

Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

Bedford REC

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Website: www.bedfordrec.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President & PREA Director

Donald Hoenstine
Kimmel and King Twp.

Vice President & Allegheny Director

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

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

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

Dale Sprigg II
West St. Clair, Pavia, and Lincoln Twp.,
Pleasantville Borough

Brian I. Hoover

Monroe and West Providence Twp.,
Everett Borough

John A. Oldham

East St. Clair Twp., Bedford County
William F. "Bill" Popovich Jr.
Colerain, Snake Spring and
South Woodbury Twp.

Attorney

James R. Cascio

Office Hours

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

From the General Manager



Interested in a seat on the cooperative's board of directors?

By Brooks Shoemaker

AS A MEMBER of the Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative, you can actively participate in the cooperative's operation by representing not only your district but also your friends and neighbors on the board of directors. Being an electric cooperative director is an interesting and challenging experience. The position requires individuals with a vision and the willingness to work with others in guiding a complex, multimillion-dollar operation.

The next Bedford Rural Electric Annual Meeting is April 14, 2021. At that meeting, cooperative members will elect directors from District 2 (Napier and Harrison townships, and Schellsburg, Manns Choice, and New Paris boroughs, Bedford County), District 4 (King and Kimmel townships, Bedford County), and District 8 (West Providence and Monroe townships, and Everett Borough, Bedford County). If you reside in any of these districts, you may be eligible for nomination to run for a seat on the board.

In accordance with our bylaws, the election process begins with the appointment of a Nominating Committee. This committee is made up of one cooperative member from each of the nine districts. It is the committee's responsibility to nominate not less than one, but not more than two, qualified members as director nominees to be made from each district in which a director's term of office is ending. No member of the board, employee or close relative shall serve on the committee. The names of cooperative members appointed to the 2021 Nominating Committee and the qualifications necessary to become a director were enclosed with your September electric bill, which you receive in early October. If becoming a director interests you, please contact any member of the committee. You can also contact the cooperative office at 814-624-3808, and we will see that your name is provided to the committee.

Annual meeting

The next Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting of the Members will be held April 14, 2021. During the annual meeting, members will cast ballots to elect three of their fellow members to the Bedford REC Board of Directors.

The following, taken from the Bedford REC bylaws, is printed for your information in compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and federal Rural Utilities Services Bulletin 20-19.

Article III, Section 3:

Nominations. (a) It shall be the duty

of the Board of Directors to appoint, no later than August 31 of each year, a committee on nominations consisting one (1) member from each District of the Cooperative.

Said committee shall meet for the purpose of making nominations at least ninety (90) days prior to the annual meeting. Five (5) or more members of the nominating committee shall constitute a quorum for making the nominations. It shall be the duty of this committee to nominate not less than one (1), but not more than two (2) qualified members as director nominees to be made from each Dis-

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REC member Gillian Leach eager for sestercentennial

By Linda Williams

BEDFORD County's "official" history stretches back for 250 years, and plans are in the works for a sestercentennial celebration in 2021.

Few people know the history better than Gillian Leach, executive director of the Bedford County Historical Society. While it might be assumed that Leach is a Bedford County native, she was actually born in Bedford County, England.

She says she ended up in Bedford County, Pa., because she married the most handsome "Yank" she ever saw, Conrad Leach. They met at a social club while he was in the Air Force. They married and arrived in the Everett area in 1961. Since then, she has been back to England only four times.

"I have always loved history," she says. "From the time I started school, I was interested in history, geography, other cultures."

Soon after arriving in the area, she began to learn more about its history. When her mother-in-law died, Leach was helping to clean out the house when she came upon some scrapbooks



HISTORY BOOK: Gillian Leach of the Bedford County Historical Society holds an order form for a Bedford County history book written by Larry Smith.



filled with obituaries. She saved them so she could learn about the area. Leach soon met other residents who were interested in Bedford-area history and enjoyed gathering information and helping to piece that information together about various families.

Names she remembers helping are Roy Kegg, Vaughn Whisker, Bob Miller, Mary Wilson, Gwen Morral and Winona Garbrick, to name a few. The official historical society opened at the National House, moved to the Mann House and on to the Litzinger House on John Street in Bedford. Throughout those early years, there was one paid staff person, Kay Williams, who acted as a research secretary.

"History is what it is," Leach says. "You cannot change it. You have to learn from it."

She cites the Confederate flag as an example, saying, "Why should anyone be offended? Without the Civil War, the slaves would not have been freed."

Leach says that without a local historical society, local history could be lost. The society also provides infor-

THE OTHER BEDFORD COUNTY: A map of Bedford County, England, birthplace of Gillian Leach, hangs in the Bedford County Historical Society office.

mation for people who are researching their ancestry.

"That is why we are here," she says. "We have the knowledge and the materials to help them."

She is particularly excited that the Bedford County Historical Society, along with Larry Smith of East Freedom, will be spearheading the 250th anniversary celebration of Bedford County in 2021. Smith has written a book about the sestercentennial entitled, "Bedford County, Pennsylvania — Two and One-Half Centuries in the Making."

Smith's book is the first written history of the county since a 1906 volume by E. Howard Blackburn. Smith has worked on the two-volume book for several years. He completed a similar project for Blair County. Cost of the book is \$120, and it can be ordered through the Bedford County Historical Society.

Leach says they don't know yet what other events and activities might be planned in 2021 throughout the county by various communities or local historical societies.

"I think it will be an exciting time," says Leach, who remembers the bicentennial celebration in 1971.

About a decade ago, the Bedford County Historical Society, governed by a board of directors, found the Litzinger House in Bedford was too expensive to maintain. They looked for a new home and found it in a converted barn located on Route 30 near the intersection of Route 56.

The barn offered a walk-in first floor for a library and a finished second floor to be used for both fundraisers for the society and for weddings or other celebrations.

"That was a smart move on the part of the directors," Leach says. "The extra income has been a huge help."

As a nonprofit organization, the society receives very little local outside money, Leach says, although they have received some county funding and grants for specific building improvements.

Leach says she is not afraid to ask for help from "the man upstairs" and has received it on several occasions. She recalls that the barn was once in dire need of a new roof and some structural repairs or the building would collapse. Total cost was estimated to be \$28,000. The board was tossing around the idea of taking a second mortgage on the barn.

Not really wanting to do this, Leach prayed for help. A day or two later, she received a letter from a man who offered to pay \$14,000 of the bill if the society could raise the rest.

"Things were looking up, and I said, 'Thank you Lord,'" she remembers.

The next day she got a call from a local accountant who said he had a client who wanted to give her a check for \$10,000 but the name of the giver could not be disclosed.

"To this day, I have no idea who it was," she says. "I never looked at the signature and just stamped the back and sent it to the bank."

The rest of the \$28,000 came as donations from local townships and organizations, which Leach says have always been very generous.

At present, Leach is the only paid member of the society and in addition to her research duties, she finds ways to raise funds for her salary and the expenses of the organization. The barn required a \$200,000 mortgage and all but \$5,000 has been paid.

While memberships at a reasonable \$20 for an individual or \$35 per family per year are available, they have dropped.

"We used to have more than 500 members, but that is down to about 350," she says.

Leach believes that may be due to the popularity of genealogy websites as people use them rather than joining the historical society to partake of the research records available at the barn.

Other money comes from the many fundraisers she must oversee. The spacious upstairs offers a place to hold a winter yard sale that is always very successful. They also hold pig roasts, a silent auction, an annual banquet, a Christmas tea, a quilt show and gun raffles.

"Anything to make a buck," she says jokingly.

COVID-19 has hit the society just like everywhere else. One of the board members suggested applying for a



SURROUNDED BY HISTORY: Bedford County Historical Society Executive Director Gillian Leach is shown with Revolutionary and British flags in the background.

Paycheck Protection Program loan for Leach's salary since the society was shut down for several months. The proposal was accepted, so that helped; however, it meant some of the fundraisers had to be skipped for this year.

Leach realizes her days at the society cannot go on forever.

"One of the board members said he would like to have my brain downloaded," she says with a laugh. "But I don't know about that; there is some history in there I might not want to share." 🌟

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.

From the General Manager

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district in which a director's term of office is ending. No member of the Board, employee, or close relative (as defined by Article III, Section 2) shall serve on such committee.

The committee shall prepare and post at the principal office of the Cooperative, by January 20 of each year, a list of nominations for directors. Any fifteen (15) or more members residing in one District, by January 15, may make other nominations for their District by a petition in writing under their signatures. The Board Secretary shall cause to be posted the same at the same place as the list of nominations made by the committee is posted. The Board Secretary shall cause to be mailed to each member by March 31, a statement of the number of directors to be elected and showing separately the nominations by District made by the committee on nominations and the nominations made by petition, if any. Nothing herein contained shall prevent additional nominations to be made from the floor at the meeting of the members. The chairman at such meeting, after all nominations so made have been duly announced, shall call for additional nominations from the floor and shall ascertain and announce, after any nominations made from the floor, the particular District from or with respect to which any additional candidates have been nominated. Notwithstanding the provisions contained in this Section, failure to comply with any of such provisions shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken by the Board of Directors after the election of directors

Article III, Section 4

Credentials and Election Committee: The Board of Directors shall, at least twenty (20) days before (or by February 28, for the Annual Meeting) any meeting of the members at which election of directors shall occur, appoint a Credentials and Election Committee. The committee shall con-

sist of an uneven number of members of the Cooperative who are not existing Cooperative employees, agents, officers, directors or known candidates for director election, and who are not close relatives (as defined in Article III, Section 2) or members of the same household of existing Cooperative employees, agents, officers, directors or known candidates for director election. In appointing the committee, the Board shall have regard for the equitable representation of the several areas served by the Cooperative and shall not appoint more than one (1) committee member from a District. The committee shall meet and elect its own chairman and secretary prior to the member meeting. It shall be the responsibility of the committee to:

- (1) Establish or approve the manner of conducting member registration and to decide all questions regarding registration of members;
- (2) Count all ballots cast for the election of directors or other voting by count;
- (3) Rule upon the effect of any ballot or vote irregularly or indecisively cast;
- (4) Rule upon all other questions which may arise relating to member voting and regularity of the election of directors including the qualifications of director nominees nominated by petition or from the floor; and,
- (5) Pass upon any protest or objection filed with regard to the election of directors or conduct affecting the results of any election.

In the exercise of its duties, the committee shall have available to it the advice of legal counsel provided by the Cooperative.

In the event a protest or objection is to be filed concerning any election or voting matter, such protest or objection must be in writing and filed with the chairman of the committee not later than three (3) business days following the date of meeting adjournment. The chairman shall reconvene the

committee for a hearing not later than ten (10) business days following the filing of such protest or objection. The committee shall hear such evidence as may be presented by the protestor(s), the objector(s), who may be heard in person, by counsel, or both, and any opposing evidence, and the committee, by majority vote of the committee members present and voting, shall decide the matter within a reasonable time thereafter, but not more than thirty (30) days following close of the hearing. The committee may affirm the initial results of the election, in whole or in part, or the committee may change the initial results of the election, but only upon recount of ballots and only in conformity with law, or the committee may set aside the results of the election and call for a new election, but only for proper and lawful cause shown. The committee's decisions shall be final and binding. The committee shall not act unless at least a quorum is present. A quorum shall be a majority of committee members.

Article III, Section 5

Elections: At each annual meeting directors shall be elected by secret ballot by and from the members to succeed those directors whose terms of office are ending. Their respective terms of office shall be for a period of three (3) years, or until their successors shall have been elected and shall have qualified. Each member of the cooperative present and registered to vote at the meeting shall be entitled to vote for one candidate from each District in which a director's term of office is ending. The candidate from each District receiving the highest number of votes cast at this meeting shall be considered elected as a director to represent his or her District. In the event of a tie vote, the tie shall be resolved by a drawing of lot between or among the candidates in the tie. The drawing of lot shall be conducted under the supervision of the Credentials and Election Committee. Cumulative voting shall be allowed during the election of directors. 