



United Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

United Electric Cooperative, Inc.
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Guest Column



Construction season in full swing

By Steve Long, *Engineering Manager*

THERE IS an old saying that goes, “Farmers make hay when the sun shines.” Well, at United Electric we don’t make hay, but we do build line when the sun shines. Summer is construction season in our area. This is the time of year when United Electric receives most of our requests for line extensions to new homes and buildings. And even though we move ahead with system improvement projects throughout the year, summer is a busy time for line construction projects.

United Electric is continually developing and updating multiyear work plans to address the rebuilding of line throughout our system as part of our long-term planning and budgeting process. Most of these system improvement projects are planned to address reliability issues in particular areas of our system. Other projects are part of a long-term plan to provide tie-lines between substations, which allow us to have alternative sources of power in case of power supplier interruption to one of our substations. Also, some line construction is to make power available to new members building in our service area.

United Electric’s Engineering Department carefully evaluates the electric needs of our members and system performance in particular areas along with data on outages and their cause to determine which projects need to be prioritized. Although some projects are part of our long-term plan to increase reliability throughout the overall electric system, many of the projects are initiated at the suggestion of our line personnel to address maintenance and

outage problems in a specific area. Our linemen and other field personnel are encouraged to bring it to the Engineering Department’s attention when there is an ongoing problem, and a line relocation or line rebuild will make an improvement in the reliability for our members. This input, along with the data tracked by the Engineering Department and our outage management system, allows us to develop a work plan to improve reliability to our members while at the same time making the best use of our financial resources.

United Electric’s current four-year work plan anticipates spending will be about \$4 million per year on system improvement projects. Over the past 10 years, we have invested over \$33 million into system improvement projects throughout our system.

This year’s system improvement projects include: rebuilding 3.5 miles of line from the Meade Chapel Church along Hunters Grove Road to Norman. This project involved converting this section of single-phase line to three-phase as part of a much larger plan that will allow us to backfeed five of our substations from each other in case there is a power supply outage or a transformer loss in one of the substations. This line provides a tie between our Conifer and Pinebrook substations. The five substations that will eventually be able to be backfed from each other are: Conifer, Pinebrook, Grange, Robertsville and Henderson. Another recently completed job in the Oliveburg area, converting a section of three-phase line with small

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conductor to higher capacity conductor, is also part of this five-substation-backfeed scenario. Another project is building a three-phase tie line from Henderson Substation north through Wishaw to Robertsville. Also as part of this plan, there is currently another



SETTING POLE: United Electric linemen Jason Duttry, Jayme Good and Dan Marshall set a pole near Sprankle Mills Road. This pole is part of the Oliveburg line upgrade that will allow us to backfeed the Grange, Robertsville and Conifer substations.

line section replacement in the engineering stages to rebuild 1 1/4 miles of three-phase line starting on Beacon Road (just north of the Punxsutawney Airport) to tie in with a three-phase line near Delancy that had previously been rebuilt.

A major project has just begun to replace the Robertsville Substation. This aging substation will be replaced at its present location with a larger footprint, allowing us to upsize the transformer



STAKING: Steve Long, United Electric manager of engineering, right, and Mike Flock, system planning engineer, center, stake out the new Robertsville Substation along with Ben Haugh, back left, and Brad Myer, back right, of Central LSS Consulting LLC.

capacity so we can backfeed the other substations I previously mentioned. We will also be providing room inside this substation so our portable substation can be more easily connected in case of emergencies. This substation replacement project requires specialized equipment with some rather long lead-times. We are anticipating having this new substation on-line by the fall of 2018.

Don't think this is the only area of our system getting attention in this work plan. We also completed a project earlier this year replacing a deteriorating 2 1/2-mile, single-phase line from Corsica along the Roseville Sigel Road to Radio Tower Road and a project replacing 3 miles of single-phase line from Singing Hills across Wilson Road to Westville Road.

In the Curwensville area, we rebuilt over 3 miles of the three-phase north feeder out of Pike Substation. This project included a 2,400-foot span across a ravine to improve reliability to members in this area. We are also replacing an aging single-phase line out of the Pike Substation past Bilger Rocks to Route 219.

We completed a major underground replacement project this year to 33 residences in the Shady Acres Development in Morrisdale. This project involved replacing our entire underground electric system through-out this development.

Even as line crews are kept busy with the system improvement projects we currently have ready for construction, the Engineering Department is busy working with members to design projects to keep our work plan on track.

We are currently in various stages of engineering a number of projects. One of those projects is to rebuild 6 miles of

three-phase line from the Punxsutawney Airport to the ammo factory on Route 310. There is a project being engineered to rebuild 10 miles of lines in the Utahville area, replacing the aging line with new line to improve reliability and allow us to better maintain voltage in that area.

We are engineering a project that will rebuild 4 1/2 miles of the line from Game School Road to Walburn Run Road just north of Brockway. Another project will involve rebuilding 6 1/2 miles of line in the Ames Road, Zion Road and Langville Road areas near Mayport. There is another project in the design stages to rebuild 12 miles of line west of Route 28 in the Shannondale area. In addition to the projects I mentioned, there are a number of other smaller jobs currently being engineered.

I cannot overstate the importance our members and landowners in these areas play when it comes to designing these projects — their cooperation is crucial in designing a line to meet the needs of our members. In many cases, replacing the lines in the existing right-of-way



REMOVING LINE: United Electric linemen remove small capacity copper wire to make way for an upgrade to a larger capacity conductor in the Oliveburg area.

just doesn't make sense today, and we need the cooperation of the landowners to re-site the line to increase reliability and allow for better access to maintain the line or make repairs, if necessary. So, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you in advance for working with our staking engineers as together we build a better, more reliable system for you and all of our members. 🌞

2017: a record-setting Youth Tour

By Kristy Smith

WHAT IS the best way for a student to learn about his or her role as a citizen? Send them to our nation's capital to personally speak with our elected officials. This is exactly what electric cooperatives decided to do over 50 years ago. The tradition is still going strong today: from June 11 – 16, over 1,800 high school students from 46 states traveled to Washington, D.C., to sightsee and learn about electric cooperatives through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Youth Tour. United Electric Cooperative was pleased to have five outstanding students from our territory to represent our cooperative this year: Abraham George, Benjamin George, Chelsea Krise, Hannah Shahmoradi and Emily Trimpey.

This year's Youth Day was June 12 for all attending students. Since Youth Tour has grown so large, states have to be split into morning and evening sessions. Youth Day consists of engaging speakers and state-to-state socialization, not only by talking, but also by exchanging state pins and stickers.

Jim Matheson, NRECA CEO, spoke to students about speaking up about issues that matter most to them.

"You bring a voice that wants to engage with people and talk about your community and what matters to you," said Matheson. "It's up to all of us to support (your community), nurture it, hold it accountable and make it work. That's the approach of NRECA and that's the approach you will help us pursue."

Students also heard from Trevor Stratton, a journeyman lineman at Wolverine Power Supply Co-op in Cadillac, Mich., about expanding electricity access in developing countries. Michigan cooperatives started a volunteer project in 2015 called Partners for Power to help electrify Guatemala.

Once again in the Youth Day lineup, students heard from two-time

Paralympic medalist Mike Schlappi. He discusses his life, including the shooting accident committed by his best friend that left him without the use of his legs. Schlappi stresses to all the students that they matter and they should not forget to speak up.

Following Youth Day, Pennsylvania and New Jersey students were treated to arcade gaming, good food, and cooperative-themed scavenger hunts at Dave & Buster's. Prizes were awarded

to the top three teams, and all of the students enjoyed making new friends. Throughout the week, the Pennsylvania and New Jersey students visited Arlington National Cemetery, the Smithsonian museums, the Newseum, Madame Tussuads Wax Museum, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and a

number of monuments. At the National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial, students were treated to a visit from Major Gen. David E. Wilmot, deputy surgeon general for the Army National Guard, Department of the Army. He spoke with students regarding their futures and answered questions ranging from the best path to become a doctor to military experience and what that means for employment. Also on the itinerary was a visit to the Washington National Zoo, Union Station, and various NRECA-sanctioned events held so students from different states could mingle with each other.

In addition to touring our nation's capital, students also met with their congressional representatives for a question-and-answer session. All of United's students met with U.S. Rep.



YOUTH TOUR: United Electric Cooperative students at the Capitol include, back from left: Chelsea Krise, Benjamin George, and Abraham George; and front: Hannah Shahmoradi and Emily Trimpey.

Glenn "GT" Thompson, who serves Pennsylvania's 5th District. Thompson was originally going to be in a meeting; however, he greatly enjoys speaking with the Youth Tour students every year so he rearranged his schedule to meet with us. Students asked a number of questions this year with a wide range of topics including the Paris climate agreement, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and education.

The Rural Electric Cooperative Youth Tour was established after President Lyndon B. Johnson spoke in 1964 about the importance of learning about government. More than 50,000 students from all over rural America have participated in this program which

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2017 Youth Tour

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teaches students about the cooperative business model and principles. Students in Pennsylvania who have participated in Youth Tour are eligible every year they are in college to apply for the Jody Loudenslager Scholarship offered through the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association. Loudenslager was a 1995 Pennsylvania Youth Tour participant from Trout Run, Pa., who was among the 230 passengers killed on July 17, 1996, when TWA Flight 800 exploded after take-off from New York. She was committed to higher education, whatever form it takes and believed that Youth Tour instilled the importance of electric cooperatives and the values they represent to the next generation of leaders.

Meet the students

Abraham George attends West Branch High School and is the son of Bruce and Jennifer George of Morrisdale. Abraham participates in Drama Club, Chess Club, teen court, and volunteers through his local youth group and Big Run Community Park. He plans to continue studying math with a career in engineering.

Benjamin George attends West Branch High School and is the son of Bruce and Jennifer George of Morrisdale. Benjamin participates in Drama Club, Chess Club, teen court and Envirothon. He also volunteers through Big Run Community Park and his local youth group. Benjamin plans to pursue a career in engineering.

Chelsee Krise attends Brockway Area High School and is the daughter of Rickilou Krise and Brandon Settemyer. Chelsee participates in volleyball, Dale Carnegie leadership training, and her local youth group. She plans to continue studying math with a career as an accountant.

Hannah Shahmoradi attends Brockway Area High School and is the daughter of Anthony and Angie Shahmoradi. Hannah attends Brockway Area High School through her grandparents and guardians, Gary and Cynthia Col-

lins. Hannah participates in tennis, the Prom Committee, Dale Carnegie leadership training, and volunteers through the Salvation Army. She would like to continue her studies in order to become a marine biologist.

Emily Trimpey attends Clearfield

Area Junior/Senior High School and is the daughter of Frederick and Barbara Trimpey. Emily has received academic high honors, placed third in the Clearfield Art Show, and is active in her local church. She enjoys studying psychology and is undecided on her career goal. ☀

**Operation Round-Up
Members Helping Members**

When we were kids, our mothers told us, “It’s the little things that count in life.” We were told to be kind to our neighbors, return any lost item we found, pick up after ourselves, and help out without being told to.



While each action might not amount to much on its own, if everyone does a little, we see a big impact in our community.

That’s what United Electric’s Round-Up program does.

Six bucks isn’t a lot of money — it’s about what you would pay for a meal at a fast food restaurant. But \$6 is the average amount folks who support our Round-Up program give every year, all through spare change.

Members — people like you who receive electricity from the co-op — agree to have their bills automatically rounded up to the next whole dollar amount each month. Let’s say your bill is \$82.90. It would be rounded up to \$83, with a dime going to the Round-Up program. The extra pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters fund our Members United

program, which helps only members of United Electric who are in need. Members United is managed by Community Action, which also administers several energy assistance programs that assist area residents, as well as fellow members, who have fallen on hard times. All of the money donated to Members United goes to help members of United Electric who are having trouble keeping up with their electric bills.

Sure, donating \$6 over the course of a year may seem like a little thing. But if you put all of that money together — well, things start to get exciting. Nearly 700 members of United Electric are chipping in to support the Round-Up program, and hopefully we can increase that number.

If you’re one of the members who makes Operation Round-Up possible, thank you. If you haven’t heard about the program and would like to participate, just fill out the certificate below and return it to the co-op, or call our office at 888-581-8969 for more information. Together, we can use a little pocket change to help those members who truly need our help. ☀

Members United Round-Up program

Yes, I would like to help members through the Members United Round-Up program.

Name on Account: _____

Account Number: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Signature: _____