

Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

Bedford REC

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Attorney

John J. Dirienzo Jr.

Office Hours

Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

From the General Manager



Critical connections behind the power

By Brooks Shoemaker

APRIL 11, 2016, is National Lineman Appreciation Day. Join us as we take a moment to honor the people who power our lives, sometimes working around the clock, often working in brutal weather conditions to ensure that we all have safe and reliable power. In fact, linemen are often first responders during storms and other catastrophic events, working to make the scene safe for other public safety officers. However, while linemen work in highly visible settings, there are many people behind the scenes who labor tirelessly to help keep the lights on — they do so with little or no public recognition or acknowledgement. While linemen do their job out in the open — whether it is restoring power after a natural disaster, maintaining the lines or building a new service — there is a lot more work taking place in the background.

The lineman out in the field works with thousands of volts of electricity high atop power lines 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to keep electricity flowing and maintain the energy infrastructure. The operations manager coordinates the team, ensuring that all the linemen know their roles and perform at a high level.

The operations manager, along with our engineering department, also ensures the overall system is well maintained. This team is responsible for analyzing future needs and continually monitoring existing equipment and resources. An equally important area of focus is safety. Working with electricity is an inherently dangerous task, and helping to foster a culture of safety for all workers is priority No. 1. Members can count on the staff from the oper-

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Colonial Courtyard has senior volunteers

By Linda Williams

IF YOU visit Colonial Courtyard during the warmer months, you are greeted by colorful pots of seasonal flowers.

Jackie Mazzaferro, who lives across the street at the Graystone Apartments, is the chairman of the garden therapy program for the Bedford County Garden Club. In the spring, Jackie aids Courtyard residents in planting pansies. During the summer, they plant colorful annuals and, in the fall, it is mums and other autumn flowers.

In the winter, Jackie enjoys leading residents of the Courtyard in an indoor gardening project. In 2015, that cold-weather project was suncatchers

made from pansies dried from the spring flowers. This year, the residents planted Christmas cactus from cuttings contributed by Jackie and her friends.

Jackie says a Christmas cactus is very easy to grow as the plants thrive on neglect. She has six cacti in various colors adorning her own apartment.

With plenty of help from other Garden Club members, Jackie was able to assist all residents who wanted a flower for their room. They started with a small pot and piece of paper towel. The paper was placed in the bottom of the pot, which had holes for proper drainage. She added a little root

PREPARING FOR PLANTING: Jackie Mazzaferro prepares a tray of pots for planting at Colonial Courtyards. Jackie is a volunteer from across the street at the Graystone Apartments.

tone to each of the cuttings and they were ready for planting.

“Just put them on a sunny windowsill and keep turning,” she advises.

“By turning them toward the sun, you should have a steady array of flowers.”

She advised them to add only a little water when the soil becomes very dry.

Phyllis Hershberger says she enjoyed the project because she always liked getting her hands into the dirt. Another resident, Ray Nave,



CHRISTMAS CACTUS: Judy Lloyd, left, a member of the Bedford County Garden Club, assists Phyllis Hershberger with planting a Christmas cactus.

was excited because his wife had a Christmas cactus for nearly 30 years that kept blooming.

A senior citizen herself, Jackie brings smiles to a lot of faces.



MUSIC BRIGHTENS LIFE: Martha Thomas, a resident at Colonial Courtyard, plays her harmonica. Martha sometimes plays solo, above, and sometimes assists with an ensemble, right.

Musical volunteer

Martha Thomas, 98, is a resident of Colonial Courtyard and has been since September 2001. A petite, pretty, nicely groomed lady, she says she finds it to be a great home away from home.

After her husband died, Martha was

pretty much alone in the Pittsburgh area, and her brother suggested she move back closer to family. She is a native of the Broad Top area.

Among her possessions was a harmonica she learned to play at about age 10. When the RSVP volunteer singers came to the home to entertain, Martha very shyly asked if she might join them and play her harmonica. She was a welcome addition to this group of retirees who do a hymn sing-a-long for all of the area nursing homes on a weekly basis.

Ron Ferguson, one of the RSVP volunteers, picks Martha up when she is able to attend. She is nearly always on hand for the Courtyard performance.

Martha also played the violin in high school. Her husband was retired from Westinghouse and she worked in dress shops and for JC Penney.

Her only daughter is deceased. She has a granddaughter, who is head of the Visitor's Center in Lancaster County. Her grandson lives in Raleigh, N.C., and has six children.

"All of them are musical," Martha says proudly.

As she picks up her harmonica each week and joins this group of volunteers to entertain, Martha is proving that you are never too old to make others smile. 🌟



From the General Manager

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ations and engineering departments for everything from lighting, heating, cooling, planning, construction, to so much more.

The member services manager leads the department that handles billing and assists members with questions about their accounts. The member service representatives (MSRs) answer calls and work with members to identify solutions for high bills. They also handle requests to establish new accounts and discuss ways to save on monthly bills. The member services department is responsible for ensuring you are treated like an owner-member, starting when you first sign up for membership. This department also generates the electric bill you receive each month, either electronically or through regular mail. We work hard to utilize the latest technology, which lowers our costs and provides you with a timely, accurate bill. Our MSRs are also responsible for collecting those bills. This department plans and organizes the cooperative's annual meeting and special outreach into the community via school presentations, informative advertising, and other educational programs.

The accounting and finance manager is responsible for the financial well-being of the cooperative. His department's responsibilities include managing our assets in the most effective fashion possible. This includes financing all of our activities and ensuring we accurately account for our assets — poles, wires, transformers, and all of our other property and equipment. While we are a member-owned cooperative and operate differently than investor-owned utilities, we are still a business. The accounting department ensures that revenue collected from the membership exceeds our expenses. Typical expenses include the money we pay for power, equipment, new technology, upgrades to the infrastructure, employees and other expenditures. As you know, at the end of each year, our margins or profits, are allocated to our members as

patronage capital. The accounting department handles that allocation, and they also manage our capital credits program, ensuring that each member receives an appropriate share of our capital credits return each December.

The human resources manager is responsible for all personnel associated with our cooperative. She handles the recruiting, hiring, retirements, benefits and initial orientation, as well as training for all employees. Continual education of our employees is crucial to having a skilled workforce that helps keep the cooperative operating at an optimal level. "Education and training" is one of the Seven Cooperative Principles, and we provide our members with a highly proficient workforce.

Finally, the information technology manager integrates each of these departments via technology. He manages our technology needs by replacing and upgrading equipment as necessary to ensure that our networks, both hardware and software, function effectively and efficiently. He also leads technological advances, as more and more

functions are computerized to increase the overall accuracy and efficiency of the cooperative's records. Most importantly, he ensures that the cooperative's electronic data is safe and secure.

As you can see, many different people and departments work closely together to serve you. Why? Because you, the member, are at the heart of everything we do. Unlike other types of businesses, as a cooperative, our concern for community is one principle that sets us apart from other businesses. From sponsoring community education endeavors to providing scholarships, and supporting new jobs and industry through our economic development efforts, we stand as a driving force in our community. The electricity we provide literally powers our communities. Together with 900 other electric cooperatives across the country, we provide safe, reliable and technologically advanced service to over 40 million Americans while maintaining a unique consumer-focused approach to business. We truly are, "The People You Can Count On". 

TROUBLE CALL SCHEDULE

In case of trouble...

- 1** Check your fuses or circuit breakers.
- 2** Check with your neighbors, if convenient, to see if they have been affected by the power failure.
- 3** Call 24-hour number, 623-7568, OR call 800-808-2732* during office hours

**(Please help us save money – only use this number if toll charges apply.)*

Please give person receiving call your name as it appears on your bill, your telephone number and your map number if known. Any specific information about the outage will also be helpful in pinpointing the problem.

Alternate numbers ...

Ed Hankinson.....	733-4005 (Week of April 4)
Scott Bischof.....	839-4640 (Week of April 11)
Adam Claycomb.....	635-3376 (Week of April 18)
Gary Lafferty.....	842-9925 (Week of April 25)
Troy Mock.....	276-9759 (Week of May 2)

In case you cannot reach any of the above, call:

Jim Wood.....	623-6121 (Bedford)
James Clark.....	652-9791 (Everett)
Mark Rowan.....	623-7890 (Bedford)

During widespread power outages, many members are calling to report power failures. You may receive a busy signal, or in certain cases your call may go unanswered. This occurs in after-hours outages when the office is not fully staffed. Please be patient, and try again in a few minutes.