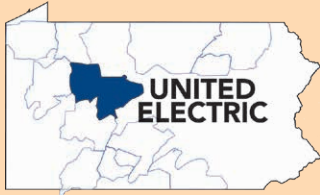




United Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

UNITED ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

P.O. 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 Road
Luthersburg, PA 15848
814-583-7320

Vice Chairman

Timothy D. Burkett, District 6
5059 Hamilton Markton Road
Punxsutawney, PA 15767
814-592-5190

Secretary/Treasurer

Eileen Pisaneschi, District 2
1964 River Hill Road
Frenchville, PA 16836
814-263-4491

DIRECTORS

Terry L. Rapp, District 1
609 Pinoak Road
Mayport, PA 16240
814-229-8627

Richard P. Owens, District 7
4044 Gillingham Road
Frenchville, PA 16836
814-592-2825

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

David W. Walker, District 4
631 Olanta Road
Olanta, PA 16863
814-236-3321

President & CEO
Len Hawkins

COO, HR Manager & Consumer Advocate
Lauren Gustafson, Ext. 8501

Manager of Marketing & Member Services
Kristy Smith

United Electric Celebrates 90 Years at 2026 Annual Meeting

UNITED ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S 2026 ANNUAL MEETING drew an especially strong turnout as the cooperative marked its 90th anniversary in Luthersburg on Wednesday, May 20.

The evening began with a high-voltage safety demonstration at 6:30 p.m., giving members an up-close look at the dangers of electricity and drawing an attentive crowd. At 7 p.m., board Chairman Stephen Marshall called the meeting to order and welcomed more than 375 members, family members, and guests. He also recognized fellow board members and extended a warm welcome to special guests Steve Brame, president & CEO of Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Allegheny) and the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association (PREA), as well as Michael Crawford, senior technical editor for *Penn Lines*.

Official business begins

Board Secretary/Treasurer Eileen Pisaneschi read the official annual meeting notice published in the May issue of *Penn Lines*, which was mailed to all United Electric members May 1.

"The annual meeting will be held May 20, 2026, at 7 p.m. at the Brady Township Community Center in Luthersburg, Pa.," she read. "At the time of the mailing, there were 16,302 members of the cooperative."

Following motions from the floor to approve the 2025 annual meeting minutes and 2025 financial reports, Chairman Marshall reflected on the retirement of two longtime board members: Shanelle Hawk of District 1 and Arden Owens of District 7, both of whom served for 30 years.

"It's hard work," Chairman Marshall said. "A lot was accomplished at United together with you both. Thank you for sticking with us and helping us get to where we are today in our 90th year."

Honoring service, reflecting on history

United Electric's President & CEO Len Hawkins then addressed the audience with a special message of appreciation for Hawk and Owens.

"Thank you for your leadership," he said. "This cooperative is stronger today because of your contributions. Your willingness to ask questions has directly contributed to the health of United Electric."

The two retiring board members were then presented with bronze plaques in recognition of their dedication and years of service.

Hawkins followed his comments with a photo slideshow tracing the

KRISTY SMITH



A WARM WELCOME: United Electric Cooperative President & CEO Len Hawkins greets a member arriving at the registration area for the cooperative's annual meeting.

Continued on page 16B

ANNUAL MEETING

Continued from page 16A

story of United Electric Cooperative back to 1936. He reminded attendees that the cooperative was founded in response to a challenge that others had overlooked: bringing electricity to rural communities.

“On Christmas Eve in 1937, electricity reached the first 95 members of Central Rural Electric Cooperative Association in Clearfield,” he said. “That organization later became Clearfield Electric Cooperative under the leadership of A.L. Orner. Jefferson Electric Cooperative, known as Jeffco, held its first meeting in Brookville in 1939. In 1966, the two cooperatives merged to form United Electric, uniting their shared commitment to service.”

Hawkins noted the newly formed cooperative had 46 employees and 9,090 meters compared to today’s 51 employees and 19,128 meters — an example of how technology and efficiency continue to support the delivery of safe, reliable, and affordable power. United’s early years were also highlighted in the March and April 2026 editions of *Penn Lines*.

A message from a special guest

Hawkins then introduced Brame, who echoed Hawkins’ remarks in honor of Hawk and Owens and shared that central Pennsylvania will always feel like home to him. He also reflected on the significance of the cooperative’s 90th anniversary.

“Rural electrification remains one of the nation’s most important achievements,” Brame said. “Pennsylvania cooperatives and the New York Power Authority (NYPA)

have a special relationship: 10% of NYPA’s hydropower continues to be used by Pennsylvania cooperatives under the original conditions established for the Niagara and St. Lawrence hydroelectric project. Roughly one out of every 10 kilowatt-hours used in your home comes from that source.

“Morris Cooke of Carlisle, Pa., the architect of the NYPA plan, later became the first administrator of the Rural Electrification Administration (REA), now the Rural Utilities Service,” he added. “The governor of New York brought Cooke to Washington, D.C., with him. Why? Because Franklin Delano Roosevelt believed that Cooke’s model of ensuring that neighboring states and rural people benefit from electrification had merit.”

Brame shared a copy of a Western Union telegram from Cooke that announced a \$310,000 loan to Clearfield Electric Cooperative for the construction of distribution lines in Clearfield County. This moment carried special significance, as the Rural Electrification Act was signed into law on May 20, 1936 — exactly 90 years ago to the day of the cooperative’s recent annual meeting.

Election results

Judge of Elections Patrick Lavelle reported the results of the director elections for Districts 1 and 7. He explained that because both races were uncontested, no vote was necessary. In District 1, Terry Rapp of Mayport was elected to fill Hawk’s vacant seat on the board. In District 7, Richard Owens of Frenchville will replace Arden Owens. Lavelle then congratulated the new directors.

With the cooperative’s business concluded, Chairman Marshall said he was looking forward to the contributions of the new board members as they continue to strengthen the cooperative. He also took time to wish Hawk and Owens well and offered heartfelt thanks for their unwavering support, leadership, and dedication to United Electric’s continued success. 🇺🇸

KRISTY SMITH
MANAGER OF MARKETING & MEMBER SERVICES

NEW DIRECTORS ELECTED: Newly elected Directors Terry Rapp of District 1, center, and Richard Owens of District 7, second from right, stand in front of the Touchstone Energy balloon after United Electric’s annual meeting. Shown with them, from left, are: Steve Brame, president & CEO of Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc. and the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, United Electric Board Chairman Steve Marshall, and co-op President & CEO Len Hawkins.



MICHAEL CRAWFORD

Independence in the Garden

GLENN SCHUCKERS

IT WOULD BE EASY THIS month to write about a holiday like the Fourth of July, and with this being the country's 250th birthday, that would seem to be the logical path to follow.

I have never followed the easy path.

I choose to be independent as an individual and choose to express that independence as a gardener. This space is dedicated to farmers and gardeners. Many years ago, when I started writing for *Penn Lines*, it was clear readers expected to read about that. That said, I do believe that the men who put this governmental experiment in motion deserve a mention.

When we think about 1776, we need to remember that this was essentially a nation of farmers — many of them men. I write “men” because the customs of the day prohibited women from taking part in government, but there is no doubt that those men were strongly influenced by women. Maybe if women had been in on the founding, things would have proceeded differently.

The birth of a nation

The person responsible for writing much of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson, was a dedicated farmer. His home in Virginia was at the center of a working farm. And even though much of the work was performed by slaves, there are numerous examples that Jefferson worked in the fields, too.

There were also others who took part in writing and revising the document, including a doctor, a lawyer and a printer.

That printer, Benjamin Franklin, may have been as influential as Jefferson in developing the document because Jefferson often deferred to his older and more experienced friend for advice. While I have found references that Franklin had either a garden or a farm, there is ample evidence that he almost certainly had a courtyard next to his house in Philadelphia. He also had a mulberry tree in that courtyard, where he often took other leaders to sit and iron out their differences. There is something about sitting under any kind of tree that makes us, even today, less likely to be disagreeable and more open to civil discourse.

We also need to remember that in 1776, America was a nation of farmers, tradespeople, smiths of all sorts, and a few professionals thrown into the mix. But when the Declaration of Independence — and later the U.S. Constitution — were written, towns were few and far apart. We were without a doubt a rural society.

GLENN SCHUCKERS



THE SPIRIT OF INDEPENDENCE: This flag is not in my garden, but the spirit of independence it signifies is always there.

'Everyone had a garden'

That began to change as the population grew and then exploded. More people lived in cities, and fewer and fewer lived on farms. By the time the country celebrated its first 100 years in 1876, it no longer resembled what it had been in 1776.

I grew up in a very small town only 13 miles from where I live now, but even the small towns of the 1940s are a far cry from what they are today.

In the 1940s and 1950s, everyone had a garden. Whether a doctor, lawyer, teacher or even a church pastor, everyone had at least a small garden in the backyard. My own dad did not become a full-time farmer until he was in his 40s, but as far back as I can remember, we had a garden in the backyard. Our next-door neighbor was a plumber and the people down the street were mechanics and teachers, and they all had gardens. My wife's grandfather was the school superintendent, and he had a garden.

I have read about the “victory gardens” people had during World War II. At that time, they were not for recreation, but a necessary adjustment to bridge the shortages brought on by the war. After the war, as towns began to grow, gardens began to fall out of favor. Some people working in factories had less time to tend to a garden. As grocery stores and supermarkets began to fill with produce grown nearby, people were less likely to see gardens around. When frozen vegetables became commonplace, gardens became fewer. As America became more suburban and urban, people planted fewer gardens, too.

Continued on page 16D

RUSTIC VIEWS

Continued from page 16C

But as the saying goes, “You can take the boy (or girl) out of the farm, but you can’t take the farm out of them.” Men and women who had never spaded a plot of ground began to cultivate a need to grow their own food. Gardens and gardening began to be fashionable again. Young people began to see the difference between tomatoes in their own gardens and those they bought in a store. The sheer joy of watching plants grow has made a comeback.

An act of independence

But is it patriotic to have a garden? Those of us who plant and tend gardens and orchards think it is. Having

a garden is an act of independence and even defiance. Growing our own food becomes not something we have to do, but something we want to do. There is a sense of independence in getting our hands dirty in God’s warm earth that nothing else can equal. When I go to work in the garden, I sometimes tell myself, or even others, that I am going out to shake hands with God.

There are few things as independent as picking what my aunt used to call a “mess of beans,” a ripe tomato, an onion, a fresh green pepper, or any of the plants we have in our gardens for lunch or supper. Above all else, it is a feeling of independence and accomplishment. 🍅



ACCEPTING SEALED BIDS

Separate bids - NO CHOICE BIDS

#117

- 2017 Dodge Ram 1500
- 4 x 4
- 5.7 L Hemi V8 engine
- Towing package
- Tradesman trim package
- Hard Tonneau bed cover
- 101,195 miles*
- PA State Inspection expired



#122

- 2014 Dodge Ram 1500
- 4 x 4
- 5.7 L Hemi V8 engine
- Towing package
- Tradesman trim package
- Hard Tonneau bed cover
- 110,256 miles*

Viewing before the bid deadline will be held
July 30 & 31, 2026.

Sealed bids must be received by **August 6, 2026.**

29 United Road
DuBois, PA 15801

888-581-8969
Ext. 8504 or 8505

*Mileage current as of publication. Will not pass PA state inspection as is.