

Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

Bedford REC

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Office Hours

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

From the General Manager



Moving to the 'yellow' phase

By Brooks Shoemaker

AS I WRITE this column, we have just been notified that Bedford, Fulton and Somerset counties will move into the "yellow" coronavirus category on May 15, which means the stay-at-home order is lifted. This is good news for all of us. As we all deal with the new realities brought on by the coronavirus, I want to assure you that Bedford Rural Electric is here to help you. We have always had an emergency plan, and it serves us well in a variety of circumstances, from blizzards and ice storms to flash floods. Early in this crisis, our staff updated that plan with a special emphasis on ensuring we can continue to provide the reliable electric service you have come to expect from your co-op.

We are hoping that when you read this in early June, we will be well on the way, or maybe already reached the "green" threshold. We are looking forward to reaching that milestone. Thus far, your cooperative has weathered the pandemic very well. Fortunately, we have been able to remain healthy, which allows us to continue serving the membership by providing safe, reliable energy. That has been our primary concern throughout this ordeal.

Most importantly, our office remains open, albeit with a minimal number of employees in the office each day. We respond to outages in a normal fashion and complete our construction work on schedule. We have been forced to put some special projects on hold for now. But, rest assured, that does not affect our service.

We are looking forward to opening

our lobby and having all the employees together under one roof. At this point, I cannot say when that will happen. However, when it does, you will notice some changes. We are installing a Lexan barrier in the lobby to separate members who are transacting business from our employees. It is designed to prevent the spread of germs for everyone's protection, while maintaining the one-to-one interaction you expect at the cooperative.

Always remember, there are many ways to make payments without having face-to-face contact. The drive-up is open 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. daily. Our night drop box is available 24/7. Payments are always accepted by mail, using our online payment system or over the phone. Any other business can be initiated with a phone call, and we will work out a way to satisfy your needs. Most importantly, be assured that when you call, we will be there to meet your needs.

Regardless of what the "new normal" looks like as we move forward, remember that we have done this before. Co-ops respond best in crisis situations!

Difference between cleaning, disinfecting, sanitizing

When it comes to cleaning, not all jobs are created equal. Cleaning dirt or food from a surface, for example, doesn't necessarily kill germs and bacteria that can cause us to become sick. That's why it's important to know the difference between cleaning, disinfecting and sanitizing. The Centers

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A farrier must love horses

By Linda Williams

THE WORD “farrier” is foreign to many who know little about the horse world. A farrier, simply put, “shoes” horses. Contrary to popular opinion, a farrier is not a blacksmith. A blacksmith can be a farrier, but a farrier does not have to be a blacksmith.

Michael Baker, who lives in what he calls “the Scrub Grass area” near Queen, is a farrier. However, when folks ask him what he does for a living, he simply replies, “I shoe horses.”

“I don’t know if I talk with a drawl or what,” Baker says with a laugh, “but so often, the answer will be, ‘Why do you shoot them?’”

Growing up on a dairy farm with a love for horses, Baker always felt out of place.

“Dairy farms consider horses to be

hay burners,” he says. “But I helped to handle the cows and, during harvest season, I picked a lot of vegetables. I figured if I did that much physical work, I could certainly handle a horse.”

The first 15 years of being a farrier were easy for him, but the repetitive actions of being under a horse and lifting heavy feet day after day finally began to take its toll. At one time he worked on draft horses, but the 100-pound-per-foot weight got to be too much.

“My back got so bad I had to have some extensive medical treatment,” he reports.

Baker received his training from a local farrier. A few years into the trade, he graduated from the Eastern School

QUITE A VARIETY: This array of horseshoes shows the many different types and sizes available. A race horse needs a different shoe than a work horse or a pleasure horse. It all depends on the purpose.

of Farriers and then went to work with a local resident. Being a farrier does not currently require any type of certificate or license.

“There is not a lot of risk to the animal when shoeing,” he says. “We also treat abscesses or infections, but that is always done under the instruction of a veterinarian.”

Pennsylvania has a very high horse population, and a large majority of Baker’s business comes from Blair County. This wasn’t always true as he started in the Lancaster area and worked his way home.

“You have to prove yourself to come home,” he says.

He developed a good reputation for his work by always showing up on time and getting the job done in



ONE-OF-A-KIND: Farrier Michael Baker uses this contraption on a horse to help heal the tendon in a breeding stallion's leg.

a timely fashion. Within a few years after he started working as a farrier, he was on the job 60 to 70 hours a week. At this point in his career, Baker says

he has all the business he can handle, and if a horse dies and the owner does not replace it, he does not look for another.

The No. 1 trait a good farrier must have is a love of horses, Baker says, adding, "A horse knows if you are afraid, and you have to be in control."

He tells a story of taking a young apprentice with him to a farm where the horse was always very easy to handle. However, the horse knew quite well that a "greenie" was playing with his hooves, and he started to act up.

"I had to give the horse a little talking to; he got the message and settled down," Baker notes.

Starting out in the shoeing business is difficult because the longer someone is under a horse, the more dangerous it becomes. As a newbie, it's not easy to be fast, which Baker says is important for the farrier's own safety.

Not all horses need to have shoes, but unless they are wild horses, they still need the services of a good farrier.

"It's all the genetics," Baker says. "A well-bred horse might have such good feet it will not need to be shod, but it will still need to have his hooves trimmed. Wild horses do not need to be shod because they walk on various kinds of surfaces and actually do their

own foot care. They walk in marshlands, pastures and over stones."

Typically, a horse will need new shoes every 6 to 8 weeks. Baker purchases the shoes he uses from a blacksmith in Lancaster, and the styles and variety would compete with almost any woman's shoe wardrobe. They come in all sizes and shapes. The most popular variety in this area has rough patches added to allow for uneven, stony ground.

Of all the horseshoeing he has done, Baker found the most challenging was a breeding stallion that had injured a tendon in his hind leg. He was a valuable horse well worth saving for his intended purpose, which required two strong back legs. Baker had a machinist create a metal contraption that did not allow the horse to bend his leg for a given amount of time, which allowed the tendon to heal. It worked, and the stallion was soon back in business.



POPULAR CHOICE: This is the most frequently used type of horseshoe in this area. It is designed to prevent a horse from slipping.

Shoeing does not hurt the horse as the nail is inserted into the part of the hoof that would be similar to human nails beyond the nail bed. But, like a cat or dog getting its nails trimmed, some horses tend to think it hurts. Because tying a horse in place for shoeing is considered cruel, farriers must hold the horse while working on it.

Regardless of the repetitive position he finds himself in as a farrier, Baker finds every day is a challenge with something new and different. 🐾



FORGING AHEAD: Michael Baker shows an anvil he uses on horseshoes.

From the General Manager

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for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers the following guidance:

Cleaning removes germs, dirt and impurities from surfaces or objects. Cleaning works by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces or objects. Disinfecting works by using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces or objects. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.


Sanitizing lowers the number of germs on surfaces or objects to a safe level, as judged by public health standards or requirements. This process works by either cleaning or disinfecting surfaces or objects to lower the risk of spreading infection.

Pay close attention to hazard warnings and directions on product labels.

Cleaning products and disinfectants often call for the use of gloves or eye protection. For example, gloves should always be worn to protect your hands when working with bleach solutions.

Visit the CDC website at cdc.gov/coronavirus for more information on how to protect yourself and your family.

Energy efficiency tip of the month

Home cooling makes up a large portion of your energy bills. Try to keep the difference between the temperature of your thermostat setting and the outside temperature to a minimum. The smaller the difference, the more energy you will save. 

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.

Congratulations to the Bedford Rural Electric 2020 Scholarship Recipients

(Each will receive a \$1,000 scholarship)

- Kristen Ewing from Everett H.S. – Parents are Kimberly and Arthur Ewing
- Emily Clark from Chestnut Ridge H.S. – Parents are Rodney and Susan Clark
- Kaitlyn Maxwell from Everett H.S. – Parents are Bruce and Roxanne Maxwell
- Noah Hillegass from Chestnut Ridge H.S. – Parents are Todd and Heidi Hillegass
- Brandon Shaffer from Chestnut Ridge H.S. – Parents are David and Rita Shaffer
- Kolby Weaver from Everett H.S. – Parents are Kevin and Kristi Weaver
- Alexis Fetter from Bedford H.S. – Parents are Jim and Brenda Heit
- Jamie Emerick from Chestnut Ridge H.S. – Parents are Richard and Paula Emerick
- Megan Kaufman from Chestnut Ridge H.S. – Parents are Jay and Heather Kaufman
- Stephen Shaffer of Bedford – Winner of Non-Traditional Scholarship

