



United Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

United Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Post Office Box 688

DuBois, PA 15801-0688

Customer Service: 888-581-8969

www.unitedpa.com

Outage: 800-262-8959

Office Hours: M - F 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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Guest Column



2021 Youth Tour canceled

By Kristy Smith

FOR DECADES, an amazing opportunity has been offered annually for high school juniors and seniors whose parents/guardians belong to an electric cooperative. It is called the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth Tour, and more than 54,000 students from all over rural America have participated since it started in 1964. Youth Tour was established after President Lyndon B. Johnson in a speech at the NRECA Annual Meeting suggested high school students visit Washington, D.C., as way to “see what the flag stands for and represents.” Decades later, the Youth Tour stands true to President Johnson’s dream and the cooperative spirit.

During the weeklong trip to Washington, D.C., students visit many historical landmarks such as the Lincoln Memorial and the 9/11 Pentagon Memorial. Museums, including the Holocaust and various Smithsonian facilities, are always a favorite, as is meeting students from across the country. As part of the day on Capitol Hill, opportunities to have one-on-one meetings with local congressional representatives are made available. NRECA also plans various events where students hear from speakers who make a cooperative difference.

In 2020, United Electric selected 10 outstanding high school juniors to represent our cooperative at the

Youth Tour, but as poet Robert Burns noted, “best-laid plans often go awry.” Last May, NRECA made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 Youth Tour due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

Now, with the 2021 Youth Tour dates approaching, and COVID-19 still a formidable virus, the decision to cancel the 2021 Youth Tour was made in order to protect the health and safety of our students and chaperones.

Meet the students

The following students who were selected deserve large amounts of praise. Both their junior and senior years of high school have been turned upside down, with once-in-a-lifetime events canceled or restricted in a way we never imagined. Yet, they persevere, and they roll with the punches while still maintaining their goals, dreams, and ambitions.

Savanna Boyer, Redbank Valley High School, New Bethlehem

Maura Bunnell, Curwensville Jr./Sr. High School, Olanta

Lance Dowdall, Brockway Jr./Sr. High School, Brockway

Nathan Farrell, DuBois Area High School, DuBois

Nicholas Farrell, DuBois Area High School, DuBois

Samuel Kauffman, Purchase Line Jr./Sr. High School, Mahaffey

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Rustic Views

Flowers spring up

By Glenn Schuckers

“APRIL SHOWERS bring May flowers.” How often have we all heard that? And this year, more than the past few, April will be a month of promise and hope. Looking back, it seems that winter started around the middle of December, and then just kept on going and going and going. Especially for folks like us who live in an area that is about 2,000 feet above sea level. The first two months of the year, we are often in a world apart from the other areas. For most of January and almost all of February, there was between a foot and foot and a half of snow on the ground.

But that is behind us now, and we can look forward to the coming of spring, even if there may be an “April surprise.” Almost everyone can remember a year when we had a snow storm in April, and years when bushes like lilacs and a few other perennials got ahead of themselves and ended up with frozen buds or even flowers.

Even though this month opens with April Fools’ Day, we can be optimists and look forward to good things. And this is no April Fools’ prank. After a winter of serious, sometimes bleak days, playing a harmless joke on someone is a welcome reminder that some levity is in order.

This is the time, however, to start looking seriously at the coming spring and summer. It may be the best time of year to trim those shrubs and trees that suffered some broken limbs and branches this past winter. It should



DAFFODILS ARE SPECIAL: Daffodils are as close to no-maintenance flowers as anything can be. They ask for no care, expect no special treatment and give us blooms of beauty each spring.

come as no surprise that no broken limb will ever regrow itself and will be nothing but a hindrance to the tree. Winter storms, ice and wind take their toll on trees, and if you didn’t read my last article, it’s time to make repairs.

It is also a good time to look at the garden and do more than just think about what needs done. I plan to spread a few inches of composted cow manure this month, so it will be ready to plow down when the time comes for that.

We also need to remember that there is a time for everything, and this is not the time to do a lot of planting. We can get out and plan, maybe rake any debris that collected in the garden and plan what will go where.

And speaking of debris, where does it all come from? I am pretty sure that none of us ever spreads “junk” in our gardens or yards. There may not be anything like newspapers, cardboard,

or anything of the like on our lawns or gardens in August or September, but there it is when the snow melts off in April. Are there gremlins that carry that stuff in and leave it there when we are not looking?

What I am looking forward to this month are the spring flowers that have been sleeping beneath the winter’s snow. The daffodils and crocus will begin to show themselves now much like the saying, “Hope springs eternal.”

I really like daffodils and Narcissus.

I remember teaching Greek mythology about a young man named Narcissus who was so in love with his own image that he could not stop looking at his own reflection in a pool of water. So enthralled was the poor youth that he died there, unable to look away. The myth was that the flowers that sprang up where he died were named Narcissus in his honor. I never could fathom why anyone would want to



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.

honor someone who was so in love with himself that nothing else, even life, mattered, but I guess like other Greek myths, there was a lesson there for youths.

But I do like both flowers of the Narcissus family, especial daffodils. They are about as close to no-maintenance flowers as anything can be. Two years ago, I had a neighbor boy helping out and he tilled up some strips of the lawn. I took a bag of daffodil and Narcissus bulbs and threw them on the strips he had tilled and told him to just bury them where they landed, no order, no rows, no spacing. They were completely random and that was the way we wanted them.

Last spring, about this time of year, they began to show their sprouts above ground. Sure enough, a few weeks later, there were bursts of yellow and white flowers greeting the morning sun.

Some neighbors have patches of yellow daffodils that bloom every spring and have been blooming every year for as long as I can recall. At our old house, and around both a spring house and a barn, there were patches of daffodils that I never planted and I have no idea who, if anyone, ever

planted them.

Some time after they bloom, they get mowed off and that is about the sum and substance of the care they get. The bulbs multiply underground and wait there through the summer, fall and winter for the snow to melt

and the ground to warm for them to grow and flower again. What could be more altruistic? They ask for no care, expect no special treatment and give us blooms of beauty each spring.

What could be a better example of hope and promise? ☀️

Special Announcement

Due to COVID-19 and current restrictions, the Board of United Electric has decided to postpone the 2021 Annual Meeting.



Guest Column

(continued from page 14a)

Caleb Keighley, DuBois Area High School, DuBois

Tyler Newell, DuBois Area High School, DuBois

Morgan Steiner, North Pocono High School, Covington Township

Klara Wilson, Slippery Rock Area High School, Butler

Although these students were not able to participate in Youth Tour, they are still eligible to apply for any scholarships offered for Youth Tour attendees. This includes the Jody Loudenslager Scholarship offered to Youth Tour attendees every year that they remain at a higher education institution. Please see PREA's website at prea.com for details. Additional scholarship opportunities are offered through NRECA and can be found at electric.coop/our-organization/youth-programs/scholarships. 



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All students*, including adult learners*, who are attending or planning to attend a university or technical school are eligible to apply by April 15, 2021.

*Must be associated with a cooperative member. Directors and employees, and their families are not eligible to apply.



United Electric
 COOPERATIVE, INC.
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WHAT DOES A LINEMAN DO?

On any given day or night, in all kinds of weather conditions, linemen install and maintain overhead and underground electrical systems.

We entrust our linemen with your safety, so they hold a very important job. We also rely on their expertise to power our world.

SAFETY COMES FIRST

Linemen must commit to safety above all else for the benefit of those they serve (you!), fellow crew members and themselves. They spend thousands of hours in safety trainings each year and must learn and apply numerous safety regulations.

THEY ARE SPECIALLY TRAINED TO:

- Climb poles to service power lines in areas inaccessible by trucks.
- Stand in an elevated bucket to assess and repair overhead lines.
- Install poles, overhead lines and other equipment.
- Work on both energized and deenergized lines.
- Install and service underground lines.

