

Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

Sullivan County REC

P.O. Box 65
Forksville, PA 18616
570-924-3381
1-800-570-5081
Email: screc@epix.net
Website: www.screc.com

Staff

Craig A. Harting, CEO
Dennis Klem, Manager,
Finance and Administration
Walt Tubach, Manager,
Electric Operations
Diane E. White, Executive Assistant

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David L. Aumen – CCD*/BLC**/Gold***
Chairman
Ann B. Henderson – CCD/BLC
Vice Chairman
Kathy A. Robbins – CCD/BLC
Secretary
Stephan Paul Brady – CCD/BLC/Gold
Benton J. Fiester
Wayne E. Gavitt – CCD
Jeff Hamilton – CCD
Jay Lewis – CCD

*Credentialed Cooperative Director
**Board Leadership Certificate
***Director Gold Certificate

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

From the CEO



Special election next year

By Craig A. Harting

LAST month I noted the passing of District 7 Director Curtin Rakestraw. Curt was on this year's director election ballot. The board decided to hold a special election for District 7 and include it with next year's election process.

Your cooperative has nine directors elected from nine separate geographic districts. Each director has a three-year term, and three districts are up for election each year.

The three districts up for election next year (with standard three-year terms) are Districts 3, 4 and 8. District 7 as a special election (with a one-time, two-year term) will also be included next year. A complete description of these districts is on our website.

Directors

What does a director do? Directors make all the major decisions for the cooperative. They approve budgets, set rates, establish policies, approve contracts and any borrowing, and hire the CEO, attorney, and auditor.

Directors average 20 days of meetings per year with an average of 12 hours per month. Nearly all meetings are held from 7 – 10 p.m. at the co-op office. Some training and update meetings are held around the state.

Directors are charged to represent all members in all districts. We serve a variety of members from residential to seasonal and all types of commercial accounts.

Note that all members elect all directors from all districts.

To become a director, a member must be a resident of the district up for election, have been a member for one

year, not be a close relative of a current employee, have a high school diploma or GED certificate, and not have been an employee for two years.

Election process


The election process consists of a nominating petition and voting by mail ballot. The Credentials & Elections (C&E) Committee, made up of members, and the attorney handle this process.

The board selects C&E members from the six districts not up for election. These committee members, who take their duties very seriously, oversee the entire process.

The process begins with a petition signed by 10 members from that district. The signers can be any member from that district. Petitions are reviewed by the C&E Committee and if approved, then that candidate's name is added to the ballot.

A candidate profile sheet is sent along with the ballot to each member. Candidates have 100 words to describe themselves. Ballots are returned in a special blue envelope to a special Post Office box number.

The C&E Committee collects these ballots on counting day and counts them with the attorney present. All committee members sign the tally sheet and the attorney reports the results at the annual meeting.

The schedule for the 2021 election has not yet been determined, but these dates will be published in *Penn Lines* and a bill stuffer. Please check our webpage or call us if you have any questions concerning the process. And thank you for voting for your directors. 

Bear Mountain Trading Post offers something for everyone

By John Zelewicz
Penn Lines Writer

WHERE do you go when you're looking for an antique chair or perhaps some lodge décor? What if you're looking for an artisan gift or maybe eggs, Amish butter, maple syrup, or firewood and camping supplies? You might get in the car and drive around to a bunch of stores searching for what you need. Or you can simply stop in at the Bear Mountain Trading Post located just outside of Estella.

Owned and operated by Jeff and Angie Higley along with their daughter, Rayanna, the trading post is located in what once served as the office for L&H Lumber. Unfortunately, the sawmill burned down years ago. The former office was used in a variety of ways before sitting empty for some time. That is, until Jeff and Angie opened their store in April 2015.

What led Jeff and Angie to open a trading post store? They both enjoy going to Maine for vacation. While they are there, one of the highlights of their trips is visiting the local shops. The quaint shops with their wide variety of items convinced them to open their own place.



"We looked around the area and thought, 'Wouldn't it be nice to open a place like that here?'" Angie explains. "There were no shops like this, at least not in the immediate area. We weren't sure what to expect when we got into this or what kind of reaction we would get, but the people really like it."

A FAMILY AFFAIR: Jeff and Angie Higley are the proud owners/operators of Bear Mountain Trading Post. Their daughter, Rayanna (in foreground), can often be found at the store helping to serve up barbecue or creating unique ice cream sundaes.

candy, hunting, fishing and camping supplies, and the list goes on and on.

Items from all over

While you might be able to order camping, hunting, and fishing supplies out of a catalog or online, it's more difficult to build up an inventory of antique and vintage items. As Angie explains, they get their items wherever they can. They get some from auctions and estate sales. Other times, people bring items into the store to sell or trade.

"We have people bring in things to us," Angie says. "Some want to just sell the items to us, and others want to put the items in the store on consignment. Sometimes people will bring in an item or look at something in the store they want and ask if they can make a trade. We even have people who will bring in a small item and trade us for barbecue or ice cream. It's fun when we do that."



VARIETY STORE: Bear Mountain Trading Post has a wide variety of items for sale, everything from antiques and vintage items to camping supplies, fresh produce, barbecue, and even ice cream.

Opening the trading post was a leap of faith for Angie and Jeff. They originally opened with the help of Nadine Molyneux and her daughters, Serena and Davina. However, growing families and obligations prevented them from being involved in the current daily operations. Angie's mother, Rose Farrell, has also helped a great deal with her experience in the retail business. It has been a family affair from the beginning.

The store offers a wide range of items for sale including antiques, collectibles, vintage finds, produce (in season), eggs, Amish butter, fresh baked goods, old-fashioned

What customers are looking for varies. Some might be looking for a particular piece of furniture or perhaps a certain piece of glassware to complete their collection. It varies from person to person and even from year to year.

“For a while, the antique market was slower than it used to be,” Angie says. “We’d go to auctions, and they couldn’t give the furniture away. Now it’s coming back, and people come in looking for large pieces that they can recondition.”

While many people stop in to check out items available at the trading post, one of their biggest draws is the food, especially the barbecue they offer every weekend.

To ensure customers have dining options, they added items like fresh-cut French fries so people had something to go with the barbecue. How popular is their barbecue? According to Rayanna, it sells like hotcakes!

“Our barbecued brisket is very popular,” Rayanna says. “People call ahead to make sure that they can get some. The amount of barbecue we sell continues to grow. We sell a lot more barbecue now than we did the past few years. We always sell out.”

Even with the coronavirus, people come out to relax and enjoy the barbecue at one of the outside tables, or get it to go.



COME FOR THE FOOD: One of the biggest draws to the Bear Mountain Trading Post is their homemade barbecue, fries and soft ice cream. Food is available to go or there is room to sit outside. Relax and enjoy a delicious meal or treat.

“I think with people being able to finally get out, they want to go out and get something to eat,” Angie says. “We had to move things around in our kitchen because even though we had a window for takeout, we didn’t use it much. Now a lot of people come and get food to go.”

In addition to prepared food, the Bear Mountain Trading Post offers local produce when in season. They normally get produce in around Memorial Day and have it available through Labor Day.

Virus affects business

This year has been difficult and frustrating for a lot of businesses, and Bear Mountain Trading Post is no exception. Like many other “non-essential” businesses, the trading post had to move back their opening this year until May 8.

The first few weeks were slow due to the virus fears, but locals and seasonal residents slowly started to stop in. Now things seem to have settled down and are getting back to normal. To help ensure the safety of their customers, the Bear Mountain Trading Post offers outdoor seating and takeout.

“We truly appreciate our customers who continue to support us and all our local small businesses during this pandemic,” Angie notes.

Of course, what’s better on a hot summer day than ice cream? Heck, no matter the time of year, ice cream is always a delicious treat. The trading post offers 39 flavors of Crowley soft ice cream. While they offer traditional flavors such as chocolate and vanilla, you can also enjoy such wonderful flavors as pumpkin, peanut butter, salted caramel, and even candy apple chill. But why stick to only one flavor? Flavor combinations and unique sundaes are very popular.

“We can combine any flavor you want, like pumpkin cheesecake,” Rayanna points out. “One thing we enjoy doing is making something special like brownie sundaes, pretzel sundaes or even a shark sundae with gummy sharks.”

At first, the Bear Mountain Trading Post was open all year, but they noticed business was slow during January and



OUTDOOR EVENT: Once or twice a year, Bear Mountain Trading Post holds an outdoor event. On Aug. 15, vendors set up and displayed the items they had for sale. Here Lori Williams (in pink T-shirt) displays the Avon products she was selling.

February. Now the store is open pretty much all year except for January and February.

They’re normally open three days a week except from Memorial Day to Labor Day when they’re open four days a week, Thursday through Sunday. The trading post is open until 8 p.m. when serving ice cream. When not serving ice cream, they close around 6 to 7 p.m.

While hunting for new items to stock the store is something that Angie loves to do, her favorite part of owning the trading post is meeting the people.

“The best part is the people,” she says. “Some we knew but just in passing. But since we opened the store, we’ve gotten to know them so much better. They like coming here and just hanging out. Sometimes they’ll come for ice cream and just visit until closing time. The people stopping in aren’t just from around here; they come from all over.”

And boy, do they come from all over. Angie and Jeff have had people stop in the trading post from California, New York, France, South Africa, Israel, and even Japan.

“We had one young man from Japan who couldn’t speak a word of English,” Angie recalls. “He had to have someone with him who spoke English.”

So, next time you’re near Estella, why not stop in at Bear Mountain Trading Post? Who knows, you may find that chair or antique salt and pepper shaker set you’ve been looking for. Or maybe you’ll just want to take a minute to relax, enjoy some barbecue or a soft serve ice cream — your choice of flavor! 🍦

Don't be shocked on Halloween

IN JUST a short while, your quiet neighborhood will be overrun by witches, werewolves, ninjas, zombies, or perhaps a fairy princess or pirate thrown in for good measure. This year, Halloween will be different than in years past — there may be children wearing masks over their Halloween masks!

But no matter what, it's obvious that Halloween is one of our favorite times of the year. Kids dream of bags filled to the brim with a wide variety of candies and treats.

There was a time when you'd walk down the street and it seemed that every porch step had a carved pumpkin with a candle illuminating its ghastly smile or perhaps a cardboard witch or skeleton carefully placed and watching you from the window as you passed by. But today, many go all out and turn their home into a haunted house and their yard into a spooky graveyard.

While Halloween can be a lot of fun, you want to make sure everyone is safe. Here are a few tips to ensure that your Halloween is a safe one and to make sure you don't get "shocked," unless of course, it's by Frankenstein's monster!

- ▶ Carefully inspect each electrical decoration. Cracked or frayed sockets, loose or bare wires, or loose connections could cause a serious shock or start a fire. Get rid of any damaged sets you may have.
- ▶ Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house walls or other firm supports to protect the lights from wind damage. Use only insulated staples to hold strings in place, not nails or tacks. Don't staple or nail through light strings or electrical/extension cords because you could damage the wire or insulation, which could lead to an electrical shock or fire.
- ▶ Don't overload extension cords or allow them to run through water or snow on the ground. Before using any light strings, animated displays or other electrical products



outdoors, make sure the product is approved by a nationally recognized certification organization (i.e., UL rated) and marked "for outdoor use." Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord.

- ▶ Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house. Lights could short out and start a fire. Always have at least one fire extinguisher available and know how to use it. In homes with small children, take

special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable.

- ▶ Avoid using dried flowers, corn stalks or hay for decorations. These items are highly flammable and could be ignited by the heat from a nearby lightbulb.

Following these steps will help ensure that the only thing you need to be scared of this Halloween is running out of treats while facing hordes of candy-hungry children. ⚡