



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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Chairman

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Guest Column



2018 Work Plan review

By Steven Long, *Engineering Manager*

UNITED Electric's system improvement projects moved ahead in 2018 despite the unusually wet weather. The Operations Department continued our system improvement and replacement plan, which is designed to increase reliability to you, our members. In 2018, we rebuilt over 20 miles of line in addition to replacing our Robertsville Substation.

One of the projects completed this year was a three-part project to replace the Five Points north three-phase feeder. This project consisted of rebuilding 11 miles of line. It began near the substation, followed Route 36 north to LaJose, then through the Bells Landing and Cherry Corners area, ending near Lumber City.

Another project completed in 2018 consisted of replacing failing underground distribution line on Horizon Drive near Brockway. We also rebuilt the three-phase line in the Anderson Creek area near the DuBois Reservoir. Two completed projects involved relocating inaccessible lines sections to more accessible areas, one in the Bear Run area

north of Cook Forest and the second near McVitty Road between Falls Creek and the DuBois Airport.

After several years in the planning and design stages, the replacement of the Robertsville Substation is now complete. The new substation was built adjacent to the original sub.

BNF Line Construction was the contractor on this project. The larger capacity 5-MVA transformer had almost a year lead time. The new Robertsville Substation with its increased capacity gives United Electric the ability to serve our members on a number of other substations. If the power supply is lost to the Conifer, Grange or Henderson substations, we will be able to backfeed the members on those substations from Robertsville, and Robertsville members will be able to be supplied with power from a combination of the other substations. At this time, our line crews will have to do manual switching to pick up



NEW ROBERTSVILLE SUBSTATION: After several years of planning and construction, the new Robertsville Substation is now on-line.

the members on the different substations and in some cases the power supply will be split between Robertsville and other substations. As we continue to expand our SCADA system, the design of the new Robertsville Substation will eventually allow for remote switching between these substations from our office.

(continues on page 14b)

2018 WORK PLAN REVIEW

(continued from page 14a)

The area where the existing Robertsville Substation was located has been fenced in along with the new substation to allow our portable substation to be backed in and easily energized in case of any problems with the transformer. This improvement to



PLACING TRANSFORMER: Smith Hauling, one of United Electric's members in the Ringold area, places the new 5-MVA transformer in the new Robertsville Substation.

RICHARD HEVERLEY

our distribution system will provide our members with much more reliable power and will reduce outage times throughout the southern Jefferson County area.

All of these projects are, as always, designed and built to provide more reliable electric service, as well as increase capacity for the future.

Currently, United Electric is moving ahead with our 2019 system improvement projects, and the Engineering Department is in the planning stages of a number of new projects aimed at improving reliability for our members. Three projects are nearing completion from an engineering standpoint and will soon be ready for construction. These are the Utahville rebuild, the Shannondale West rebuild and the second portion of Anderson Creek rebuild.

The Engineering Department extends a sincere thank you to all of the members who were instrumental in these system improvement projects. Your cooperation is essential in mak-



RICHARD HEVERLEY

OLD STRUCTURE REMOVAL: In order to minimize the outage time to our members, the contractor coordinates the use of seven line trucks and bucket trucks along with a number of groundmen to remove the old Robertsville Substation structure and make preparations to energize the new substation.

ing these and future projects a success. Allowing line relocation or changing of poles on your property makes it possible for United Electric to continue to improve service to you and your neighbors. ⚡

Rustic Views

It's a new year

By Glenn Schuckers

SOMEWHERE, way back when, someone decided January would become the first month of the year. Without going into all the boring details, let's just say what the Native Americans did makes a lot more sense.

The original inhabitants of this continent looked at their year and decided that each year would begin somewhere in what we call Spring. It was the time



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.

for planting their crops of corn, squash and the grains they needed to survive. That was when they believed their year should begin.

I tend to go along with them.

No matter what the calendar looks like, this is not when the new year should begin. For people who have fruit trees, it is mostly the time to finish up what the "old" year did not complete.

If our fruit trees have broken limbs, this is a good time to cut them off, provided of course that we don't have to wade through two feet of snow to get to the trees. Trimming trees is hard work anytime, but if the trees are buried in two or three feet of snow, that hard job becomes next to impossible.

The one exception was one year, probably in the late 1970s, when we had drifts five or six feet deep with a hard crust on top. The crust was hard enough to walk on top of without breaking through every two or three steps. That gave me a head start on trimming the tops of a lot of the trees

without using a pole pruner or ladder, both of which slow down the job a lot.

As a short word to people who have trees that need trimming this month or later into the winter, let me make two suggestions.

One, do not use the aforementioned ladder. Or if anyone does think he or she needs to use one, never work alone. Even the traditional tree ladders that are pointed at the top are an invitation to falling. Falling itself is bad enough, but falling alone can easily turn an accident into a tragedy. One simple rule — don't work alone in an orchard, unless the orchard is strictly dwarf trees that won't get more than 10 feet tall. If they are that size, a short pole pruner can reach the highest limbs.

But other than pruning fruit trees, which to be honest is a job for both this month and the next two that follow, people often ask when it is a best time to prune those trees. Doc Ritter had a good answer for that ques-

(continues on page 14c)



tion. He would say, “When the saw is sharp,” which is to say that trees can be trimmed just about any time, except maybe in the late summer when trimming could lead to stimulating growth and prevent the trees from “hardening” for the winter.

Maybe the best thing for this month is — patience. Instead of getting out trying to do things that will be better done in a month or two, the best thing to do may be to stay inside, clear a sidewalk and the driveway when they really need it, and enjoy the winter view. And by “when they really need it,” I mean when the freezer is just about empty or someone important is coming, or when the bourbon bottle is down to its last shot.

If none of that is happening, we all probably have a lot of seed and nursery catalogs to look at. I get five or six (the one or two I order from must share my name and address with a lot of others), but past experience has taught me to limit the orders to a few factors.

First, plant no more vegetables than my ever-patient wife can take care of. If the garden is bigger than that, I may have to get out and cultivate, pull weeds and take care of it in other ways. Seriously, most people, myself definitely included, plant more than we need.

In the past six years, we have managed to stockpile at least 40 quarts of tomato sauce, enough green beans to have them once a week for a year, and even frozen zucchini. There is always that nagging fear that there won’t be crops in a given year, so a surplus might be wise.

That’s the thinking that led to the surplus we have, and I’d be willing to guess that a lot of others have the same dilemma. But one word of caution, due to some kind of mix-up with a normally reliable seed company, one field of our favorite late corn did not produce as expected, so having a good supply of corn in the freezer was

necessary.

Nonetheless, this month is probably a great time to order seeds and trees for the coming year.

Try something new this season. Instead of sticking with the same kinds of beans, squash and cucumbers, order a packet of something new, maybe in addition to the old “tried and true.”

We could all benefit from finding out if we could do something better. For my part, and to practice what I preach, I’m going to plant some spaghetti and butternut squash, something I’ve never tried. And maybe a couple of “heritage” tomato plants just to see if we like them.

There is no guarantee that what is new will be better. Nothing in nature ever comes with a guarantee like that. Success can follow a leap of faith; so can failure. The one thing that is sure is that we’ll never find anything better unless we go looking for it, and the only thing that is guaranteed is that no one ever made progress by doing the same thing.

If this is actually the “New Year,” why keep doing what we have always done in the past? Maybe we should stop calling this “New Year’s” and start calling it what it should be, “Different Years,” and make it more like what the Native Americans saw coming a few months from now, the real next season. This may be, instead, the time to sit back in today’s version of the Native Americans’ teepee and plan for the coming season. ☀

Use Space Heaters Safely

DO: Plug your space heater directly into the wall outlet.

DO: Keep your space heater at a safe distance (at least 3 feet) from kids, pets and flammable items.



DO: Buy a unit with an automatic shutoff in case the unit tips over, or you forget to shut it off.

2019 United Electric Board elections will be held for Districts 3 and 6

United Electric Cooperative members residing in Districts 3 and 6 will be eligible to vote in the 2019 director elections.

The 2019 United Electric Director elections will be held in May. Members residing in Districts 3 and 6 are eligible to run for the board (See districts by county and township listed below for your location). A mail-in ballot will be sent to every member in Districts 3 and 6. Mail-in ballots provide everyone in those districts the opportunity to vote, includ-

ing those who do not, or cannot, attend the annual meeting. United Electric's 2019 annual meeting will be held Wednesday, May 15, 2019, at the Brady Township Community Center in Luthersburg. More information about the 2019 election will be in future issues of *Penn Lines*.

Members residing in Districts 3 and 6 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. 3. *Clearfield County* – Pine, Sandy and Union Townships. *Jefferson County* – Henderson Township.

DISTRICT NO. 6. *Indiana County* – Banks, Canoe, and West Mahoning Townships. *Jefferson County* – Beaver, Bell, Gaskill, Knox, McCalmont, Oliver, Perry, Porter, Ringgold, Rose and Young 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 by the close of business on the last business day of January 2019 (Thursday, January 31, 2019).