

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

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Office Hours

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

From the General Manager



Safety tips for before, during and after the storm

By Brooks Shoemaker

STORM SEASON is in full swing. Summer storms have the potential to produce damaging winds, hail and heavy downpours. Especially during the hot, humid summer months, they can happen seemingly at a moment's notice.

As adults, we understand the importance of storm safety, but younger children and teens may not realize the dangers storms pose. That's why it's so important to talk to your family and have a storm plan in place. Here are several tips you can share with your loved ones:

Before the storm

- ▶ Talk to your family about what to do in the event of a severe storm or tornado. Point out the safest location to shelter, like a small interior, windowless room on the lowest level of your home. Discuss the dangers of severe thunderstorms; lightning can strike 10 miles outside of a storm. Remember: Anytime you hear thunder, head indoors.
- ▶ Make a storm kit. Include items like water, nonperishable foods, a manual can opener, a first-aid kit, flashlights, batteries, prescriptions, and infant and pet supplies. Keep all the items in one place for easy access if the power goes out.

During the storm

- ▶ Pay attention to local weather alerts and understand them. A "watch" means these events are possible and you should be prepared, and a

"warning" means a thunderstorm or tornado has been spotted in your area, and it's time to act.

- ▶ If you find yourself in the path of a severe storm or tornado, head to your safe place to take shelter and protect yourself by covering your head with your arms or materials, like blankets and pillows.
- ▶ If you're driving during a severe storm or tornado, do not try to outrun it. Pull over and cover your body with a coat or blanket, if possible.

After the storm

- ▶ If the power is out, conserve your phone battery as much as possible. Limit calls and texts to those that let others know you are safe and, after that, only use your phone for emergencies.
- ▶ Stay off the roads if trees, power lines or utility poles are down. Lines and equipment could still be energized, posing life-threatening risks to anyone who gets too close.
- ▶ Wear appropriate gear if you're cleaning up storm debris on your property. Thick-soled shoes, long pants and work gloves will help protect you from sharp or dangerous debris left behind.

Summer is a time for many fun-filled activities, but the season can also bring severe, dangerous weather. Talk to your loved ones about storm safety so that everyone is prepared and knows exactly what to do when a storm strikes.

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Bedford REC recognizes fair time

By Linda Williams

IT'S BLUE-RIBBON and queen-crowning time as the Bedford County Fair rolls around once more.

On opening day, July 24, Sarah "Madison" Koontz will relinquish her fair queen crown to another county farm-spirited young woman.

Madison is the daughter of Sarah Redmond-Koontz and Allen Koontz of Everett. The pretty brunette grew up on a farm with six siblings and began showing animals at the fair when she was just 5 years old.

"I won the Pee Wee Showmanship that first year," she says.

A 2020 graduate of Bedford High School, Madison is now an employee of Somerset Bank and Trust and hurries home after work each day to take care of her farm animals. This year, the departing fair queen will be showing a heifer, steer, lamb, goat and two pigs.

"My vacation from the bank is fair week," she explains.

She says being the fair queen was not a title she dreamed about.

"It was really far from it," she says with a laugh, "but as I got older and realized the duties of the fair queen, I decided I would enter the contest. It was a way to thank the fair people for all their hard work and to give back to the community."

Becoming the queen begins with an application and continues with an



MAKING THE COUNTY PROUD: After being crowned Bedford County's fair queen, Madison Koontz represented the region at the Pennsylvania Fair Queen Contest.

essay that explains why you want to hold the title.

"I had to give a speech and meet one-on-one with the judges," Madison says. "The night of the contest, I had to answer an impromptu question. Mine was tough. I had to explain what set me apart from the other girls in the contest."

"All of the girls were great, and I did not feel superior to any of them, so that was extremely difficult."

Once she was crowned, her duties began by representing agriculture throughout the county. The fair queen is expected

to attend many of the animal shows and present ribbons.

"I would sometimes try to take the kids aside and tell them what a great job they did," she says, "and I might tell them how they could do even better."

Madison attended the Pennsylvania Fair Queen Contest in January, which she says was fun and a way to meet many other great girls. Throughout the year, she has visited schools to talk about agriculture and encourage other young girls to vie for the title. She was also expected to be present at various functions and parades.

Madison's own background includes Friends Cove Livestock 4-H and she still belongs to FFA. She studied agriscience for three years at Bedford County Technical Center and was the



BEDFORD COUNTY FAIR ROYALTY: Fair Queen Madison Koontz, far left, poses with the 2021-2022 fair queen alternate, center, and the 2021-2022 fair queen ambassador.



REPRESENTING THE FAIR: 2021-2022 Bedford County Fair Queen Madison Koontz, right, stands with fair Ambassador Samantha Harold.



THE FAIR COMMITTEE: Members of the Bedford County Fair Committee are, front row, from left, Peggy Zembower, Madison Koontz and Beverly Stanton; and back row, from left, Erin Jay, Ashley Felton and Lois Yoder.

FFA treasurer in 2019 through 2020.

She gives a lot of credit to teacher Scott Myers, who encourages his students in various fields of agriculture.

Madison is the oldest of the seven Koontz children, all of whom are named after presidents. There are four boys and three girls. Her mother,

Sarah, was a teacher and now finds plenty to do raising her family. Her father, Allen, is a truck driver.

Not only does Madison work in the banking industry, but she is also a waitress at Hoss's on the weekends.

"I'm saving for a truck," she says. "I need something to haul my animals."

The Koontz family is a member of Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative (REC).

Bedford REC sponsors rate of gain contest

Kay Kring is co-chair of the rate of gain contest, which is sponsored by Bedford REC and an annual part of the Bedford County Fair.

"About 50 steers are tagged for this summer's fair," he says.

Exhibitors may tag two steers, but only the top-gaining steer of each exhibitor receives rate of gain money. Last year, 30 exhibitors received checks from Bedford REC.

The rate of gain contest for the Market Steer Show begins with registration in January and an initial weigh-in and ends with the weighing of the steers at the fair. Exhibitors earn 10 cents per pound, based on the number of pounds their steer gained between those dates.

Profit margins are tight on steer projects, and exhibitors traditionally depend on money from the rate of gain contest and fair prizes, as well as buyers paying a premium for the animals at the livestock auction, to ensure a profit.

In 2021, the highest-gaining steer put on 902.3 pounds between January 1 and the fair's July weigh-in. Checks awarded to exhibitors ranged from \$90.23 to \$28.92. In 2020, when there was no Bedford County Fair due to COVID-19, Bedford REC paid \$75 to each exhibitor who had registered a steer in January, in lieu of the rate of gain earnings.

"As a member of the committee," Kring says, "I think it is very generous of Bedford REC to offer its continued support for the Market Steer Show each year." ❁



BE PREPARED BEFORE A STORM STRIKES

In the event of a power outage, be prepared by keeping the following items in an easy-to-find emergency supply kit.



■ WATER

Three-day supply, one gallon per person per day.



■ TOOLS

Flashlight, extra batteries, manual can opener, battery-powered or hand-crank radio, NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert.



■ FIRST AID KIT AND PRESCRIPTIONS

First aid supplies, hand sanitizer and at least one week's supply of prescriptions and medications for the family.

Learn more at www.ready.gov



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

Source: American Red Cross, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

From the General Manager

(continued from page 14a)

New ways to use electricity

If you listen carefully, you can hear a quiet transformation happening. Electric appliances and equipment are becoming more popular than ever among consumers. Advancements in technology, coupled with decreasing costs, are winning over consumers looking for comparable utility and versatility. Plus, electric equipment is typically quieter.

Inside the home, consumers and homebuilders alike are turning to electric appliances to increase energy efficiency and savings. More tools and equipment with small gas-powered motors are being replaced with electric ones that include plug-in batteries. In the past few years, technology in battery storage has advanced significantly. Hand-held tools with plug-in batteries can hold a charge longer and offer the user the same versatility and similar functionality as gas-powered tools. For do-it-yourselfers and those in the building trades, trusted brands like Dewalt, Makita, Ryobi and Milwaukee offer electric versions of their most popular drills, saws, sanders and

other tools.

The number of electric products available is exploding. There are electric bikes, pressure washers, lawn mowers, leaf blowers, string trimmers, snow blowers, utility terrain vehicles, school buses and backhoes. There is an electric version of almost anything that burns gasoline or diesel.

Electric equipment also requires less maintenance — the biggest challenge is keeping it charged. Additionally, electric equipment is quieter, so if you want to listen to music or your favorite podcast while performing outdoor work, you can.

Efficiency tip of the month

Did you know the combined use of large appliances, like dishwashers, clothes dryers and washing machines, account for the largest percentage of electricity use in the average home? Take small steps to save energy when using these appliances. Only run full loads in the dishwasher and thoroughly scrape food from dishes before loading. Dry towels and heavier cottons separately from lighter-weight clothing and clean the lint screen after every use. Wash clothing in cold water to save energy used to heat water. ❁

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, 814-623-7568, 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 during after-hours outages when the office is not fully staffed. Please be patient and try again in a few minutes.