

Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

SOMERSET REC

223 Industrial Park Road
Somerset, PA 15501
814-445-4106
800-443-4255

Email: e-mail@somersetrec.com
Website: www.somersetrec.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Clarence B. Waltermire, District 5

Vice President

Jerry L. Engle, District 4

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P. Timothy Vought, District 6

Jason Huston, District 7

Joshua C. Sechler, District 8

Harvey W. Reckner Jr., District 9

**Ruston Ogburn
General Manager**

STAFF

Gary Gindlesperger

Manager of Information Technology

Jonathan Hillegas

Director of Finances

Andrew Phillippi

Manager of Outside Operations

Emily Baer

Director of Marketing and Member Services

Phil Stern

Manager of Metering Services

Jessi Ditzler

Executive Assistant

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

EMERGENCY OUTAGE NUMBERS

814-445-4106
800-443-4255

Doing the Right Thing



TAWNYA ZORN

TUESDAY, JAN. 30, SEEMED LIKE a routine workday for Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) Meter Technician Jeff Brant. He had spent the morning installing a relay switch and was headed to a commercial meter reading job near Mount Davis.

While driving along Brushcreek Road in Northampton Township, Jeff noticed a woman lying on the ground waving for help. When he approached the woman, 85-year-old cooperative member Shirley Werner, it became apparent she had fallen while getting her mail. As Jeff spoke with Shirley, he realized she was unable to get up and had been lying on the cold, wet ground for quite some time. She told Jeff six cars had gone by and no one stopped. Since she was unable to walk to her house, he helped her into his truck to warm up.

Shirley told Jeff her son would be there soon to take care of her. However, even after sitting up for a short time, she felt dizzy and short of breath. Jeff called 911.

Jeff knew a Somerset REC line crew was working in the area. He called crew members Roy Bittner and Adam Barnes to provide additional help. Jeff tried to flag down some passing motorists, but again, no one would stop.

The three cooperative employees helped to keep Shirley calm and comfortable by wrapping her in blankets and talking to her until the ambulance arrived. The ambulance crew took over and transported her to the hospital. Unfortunately, Shirley passed away later that day.

Somerset REC employees go through extensive training on a variety of topics. They participate in monthly training sessions and courses on-site to remind them of the safety aspects of their job. Employees are also encouraged to attend various Job Training & Safety schools organized by the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, the statewide trade association for the 13 rural electric cooperatives in Pennsylvania and one in New Jersey.

These safety courses include comprehensive first aid, CPR, and AED training, and all employees are required to be certified in these areas. The training teaches staff how to recognize and respond to emergency situations, in and out of the workplace, and how to provide aid until emergency personnel arrive. In this situation, Jeff, Roy and Adam did exactly that.

This case shows the importance of remaining calm, assessing the situation and determining the actions that need to be taken. Most important, it demonstrates the need to be a Good Samaritan to those in distress. By Shirley and Jeff's count, at least eight motorists passed the scene without stopping.

Debbie Werner, Shirley's daughter-in-law, expressed the family's gratitude to Jeff, Roy and Adam. Debbie teared up as she thought about how long Shirley would have suffered if the men hadn't stopped to help.

We at Somerset REC are members of our community and know the importance of doing the right thing. General Manager Rus Ogburn said it best: "The awareness of Jeff to recognize someone in distress and the willingness of all three to help a person in need perfectly reflect the way this cooperative serves our members." 📌

TAWNYA ZORN

OPERATIONS ASSISTANT

2024 DIRECTOR NOMINEES

DISTRICT 1 – Floyd Lehman (Incumbent)



FLOYD T. LEHMAN of Conemaugh Township currently represents District 1 on the Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) Board of Directors. He resides in Boswell and has served on the board for the past 12 years. He also serves as the cooperative's representative on the board for Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc.,

the wholesale power provider for 13 cooperatives in Pennsylvania and one in New Jersey.

Floyd has earned the Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate, the Board Leadership certificate and Director Gold status from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). Floyd says that serving on the Som-

erset REC Board has been an honor and privilege because he's able to make decisions that benefit the members.

Floyd is retired from the Pennsylvania Electric Company, where he was employed for 33 years as a lineworker. He is a member of Stahl Mennonite Church and helps with the Somerset County Meals On Wheels program and the St. Francis Sharing & Caring Food Pantry. These organizations fill his days with many meaningful hours, but he says there is always time for a round of golf.

Floyd and his wife, the former Chris Thomas, have been married for 55 years. Visiting their two daughters takes them to Latrobe and Pittsburgh and their two sons to Montana and Wyoming. On these trips, they get to see their granddaughter and seven grandsons and look forward to these visits.

DISTRICT 5 – Tim Hinebaugh, James B. Harrold Sr. and Jesse Moore



TIM HINEBAUGH of Milford Township graduated from Gateway High School in Monroeville. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in forest science from Penn State University and a Bachelor of Science degree in secondary math education from the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown.

Tim, a semi-retired arborist, worked as an arborist since 1982 with a business in Somerset County and taught secondary math at various Somerset County school districts.

He and his wife, Gayle, raised three children in the Rockwood Area School District. Tim is an active member of Somerset Anglican Fellowship and Kairos Prison Ministry. He served as scoutmaster of Rockwood Boy Scout Troop 538 for 10 years, previously coached AYSO soccer and volunteered for Habitat for Humanity.

Tim's hobbies include canoeing, hiking, fishing and generally enjoying this amazing world. He recently installed solar at his residence and is interested in developing multiple energy sources.



JAMES "JIM" B. HARROLD SR. of Middlecreek Township graduated from Rockwood Area High School in 1967 and received his associate degree in forest technology from Penn State University in 1969. He continued his education at West Virginia University (WVU), where he received a bachelor's degree in forest

resources management in 1972, graduating cum laude, and a Master of Science degree in forestry in 2005.

A professional consulting forester, Jim is retired from the Somerset County Technology Center, where he was an agriculture education teacher for 36 years.

He is married to Barbara Colflesh Harrold, and they have two adult sons, James B. Harrold Jr. and Jonathan Harrold. Jim is a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Society of American Foresters, Pennsylvania Forestry Association, National Woodland Owners Association, Somerset County Conservancy, Pheasants Forever, Pennsylvania Agriculture Education Association, Pennsylvania State Education

Association, West Virginia University Division of Forestry, International Organization of Odd Fellows and Scullton Rod and Gun Club. He is president of the Laurel Mountain Lutherans and an executive board member of the WVU Forestry and Natural Resources Alumni Association.

Jim was also actively involved in the Rockwood Area School District, serving on the school board and as the boys' soccer head coach. In addition, he was extensively involved in numerous soccer organizations.

A former member of the Somerset County Parks and Recreation Board, Jim is the co-author of a high school forestry curriculum. He was awarded Conservation Educator of the Year in 1976 and the WVU Forestry and Natural Resources Alumni Association Outstanding Alumnus Award in 2019. Jim was also inducted into the Rockwood Area School District Hall of Fame in 2021.

He enjoys spending time with his five grandchildren, watching baseball, football, and soccer, hunting with his bird dogs, fishing, and growing Christmas trees.



JESSE MOORE of Middlecreek Township is a 1975 graduate of Rockwood Area High School and received an associate degree in electronics from Penn Technical Institute in Pittsburgh.

Jesse retired from Drive DeVilbiss Healthcare in 2019 after working 38-plus years as a product design and safety engineer.

He is a member of Kingwood Church of God in Markleton, where he has served several terms on the church board, as a Sunday school teacher and as the Youth Sunday School superintendent.

Jesse and his wife, the former Amy Rush, live on his family farm and have three grown children. He enjoys being in the great outdoors, traveling, working with his hands, problem-solving and volunteering.

DISTRICT 9 – Harvey W. Reckner Jr. (Incumbent) and Harvey Wetzler



HARVEY W. RECKNER JR. of Henry Clay Township currently represents District 9 on Somerset REC Board of Directors. He has been a board member since 2012 and earned the Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate, the Board Leadership certificate, and the Director Gold status from NRECA.

Harvey, a retired maintenance supervisor for Westvaco Paper Company, currently works part time as a logging

contractor and farmer. The son of the late Harvey and Elsie Reckner, he is married to the former Ida Mae Clark. The Reckners own a home along Mae West Road in Confluence and have two grown children and three granddaughters.

A graduate of Turkeyfoot Valley Area High School, Harvey is a member of Johnson Chapel Methodist Church, where he serves on the board of the Cemetery Committee. He also served on Somerset REC's Nominating Committee and is a life member of Confluence Fire Department.



HARVEY WETZLER of Addison Township grew up in Westmoreland County and graduated from Norwin High School. He was a paramedic and firefighter while earning an associate degree in specialized technology from Penn Tech. He also participated in numerous classes at Pitt at Greensburg, Capitol College and

The National Cryptologic School.

He worked as a senior account manager for Sun Microsystems and a senior consultant for Oracle. He retired as a technical director with the National Security Agency and then worked at Nemacolin Woodlands as a

trapper guide and instructor.

Harvey is married and has two adult children. He is a member of Addison Volunteer Fire Department, where he is a firefighter, the secretary and part of the Swift Water Rescue Team. He is also a member of the following local organizations: Somerset County Hazardous Materials Team, the Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team, Community Organizations Active in Disasters, the Fusion Liaison Office and the County Animal Rescue Team.

He serves as the emergency management coordinator for Addison borough and township, is a member of the Somerset County GOP Committee, and participates in the Somerset County Broadband Taskforce.

SOMERSET REC ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE — MAY 23, 2024



- 5 p.m. Registration
- 6 p.m. Call to Order – Board Chairman
- 6:05 p.m. Reading of Minutes & Financial Report
- 6:15 p.m. Manager's Report – Ruston Ogburn, General Manager
- 6:35 p.m. Report of Nominating Committee/Voting Period/Collection of Ballot Boxes
- 6:50 p.m. Speaker – Samantha Jo Hayman – PA Youth Leadership Council Delegate
- 7:10 p.m. Unfinished Business/New Business
- 7:15 p.m. Report of Tellers
- 7:20 p.m. Adjournment & Awarding Gifts/Grand Prize Items

UPDATE TO PAY-BY-PHONE NUMBER

Effective May 7, our pay-by-phone number will be updated, and you will no longer be able to use 877-833-4018.

The new phone number will be 855-939-3614.

This change will allow the cooperative to provide text messaging options in the future.

This will enable us to better communicate with our members and relay timely information related to power outages, billing due dates, past due balances, and member events.

ANDREW PHILLIPPI PROMOTED TO MANAGER OF OPERATIONS

Andrew Phillippi's promotion to manager of operations for Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) officially took effect in February. He replaces Doug Glessner, who retired after 39 years of service. Andrew began his transition to this role in June 2023, soon after Doug announced his retirement.

Andrew is a familiar face at the cooperative. He has been involved with the operations department for the past 17 years – nine years as a lineworker and eight as a staking engineer. He started his tenure with Somerset REC in 2007, when he was hired as a summer intern. That summer, he worked on the brush crew while attending Pennsylvania College of Technology. Andrew was hired as a full-time employee later that year, where he advanced to journeyman lineman.

As a lineworker, Andrew became familiar with the cooperative's service territory, canvassing the entire area, which includes parts of Somerset, Fayette, and Bedford counties and extends into Garrett County, Md. He also learned how to build and maintain the cooperative's electrical power lines.

In 2016, Andrew became a staking engineer. In this role, he managed the geographic information system to map the cooperative's service territory. Andrew also assisted with the layout and design of new line construction and the upgrading of existing facilities. In 2020, he took on oversight of the right-of-way maintenance program.

Andrew is a graduate of Rockwood Area High School and has an associate degree in electrical technology and management. He lives in Somerset Township with his wife, Amber (Kister), their daughters – Andi, 7, and Alix, 5 – and 1-year-old son Aiden. Andrew attends St. Paul's United Church of Christ in Somerset. In his spare time, he enjoys hunting, fishing, and any activities involving his family and friends.

Filling the position after Doug's retirement is a big responsibility, but Andrew hopes to build on the foundation that Doug established.

"I look forward to serving our members," he says, "and working with all my co-workers to improve our co-op."

REMEMBER AND
HONOR THE COURAGE
OF OUR FALLEN

Memorial Day

THE OFFICE OF SOMERSET RURAL ELECTRIC
WILL BE CLOSED ON MONDAY, MAY 27.