

# Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

**Bedford REC**

P.O. Box 335  
Bedford, PA 15522  
814-623-5101

Email: support@bedfordrec.com  
Website: www.bedfordrec.com

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**President & Allegheny Director**

C. Robert Koontz  
Colerain, Snake Spring and South Woodbury Twps.

**Vice President & PREA Director**

Donald Hoenstine  
Kimmel and King Twps.

**Secretary**

Ronald W. Wilkins  
Napier and Harrison Twps.,  
New Paris, Manns Choice and Schellsburg Boroughs

**Treasurer**

Reuben R. Lafferty  
Juanita Twp., Bedford County, and Allegheny Twp., New Baltimore Borough, Somerset County

**Assistant Secretary**

Earl W. Garland  
East Providence Twp., Bedford County, and Brush Creek Twp., Fulton County

**Assistant Treasurer**

Paul L. Rummel Jr.  
Bedford and Cumberland Valley Twps.

**William Howard Atkinson**

Monroe and West Providence Twps.,  
Everett Borough

**John A. Oldham**

East St. Clair Twp., Bedford County  
Dale Sprigg II

West St. Clair, Pavia, and Lincoln Twps.,  
Pleasantville Borough

**Attorney**

James R. Cascio

**Office Hours**

Monday through Friday  
7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

## From the General Manager



# Appreciating electricity one penny at a time

By Brooks Shoemaker

SOME of our members remember when penny candy actually cost a penny. For a nickel, mothers used to say that you could buy enough candy to rot your teeth out! But a penny doesn't buy much these days. The government can't even make a penny for a penny anymore. According to the U.S. Mint, it now costs 1.5 cents to produce one.

About the only real value you can still get for a penny is electricity. You might call it "penny electricity."

A kilowatt-hour of electricity at Bedford REC, which costs 12 cents, provides 1,000 watts of electricity for 60 minutes. So a penny of electricity buys 83 watts. It's enough to power a 9-watt LED lightbulb — the equivalent of a 60-watt incandescent bulb — for 9 hours. For only a penny!

Where else can you get that kind of value? How many eggs will a penny buy? How much milk, bread, coffee, medicine or gasoline?

Gasoline has come down from its stratospheric levels of several years ago, but there is still no comparison to the value of electricity. For example, if a gallon of gas costs \$2.50 and your car gets 25 miles to the gallon, you can drive about a 10th of a mile on a penny's worth of gas. If I'm spending a penny, I will take 9 hours of light over driving one-10th of a mile, any day.

The value extends beyond lighting. Using the same 12-cents-per-kWh price, you can charge your smartphone more than 14 times for a penny. In fact, you can charge it once every day of the year for about a quarter.

Still not impressed? Well, how about these other examples of what you can do with just a penny's worth of electricity: power a 1,000-watt microwave on high for 5 minutes; run a 200-watt desktop computer for 24 minutes; watch 2 hours of your favorite shows on a 40-watt, 32-inch, LED television. The examples are endless. We are fortunate electricity is such an excellent value because we have a huge appetite for it.

Unfortunately, like many modern conveniences, we don't always appreciate it. When the electric bill comes, we open it and many times may complain about the cost. We don't stop to think about the value we received for the money.

I'm reminded of an interview with an elderly woman who vividly remembered the day electricity came to her farm in 1940. As she proudly showed off the worn, dog-eared membership certificate, she said, "Young people will never know what it was like to have electricity for the very first time; it was glorious. Nowadays, you take it for granted." In those days, electricity was slightly less than a penny per kilowatt-hour — true penny electricity.

Wages and the cost of living today are much higher than in 1940, when the average wage was less than \$150 a month. But in 77 years, the price of electricity has risen much slower than the rate of inflation.

A penny in 1940 had as much buying power as 17 cents today, which means that our 12-cents-per-kWh electricity is actually a better deal today than it was in 1940, and it won't rot your teeth! 

# Couple enjoys playing in the dirt

By Linda Williams

**RALPHARD** and Janet Black are enjoying their retirement years by playing in the dirt.

Every morning from early spring through late fall, Ralphard is busy in their picturesque lawn that has a view that goes on forever. On clear nights, they can see the lights of Breezewood.

A rock collector, Ralphard has brought home samples from all of their travels, both far and near. He intermingles them among daylilies, clematis, petunias, rhododendron, camellias, dahlias and other species of colorful blooming plants. He has flowers blooming in each of the three growing seasons. An assortment of 72 handmade bird houses is scattered throughout the lawn.

Last year, the well-kept property earned the couple the “Garden of the Month” award for July from the Bedford County Garden Club.

The Black garden used to cover a big chunk of their 10-acre property. In more recent years, they have grown vegetables in a plot surrounded by a large fence to prevent deer damage. They also have an array of fruit trees and dozens of blueberry bushes.



“I used to grow everything,” Ralphard says, “but then I realized I was feeding the wildlife instead of us.”

While Ralphard is busy outside,

Janet is working on the screened-in patio on an assortment of fairy gardens.

It is not a hobby she planned; it just happened. One year, her daughter-in-law, Pam Black, gave her a fairy garden as a gift. Janet decided to try making her own.

In recent years, fairy gardens have become very popular. They mingle miniature objects with small plants, creating various real-life scenes.

Her quest for miniature figurines and tiny plants quickly became addictive.

“I shop everywhere for them,” she admits. “I find a

**AWARD-WINNING GARDEN:** Ralphard and Janet Black received the Garden of the Month award from the Bedford County Garden Club in July 2016. Pictured here are Micki McCahan, Janet Black, Ralphard Black and Jan Walent. McCahan and Walent are representatives of the garden club.

lot at Countryside Gardens and even the hardware store.”

She and her sister look for them at various shops and she discovered an online assortment.

Finding the plants is a bit more difficult as they must not grow out of proportion to the tiny figurines. She finds succulents particularly useful because they do not have to be watered as often and tend to stay small. While she tries to keep them growing throughout the year, some survive the winter and some don't. If they don't, she has to start over in the spring. A sunny basement window helps.

This year, she was happy to find galvanized beverage tubs to use as



**FAIRY GARDEN:** Janet Black displays a three-tier fairy garden she created this spring.



**FOR LARGER FAIRIES:** This outside fairy ring is larger than most of Janet Black's fairy gardens.

containers as they are large enough to house an attractive setting. She fills them with gardening soil. After planting with an assortment of fairy garden plants such as ferns, gold moss sedum, lemon grass, white fox, small shrubs and more, she is ready to add a layer of pebbles. Sometimes she leaves

**TINY CAMP:** This campground scene includes a wiener roast, s'mores and pizza.

the ground bare, depending on the scene. The fun part comes when she adds miniature people, accessories and buildings.

"It's just an entertaining hobby," she says. "I have to keep convincing my husband that I need more space for them because I add a couple each year."

Ralphard is retired from the former Everett Bank. A native of the Broadtop area, he enjoys going back to his roots and loves to hunt morel mushrooms in the spring.

Janet, who was a secretary at the Everett Elementary School, has been retired for nine years.

The couple raised four children: Wendi Wright, Vicki Jones, Timothy Black and Shari Lohman. Entertaining their grandchildren is high on their priority list and Janet finds herself making chocolate Easter eggs year-round. 🍪



**LIFE IN MINIATURE:** A miniature school scene takes you back to yesteryear.



**ROCKING WORLD:** A small portion of Ralphard Black's rock collections is accented with colorful flowers.



## Powering Up

When electricity goes out, most of us expect power will be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm causes widespread damage, longer outages may result. Co-op line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of consumers in the shortest time possible. Here's what's going on if you find yourself in the dark.

### 1 High-Voltage Transmission Lines

Transmission towers and cables that supply power to transmission substations (and thousands of members) rarely fail. But when damaged, these facilities must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

### 2 Distribution Substation

Each substation serves hundreds or thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, line crews inspect substations to determine if problems stem from transmission lines feeding into the substation, the substation itself, or if problems exist down the line.

### 3 Main Distribution Lines

If the problem cannot be isolated at a distribution substation, distribution lines are checked. These lines carry power to large groups of consumers in communities or housing developments.

### 4 Tap Lines

If local outages persist, supply lines, called tap lines, are inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers, either mounted on poles or placed on pads for underground service, outside businesses, schools, and homes.

### 5 Individual Homes

If your home remains without power, the service line between a transformer and your residence may need to be repaired. Always call to report an outage to help line crews isolate local issues.

graphic by Farnell Inc.

## OFFICE CLOSING

Bedford REC's office will be closed on Tuesday, July 4, 2017, in observance of Independence Day.

## OUTAGE REPORTING

In case of an outage...

- 1** Check your fuses or circuit breakers.
- 2** Check with your neighbors, if convenient, to see if they have been affected by the power failure.
- 3** Call the 24-hour number, 623-7568, OR call 800-808-2732\* during office hours.

*\*(Please help us save money – only use this number if toll charges apply.)*

Please give the person receiving the call your name as it appears on your bill, your telephone number and your map number if known. Any specific information about the outage will also be helpful in pinpointing the problem.

**To report an outage call:  
(814) 623-7568**

*During widespread power outages, many members are calling to report power failures. You may receive a busy signal, or in certain cases your call may go unanswered. This occurs in after-hours outages when the office is not fully staffed. Please be patient, and try again in a few minutes.*