

# 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**

### Secretary/Treasurer

**Lowell L. Friedline, District 3**

**Floyd T. Lehman, District 1**

**Russ Hillegas, District 2**

**P. Timothy Vought, District 6**

**Carl A. Hay Jr., District 7**

**Joshua C. Sechler, District 8**

**Harvey W. Reckner Jr., District 9**

**Ruston Ogburn  
General Manager**

## STAFF

**Gary Gindlesperger**

*Manager of Information Technology*

**Douglas E. Glessner**

*Manager of Outside Operations*

**Jonathan Hillegas**

*Director of Finances*

**Emily Baer**

*Director of Marketing and Member Services*

**Phil Stern**

*Manager of Metering Services*

**Jessi Ditzler**

*Executive Assistant*

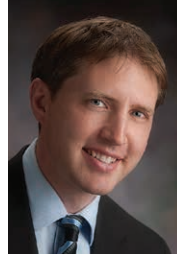
## OFFICE HOURS

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

## EMERGENCY OUTAGE NUMBERS

814-445-4106  
800-443-4255

## Join Us In Person for the 2023 Annual Meeting



**AN INTERESTING STUDY FOUND THE** most beneficial practice for raising children was everyone in the family sitting down for meals together multiple times each week. I had that benefit when I was growing up, and we try to do that with our kids as well. Our busy schedules do not allow everyone to attend every meal, but we do our best to keep it going.

This study may not seem related to Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative, but it came to mind as we made plans for this year's annual meeting. Preparations for our annual meetings followed similar patterns for our first 80 years. Those in-person meetings were forced to change in 2020. We settled on a drive-thru format for that meeting and because it was popular, we continued that for 2021 and 2022. By most accounts, those meetings were successful.

We certainly respect the feedback from the members who told us they prefer the drive-thru format, but it was also clear something was lost by waving hello to our members as they drove through instead of talking with them in person. In my mind, the difference is like sitting around a table having dinner together versus grabbing chicken nuggets and fries on the way to baseball practice.

Our bylaws require an annual meeting to report on the business of the cooperative and elect directors. I believe the logic of that rule remains as sound today as it was 80 years ago. We exist to serve our members — taking the time to explain to our members what we do and why we do it ensures we remain focused on the needs of our members. While we have been able to provide a written report to our members as part of the drive-thru process, it has not allowed members to ask questions and hear an immediate response, which often leads to a follow-up question or a related question from a second member. We hope to revive that part of the meeting.

Some of the benefits of the drive-thru process came from the central location and the length of time involved in the process. To capture those aspects, we have moved the venue and streamlined the meeting.

This year's meeting will be held at Somerset Area High School, instead of Seven Springs. This location is more central to our territory and has more seating capacity. Many of our annual meetings were held in this auditorium until the early 2000s, so we hope this will be easier for our members to attend.

We also moved the meeting start time an hour earlier and shortened the meeting activities. We plan to keep the focus on the election of a new director along with presentations discussing the work of the cooperative and perspective on what we see the future holding for the electric industry.

As with everything we do, we balance the benefits of our traditions and founding principles with the pace of today's membership. We hope you will join us on Thursday, May 25, and look forward to your feedback on this year's annual meeting format. 🗣️

**RUSTON OGBURN**  
GENERAL MANAGER

# 2023 DIRECTOR NOMINEES

## Russ Hillegas – DISTRICT 2



**RUSS HILLEGAS** currently resides in Allegheny Township and is the current board director representing District 2.

He and his wife, Jeanne, have two sons, Brandon and Kyle. Russ is a member of Trinity United Church of Christ in Berlin. He is also a board member on the Berlin Area Historical Society, member of the Somerset Masonic Lodge 358, and a member of the Berlin Sons of the American Legion and the New Baltimore Sportsmen's Club.

In his three-year role as a director, he has earned the

Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate.

Russ is retired from the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, where he was a foreman and facility manager. He also operates a beef cattle farm in Allegheny Township and enjoys assisting his son at Hillegas Sugar Camp, hunting, golfing, traveling and spending time with his four grandchildren.



## Lowell L. Friedline - DISTRICT 3



**LOWELL L. FRIEDLINE** currently represents District 3 on the cooperative's board of directors. He and his wife, Carma Lou, have a son, Jonathan, and daughter, Jillynn Bastian. They have six grandchildren.

He is a partner with Jonathan in Walnutdale Farms and a partner with his daughter-in-law, Mary Lynch Friedline, in Walnutdale Maple Farms LLC, both in Jenner Township.

Lowell serves as secretary/treasurer of the cooperative's board of directors and is a director and past chairman of the board of Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc., Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative's (REC) wholesale power supplier.

He has earned the Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate, the Board Leadership Certificate and the Director Gold rating from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. In 2004, he received the coveted Eminent Service Award from the Pennsylvania Rural

Electric Association, Somerset REC's statewide service organization.

Lowell completed the Public Affairs Leadership Program, now known as RULE, at Penn State University and currently serves as secretary of the board of the Allied Milk Producers Cooperative, Inc. He is a member of the Somerset County Maple Producers Association and the Somerset County Farm Bureau. He enjoys singing with the Flight 93 Memorial Chorus and Roof Garden Chorus, where he served as past president.

A member of Zion Hoffman Lutheran Church, Lowell has served in many church capacities, including assisting minister. He is a member of the Reconciliation Ministry Team of the Allegheny Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.



## Jason Huston - DISTRICT 7



**JASON HUSTON** is a director nominee from District 7 residing in Northampton Township. He graduated from Meyersdale Area High School and received an associate degree in architectural design at Thaddeus Stevens College in Lancaster.

Jason has been self-employed as a residential contractor for 27 years.

He and his wife, Julie, have four children — Keegan, Cooper, Ellery and Maverick. He is a member of Berlin Brethren Church, the Pennsylvania Builders

Association and the Berlin Fire Department. He also volunteers on the Somerset Vo-Tech Occupational Advisory Committee for carpentry.

Jason enjoys spending time at Cider Valley Farm, the family's farm in Northampton Township, where he raises grass-fed cattle and pigs.



## Steve Schrader - DISTRICT 7



**STEVE SCHRADER** is a director nominee from District 7, who lives in the Village of Pocahontas, Greenville Township. He graduated from Meyersdale Area High School and attended the welding program at Somerset County Vo-Tech School.

Steve is currently a Greenville Township supervisor. Previously, he was employed by 4 Guys Fire Trucks for 22 years and was the owner/operator of Western Village RV Park, Inc., for 15 years.

He and his wife, Diane, have three children. Steve is a member of Meyersdale Grace Brethren Church, where he

serves as an usher and deacon, as well as a trustee on the church board.

His hobbies include spending time in the great outdoors hunting and fishing, spending quality time with family and friends, and spoiling his four grandchildren. He can also be found at sporting events at local high schools and volunteering at organizations in the Meyersdale community.



**Somerset Area High School Auditorium**

**645 S. Columbia Ave  
Somerset, PA 15501**

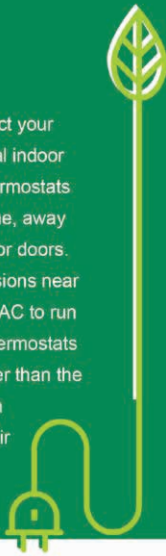
**Registration begins at 5 p.m.  
Business Session begins at 6 p.m.**

## SOMERSET REC ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE — MAY 25, 2023

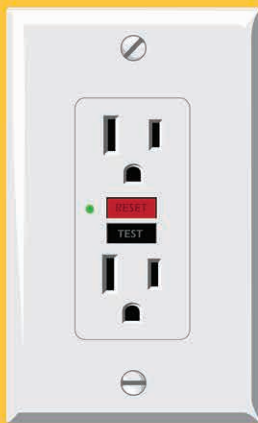
- 5:00 p.m. – Registration
- 6:00 p.m. – Call to Order – Clarence B. Waltermire, President
- 6:05 p.m. – Reading of Minutes & Financial Report
- 6:15 p.m. – Manager’s Report – Ruston Ogburn, General Manager
- 6:35 p.m. – Report of Nominating Committee / Voting Period / Collection of Ballot Boxes
- 6:50 p.m. – Speaker – Stephen M. Brame – PREA/Allegheny President & CEO
- 7:10 p.m. – Unfinished Business / New Business
- 7:15 p.m. – Report of Tellers
- 7:20 p.m. – Adjournment & Awarding of Door Prizes

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

The location of your thermostat can impact your HVAC system's ability to maintain an ideal indoor temperature. For maximum accuracy, thermostats should be placed in the center of the home, away from air vents, plumbing pipes and exterior doors. Avoid placing items like lamps and televisions near your thermostat, which can cause the HVAC to run longer than necessary. Avoid installing thermostats in rooms that tend to feel warmer or colder than the rest of the home. Do not place furniture in front of the thermostat, which can block air flow and result in inaccurate readings.



## WATT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

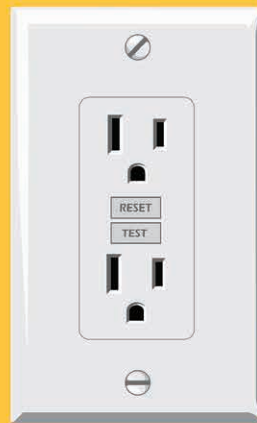


### Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter

Prevents electrical shock by detecting variations in current.

Install in areas where water and electricity are in close proximity.

Test outlets with GFCIs monthly; if they don't work properly, consult your electrician.



### Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter

Prevents electrical fires caused by arc flash. Usually installed by an electrician.

An arc is an electrical discharge that can cause intense heat or light.

It interrupts the circuit when it detects an arc or other abnormalities in the flow of electricity.



### Tamper Resistant Outlet

Prevents shocks caused by tampering with an outlet.

The protective shutters are designed to move when a plug is correctly inserted.

Became part of the National Electrical Code in 2008; if your home does not have these, install childproof devices.

