

# Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

**Bedford REC**

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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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



### What's in it for 'we?'

By Brooks Shoemaker

ONE of the most attractive features of cooperatives is that we can honestly answer the popular question, “What’s in it for me?” with “What’s in it for we!” Cooperatives are typically formed when the market fails to offer a good or service, with decent quality, at an affordable price. Bedford Rural Electric was formed in 1939 because the Pennsylvania Electric Company realized there was not enough profit to be made in rural Bedford County and refused to extend service into the countryside.

Bedford Rural Electric’s founding members went door to door, collecting a \$5 membership fee in order to raise a portion of the original investment the co-op needed. Those “go-getters” realized the only way to get electricity for “me” was to get it for “we,” the whole community.

Cooperative ownership is in the hands of the people who use the co-op’s goods and the services (not investors), so not only do cooperatives start out answering the question of “What’s in it for we?” — they continue to answer that question for as long as they exist.

These days, we often hear about companies abandoning their local communities and moving overseas, searching for lower taxes or cheaper labor. This negatively impacts the community through job loss, declines in housing values and erosion of the tax base. Because local residents own a majority of cooperatives, they are less likely to leave their community. In fact, it would be impossible for Bedford Rural Electric to leave Bedford County

because ALL of our members live in Bedford County or just over the county line in Somerset or Fulton County. The co-op is a critical part of what makes the community a community.

The way we continue to answer the question, “What’s in it for we?” is critical to our survival. It is imperative that we keep you — our members — as the primary focus. Keeping rates as low as possible, while providing safe, reliable service is a major part of that focus. However, ensuring we provide real value as your trusted energy adviser is also extremely important.

By maintaining that focus with your help and support, we will continue to serve the “me” and the “we” in our community long into the future.

### We are prepared for summer storms

Summer is here, school is out, and families are gearing up for a few months of fun and relaxation. While summer brings much fun in the sun, it can also bring the occasional severe storm. In the event of a power outage, you can trust that Bedford Rural Electric is ready to respond.

Trees and branches falling on power lines, caused by wind and lightning, are the major causes of summer, storm-related power outages. We work year-round — clearing and maintaining right-of-way — to ensure that power lines are clear of dangerous trees, branches and other types of vegetation.

Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, storms do damage our substations and other electric distribu-

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## Merritt Pond Campground and picnic pavilion

By Linda Williams

CAMPING and the great outdoors help to make Bedford County, with its abundance of wide open spaces, a popular place to visit.

Camping with RVs, pickup campers and pop-up campers became popular in the late 1960s. Several campgrounds sprung up in Bedford County, including the Kampgrounds of America (KOA) site owned by Ted and Nancy Brown, located in a peaceful setting about eight miles south of Bedford.

As the Browns reached retirement age, they closed the camping area and began selling off pieces of property.

Stephanie Arnold Merritt grew up in a house located on the end of the Browns' property. The freckle-faced, red-haired little girl who was quiet, polite, and neat won the hearts of the Browns. Ted Brown died around the time Stephanie married Robert "Bobby" Merritt, a natural gas pipeline construction worker. Nancy asked them if they would like to purchase the remaining property. She felt nothing would make Ted happier than to have their young friend, Stephanie, as the new owner.

Since Stephanie, a former beautician, and her husband both loved the area, they decided to give it a go. Eventually, they were able to purchase some of the previously sold property, bringing their total to 52 acres of land in a serene and beautiful setting.

The swimming pool owned by the KOA had been filled in, but there was a wetland in the middle of the property.



**NICE FISH:** Bobby Merritt displays a carp caught in the campground lake.

**FULL HOUSE:** Camping season is in full swing at Merritt Pond Campground.

Stephanie remembers cattails growing there. She also recalls Nancy wanting to put a pond in this wet spot, but it wasn't something Ted wanted to do.

Ducks Unlimited had received some money to build lakes or ponds in Bedford County and approached Bobby and Stephanie to see if they would have an interest in a project. It was not a difficult decision, and together the organization and the Merritts worked to complete a 12-acre lake that is stocked with some mighty fine fish. Among the enthusiastic fishermen are Stephanie's husband and their son, Rodey. Fish include catfish, bluegills, perch, bass, crappies and carp. Bobby went to pond management classes to learn how to take care of both the lake and the fish.

The lake was the icing on the cake and exactly what was needed to turn their land into a private recreational area.

Merritt Pond Campground is complete with a picnic pavilion and 20 campsites.



**PICNIC PAVILION:** The Merritt Pond Campground offers many amenities, including a picnic pavilion that has many uses.

their own. The campsites have electricity (30 to 50 amps), water and sewage. There are restrooms with flush toilets. Each campsite has a fire ring and a picnic table. They also have Wi-Fi.

Summer activities at the picnic pavilion have been steadily increasing. The pavilion has a storage facility with a counter, sink, refrigerator and microwave. Those renting the pavilion can keep food cold or heat a dish if necessary. There are no grills, but folks can provide their own.

The pavilion has become popular for weddings, with three planned for this summer. They also have scheduled class reunions, anniversaries, family reunions, church gatherings, clubs and just friends getting together. Folks are impressed with the cleanliness of the restrooms.

“I was always into appearance,” Stephanie says. “I think that is the first impression people have, and I like to keep things neat and clean.”

The Merritts recently completed their own dream home on the corner of the property and moved in the fall of 2015. The view of the sparkling lake is spectacular in any season. Stepha-

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“We offer fishing and just complete relaxation,” Stephanie says. “We don’t have a playground or showers, but we have nature, beauty, fishing and quiet.”

They do not allow golf carts or ATVs. Folks can kayak if they bring



**FISHING FUN:** Rodey, son of Stephanie and Bobby Merritt, shows off a lake-caught perch. Not many perch are that big.



**WEDDING VENUE:** Area brides and grooms schedule their summer weddings at the pavilion at Merritt Pond Campground.

**From the General Manager**

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tion lines and equipment. When this happens, our first priority is to safely restore power to as many members as possible in the shortest amount of time.

We start by mobilizing our line crews and other critical staff. As we receive outage calls, we begin assessing the damage. The big problems are handled first — like damage to major lines and substations, which serve thousands of people. Those problems must be corrected before we can focus on other areas where more localized damage may have occurred.

Next, line crews check the lines that deliver power into towns and smaller neighborhoods. Restoring these lines may restore power to hundreds of people. Finally, we look for damage to small taps and the individual lines outside of your home or business. This process is slower, and each repair may only restore a single home at a time.

We always do our best to avoid power outages, but sometimes Mother Nature has other plans. When outages do occur, rest assured we are working as quickly and efficiently as possible to restore service.

**Tip of the month**

Avoid placing lamps or TV sets near your room air-conditioning thermostat. The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which can cause the air conditioner to run longer than necessary. 

**OFFICE CLOSING**

Bedford REC's office will be closed on Monday, July 4, 2016, in observance of Independence Day.

**Merritt Pond Campground**

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nie's mother, Sherry Arnold, also has a house on the premises.

Stephanie says her husband is very much a "people person" and loves to chat with the campers.

Camping season starts April 15 and ends around mid-October. If the weather cooperates, those dates could change.

The couple advertises through the Visitor's Bureau, on Facebook and through a website, [www.merrittpond-campground.com](http://www.merrittpond-campground.com).

"But best of all," says Stephanie, "is word of mouth."

Merritt Pond is located off of Route 220 south, about eight miles south of Bedford on 193 Flying Dutchman Road. Turn left on Brown Road and right onto Teaberry. Flying Dutchman is an immediate left. Rates for either campsites or the pavilion are variable and can be obtained by calling 814-623-1507 or emailing [merrittpond@yahoo.com](mailto:merrittpond@yahoo.com) 

**EMERGENCY POWER NEEDS**

As a service to our members, Bedford Rural Electric needs to be aware of situations where special needs exist. Please provide the following details: (Please print clearly)

Account: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cellphone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Needs:  Medical

Farming/Livestock

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Each year, our goal is to provide service with no outages. Unfortunately, that is not a realistic expectation. Outages do occur and during severe storms, service restoration may take several days or longer. Therefore, we strongly recommend that our members with special needs install standby backup generation equipment. Please contact our office for more information on this type of equipment.

**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 the 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 the 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 ...**

- Dennis Tursich ..... 623-0922 (Week of May 30)
- Scott Shook ..... 623-2395 (Week of June 6)
- Ed Hankinson ..... 733-4005 (Week of June 13)
- Scott Bischof ..... 839-4640 (Week of June 20)
- Adam Claycomb ..... 635-3376 (Week of June 27)

**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.*