

# 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



# Tree trimming improves service for all

By Brooks Shoemaker

ONE OF THE wonderful things about our community is the natural beauty that surrounds us. We are fortunate to have so many trees that offer beauty, shade, and a habitat for all sorts of birds and other wildlife. I am sure you appreciate our community for many of the same reasons. Here at Bedford Rural Electric, we work hard to balance maintaining beautiful surroundings and ensuring a reliable power supply by keeping power lines clear of trees and foliage in our rights of way (ROW).

While we recognize and appreciate the beauty of trees, there are three main benefits to tree trimming in ROW areas. However, before touching on the main reasons, let me explain what a "right of way" is and how it may impact you. A right of way is the land we use to construct, maintain, replace, or repair underground and overhead power lines. The ROW enables the co-op to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder the power line installation, repair, maintenance, or operation. ROW areas are typically on public lands or located near a business or home. Regardless, we must be able to maintain the power lines above and below the ROW. The overall goal of our vegetation management program is to provide reliable power to our members while maintaining the beauty of our community. Proactive vegetation management benefits co-op members. It's a proven fact.

First and foremost, we care about our members and put their safety and that of our lineworkers above all else. Overgrown vegetation and trees pose a risk to power lines. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members' yards, they can pose a grave danger to families. If children can access those trees, they can potentially climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor like a tree. Our proactive approach also diminishes the chances of fallen branches or trees during severe weather events that cause outages and then make it more complicated and dangerous for lineworkers to restore power.

Of course, one of the biggest benefits of a smart vegetation management program is reliability. Tree trimming reduces the frequency of downed lines causing power outages. Generally speaking, healthy trees don't fall on power lines, and clear lines don't cause problems. Our program has proven that keeping lines clear reduces outages.

As a member, you know that we are a not-for-profit cooperative. Controlling costs is the most effective strategy to keep our rates affordable. This includes vegetation management. If trees grow too close to power lines, the potential for expensive repairs also increases. Effective tree trimming and other vegetation management efforts keep costs down for everyone.

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# Fort Bedford Honor Guard to celebrate 75 years

THE FORT Bedford Honor Guard is believed to be one of the oldest in the nation. Founded in June 1946, this group of dedicated veterans is a highly respected “living memorial” known throughout Bedford County. They are present at nearly every veteran’s funeral in the area.

Prior to the formation of the Fort Bedford Honor Guard, Bill Mock says veterans from World War I and World War II were attending funerals as individuals or in small groups in honor of their comrades.


Mock says that reliable sources, including Robert V. Howsare, William M. Ford and Francis Wilson, indicated Fred Wilfong was the organizer of the first rifle squad that preceded the honor guard. Wilfong and four other members of the Fort Bedford V.F.W. Post 7527 established the original organization, and it is believed that participating veterans wore their original uniforms. Jimmy Wagner was the first bugler. The group was referred to as a rifle squad or a burial unit.

Currently, members belong to both the American Legion Post 7527 and the Bedford V.F.W. Post 113, but there has never been any type of official ceremony uniting the two organizations.

Members of the Fort Bedford Honor Guard represent each branch of the United States Armed Forces and all are volunteers. They display allegiance to God, the United States of America, and the flag, a symbol of unity and freedom.

Mock says that for many of the members, the 75th anniversary will be a patriotic and historic, happy-yet-sad occasion as it will celebrate and honor all present veteran participants, yet remember those members lost along the way.



Honor guards are often referred to as “living memorials” and are primarily the only formal type of organization to honor deceased veterans and active-duty military members. Mock says he believes it is a contin-



**“A Final Salute: Gloves On / Safety Off”**  
 History of the Fort Bedford Honor Guard  
 Bedford County, Pennsylvania

This elite unit is considered to be one of the oldest veteran volunteer honor guards in the United States, based upon composition and continuous years of service.

Compiled and Narrated by:  
 William Roy Mock


William Ford



Guy Holler



Fred Wilfong, 1947 Honor Guard founder



Jimmy Wagner, first official bugler



*Seated; left to right:*  
 Brad Imler, Bill Hengst,  
 Jerry Williams, Bill Wertz,  
 Jim Williams, Liz Barefoot,  
 Neil Gransbury, Dave Magill.

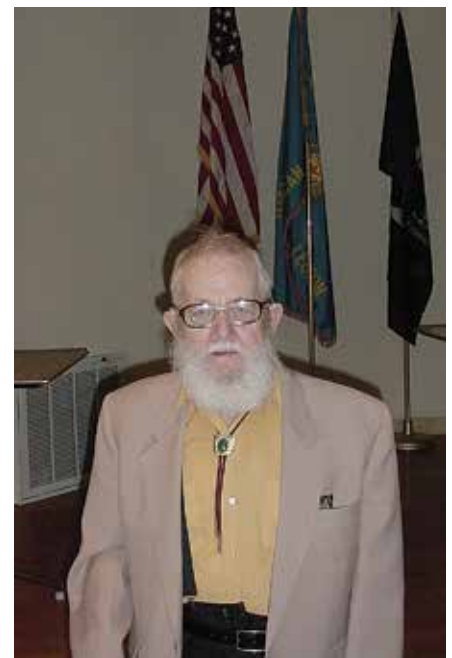


*Standing; left to right:*  
 Lisa Cairo, Jeff Onstead,  
 Dave Follmar, John Andzelik,  
 Tom Eschmann, Tom Colvin,  
 John Moles, Steve Foor,  
 Bill Mock, Mike Press,  
 Ross Arnold, Judy Andzelik.

*Absent: Guy Holler, Stan Burkett, Lee Greenawalt, Jack Schoch.*



Homer Greenawalt



Francis Wilson

ual reminder that the freedoms we enjoy today are due to the service and sacrifice of others and should never be forgotten.

The Fort Bedford Honor Guard participates in funerals, parades, special services, and other ceremonies showing honor to the flag of our country, our military brothers and sisters, as well as their family and community

members.

In November 2020, present officers were installed at the annual banquet. They are: Jim Williams, captain; Bill Wertz, lieutenant; Jerry Williams, sergeant; Bill Hengst, corporal; Brad Imler, lance corporal; Dave Magill, finance officer; Elizabeth Barefoot, company clerk; Neil Gransbury, quar-

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**From the General Manager**

*(continued from page 14a)*

**We're ready for storm season. Are you?**

Hot summer days make conditions right for dangerous winds and thunderstorms. Wind- and lightning-damaged trees lead to downed power lines and outages. But rest assured, our crews are ready and standing by to respond to power outages that occur in our area. When major storms knock out power, our line crews take all necessary precautions before they get to work restoring power.

I would encourage you to also practice safety and preparedness to protect your family during major storms and outages. Here are a few tips:

- ▶ Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of non-perishable food, such as canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials (i.e., diapers and toiletries).
- ▶ Confirm that you have adequate sanitation and hygiene supplies including towelettes, soap, and hand sanitizer.
- ▶ Ensure your first aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages, and other medical essentials, and make sure your prescriptions are current.
- ▶ Set aside basic household items you will need, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener, and a portable, battery-powered radio or TV.
- ▶ Organize emergency supplies so they are easily accessible in one location.

When outages occur, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This helps prevent damage to them when power is restored. Make sure to leave one light on so you will know when power is restored. If you plan to use a generator, make sure it is isolated from our power lines. Failure to do so may injure our employees and subject you to unnecessary liability. If you are unsure how to safely operate your generator, please contact the office.

Listen to local news or check our Facebook page or website for power restoration updates.

After the storm, avoid downed power

lines. Don't walk through flooded areas where power lines could be submerged. Always give our crews plenty of space to safely perform their jobs.

We always hope we don't experience severe storms this summer, but we can never predict Mother Nature's plans. We recommend that you act today because there is power in planning. From our co-op family to yours, we hope you have a safe and wonderful summer. ☀



**Fort Bedford Honor Guard**

*(continued from page 14c)*

termaster; Steve Foor, chaplain; William Mock, historian; David Follmar, honorary major; Guy Holler, honorary major; and Thomas Eashmann, honorary life member. Holler, who recently passed away, and the late Homer Greenawalt both served the honor guard for more than 35 years.

A history of the Fort Bedford Honor Guard has been compiled and narrated in a book, "A Final Salute: Glove On/Safety Off," by William Roy Mock, group historian. It will soon be available at the Bedford County Historical Society and other locations.

An opening ceremony and exhibit highlighting the unit's 75th anniversary is scheduled for June 8 at the Pioneer Library located on the first floor of the Bedford County Historical Society along Route 30 West. Photographs illustrating the unit's stages of development, uniform transition and other treasured memorabilia will be displayed. ☀

*Information provided by William Roy Mock, Fort Bedford Honor Guard historian.*

**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.*