

# 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  
Todd Molyneux, Manager,  
Electric Operations  
Heidi Roupp, CFO  
Diane E. White, Executive Assistant

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Dr. Stephan Paul Brady - CCD\*/BLC\*\*/Gold\*\*\***  
*Chair*

**David L. Aumen - CCD/BLC/Gold**  
*Vice Chair*

**Kathy A. Robbins - CCD/BLC/Gold**  
*Secretary*

**David L. Aumen - CCD/BLC/Gold**  
**Karen Beinlich - CCD**

**Jeff Hamilton - CCD/BLC/Gold**

**Ann B. Henderson - CCD/BLC/Gold**

**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.

## The Gift that Keeps Giving



**JOHN LYKENS**

**THE CHRISTMAS SEASON IS HERE.** It is a time we celebrate by giving gifts to those we love and cherish. It is also a time to give a helping hand to those members who are struggling to pay their electric bill.

In the spirit of giving, Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative (SCREC) has established a program that supports these members. We understand that life sometimes brings unexpected challenges — the loss of a job, illness, or other personal crises — that can make it difficult for members to keep up with monthly expenses, including paying their electric bill. We want to help, and this program does just that. Born out of one of the cooperative's core principles, "concern for community," our Helping Hand Fund provides support.

The process of applying for assistance is simple and straightforward. Applications are available on our website, [screc.com](http://screc.com) (click on the "Financial Assistance" tab and select "Helping Hand Fund"). For those without internet access, please call our office at 570-924-3381 and we will mail an application to you. Fill out the information requested and then mail the application to the address at the bottom of the form.

Trehab Community Services of Bradford, Sullivan and Lycoming counties administers the program on behalf of SCREC. Trehab determines the amount qualified applicants will receive and applies it directly to their electric account.

The Helping Hand Fund is supported by retired capital credit checks that have not been claimed or cashed by members. These funds, which prior to 2006 would have gone to the state, are escheated to the cooperative after three years have passed. These unclaimed capital credits are then allocated to our Helping Hand Fund.

Members can also donate to our Helping Hand Fund. One way is by donating your capital credits check back to the cooperative. To do this, write the word "donated" across the face of the check, include your signature directly below it, and send the check back to the cooperative. Members can also donate to the fund by check, credit card, or ACH transaction. Checks should be made payable to the cooperative, with a note indicating the money should be deposited into the Helping Hand Fund. Members who want to donate with a credit card or ACH should call the cooperative office at the number above and speak with our member services representative.

It is often said it is better to give than to receive. This holiday season, please consider donating to the Helping Hand Fund. This fund is a way to help your neighbors and fellow cooperative members who are in need. It's the gift that keeps on giving.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Semper Fidelis. 🇺🇸

**JOHN LYKENS**  
CEO

# The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

**SARAH PARRISH**, COOPERATIVE COMMUNICATOR

**THERE'S A LOT OF WORK** that goes on behind the scenes to maintain the more than 900 miles of electric line and infrastructure of Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative (SCREC).

One of these maintenance tasks is the annual inspection of 10% of our utility poles. This year, the service was contracted through American Energy Services (AES), based in Michigan. Two technicians checked more than 2,100 of our system's poles in just two weeks. Poles were tested in the Elkland and Fox township areas, covering Estella to Shunk.

Each technician begins the process by checking our mapping system (Figure 1). Each grey dot represents an unchecked pole. Blue dots are tested poles, red dots are brand-new poles, and green dots are poles that cannot be reached and need to be personally monitored by our operations department. Each technician can check between 200 to 300 poles every day, depending on the terrain, location of the poles, and weather.

Once they locate an unchecked circuit and begin their

work, each pole is visually inspected for any glaring problems: missing nuts, loose insulators, broken ground, deteriorated pole tops, etc. Issues are then noted in our mapping system for our operations department. The year the pole was made, its height, where it was made, the type of treatment, and its class (Figure 2) are recorded along with any other notes.

Next, the technicians perform a "sound test" on the pole with a hammer (Figure 3) and check for surface rot, ground line rot (the most common form of condemnation for a pole; Figure 4), heart rot, woodpecker damage, and/or ant infestation. Poles that sound "off" or that show signs of rot are then tested with a sonic reader (Figure 5). A green reading means the pole is good, and a red reading indicates rot.

If a pole comes back with a red sonic reading, technicians conduct a drill test (Figure 6) to check the interior of the pole. Each hole is plugged afterward. If the pole fails all three tests, it is marked as condemned with red flagging that has an arrow (Figure 7). If the arrow has a circle around it, that indicates the pole needs to be replaced ASAP. If a pole comes back with a good reading, it receives a tag marked "AES".

What may seem like a lengthy process typically only takes 5 to 10 minutes, and it is a huge benefit to the co-op and its members. It tells our operations department what poles need to be replaced and if there are any other problems that need attention on our system.

"The quality of inspection is great," Operations Assistant I Jeff Spako says. "Especially with the sonic testing."

SCREC is dedicated to providing safe and reliable power to our members. Maintaining and updating our infrastructure enables us to do that as easily and cost effectively as possible. 📍

**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**



**Figure 3**



Figure 4



SARAH PARRISH

Figure 5



SARAH PARRISH

Figure 6



SARAH PARRISH

Figure 7



SARAH PARRISH

# USING GREEN ENERGY IN GREEN SPACES

SARAH PARRISH, COOPERATIVE COMMUNICATOR

Worlds End State Park, through an initiative spearheaded by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), recently installed an electric vehicle (EV) charging station in its Visitor Center parking lot.

“The EV charging station is part of a bigger picture DCNR is working on to make green space in Pennsylvania more useable to the public, especially using green energy,” park Manager Matt Pecora says.

The charging station is available for public use as of mid-September. Matt hopes it will encourage people who own EVs and live a substantial distance away to travel to the park and use its many amenities while their car charges.

“This is very exciting, good news,” he adds. “We’re making the outdoors a little more visitable for folks.”

The EV charger will be available year-round and is free to use. Its installation was federally funded, and its meter usage will be federally funded, too.

For our members who have an EV at home or are considering purchasing one, EV meters are available from the cooperative. These special meters are installed at your home or in your garage and offer a reduced kilowatt-per-hour (kWh) rate when used off peak. The EV meter’s base fee is \$2 per month and, when used during off-peak hours (10 p.m. to 7 a.m.), costs \$0.092 per kWh delivered. Most EVs can be scheduled to begin charging, which makes the off-peak charging option a big money-saver.

The Worlds End State Park Visitor Center is located at 82 Cabin Bridge Road, Forksville, PA 18616 (off Route 154, between Forksville and Laporte). The park offers more than 25 miles of hiking trails and 780 acres for swimming in the Loyalsock Creek, overnight stays in cabins or tenting sites, exploring overlooks and vistas, hunting in designated areas, and fishing. The park also has a seasonal snack shop and much more to help visitors enjoy our area’s natural beauty. For more information, call the park at 570-924-3287. 📞



SARAH PARRISH

**CHARGE AND GO:** Through a DCNR initiative, an EV charging station was recently installed at Worlds End State Park in Forksville. Park staff hope it will bring more visitors, who can charge their EV while enjoying the park’s amenities.

The Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative office will be closed Wednesday and Thursday, Dec. 25 and 26, to celebrate Christmas. The office will also be closed Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2025, for New Year’s Day. To report an outage, please call 570-924-3418. All co-op directors and employees wish the merriest of Christmases and happiest of New Years to our members!

# The Power Behind Sullivan County REC: Our Directors

## A Monthly Spotlight

**SARAH PARRISH**, COOPERATIVE COMMUNICATOR

**VERY FEW DIRECTORS HAVE AS** interesting of an induction story as Dr. Steve Brady.

Steve was nominated by his father-in-law from the floor during an annual meeting to oppose an incumbent director up for election. After a tie vote, the final decision was left up to a coin toss — and the rest is history. Steve believes the speech he gave set the stage for the tie.

“My great-grandfather, Peter Brady, started Hearne Electric Company in Texas,” Steve says. “Then, once he became mayor, sold it to the city. ... I think electricity is just in my blood.”

Since 2013, Steve has been representing the members of District 9, which covers Cascade, Gamble, and Lewis townships in Lycoming County. He currently serves as board chair (and he’s really enjoying it).

“I think the board takes its responsibility to the membership extremely seriously,” he says. “Even if members may not like a decision, we always try our hardest to discuss what is best for the members and co-op, which the members own.”

Steve says his role is to offer strategic guidance to the cooperative, and along the way, he has learned from others.

“Craig Harting (the cooperative’s former CEO) was great about educating me on electrification and the equipment used in this industry,” he recalls. “I really appreciated the knowledge he shared.”

Steve’s background as a professor at Penn State Harrisburg comes in handy when explaining the cooperative’s decisions and actions to members.

“The board always keeps the seven core co-op principles in place, which I’m glad to explain to members, too,” he adds.

Steve didn’t always have such a forward approach to the board and co-op, which is something he’s worked on.

“I was a newcomer to the area (Rose Valley) and board, and I offered a much different perspective than the typical ‘status quo,’” he says. “I had to learn how to work with everyone and to help make changes that will bring the cooperative forward.”

In addition to working with our other eight directors, Steve has undergone director training offered by our statewide organization, the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association (PREA). The training has broadened his understanding of cooperatives and electricity. Steve is certified as a Credentialed Cooperative Director and earned the Board Leadership credential and the Director Gold credential, which requires recertification every three years.

“Director Dave Aumen cautioned me that being a director is a lot of work, and he’s right!” Steve notes. “But I enjoy it, and the position has been very worthwhile.”

As chair of our co-op’s board and a member of the Executive, Budget, and Broadband committees, Steve approaches the position with honor and determination.

“I’m appreciating the responsibility [as chair] to serve the members and to improve the co-op,” he says. “It’s a sense of professionally making decisions that secure the future position of the co-op ... for the other board directors, employees, and members.”

The perspective and knowledge Steve brings to the board are from a huge accumulation of knowledge in just about everything.

“My father grew up on a ranch in Texas, which is where I was born,” he explains. “It helped develop an interest in rural living and in FFA and 4-H.”

When he was 5, the family moved to Maryland, and after graduating high school, Steve hit the ground running. He joined the Air Force, where he traveled to New Hampshire, North Dakota, and Ohio, to name just a few states. He received his doctorate in logistics and supply chain from Penn State University, which is how he and his wife, Jennifer, came to know the Rose Valley area.

“We knew we wanted to live in Rose Valley, so when we were able to, we bought the property and built a small house with my in-laws just on the other side,” he says.

Steve has also created Masterclass, a program to help businesses with 10 or fewer employees see positive change within just a few months. It offers support in marketing, leadership, human resources, finances/budgeting, and more. With the proceeds from Masterclass, he was able to create the Covation Center, calling it “the premier working space in Williamsport.”

“It’s a space for folks to get out of the house if they’re working from home, or to hold meetings, or to use our internet if they don’t have any ... the options are endless for small businesses,” he explains. “Coworking is more than a space; it’s utilizing all the resources we offer.”

Steve and Jennifer have three children — Stephanie, Heather, and Matthew Darnell — and three grandchildren. Their two black labs, Angus and Galway, and one cat, Goose, join them at their Rose Valley home.

Our board’s diverse personalities and backgrounds help create a group that offers different opinions, problem-solving skills, and ideas to guide our co-op, all of which benefit our members every step of the way. 🍷



STEVE BRADY

**MEET DR. BRADY:** Dr. Steve Brady, chairman of the Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative board of directors, represents members who live in Cascade, Gamble, and Lewis townships in Lycoming County.