

PowerLines

YOUR CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE NEWS CONNECTION

Central Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative



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It Isn’t for Everyone

BY MATTHEW BOSHAW
CEO & General Manager

Being an electric cooperative employee is not for everyone, but it can be for anyone. During the 2024 Olympic Summer Games, Nike aired a series of ads with the tag line “Winning Isn’t for Everyone”. The series of commercials shows highlights of varying levels of athletes competing in a wide variety of sporting events. The idea being that whether you are competing in the NBA, Women’s World Cup Soccer, or any of the hundreds of Olympic events, winning will require not only talent but a level of effort and commitment that not everyone is willing to do. As most professional athletes will tell you, they do not win on the day of the big game without the daily effort and preparation prior to it.

I saw a parallel to the cooperative world in these advertisements. For those of you that are regular readers of my articles, you will recognize that I make that same connection with many aspects of everyday life. In this case, however, I believe this is not as much of a stretch as some connections made in the past.

As previously mentioned, being a cooperative employee is not for everyone. Like athletes, cooperative

employees must be talented in their respective area. Beyond their talent, a cooperative employee must understand the importance of the services we provide to our membership and the community. They must be committed to serving our members because, unlike the athlete, our efforts and preparation are about something much more critical than winning a game.

It is one thing to talk about these points and quite another to show them in action. Our electrical services are crucial for our members and the communities we serve, as electricity is a daily necessity. Just like athletes in the big game, we attract significant attention during major storms and outages. How effectively we restore services during these events is closely scrutinized, however our methods behind these results are often overlooked. Each day, we work hard to improve our systems and processes, with the goal of increasing efficiency and decreasing both the duration and frequency of outages.

Not everyone can handle the daily effort needed for success on “game day.” To illustrate our commitment, we use a continuous improvement model that helps us keep the lights on while also maintaining and upgrading our electric system and services. Unlike Allen Iverson’s rant, “talking about practice,”

CEC is all about preparation. It takes a unique employee to be able to overcome the potential complacency between large events and ensure that every day is approached with the same urgency as game day. In addition to our constant preparation, availability is a necessity at CEC. As an old football coach once told me, your most important ability is your availability. We can address non-work-related topics most days and take time off for vacations but as a cooperative employee, when you are needed, you are needed. We cannot always plan for “all hands-on deck” moments, so recognizing the importance of being ready when needed is crucial. This willingness to step up is a key trait of a dedicated cooperative employee. Those of us that have been doing this for a long time might be characterized as slightly obsessive with this mindset. For example, I often joke that I do not recreate well. I certainly enjoy my time off, but I know that I am not the only cooperative employee that has pictures of electric utility equipment from various locations mixed in with my vacation photos. Do you know how many substations supply the Willis Tower (formerly Sears Tower) in Chicago? Well, I do.

When asked why we know the obscure facts related to our business or why we would want to work in an industry that has to deal with the aftermath of countless natural disasters, we answer simply that we enjoy the challenge. We are in this business because we want to learn the details of these problems and the facts behind the solutions. We want to be part of an organization that provides an essential service to all and understand the structure behind it. Being engaged is what we do and a large part of who we are.

I hope I have illustrated my point that much like the Nike ad campaign, being an electric cooperative employee is not for everyone. However, it is true it could be for anyone – anyone who is passionate about being part of an organization that delivers essential services and maintains high standards. We regularly have open positions and if you are eager to contribute to our mission, we want to hear from you. There is no special handshake or password (though that would be fun), but a positive attitude will show us that you’re a great fit.

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Matthew P. Boshaw	<i>CEO & General Manager</i>
Chester Conti	<i>Director of Finance and Accounting/CFO</i>
Lisa A. Hoover	<i>Director of Member Services</i>
Christopher W. Kossman	<i>Director of Information Technology</i>
Fred E. Terwilliger	<i>Assistant General Manager/COO</i>



Central Electric Cooperative
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

OUTAGE PREPAREDNESS AND SAFETY

- Prepare an outage kit before losing power.
- Keep your food safe and your fridge/ freezer closed.
- Plan to have a fully charged phone or radio to monitor alerts.
- Consider alternative cooling/heating resources for your home.

Visit www.central.coop for more information.
This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Get Involved, Join Our Board!

Central Electric Cooperative (CEC) of Parker, Pennsylvania is seeking Forest County members who are interested in serving on their Board of Directors, to fill a vacant Forest County director seat.

This vacancy has occurred due to the passing of CEC board member Dr. John Campbell. Dr. Campbell was re-elected in August of 2023, CEC's Board of Directors have decided to appoint a replacement to fill his seat for the remainder of his four-year term.

Members of the CEC Board of Directors are expected to perform all functions of the position including attendance at regular monthly board meetings, special board meetings, and committee meetings as well as to serve in board offices, on committees, and as delegates to affiliated organizations.

The appointed individual will serve as the Forest County Director through August of 2027. If the individual is interested in continuing to serve, they will need to run for election in 2027.



Interested individuals must complete the paperwork associated with this process and return it to CEC by Nov. 2nd to be considered. Following a review of submitted materials, a Nominating Committee will schedule interviews with selected candidates.

If you are a CEC member living in Forest County and are interested in filling this vacancy, please contact Nikki Staley at 800-521-0570 x2151 or view board member eligibility and qualifications at www.central.coop/running-board.

JOIN OUR BOARD:

HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF YOUR COOPERATIVE!

CENTRAL ELECTRIC
CO-OP, INC.
HEADQUARTERS

ELIGIBILITY
AND
QUALIFICATIONS
INFORMATION:



VISIT WWW.CENTRAL.COOP FOR MORE INFORMATION.



Electrical Safety for Hunters

by Kayla Clark, Training and Events Specialist



As we head into fall, many of our members are gearing up for the upcoming hunting seasons, aiming to fill their limits on deer, turkey, bear, pheasant, and more! When preparing for a hunt, the first priorities often considered are a hunting location, gear, and of course snacks! However, there are a certain safety items that are equally important when striving for a successful season.

When packing your gear, always include a first-aid kit. Many kits are compact and can easily fit into your jacket or backpack. Essential supplies such as bandages, antibiotic ointment, allergy medication, a tourniquet, alcohol pads, and gloves can be incredibly useful in the woods. Additionally, plan to carry a cell phone for emergencies and inform a family member of your hunting plans and whereabouts in case assistance is needed.

Upon arriving at your hunting location, stay vigilant of your surroundings. Even if you were at the same location the previous day, hazards can present themselves at any time.

Pay close attention to powerlines that might run through the woods or fields where you plan to hunt. Be aware of warning signs or any indicators of hazardous areas and electrical equipment.

Avoid shooting near powerlines or any other equipment. Do not place decoys on or around equipment or powerlines. When hanging a tree stand, do not use a utility pole to secure it, instead use natural elements from your environment such as a tree. Before putting up a tree stand, make sure there are no nearby lines – they can be hard to see in the woods!

Lastly, make yourself visible to others; while fluorescent orange requirements can vary by season and game, the PA Game Commission strongly recommends always wearing it for safety.



Role: Engineering/Operations Assistant

Employee Since: January 2000

Employee Spotlight:

Lori Neiswonger



What do you do at CEC? I assist the engineering/operations department, ensuring its tasks are carried out efficiently and effectively.



What is a unique experience you have had while working at CEC? Before I was hired, I did the OPX job from home for 5 years. I worked with two phones, a radio, and no computers.



What was your first job? I was a secretary at Rimersburg Plumbing & Heating.



What is something you are most proud of? My family!



Do you have any pets? I have a cat named Lilly.





Member Survey

By: Izzy Cellucci, Communication Representative

We value your feedback! At Central Electric Cooperative (CEC), we aim to understand and acknowledge our members’ voices. As we continue to grow and adapt, your input is vital for ensuring we make the changes that matter most to you. This is why we invite you to participate in our upcoming member survey.

The member survey provides a confidential approach for the co-op to gain insight into how we can improve our services. CEC is committed to our member-owners and the survey’s purpose is for you to participate in the decision-making process at the cooperative. As member-owners, your feedback is necessary for our decisions and an improved understanding of relevant community needs.

You can participate in the survey from October 1st until November 15th. Upon completion, you will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of several prizes: a \$100 Visa gift card, a \$500 gift card, or a grand prize of one year’s worth of electricity valued up to \$1,500! The \$1,500 amount is based on the average annual electricity costs for a typical CEC residential member. Please note that the grand prize must be redeemed for energy use (via billing credits) by December 31, 2025. Additionally, only one entry per CEC membership is allowed, and CEC employees, directors, and their immediate family members are not eligible to win.

To participate, visit the “Member Center” tab on our website. If you have any questions or need assistance, feel free to contact us at 800-521-0570.

Deck the Halls for CEC’s Christmas Lights Contest!

Deck your home with all things festive and you could win the CEC Christmas Lights Contest! **First place (the Griswold Award) will receive a \$500 bill credit and a \$500 donation to a charity of the member’s choice! Second place will receive a \$250 bill credit and third a \$100 bill credit!**

The contest is open to both residential and commercial CEC members and the rules are simple — there are no

special themes or guidelines, just be creative and festive.

To enter, members must complete the registration form on CEC’s website and attach a photo or video of their display before Dec. 8. Voting is open to all and will take place on CEC’s website from Dec. 12 to Dec. 20. The winners will be announced on CEC’s website on Dec. 23 and in February’s Power Lines newsletter.

Visit www.central.coop for additional contest details!



CEC's Favorite Energy Efficiency Tips

by Connie Long, Member Energy Specialist



You often see me giving you information on how to be energy efficient and conserve energy, but what about the other employees here at CEC? What strategies do they use to keep their usage low? I have asked several of them to share their favorite or most useful tips for being energy efficient. Here's what they had to say:

1. **Laura P.** – Supervisor of Member Services: “My favorite energy efficiency tip is to use the dishwasher! It saves energy, as well as water and, most importantly, my time. In one year, an Energy Star dishwasher can cut utility bills by about \$210, save 8,400 gallons of water, and save around 230 hours of my time over handwashing dishes. That’s a win for my family.”

2. **Bill F.** – Senior System Engineer: “My favorite tip is: Phantom or Vampire Loads. These range from leaving our device chargers plugged in while not charging, to our gaming system on standby or our computers. I looked this up before but in an average household this can equate to the same amount of power you would use to run your refrigerator.”

3. **Chris P.** – Journeyman Lineman: “Make the switch to LED light bulbs and use a programmable thermostat.” Chris made the switch to LED light bulbs and sets his thermostat to turn back to his comfortable setting about an hour before he would get home to keep it from running all day while he is gone.

4. **Matt G.** – Storekeeper & Meter Repairman: “I utilize the SmartHub app to keep track of my daily usage. I receive notifications for my usage to give me a baseline to help realize if my usage is higher so I can catch it earlier.”

5. **Jessica M.** – Payroll Specialist: “I use a timer for my pool pump to run during off peak hours, for example throughout the night when overall usage is lower.”

As you can see, from their tips, there are many strategies to help you be energy efficient. It’s all about what works best for you and your family! Remember small changes can help make a big difference in your daily usage, helping you spot potential issues before your next bill arrives and giving you more quality time with your loved ones. By conserving energy and making the changes to be energy efficient, you can make a big difference in your usage and energy costs.

CEC's 2024 Annual Business Meeting Recap

On August 8th, 2024, Central Electric Cooperative (CEC) held the 87th Annual Meeting of the Members at AC Valley Elementary School at 6:00 PM.

Forty-five members and their guests attended the meeting. Members who attended the meeting spoke with CEC’s board of directors, management team, and staff, and learned of the official election results.

Before the meeting commenced, members enjoyed refreshments and took the opportunity to interact with staff at the education center. CEC provided members with information on the GenerLink transfer switch, energy efficiency tips for cost savings in their homes, and America’s Electric Cooperatives PAC.

During the meeting, it was confirmed that incumbent directors Rick Weaver, Clarion County Representative, and Ken Durrett, Butler County Representative, were re-elected in uncontested races.

All members in attendance received a \$15 bill credit and were entered to win door prizes. Prizes included \$250, \$100, and \$50 Visa gift cards.

For the members not in attendance, a video recording of the 87th Annual Meeting of the Members is provided at www.central.coop/CEC-annual-meeting.

Thank you to everyone who attended the 87th Annual Meeting. We look forward to seeing you, our members, again in 2025.



SEVEN COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Did you know electric co-ops are guided by a set of seven cooperative principles? These principles ensure co-ops like ours remain focused on member needs, community impact and co-op values.

Complete the crossword below to learn more about the cooperative principles. Use the word bank to check your work.



ACROSS

- 2. Cooperation Among Cooperatives: Co-ops _____ and learn from other co-ops.
- 5. Autonomy & Independence: Co-ops are _____ and can operate on their own.
- 6. Member Economic Participation: Members _____ money to ensure the co-op runs smoothly.
- 7. Open & Voluntary Membership: Co-op membership is open to _____ .

DOWN

- 1. Concern for Community: Co-ops give back to their local _____ to help them thrive and grow.
- 3. Education, Training & Information: Co-ops focus on _____ to ensure employees and members have the info they need.
- 4. Democratic Member Control: Members get to make _____ about the co-op.

ANSWER KEY

2 ACROSS: SHARE
 6 ACROSS: CONTRIBUTE
 7 ACROSS: EVERYONE
 1 DOWN: COMMUNITIES
 3 DOWN: EDUCATION
 4 DOWN: DECISIONS

From the Kitchen of:
Rick Cellucci

RECIPE: **PASTA FAGIOLI**



INGREDIENTS:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1/4 c. olive oil | 1 1/2 c. ditalini pasta |
| 2 Tbs. garlic, minced | parmesan cheese, for top |
| 1 yellow onion, chopped | parsley, for top (optional) |
| 2 carrots, chopped | |
| 3 celery stalks, chopped | |
| salt, pepper, italian seasoning to taste | |
| 6 c. chicken broth | |
| 1 15 oz. can crushed or diced tomatoes | |
| 2 15oz. cans cannelli beans | |

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In a large pot, heat oil over medium heat. Add onion, garlic, carrot, celery, and seasonings. Stir occasionally, and cook until soft, about 7-10 min.
2. Add broth and undrained tomatoes; stir to release any browned pieces from bottom of pot. Once broth comes to a boil, re-season with previous spices.
3. Add beans and pasta to the pot; let sit on medium heat for 15 min while stirring occasionally.
4. Remove from heat, top it off with parmesan and parsley, and enjoy!



**ON THE GO AND
IN CONTROL.**

MANAGE

your account

REPORT

service issues

VIEW AND PAY

your bill

RECEIVE

key notices

MONITOR

usage 24/7

*...all in the palm of your
hand, online.*



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Your Board of Directors

From left (back row): Robert Smith, President, Butler County; Jody Weaver, Vice President, Clarion County; Kenneth Durrett, Butler County; Richard Weaver, Clarion County; **(front)** Ken Etzel, Venango County; Althea Smith, Secretary/Treasurer, Venango County; and Nancy Lendyak, Armstrong County.



central.coop/meet-your-directors

MISSION: CEC safely provides reliable and competitively priced electricity to our consumer-members and was established by and is committed to the communities we serve.

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Member Services: 800-521-0570
Outages: 800-282-8610



Newsletter Editor: Izzy Cellucci

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Missed an issue?

Catch up at www.central.coop

Read past issues of Power Lines and stay up to date on CEC news.

