



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.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman

Stephen A. Marshall, District 5
1030 Donahue Rd.
Luthersburg, Pa. 15848
814-583-7320

Vice Chairman

Timothy D. Burkett, District 6
5059 Hamilton Markton Rd.
Punxsutawney, Pa. 15767
814-938-7991

Secretary/Treasurer

Eileen Pisaneschi, District 2
1964 River Hill Rd.
Frenchville, Pa. 16836
814-263-4491

DIRECTORS

Shanelle Hawk, District 1
502 Pine Run Rd.
Mayport, Pa. 16240
814-365-5646

Arden E. Owens, District 7
505 Trout Run Rd.
Shawville, Pa. 16873
814-765-6458

Richard Petrosky, District 3
P.O. Box 612
DuBois, Pa. 15801
814-371-8672

David W. Walker, District 4
631 Olanta Rd.
Olanta, Pa. 16863
814-236-3321

President & CEO
Brenda Swartzlander

Consumer Advocate
Debra Horner, ext. 8508

Kristy Smith, Editor

Guest Column



News from the forestry department

By Anthony Pyne, *Forestry Supervisor*

UNITED Electric strives to provide the most reliable service to all of its members. United maintains approximately 2,800 miles of electric line in 10 counties. The majority of our line is in rural, forested areas, which makes vegetation management crucial to ensure the dependability of our services.

As one might guess, trees cause our highest percentage of power outages and interruptions. Integrated vegetation management (IVM) includes a variety of tactics that help to maintain our rights-of-way and mitigate threats. This may involve hazard tree removal, trimming, directional pruning, mowing and a blend of herbicide applications. Systematically applying these methods to appropriate sites helps to achieve proper clearance and reduce outages.

We have a regular vegetation maintenance cycle in place that allows us to fully maintain our entire system in six years. We also have a mid-cycle program that provides maintenance at three years to those circuits that are between regular maintenance. The mid-cycle program focuses primarily on immediate danger trees, dead trees, fast-growing vegetation, and any other hazard that may cause an outage or interruption.

Our typical right-of-way clearance for vegetation management is 30 feet for single phase line and 50 feet for multiphase line. We've implemented an Off Corridor Risk Assessment and Abatement Program, which targets

danger trees outside the right-of-way, because over the years trees beyond the established edge have caused the most outages by far. United Electric intends to reinforce ground-to-sky clearance where possible, which means eliminating vegetation that overhangs the right-of-way. When an outage occurs during a snow or ice storm, overhang vegetation can delay the power restoration process.

We also face challenges from insects and blights that can be detrimental to tree health. When trees become stressed or diseased, they can decline rapidly and pose a serious threat to the electric line. It is imperative we identify and remove a potential hazard before it causes an outage. Sustaining a strong IVM program is cost effective for the cooperative and its members.

As of Jan. 1, a new contractor is performing our full-cycle vegetation maintenance. United Electric would like to welcome Penn Line Tree Service, Inc., as our primary contractor. Its employees are qualified professionals who specialize in utility right-of-way clearing, and we look forward to working with them.

Aerial and line patrols

In 2021, we continued aerial patrol and covered approximately 350 miles of line. Helicopter patrol is an effective and cost-efficient way to locate potential outage-causing hazards. Together, the forestry and line

(continues on page 18c)

Rustic Views

A time to choose what we see

By Glenn Schuckers

IN JANUARY, it begins to look as though just about everything is dead. The only trees that have any green on them are the pines, hemlocks, spruce and fir — and even those trees do not appear to be growing. After all, during about seven months of the year, we can see plants and trees showing new growth. This month, we get to decide what we see.

Around this time of year, I like to think of an often-repeated cliché: “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” I have read that the author, Margaret Hungerford, wrote that phrase in 1878. Whether it was original with her at that time or not, we can all agree that we see what we want to see and hear what we want to hear.

What some people see outside in winter as desolate, lifeless forms, others see as sharp, shaped beauty. I can vouch for the fact that our part of the country sees its share — and sometimes a lot more — of winter’s portraits.

Of course, when any of us look outside in January, a lot of what we see depends on our situation. Back when my wife and I had to travel some 20 miles to work five days a week and when a 50-yard, all-uphill driveway stood between us and the state road (and even that state road could hold drifts that were measured in feet, not inches), we viewed winter a lot



PHOTO BY GLENN SCHUCKERS

YOUR CHOICE: Even the spruce, fir and pine paint a picture of winter that can be either foreboding or beautiful. The eyes of the beholder will decide.

differently than we do now that we are retired. Then, it was a necessity to get out. Now, it is mostly a choice.

But I know a lot of people who don’t have the luxury of making that choice. Cows have to be milked, roads have to be cleared, downed power lines have to be restored, and deliveries have to be made. Those people who do not have the opportunity to decide what they will do following a January blizzard see winter’s “beauty” as something that must be overcome.

But a lot of us can reflect on the beauty of a winter morning. The sun sparkling on new-fallen snow ... the crunch that it makes when the temperature dips into the teens ... the smell of a wood fire on a cold winter morning ... all of these treats to our senses can be either a gift or a challenge.

I know the challenge of digging out from a hard winter storm can test even the hardest soul. Many years ago, we took a trip through New England and stopped for gas at a little rural station. While a somewhat elderly man was pumping the gas (this was long before the self-service stations we have today), I saw a yellow school bus parked beside the garage. I asked

if it was hard being a school bus driver in Maine. The man gave me a slightly puzzled look and said, “Nah, last winter was nothing. It only went to 24 below four or five times and then warmed up to zero in about a week.”

What we think about winter depends a lot on what we are used to, I guess.

Nonetheless, as I said before, we usually see what we want to see.

Where one person sees a landscape cloaked in a white robe, another sees a desolate white desert. Trees covered in snow can be beautiful to one person, but to another, they’re a danger to a porch. I am neither wise enough nor experienced enough to try to define beauty, but I do know that what I see this month will be nature’s promise.

Along that line, I am reminded of these lyrics in the last verse of the song, “The Rose”: *“When the night has been too lonely /And the road has been too long /And you think that love is only /For the lucky and the strong /Just remember in the winter /Far beneath the bitter snow /Lies the seed that with the sun’s love /In the spring becomes the rose.”*

I count myself lucky to live where we have winter-winter’s snows, cold winds, sparkling sunrises and blazing



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.

sunsets. And so, I welcome winter's short days, winter's long nights and winter's snowflakes ganging up together to form drifts.

These days, I'll look at seed catalogs and plan another garden. I'll let the trees take their rest before the coming spring. I'll watch the snow falling on the trees out back and think about the things that will need to be done when the snow melts. But today, I'll try to see the beauty that is all around me. Today, I will do what nature tells us to do: Be patient and remember, "Far beneath the bitter snow /Lies the seed that with the sun's love /In the spring becomes the rose."

Happy January. ❁

Guest Column

(continued from page 18a)

departments are able to proactively correct these threats quickly. Having a view from above allows us to find hazards that may not be detectable from the ground. Our line department also inspects approximately 300 miles of line from the ground each year, which allows us to locate hazards that would otherwise be hard to see from above. United will continue aerial and line patrols in 2022.

Wood-pole inspection

Our wood-pole inspection/treatment process increases the safety and serviceability of our poles

indefinitely. Professional contractors inspect 5,000 to 6,000 United poles per year. Inspection reports allow our engineering technicians to create work orders/service orders for any poles or hardware that do not pass the inspection. This process also pinpoints priority "danger" poles, which are replaced as soon as possible.

Working together is the key to success. With your help, we are able to maintain our lines to the proper specifications. Remember, every dollar of preventive maintenance spent today ensures reliable service tomorrow. With the continued cooperation of our valued members, we are able to keep the future bright. ❁



United Electric

COOPERATIVE, INC.

A Touchstone Energy® Partner



DREAM. SHINE. ACHIEVE.

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR THE SHINE THE LIGHT SCHOLARSHIP

All Students
Attending or
Planning to Attend
Higher Education*

Application
deadline is
April 15, 2022.

Contact Kristy Smith:

888-581-8969, ext. 8507

ksmith@unitedpa.com

www.unitedpa.com

*Must be a United Electric Cooperative member or dependent. Directors, employees and their families are ineligible to apply.



2022 United Electric board elections will be held for Districts 1 and 7

United Electric Cooperative members residing in Districts 1 & 7 will be eligible to vote in the 2022 Director elections.

The 2022 United Electric Director elections will be held in May. Members residing in Districts 1 & 7 are eligible to run for the Board (See District 1 & 7 by county and township listed below). A mail-in ballot will be sent to every member in Districts 1 & 7. 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 2022 Annual Meeting will be held Wednesday, May 18, 2022, at the Brady Township Community Center in Luthersburg. More information about the 2022 election will be in future issues of *Penn Lines*.

Members residing in Districts 1 & 7 who are interested in running for the United Electric Board of Directors should read the following bylaws carefully.

UNITED ELECTRIC BYLAWS

ARTICLE IV – BOARD MEMBERS

SECTION 2. Districts (excerpt).

DISTRICT NO. 1. *Armstrong County* – Redbank Townships; *Clarion County* – Clarion, Farmington, Highland, Limestone, Mill-creek and Redbank Townships; *Forest County* – Barnett Township; *Jefferson County* – Barnett and Eldred Townships.

DISTRICT NO. 7. *Clearfield County* – Girard, Goshen, Huston and Lawrence Townships; *Elk County* – Fox, Horton, Millstone, Ridgway and Spring Creek Townships; *Jefferson County* – Heath Township.

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 Kristy Smith, Marketing and Member Services Supervisor, at the cooperative office by calling 1-888-581-8969 Ext. 8507.

* Please note that completed petitions must be returned to the cooperative headquarters in DuBois no later than the last business day of January 2022 (Monday, January 31, 2022).