire cage in the water next to the boat dock for curiosity seekers to look at.

Wake up, America! So, don’t tell me about no vampire fishin’. I have been to vampire hell and back. And lived to tell about it. I’m Earl Pitts, American.

They say your automakers are bringin’ back two-tone paint jobs with different color roofs and bodies. Very clever marketin’ idea. ‘Cept we don’t need to bring the two-tone paint job back out here because it never left!

‘Cept it ain’t usually a different color roof. It’s a different color door. Or a fender. When you go to the junk yard, you’re lookin’ for a part that fits for a vehicle that’s got a lotta miles left on it, not a color that matches.

I got a buddy who drives around with a different color trunk lid. I kept wonderin’ what in the world happened to this dude’s car that he needed to replace the trunk lid? I had to ask him. He said he hit a tree.

I says, “Wait a minute — you hit a tree — going backerts?” He says, no, he was goin’ forward and took out his bumper and his grill. And I’m like, “Then how come you had to replace the trunk lid?” Then he says the collision caused a bear to fall out of the tree.

Wake up, America! ‘Cause then it made perfect sense. I’m Earl Pitts, American. 🌞



Social commentary from **Earl Pitts** — a.k.a. GARY BURBANK, a nationally syndicated radio personality — can be heard on the following radio stations that cover electric cooperative service territories in Pennsylvania: WANB-FM 103.1 Pittsburgh; WARM-AM 590 Wilkes-Barre/Scranton; WIOO-AM 1000 Carlisle; WEEO-AM 1480 Shippensburg; WMTZ-FM 96.5 Johnstown; WQBR-FM 99.9/92.7 McElhattan; WLMI-FM 103.9 Kane; and WVNW-FM 96.7 Burnham- Lewistown. You can also find him at earlpittsamerican.com.

Last call for 2020 photos

It's time to wind down the 2020 Rural Reflections contest, so hurry and get your photos ready to mail. Entries must be post-marked by Oct. 31 in order to be placed in competition for the 2020 prizes.

Amateur photographers who are members of a rural electric cooperative have a chance to win a \$75 prize in one of our contest categories: artistic, landscape, human subject, animal and editor's choice. Runners-up will receive a \$25 prize. Entries received after Oct. 31 will be entered in the 2021 contest.

Winning entries and the runners-up, all selected by an independent panel of judges, will be printed in the January and February issues of *Penn Lines*.

Amateur photographers may send photos (no digital files, please) to *Penn Lines* Photos, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108-1266. Include your name, address, phone number, and the name of your electric cooperative that serves your home, business, or seasonal residence. Include a self-addressed, self-stamped envelope if you want your photo to be returned. 📧



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