

# Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

## SULLIVAN COUNTY REC

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### STAFF

John Lykens, CEO  
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Jeff Truesdale, Manager,  
Electric Operations  
Diane E. White, Executive Assistant

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Jim Lambert - CCD**  
**Jay Lewis - CCD/BLC/Gold**  
**David R. Rakestraw - CCD**

\*Credentialed Cooperative Director

\*\*Board Leadership Certificate

\*\*\*Director Gold Certificate

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday  
7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

## Trees and Electrical Lines Don't Play Well Together



**SIGNS OF SPRING ARE IN** the air. That oh-so-familiar sound of birds singing in the morning, cool nights giving way to warm temperatures during the day, blossoming forsythia bushes and flowering crocus, tulips, and daffodils, and the deep red maple buds pushing their way out are all signs of better days ahead. And while this winter was not overly harsh from the standpoint of extreme cold temperatures or measurable snow amounts, I believe we can all agree spring is welcome here!

Unfortunately, as we head into spring and temperatures become more moderate during these shoulder months, snowstorms tend to bring heavy, wet snow. This type of snow accumulates on tree branches and power lines, and often times leaves a mess for all of us to deal with as it moves through and out of our service territory. This heavy, wet, accumulating snow often brings mature trees and tree branches down and brings power lines down with them.

Your electric cooperative maintains more than 900 miles of electric distribution line throughout our service territory. Not surprisingly, tree removal and trimming are part of maintaining the cooperative's electric distribution system. In fact, they are the largest expense in the cooperative's annual budget. In spite of this and in spite of employing the best industry practices, tree-related outages are your cooperative's no. 1 cause of outages.

To help keep tree-related outages from growing in number, Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative must maintain a clear "no tree zone" — or right of way — 20 feet from the centerline of our primary overhead power lines. Trees growing or planted within this zone will become a problem sometime within the cooperative's trim cycle (currently seven to 10 years) and, if not permanently removed, will continue to cost the cooperative (and all members) for years to come. We ask all members to please refrain from planting any tree or shrub within this zone. We also ask all members to allow cooperative-contracted tree-trimming crews to trim and/or remove trees within this zone.

A properly cleared right of way is necessary and essential for two reasons. The first and most obvious is reliability. Trees must be properly trimmed and/or removed from the cooperative's right-of-way corridor to eliminate outages caused by trees affected by heavy, wet accumulating snow or strong winds. The second — and probably not so obvious but, by far the most important — reason is public safety.

Branch contact with an energized overhead electrical wire will energize the tree at either 7,200 or 14,400 volts, depending on where this contact occurs within our service territory. A child climbing the tree, for instance, when this occurs could be seriously injured, burned or even killed. Likewise, any individual in close proximity to the tree while on the ground could suffer serious injury or death from something known as "step potential." This is where the ground becomes energized and causes current to flow through the individual's body, causing shock and heart defibrillation that could result in death.

I am personally asking all of our members to cooperate with us in maintaining a safe right-of-way corridor on your property. Together, we can continue to be a cost-responsible electric cooperative whose mission is to provide all members with safe and reliable electric power for generations. Semper Fidelis. 🇺🇸

**JOHN LYKENS**  
CEO

# Spring is Baaaaack!

**SARAH PARRISH**, COOPERATIVE COMMUNICATOR

**IT'S HERE. THE GRASS IS** getting greener, Earth's deep frost is thawing, flower bulbs are sprouting and birds are chirping: spring is back! But as you tackle your spring cleaning, area farmers are in the middle of one of their busiest times of the year — the birthing season!

Chad and Sarah Langen of Black Creek Farms, Dushore, have had their hands full since early February, adding 65 lambs to their Katahdin sheep herd. They came by the singles, doubles and triples. On the morning of Feb. 6, the couple had welcomed 13 babies overnight.

Katahdins are unique to the sheep family because they're shearless. Their hair stays at a manageable length and sheds in the summer. The lambs are weaned from their mother at 3 months old, then have a diet of stock feed and hay or pasture. Hay is made on the farm and fed to the goats during the winter months. Black Creek Farms has several pastures to rotate the herd through in the late spring, summer and early fall.

The Langens have been in the sheep business since 2010. Previously, they had more than 60 alpacas and have also raised pigs and Herford and Angus beef cattle. Their Katahdin herd is used for breeding stock.

Just down the hill from her son and daughter-in-law, Kathie Langen stays busy with her herd of Nigerian dwarf and mini-Nubian goats.

Kathie has had her herd since 2011. Sixteen does were bred for the 2023 spring and summer birthing season, and she's expecting between 35 and 40 kids. Besides breeding



**SNACK TIME:** Chad Langen and wife, Sarah, of Black Creek Farms have been adding to their Katahdin sheep herd almost daily. They've birthed nearly 75 lambs this spring, which makes for a lot of hungry mamas and babies.

stock, Kathie uses the goats for their milk to make soap and shampoo bars. She also uses their milk for all of her drinking, cooking, and baking, and likes to make butter-milk, yogurt, and different kinds of cheese with it.

Kids available for purchase will be listed on Black Creek Farms' website, [blackcreekfarms.weebly.com](http://blackcreekfarms.weebly.com). The best way to contact the family about available kids and lambs is by emailing [blackcreekfarms1423@gmail.com](mailto:blackcreekfarms1423@gmail.com).

## Keeping it local

Outside of Shunk, the Trostle family — Andy, Tami, Travis (his wife, Becca, and son, Easton), Linsay and Joseph — have been busy juggling mothers expecting calves.

Trostle's Dairy and Poultry Farm has a little bit of everything: dairy and beef cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, chickens, geese and guineas, just to name a few.

The calving season started in January with an arrangement of calves; they currently breed Jersey, Ayrshire, Holstein, Brown Swiss, and Lineback. Thirty more calves are expected to be born this year. They are kept in hutches for the first few months, where they are bottle-fed twice a day and kept cozy with warm bedding, sunshine, and body heat. Once they outgrow their hutches, heifers are kept to breed after they reach a year old and are milked after they freshen. Bull calves are raised for beef production.

The Trostles have around 150 head total cattle and milk anywhere between 30 and 35, depending on how many freshen and how many are dry. Cows are milked twice a day in a parlor, which takes about an hour both times.

The other moneymaker for the farm is the poultry business. Trostle Twins Eggs collects anywhere between 250 and 300 eggs each day. If that wasn't enough, around 520 more hens will start laying at the end of May/early June. Eggs are available year-round at the family's produce stand on Ellenton Mountain Road. Depending on the time of year, they also have an assortment of produce, beef, pork, cheese, honey, flowers, vegetable plants,

PHOTOS BY SARAH PARRISH



**NEVER A BAAAD HAIR DAY:** White, brown, black, speckled or spotted, Katahdin sheep come in every color and pattern.



**HELLO!:** Trapper, the dog, keeps an eye on things around the Trostle farm, including folks who stop by and other farm animals.

shelled corn, chicken feed, drinks, and seasonal items, such as pumpkins, mums, and Christmas trees.

“We like to keep our business local, and our neighbors are good about supporting our business in return,” Andy says.

The Trostle family is originally from Dillsburg in York County, and Andy and Tami have been farming since 1990. When their hometown went from a small, two-feed mill town to a suburban community, they knew it was time to move.

“My family had a cabin in Forksville when I was growing up, so I always knew and loved Sullivan County,” Andy says. The family moved here in 2008 and began farming immediately.



**I CAN HEAR YOU:** A pair of kids cuddle together to stay warm while napping on the Trostle family farm outside of Shunk.

The family is dedicated to their farm and community. Lynsay served as Sullivan County Dairy Maid for three years and is currently the county’s Dairy Princess. She likes to spread the word about the farming industry and what her family does to the public. The Trostles also spend a lot of time at the Endless Winds Fire Hall, helping with fundraisers and meals. Andy also serves as vice president and farmer director for the Sullivan County Conservation District.

But the farm always comes first.

“All of the animals are fed before we are and bed before we get to bed,” he says. “No one takes better care of their animals than a farmer does.” 🐾

# Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative ANNUAL MEETING

## Tuesday, May 16, 2023 - 6:30 p.m.

Online via Zoom **only**.

Prior to the meeting,  
please download the Zoom app.

Registration is required by **May 15:**

- Visit [bit.ly/screcAnnualMtg2023](https://bit.ly/screcAnnualMtg2023)

**OR**

Contact Diane White at

- [DianeWhite@screc.com](mailto:DianeWhite@screc.com)/570-924-3381.

### Agenda:

- 6:30 p.m. - Call to Order
- Report of 2023 Director Election (Attorney Chappell)
- Board Chair Report (Ann Henderson)
- CEO Report (John Lykens)
- Q&A (submitted during meeting)
- 7:15 p.m. (approx.) - Adjourn

# The Power Behind Sullivan County REC: Our Employees

*A Monthly Spotlight*

**SARAH PARRISH**, COOPERATIVE COMMUNICATOR

**WHAT DID YOU WANT TO** be when you grew up? The president? An astronaut? A professional athlete? Personally, I wanted to be a veterinarian.

A lot of other folks who grew up in the Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative (SCREC) service territory also had rural-based hopes and dreams when growing up. The same can be said for Senior Lineman Nolan Chase.

Nolan spent his childhood on his parents' Forks Township farm, showing dairy cattle in 4-H. After a short stint in college, Nolan came home to be a self-employed dairy farmer. He also worked for C.H. Waltz Sons, Inc. On his way home from work one day, he stopped at the SCREC office to fill out an application. Sure enough, several months later, Nolan was called in for an interview to fill a vacant lineworker position, and in October 2000, he was hired as an apprentice lineman.

"I never dreamed I'd have this job," Nolan says. "I always wanted to be a dairy farmer, but I'm glad it worked out. I like everybody I work with, and I like getting to meet the different members we serve."

Over the last 23 years, Nolan — and SCREC as a whole — have seen a lot of improvements in the operations department. More and newer equipment has certainly been a huge asset. The fleet expanded from two to four bucket trucks and also grew to include a skid steer that helps dig holes and set new poles. Updated hand tools also take a lot of work off the lineworkers' shoulders.

"Nothing is like it was 20 years ago," Nolan says. "We went from paper maps to everything being on our tablets: maps, OCRs and breakers. Even our tools are easier to use now."

He has a lot of memories from the last 23 years, too. "What opened my

eyes to what this job really was, was the ice storm on New Year's in 2003," he says. "It was my first big storm I ever worked through."

Nolan worked ten, 18-hour days straight in the same area trying to fight through the ice day after day. But storm restoration is one of Nolan's favorite parts of the job. "It's so gratifying," he says, "when the members say 'thank you,' whether face-to-face

or through an email. We've even had some people bring us out cookies and pizzas."

Storm restoration work isn't limited to SCREC's territory, either. Nolan has had the opportunity to travel to Virginia and other co-ops throughout Pennsylvania to help with their restoration efforts.

"I really enjoy getting off our system to other co-ops. It's interesting to meet their guys," he says. "We're all the same group of people — all linemen have been through the same experiences and understand each other."

Nolan lives outside of Dushore with his wife, Melissa, two daughters, Nora and Lyla, three dogs, and a menagerie of other critters. He's busy at home and in the community. He likes spending time with his family — especially while camping — enjoys tractor pulls and would like to get back into small-scale farming. He has been a member of the Sullivan County Agricultural Society for 20 years, served on the Sullivan County Fair Board for a while, and served on the Sullivan County School District Board for six years.

To anyone considering a career as a lineworker, Nolan offers this advice: "Find a good linemen's school, fill out applications and get your name out there. It's not the job for someone who likes to sleep a lot, and you will miss holidays and birthdays, but you've just got to go with the flow of it: it's all part of the job."

Since we've started the employee spotlight, members have been able to meet six of our employees at SCREC. The spotlight will shine on one of our office staff in next month's edition. We hope you enjoy getting to know the folks who keep your power on. 🍪



**FAMILY TIME:** Sullivan County REC Senior Lineman Nolan Chase is shown here with his wife, Melissa, and their daughters, Lyla and Nora.