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Power Lines

Photo by Autumn Mott Rodeheaver on Unsplash

Go Team CEC!

by Matthew Boshaw, CEO & General Manager

This year’s annual meeting was my tenth as Central Electric Cooperative’s (CEC’s) CEO and general manager. Leading a group of talented, hard-working, and dedicated people while facing the challenges of providing an essential service, and navigating generational transitions, is a remarkable opportunity.

At my first annual meeting I waved a Terrible Towel to indicate that, although I am not from the area, I am a Steelers’ fan. The memory of that towel waving and my first annual meeting highlighted some amazing similarities between CEC and football for me.

Let me share with you what I mean. The distribution, electric utility business would be the National Football League (NFL). CEC would be our team or the Steelers, of course. I prefer to watch the Steelers because I believe they

are superior as an organization — just like CEC.

Hiring personnel compares to the draft. We pick people with great skills who will be a good fit for our organization. We have grizzled veterans who show the kids the ropes and let them know they don’t know everything — yet. We have owners, represented by our board, and a coaching staff, represented by the senior staff and I. I guess the linemen would be, well, the linemen.

Our members are the fans who cheer for us to succeed, are disappointed when we fail, and occasionally scream at the screen if we drop the ball or miss a block. The bottom line is we are all working toward the same goal, meeting our targets and having a “winning season” for our members.

CEC had its share of wins in 2018, but we took a couple of losses as well. I would like to provide

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highlights from 2018 as well as some important game plan adjustments you can expect.

Last November CEC saw one of the single worst storm events in the history of the cooperative, and certainly the most financially costly one. A combination of ice, wet snow, wind, saturated soil conditions, and dead ash trees came together for what was ultimately a week long event — a big late season loss.

This led to engaging our preestablished game plan in the form of mutual aid agreements with cooperatives across the state as well as the tree-trimming contractors who we utilize throughout the year — a win for our organizational planning.

Over 100 additional people worked directly on CEC's behalf — not including peripheral police, fire, and other agencies. There were no reportable or recordable injuries or accidents during this event — which was a huge safety win for our team.

The event also highlighted the area of reliability. Not including the November storm, 2018 saw a 25 percent improvement in outage time over 2017. However — neither of the numbers were in the range of our goals, so it is tough for us not to consider this a loss.

In 2018, trees caused over 60 percent of our outages and our transmission suppliers created another 34 percent. The tree issues were compounded by one of the wettest years on record in our area, leading to even healthy trees uprooting in addition to the continuing dead, ash tree

problem.

Since 2010, we have nearly tripled the amount of money we devote to clearing our rights-of-way. We are utilizing four contractors to get more done and are providing closer oversight to their work in order to “reclaim” our rights-of-way. We have also changed our design standards to stiffen our system against storms.

We are working with our generation and transmission cooperative operationally and politically to hold our power suppliers accountable and create solutions to the increasing frequency and duration of our power supply interruptions.

The continued weather issues we are experiencing make it difficult to quantify the immediate benefits of these efforts, but they are making a difference and reflect a long-term investment in the reliability of our system. I would compare these efforts to preseason and weekly game planning, as they are all intended to give us the best opportunity to be successful.

One of the primary governance roles of your member-elected board of directors is fiscal responsibility and, in this area, we strung some wins together.

- No rate increase since July 2016 — Win.
- Decreased rotation of patronage capital (getting your money back to you sooner) — Win.
- Increased member equity level

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Check Out Our Photo Contest!

You can vote online until Oct. 18 and the winners will be posted online Oct. 25 at www.central.coop and in the December issue of this newsletter.

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to nearly 35 percent — Win.

- Record-breaking retirement of Capital Credits, over \$1.7 million in April after the year-end financials were complete for 2018 — Big Win.

But, these plans can only be successful with a great team to execute them. I mentioned our grizzled veterans and highly drafted rookies. As with many organizations, our team is seeing more transition as the baby boomers retire. Our first-round draft picks are providing some valuable bench strength as experience departs. Our efforts in succession planning have been very effective, while still staying

within our 72-employee roster.

The board of directors continues to serve you well as managing owners, and have provided me and the rest of your coaching staff with the resources necessary to maintain our winning history.

I recognize that the essential service we provide is much more important than any football game but, like a football team, all our efforts are for you — our membership (fans). You are the core of all the decisions and efforts we make.

2018 was not without its challenges, but CEC remains strong, healthy, and poised to have another winning season. Thank you for your continued support of all we do on your behalf.

Meter Readings

with Laura Hensley

Member Energy Specialist



You may have energy vampires in your home stealing money from you right now. Some electronics draw power from the outlet and money from your wallet, even when they are turned off.

Phantom power draw is not always wasteful. Some electronics need a constant, small supply of power for displays, to be remotely operated, or to be turned on quickly. Other appliances, however, do not require constant electricity and are sucking it up anyway.

Chargers take the power at the outlet and reduce it down to the voltage required by the connected device. When your device is charging, the charger is using electricity, but you might be surprised to learn it is still using small amounts of energy even when it is not connected to a device.

Television set-top boxes also consume energy when they appear to be inactive. Anytime the set-top box's lights are on, it is using power. Like chargers, they use more when the television is on, but they are always working. This is especially

Stopping Energy Vampires

true for devices with a DVR function.

The typical gaming console can use as much energy as a regular refrigerator, even when it is not being used. Check the console settings and disable automatic updates — which are a huge energy drain.

So, how do you combat these dreaded vampire loads? Garlic? Silver bullets? Fortunately you just need to change how you handle these energy-sucking electronics. Here are some tips.

- Unplug electronics and counter top appliances not in use. Plug items into a power strip and turn the power strip off whenever possible.
- Invest in smart power strips. These devices sense when electronics are sleeping or off, and cut off power.
- Unplug chargers when not in use.
- Completely turn off gaming consoles when not in use.
- Buy low-standby products. Most Energy Star endorsed products draw smaller than average amounts of electricity when turned off.



Youth Tour — An All Expenses Paid Week in Washington, D.C.

Youth Tour is a once-in-a-lifetime, all expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C. inspired by Senator Lyndon B. Johnson in 1957. The purpose is to “send youngsters to the national capital where they can actually see what the flag stands for and represents”.

Leadership is the Focus.

- From monuments and memorials to meetings with Congress, the focus of Youth Tour is LEADERSHIP.

Cooperation is the Purpose.

- Electric cooperatives power communities and empower their members to improve their quality of life. This spirit of cooperation is shared throughout the Youth Tour experience.

History is the Guide.

- From the Civil War to the Civil Rights Movement, to the issues facing our country today, Youth Tour goes where great leaders have

gone before and explores future possibilities for our nation through the lens of history.

All high school juniors who reside in a home receiving electric service from CEC are eligible. To apply visit www.central.coop, call us, or see your high school guidance counselor.

All application requirements must be completed and received by CEC before Jan. 10, 2020. For more information about Youth Tour visit www.youthtour.coop.

Finalist are not only entitled to the trip to D.C. but are also eligible for special scholarships and national recognition.



SAFETY MATTERS

Don't Let Your Generator Generate Trouble

Having a portable generator on hand may sound like a great idea for times when the power goes out, but misusing one is dangerous. Although they can help light your home, or cool your perishable food when the neighborhood is dark, if used incorrectly you could have a much bigger problem on your hands.

Here are some tips to consider when using a generator:

- Operate a portable generator in well ventilated locations outdoors away from all doors, windows, and vent openings to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.

- Turn the generator on before using it. Once it's running, turn your appliances and lights on one at a time to avoid overloading the unit.

- To protect a portable generator from moisture, operate it on a dry surface under an open, canopy-like structure.

- Never use or install a generator in an attached garage, even with the door open.

- Turn off portable generators and let them cool down before refueling. Never refuel a generator while it is running.

- Use heavy-duty extension cords that are properly rated for your appliance loads.

Make a Difference: Join the MAAC!

Are you interested in serving on a respected committee and sharing your ideas with cooperative employees and members? Then the Member Aware Advisory Committee (MAAC) is the perfect opportunity for you! CEC is looking for members to serve on the 2020-2021 MAAC committee. This committee establishes effective communication between cooperative members, the board of directors, and management.

As a MAAC member you have the chance to discuss and contribute your ideas on issues directly concerning cooperative members. You will also have the chance to submit recommendations to the board of directors and management on improving services and procedures. This committee will meet eight times (once a quarter) throughout the 2020-2021 term.

CEC will select representatives from the following counties: Armstrong, Butler, Clarion, Forest, and Venango. In keeping with the cooperative's bylaws, Allegheny County members shall be affiliated with Butler County and Mercer County members with Venango County.

MAAC members must be residential members with their permanent residence on cooperative lines in the county they represent. In addition to residential members, the committee will also include a seasonal representative who is required to have a seasonal account on cooperative lines.

All interested members must be in good standing with the cooperative to be considered. The board of directors will appoint members if there are no volunteers for a specific county.

Those who have served on either the MAAC committee or CEC's board of directors are ineligible. MAAC members receive a per diem and mileage compensation for attending each meeting.

CEC would like to recognize the 2018-2019 MAAC members for their dedication and outstanding efforts. They are: David and Karen Conrad of Armstrong County; Ryan and Emily Borcz of Butler County; Peter and Margo Perotti of Butler County; Timothy and Shirley Hockman of Clarion County; Mike and Mary Slaughaupt of Clarion County; George Holland of Forest County; Angel and Jeanette Campesino of Venango County; Tim and Dorothy Hurley of Venango County; and seasonal representatives Dan and Sandy Steinmiller.

If you are interested in serving on the MAAC committee, please complete the coupon below and send it to: Central Electric Cooperative, MAAC Committee, P.O. Box 329, Parker, PA 16049. Coupons must be returned by Dec. 1, 2019. If you have any questions, please call 800-521-0570.

Member Aware Advisory Committee

I would like to volunteer to serve on the 2020-2021 MAAC Committee

Name: _____

Residential or Seasonal (circle one) Account Number: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ County: _____

Recipe of the Month

Hot Reuben Dip

Ingredients:

- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 1-1/2 cup shredded swiss cheese
- 1/2 cup thousand island dressing
- 4 ounces deli sliced corned beef, chopped
- 1/2 cup drained sauerkraut

Directions: Mix cream cheese, one cup swiss cheese, dressing, and corned beef. Spread into a 9-inch pie plate. Top with sauerkraut and remaining swiss cheese. Bake at 400 degrees about 10-15 minutes (until bubbly). Serve with bagel chips.

Thank you to Linda Knott for submitting this recipe!

CEC Management Team

Matthew P. Boshaw
CEO & General Manager

Dennis W. Beggs
Director of Finance and
Accounting/CFO

Christopher W. Kossman
Director of Information Technology

Stephanie Deal
Director of Human Resources

Fred E. Terwilliger
Assistant General Manager/COO

Lisa A. Hoover
Director of Member Services

Read Power Lines and Win!

Last Issue's Winner:

James Barnes of Petrolia

Last Issue's E-Winner:

Winnie Hook of Knox

Read Power Lines for a chance to win a \$25 credit on your monthly electric bill by completing and returning the quiz below. You can also have a chance at another \$25 bill credit by submitting a quiz online at www.central.coop.

If you don't have access to the Internet, indicate that on the quiz and we'll also enter you in the online drawing. Just complete and enclose the quiz and information below and return it with your monthly payment.

1. True or False: Smart power strips sense when electronics are sleeping or off, and cut off power.

Answer: _____

2. True or False: In 2018, trees caused over 60 percent of our outages and our transmission suppliers created another 34 percent.

Answer: _____

3. True or False: It's okay to refuel a generator while it is running.

Answer: _____

How are we doing? (no wrong answer)

Name: _____

Phone: _____ **Acct. #:** _____



Central Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

716 Route 368, P.O. Box 329, Parker, PA 16049

Newsletter Editor: Renee Tritten