



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



Clean, dependable energy working for you

By Kristy Smith, *Energy Management Advisor*

WHAT do you think of when someone asks you about clean energy? With all the talk in the media today, your mind probably goes straight to solar or wind power. What about water? Hydroelectric power is one of the oldest, cleanest ways to produce electricity. Did you know your generation and transmission supplier, Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Allegheny), owns a hydroelectric power generation station? This means you, as a member of United Electric Cooperative, Inc., own a portion of a clean, hydroelectric facility that is used to power your home.

Approximately 60 percent of your power comes from the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station, a nuclear steam generating station near Berwick, but the Raystown Hydroelectric Project at Raystown Lake usually provides about 3 percent of Allegheny's power portfolio through hydropower. This may not seem like a lot, but this equates to up to 85.7 million kilowatt-hours per year. This past October, I attended a presentation at the Raystown Hydroelectric Project along with other cooperative employees from across the state. Our presenters were Jude Harrington, supervisory ranger for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Bill Shearn, supervisor of Raystown operations for Allegheny.

Hydroelectric project

In addition to the generating station, Raystown Lake, located in Huntingdon County, is a reservoir with a dam managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The dam is located on the Raystown branch of the Juniata River,

which flows into the Susquehanna River. The original lake was built by the Simpson family of Huntingdon County with intentions of making it a hydroelectric project.

Harrington explains, "The Corps of Engineers began dam construction in 1968, and it was completed by the end of 1973. Water release can be done through a high-level outlet spillway with two 45-foot tainter gates or low-level outlet through a tower with a 14-foot diameter tunnel housing two 5.5-by-10-foot gates."

There is also an emergency spillway for extremely high water runoff that was built when the dam was constructed. The earthen dam itself is 225 feet tall, and it is entirely constructed of rolled earth and rockfill.

Generating station

"The 21-megawatt William F. Matson Generating Station was completed in 1988 and is located at the base of the dam," Shearn explains. "The generating station is owned and managed by Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc."

Raystown was the first hydroelectric plant in Pennsylvania that was on a Corps of Engineers project. Inside the generating station are two turbine/generator units: a 7-megawatt unit and a 14-megawatt unit. The units are sized differently to accommodate seasonal availability of water since this is a "flow of the river" facility. The plant provides an average of 2.5 to 3.5 percent of yearly power to the 14 Pennsylvania and New Jersey cooperatives. Water released from the reservoir's power intake is chan-

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Guest column

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neled down the tunnel penstock (intake tunnel) and flows through one or both of the turbines, spinning them, which in turn activates the generators to produce electricity through the conversion of mechanical energy. The power intake draws from different levels of the lake water and the temperature control gates inside regulate water temperature to provide optimum temperature conditions downstream for the fish (this is a requirement from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission).

“While drawing in water, the power intake only draws at 3 feet per second so fish can still swim in and out,” Shearn says.

Special racks inside the power intake



POWER SUPPLY: The William F. Matson Generating Station, a 21-megawatt generation facility at the base of the Raystown Dam, provides enough power to supply 8,500 Pennsylvania co-op members' homes.

called trash racks also help to keep the fish and other debris such as tree limbs from going down the tunnel.

Certifications

Hydropower is a renewable energy source, but it also has environmental impacts. A national independent environmental organization, the Low Impact Hydro Institute (LIHI), monitors and certifies hydro plants with generation capabilities. The Raystown Hydroelectric Project was the first plant in Pennsylvania to be certified by LIHI as having a low impact on the environment. It is certified through 2022 thanks to the eight rigorous standards it meets or exceeds: water quality, fish passage and protection, river flow, endangered species protection, cultural resources, watershed health, whether or not the dam has been recommended for removal, and recreational use and access. All of these standards must be met for a facility to qualify, and the process is entirely voluntary.

Recreation

Raystown Lake encompasses 29,000 acres of woods, beaches, lake water, campgrounds, trails, wildlife, lodging and boat launches. There are also many things to do near the lake area like golfing, shopping, museums and cave ex-

ploration. Raystown Lake also has four pairs of nesting bald eagles — you may see them from the hydroelectric project or from the dam overlook. Throughout the year, there are many festivals, trail races, and other events at the lake in Huntingdon and the surrounding counties. Since the lake’s depth is approximately 200 feet in places, there are relatively ice-free conditions in the winter. This provides year-round recreation for the avid enthusiast or the occasional outdoors person.

Hydroelectric generation is more than just taking water from a lake and generating power. Several factors must be considered: level of the lake, incoming and outgoing water temperatures, fish and other wildlife, downstream water levels, weather forecast, and electricity demand forecast. Without forethought, hydropower wouldn’t be one of the cleanest, most dependable and least expensive sources of energy. So next time you’re camping and enjoying the view at Raystown, don’t forget how very important the lake is — not only to the economy of Huntingdon County, but also the regional and national economy. The Raystown Hydroelectric Project provides enough electricity to power approximately 8,500 rural residences — one of those residences may be your own. ☀

Rustic Views

Should the new year really start in January?

By Glenn Schuckers

WE USUALLY welcome a new year this month, and I suppose I should, too. After all, traditions die hard, and for centuries people in Europe and America have celebrated the new year at the beginning of January. But, I have always been of the opinion that the new year should begin sometime in April or May when the new year for crops actually begins.

I mean, no one plants corn or beans or potatoes in January, right? At least no one in Pennsylvania or Ohio or Vermont or New York. We have the good

sense to have four seasons; spring, summer, fall and winter.

We are now in the heart of one of those seasons: winter. It will be 10 or maybe even 15 weeks until we can start thinking about things like planting crops, plowing fields, and enjoying all those things like the smell of fresh cut grass, spaded or plowed earth, and just the smell of spring.

But that does not mean we can, like some animals, bed down and sleep until April arrives. No, no; we have jobs to do.

First and maybe foremost, we need

to keep the driveway and sidewalk open. Out here in the country, we may only get 2 or 3 inches of snow, but the wind has a way of piling those few inches where it does the most harm, and I find drifts 1 or 2 feet deep where I or a neighbor want to walk or where I need to drive the car to get to town.

The whole field across the road or down the road will most likely be bare, of course. All the snow that used to be there is now piled up in the driveway or over the sidewalk. It is a cruel fact of nature that the wind never blows the snow out of the driveway and into an



PHOTO BY GLENN SCHUCKERS

WINTER BEAUTY: It may be because of the frost in the air, the ice on the trees or the way the light reflects off the snow on the ground, but whatever the reason, sunrise in winter is a beautiful sight to see.

empty field, but always does just the opposite.

So long as it does not become a daily chore, clearing a driveway is just a challenge we have to deal with. When we first lived where we live now, we had a gravel driveway, and I had the large tractor with a 6-foot snowblower. It does a heck of a job moving huge amounts of snow, but as I discovered in April, it also does a heck of a job moving gravel. Keeping the driveway clear in January and February meant raking gravel out of the yard in April and May.

With a smaller snowblower on the front of the garden tractor and with it set about an inch off the ground and with our now-paved driveway, I can keep the driveway open and the lawn ready to mow. I have never mentioned to Ann that the garden tractor does have lights on the front. So far, all of the plowing has been a daytime job — let's keep it that way.

Of course, other January jobs await people who are ambitious — or, like me, who don't like to sit and look out the window.

This month would also be one of the best times to get up and look at a sunrise. For some reason, sunrise in January looks better than just about any other time of year. Maybe the frost in the air, some ice on the trees or the snow on the ground that reflects the light is what makes it so beautiful. But other than our hills in the fall, there are few scenes as beautiful as a winter

sunrise. Getting up to watch one is a pleasure no one should miss.

The biggest job for this month, of course, is ordering the seeds for this summer's garden. The catalogs have been arriving almost daily since back in November, and I now have a catalog from just about every company that sells seeds or plants.

The easy thing would be just to order one of everything in every catalog, but then with about a zillion packets of seeds on the shelf, I would have to decide which ones to plant and which ones to save.

To me, saving seeds just seems the right thing to do. I have coffee cans in the basement from 2012 with unplanted seeds from that year. Seeds are like wine and people — they all get better with age.

I have no idea why I save unplanted seeds from year to year. The packets all have a clear message: "prepared for planting in" whatever the year was. I really doubt many of them will germinate two or three years after they were prepared, but throwing them out seems like getting rid of something valuable.

Just don't ask me what they are valuable for. Making jewelry maybe?

But back to deciding what seeds/plants to order.

I like to order fairly early just in case the company runs out of the seeds I want. Even though that has never happened, I have this feeling that the time I wait to order that special variety of squash I have never grown before, I'll get a letter, "We are sorry, but our supply of Triple Sweet Squash has run out. Can we substitute another variety?"

So, I'll order my seeds this month and be sure to get the ones I want.

The question is, which seeds do I want this year?

After a pretty successful year in 2016, I have decided to do two things

with this year's garden. One, I plan to downsize a little. We have always had about four dozen tomato plants, and made around 20-30 quarts of canned sauce. After a few years of not using as much as we made, we have a surplus of canned sauce on the shelves. Time for a year to catch up. That means planting no more than two dozen tomato plants.

Same goes for green beans. Ann froze about 30 packages of beans last year from the six rows I planted. We will probably use about 20 packages. Another year to catch up, so I'll probably plant three rows. That will be enough for lots of fresh beans and a few more to freeze.

We found a really tasty recipe for stuffed zucchini, so I'll need to plant a few more. And since the acorn squash keep all winter, we'll need a few bushes.

The second thing is to "diversify."

I have not planted potatoes, and we really like the little red ones fresh. Same goes for onions. So, two rows of potatoes and one of onions will be in order. I'll go back to planting some turnips, add a row of beets and one of carrots, some lettuce, maybe a few cabbage plants and certainly some Brussels sprouts. And a fence around everything!

Even if the garden turns out to be about the same size, we'll have less quantity but more variety, which will make it seem smaller. Which is what a garden is all about, really. Just having one is about as important as what comes out of it.

Whether the beginning of the new year comes in January or April, whether it is sunrise or sunset, it really makes little difference. The calendar will say 2017, and I will wish all a happy new year and look forward to the farmer's new year in about three months. ☀



Glenn Schuckers, a longtime member of United Electric, operated Schuckers' Orchard in Luthersburg until the mid-1990s. He is a retired high school teacher and a contributing writer for *The Courier Express*.

We are pleased to have Glenn provide our *Penn Lines* readers with his take on rural life.

2017 United Electric Board elections will be held for Districts 4 and 5

United Electric Cooperative members residing in Districts 4 and 5 will be eligible to vote in the 2017 director elections.

The 2017 United Electric director elections will be held in May. Members residing in Districts 4 and 5 are eligible to run for the board. (See Districts 4 and 5 by county and township below.) A mail-in ballot will be sent to every member in Districts 4 and 5. Mail-in ballots provide everyone in these districts the opportunity to vote, including those

who do not, or cannot, attend the annual meeting. United Electric's 2017 annual meeting will be held Wednesday, May 17, 2017, at the Brady Township Community Center in Luthersburg. More information about the 2017 election will be in future issues of *Penn Lines*.

Members residing in Districts 4 and 5 who are interested in running for the United Electric Cooperative Board of Directors should read the following bylaws carefully:

UNITED ELECTRIC BYLAWS

ARTICLE IV – BOARD MEMBERS

SECTION 2. Districts (excerpt).

DISTRICT NO. 4. *Cambria County* – Susquehanna Township; *Clearfield County* – Bell, Burnside, Chest, Ferguson, Greenwood, Jordan, Knox, Lumber City, Penn, and Pike Townships; *Jefferson County* – Henderson Township.

DISTRICT NO. 5. *Clearfield County* – Bloom, and Brady Townships; *Jefferson County* – Pine Creek, Warsaw, Washington, and Winslow Townships.

SECTION 3. Qualifications.

No person shall be eligible to become or remain a Director of the Cooperative who is not a member in good standing of, and receiving electric service as required in Section 2 hereof from the Cooperative at such member's primary residential abode for a minimum period of one continuous year immediately preceding his/her election within the particular district which such member is to represent. No person shall be eligible to become or remain a Director of, or to hold any other position of trust in, the Cooperative who:

- (a) is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise; including, but not limited to, the sale and distribution of electric power;
- (b) is engaged in regularly selling, at wholesale or retail, goods, equipment, or material that is used in and about the business of the Cooperative;
- (c) is unwilling to become acquainted with the business and working of the Cooperative;
- (d) does not complete half (50%) of the required NRECA Director Certification Training within three (3) years of election or appointment, and complete NRECA Director Certification at the conclusion of the Director's second term in office;
- (e) shall miss three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the Board without just cause and excuse filed with the Secretary and approved by the Board;
- (f) is not willing and able to attend all regular and special meetings of the Board, unless prevented by unavoidable circumstances;
- (g) is in any way employed (or is the spouse of an employee) by the Cooperative or has been an employee (or is the spouse of a former employee) of any electric cooperative or association;
- (h) has been convicted of a felony within the last five (5) years;
- (i) is the parent, husband, wife, son, daughter, brother or sister of

a person regularly employed by the Cooperative, whether by the whole or half blood or by adoption.

- (j) has been removed as a Director of this Cooperative by vote of the Members or the Board. 'Ineligibility' under this subsection may be waived by the Board, at the Board's sole discretion, if the Director was removed by the Board.

Upon establishment of the fact that a nominee for Director lacks eligibility under this Section or as may be provided elsewhere in these bylaws, it shall be the duty of the Judge of Elections, as hereinafter provided, to disqualify such nominee. Upon the establishment of the fact that any person being considered for, or already holding a position of trust in the Cooperative lacks eligibility under this Section, it shall be the duty of the Board to withhold such position from such person, or to cause such person to be removed therefrom, whichever be the case. Upon establishment of the fact that a Director is holding office in violation of this Section, it shall be the duty of the remaining Directors on the Board to remove such Director from office. Nothing contained in this Section shall, or shall be construed to, affect in any manner the validity of any such action taken at any meeting of the Board of Directors; PROVIDED the action taken was one in which none of the Directors had an interest adverse to that of the Cooperative.

SECTION 4. Nominations.

All incumbent Directors are automatically nominated to run for the office of Director and shall be one of the nominees to run for the office of Director, unless they decline and/or refuse to run. Any additional nominations for director shall be made by the submission of a written petition signed by not less than twenty-five (25) members of the Cooperative in their respective district. Such petition shall contain the following information:

1. Statement Release for Background Check Information;
2. Signed Review of the Director Oath of Office;
3. Signed statement that petitioner has reviewed the qualifications and is eligible to be elected as a Director of United Electric;
4. Brief Biography of Petitioner.

All such nominations by petition shall be addressed to the Judge of Elections and must be received at the Cooperative headquarters office no later than 4:30 PM on the last business day in January immediately preceding the annual meeting.

Nominations by petition not received in a timely manner or with incomplete, untrue, or inaccurate documentation will be disqualified. There will be no nominations taken from the floor and there will be no write-in candidates.

To receive the petition forms and additional information to be completed for nomination for director, please contact Richard Heverley, marketing and member services manager, at the cooperative office by calling 1-888-581-8969, extension 8506.

* Please note that completed petitions must be returned to the cooperative headquarters in DuBois no later than Jan. 31, 2017.