

Guest  
COLUMN:

# A change in procedure



by Alex Hartley  
Director of Member Services

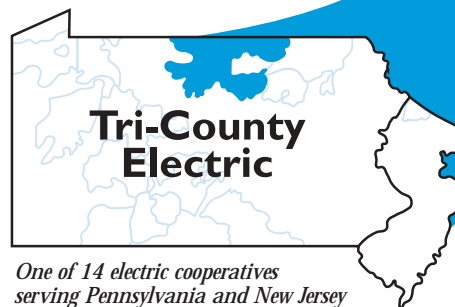
**E**arlier this month, Tri-County members in Districts 2, 6 and 8 — the three districts in which cooperative director elections are taking place this year — received ballots to elect a fellow member to a three-year term on the board of directors. (Only members listed as being served by the co-op as of the date of the mailing should have received ballots.)

Those who have voted in past elections probably noticed the voting process has been slightly altered from previous years. That's because Tri-County's Election and Credentials Committee recently authorized a change in the voting procedure, effective this year. The committee believes the changes will simplify the process, make voting more secure and encourage additional member participation.

Members in Districts 2, 6 and 8 received a ballot printed on "safety" paper, accompanied by an envelope in which to place the completed ballot before returning it to the Election and Credentials Committee. Please note that there is no place on the envelope for a return address. This is intentional and done to ensure voting confidentiality.

Once the ballot return envelopes are received, they are opened, sorted by district and candidate. Then the ballots are counted and tallied by the committee, with total counts for each district checked against the total envelope count.

If the committee finds more than one ballot in an envelope, none of the ballots in that envelope will be tallied for final count.



One of 14 electric cooperatives  
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

Although we prefer that members mail in their ballots prior to the annual meeting on July 10 at Williamson High School, Election and Credentials Committee members will accept ballots during the annual meeting. The committee will close the ballot box shortly after the start of the business portion of the meeting. Any ballots received before the ballot box is closed are added to the vote count totals for each candidate.

As usual, the committee chairman will announce winners of director seats during the business portion of the meeting.

Because the democratic election of directors is at the heart of the cooperative way of doing business, we strive to make the process as fair and as simple as possible. The Election and Credentials Committee is charged with establishing procedures and handling other aspects of director elections. Each person on the committee is a cooperative member appointed by the director from his or her district.

Barring any unforeseen problems, we anticipate this new voting procedure will be continued indefinitely. Members with accounts in cooperative districts that aren't conducting elections this year — Districts 1, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 9 — will have to wait a year or two before experiencing this change in voting procedure.

**Tri-County's offices  
will be closed  
Monday, July 5,  
in observance of  
Independence Day**

## Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

22 North Main Street • P.O. Box 526  
Mansfield, PA 16933  
Mansfield – 570/662-2175  
Coudersport – 814/274-8740  
Web Site: [www.tri-countyrec.com](http://www.tri-countyrec.com)  
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**For Emergencies call**  
1-800-343-2559

## Robert O. Toombs President & CEO

### Staff

Craig Eccher <i>Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer</i>	Michael W. VanBergen <i>Sr. Director, Electric Operations</i>
Annette Fowler <i>Executive Assistant</i>	Bert Cunningham <i>Director, Human Resources</i>
Barbara Johnson <i>Director, Financial Services</i>	Alex F. Hartley <i>Director, Member Services</i>
Ralph Park <i>Sr. Director, Engineering Services</i>	

## Board of Directors

Ferd W. Irish.....	<i>Chairman</i>
Ralph E. Snyder .....	<i>Vice Chairman</i>
Alston A. Teeter.....	<i>Secretary/Treasurer</i>
Donald H. Blackwell	Alfred G. Calkins
James R. Davis	Jay E. Haldeman
Gerald A. Kite	Barbara J. Seeley

## Summer Hours

7 a.m. - 4 p.m. (Mon.-Fri.)

# Director elections slated for Districts 2, 6 and 8

Democracy will take center stage at Tri-County's 2004 annual meeting next month, with director elections highlighting the agenda. This year, board seats are up for election in Districts 2, 6 and 8. Only members with accounts in those three districts may vote in this year's election.

In accordance with Tri-County's bylaws, director elections take place on a rotating basis, with three of the cooperative's nine districts electing directors each year. If your account is located in one of this year's voting districts, you should have recently received a mail-in ballot.

Please review the ballot, cast your vote and mail it back to Tri-County. Note that the cooperative has instituted changes to the voting procedure, which are explained in Alex Hartley's guest column that appears on page 12a of this issue of *Penn Lines*.

Election results will be announced at Tri-County's 2004 annual meeting on Saturday, July 10, at Williamson High School in Tioga, Pa.

Elected candidates serve three-year terms. Tri-County directors are responsible for representing the needs and concerns of members in their districts. They also establish co-op policies and oversee business operations.

All three director candidates running for election this year are incumbents, and all are running unopposed. Profiles of the candidates follow:

## District 2

*District 2 includes the Potter County townships of Allegany, Clara, Eulalia, Hebron, Hector, Pike, Pleasant Valley, Roulette and Ulysses.*



### Ferd W. Irish

Ferd Irish is seeking his fifth term as District 2 director.

A potato farmer in Potter County for over 43 years, Ferd operates Irish Farms atop Denton Hill. He

is currently Tri-County's representative on the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association board of directors, vice chairman of Citizens' Electric Co. board of directors and serves as the chairman of the Tri-County board of directors.

"I have the time and determination to be an effective director for the members of Tri-County. Coupled with the desire to make Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative a success now and into the future, I am asking for your vote for director," he says.

## District 6

*District 6 includes Armenia, Columbia, Granville, Springfield, Troy and West Burlington townships in Bradford County; and Sullivan and Ward townships in Tioga County.*



### Alfred G. Calkins

Alfred G. Calkins, is seeking re-election as District 6 director.

Calkins, a full-time dairy farmer, is active in local, state and national Holstein associations. He currently serves as a director and president of the Bradford County Holstein Club.

An avid sportsman, Calkins is a past director of the Trojan Booster Club, belongs to the Troy Rod and Gun Club and is a member of the East Troy Baptist Church. He and his wife, Sharon, have two sons, Ryan and Randy.

"I continue to work at the board level to keep rates stable and to challenge management to maintain our competitive position in the industry," he says. "Our ability to work together keeps the cooperative financially sound."

## District 8

*District 8 includes Brown, Cogan House, Cummings, Jackson, Lewis, McIntire, McHenry and Pine townships in Lycoming County; Liberty, Morris and Union townships in Tioga County.*



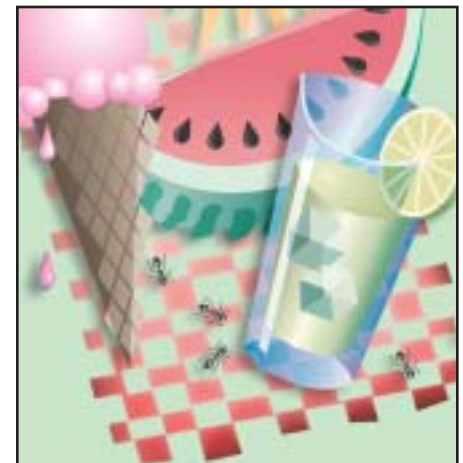
### Donald Blackwell

Donald Blackwell has been a Tri-County member for 47 years and has served as District 8 director since 1977. A lifelong resi-

dent of the village of Blackwell in Tioga County, he is a retired Tioga County Chief Clerk.

Blackwell and his wife, Martha, have three grown sons. He is active in his community and an avid golfer.

Blackwell states, "Excellent service and stable rates are what members expect. I continue to make and support decisions to maintain Tri-County's ability to maintain the service requirements and keep rates stable for all members."



## JOIN US AT THE 2004 TRI-COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, July 10, 2004  
Williamson Area High School,  
Tioga, Pa.

### Highlights

- Door Prizes
- Lunch
- Director elections
- Children's activities
- Entertainment
- Health fair

# Tri-County selects Youth Tour students

Six lucky high school juniors from Tri-County's service territory will join thousands of students from all over the United States this month for the Rural Electric Youth Tour, a week-long tour of our nation's capital. The students will visit historical sites including the Vietnam and Korean War memorials, the Smithsonian museums, National Cathedral, National Zoo and the new World War II Memorial.

Selected on the basis of an application, essay and extracurricular activities, the following students will represent Tri-County on the 2004 Youth Tour: Larkin Hayman, Northern Potter High School; Shannon Heck, Cowanesque Valley High School; Kayle Perkins, Oswayo Valley High School; Sarah Sherman, Mansfield High School; Erika Smith, Coudersport High School; and Kelly Wood, Williamson High School.

**Larkin Hayman** is the daughter of Barry Hayman and Deborah Rutkowski of Genesee. The Northern Potter High School junior is active in 4-H, FFA, yearbook and Ski Club. Following high school, Larkin plans to attend college. Her career goal is to become an attorney.



**Shannon Marie Heck** is the daughter of Alan and Lila Heck of Middlebury Center. A student at Cowanesque Valley High School, Shannon serves on student council and prom committee, plays on the school volleyball team, sings in the school chorus and is a member of the National Honor Society. She is also active in FFA, church youth group, church choir and volunteers with the Special Olympics. Shannon hopes to attend veterinary school following high school.



**Kayle Perkins** is the son of Glenn



and Jane Perkins of Shinglehouse. A junior at Oswayo Valley High School, Kayle is a varsity member of the school's golf team, participates in Health Club at Charles Cole Hospital and enjoys bowling. He plans to pursue a career in the health-care field.

**Sarah Sherman** is the daughter of Rodney and Pam Sherman of Mainesburg. She participates in volleyball, 4-H, Key Club and the Tioga County Youth Leadership Program. She is also involved with the Future Business Leaders of America, serves as a school peer helper and is a member of the National Honor Society. Sarah plans to attend college following graduation from Mansfield High School next year. She aspires to work in health care, possibly as a dentist or doctor.



**Erika Smith**, the daughter of Devonna Smith of Coudersport, is a junior at Coudersport High School. Erika plays on the school volleyball squad, participates in track and is a varsity basketball cheerleader. She is also a member of the Varsity Club, Spud Growers FFA, National Honor Society, French Club, History Club, TATU, Students Against Drunk Driving and prom committee. Erika plans to attend a four-year college, with a career goal of becoming a history teacher.



**Kelly Wood** is the daughter of Stanley and Lois Wood of Tioga. The Williamson High School junior serves as student council vice president, is a member of the National Honor Society, Health Career Club and chorus and participates in the Tioga County



Youth Leadership Program. She also plays volleyball and basketball and runs on the track team. Kelly plans to study medicine following high school.

## Tri-County to return \$500,000 in capital credits to members

Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative will be returning \$500,000 in capital credits to members and former members this month. The retirement covers capital credits allocated to members' accounts in 1982. That means if you were a Tri-County member in 1982, you can expect to see a credit on your June electric bill.

In a change from past practices, current co-op members will not receive a capital credits patronage check. Instead, they will receive a credit to their Tri-County account.

"By crediting existing members' accounts instead of issuing capital credits checks, we can save considerably on administrative and mailing costs," says Barbara Johnson, director of financial services.

Tri-County will continue to issue paper checks to those who were served by the cooperative in 1982 but are no longer on our lines, as well as to any current member whose account location has changed since 1982.

Capital credits reflect margins the cooperative realizes at the end of each year. Margins, a cooperative's equivalent to "profits," are the excess of income over expenses.

Because cooperatives are member-owned, margins are allocated back to members in the form of capital credits. The amount of the allocation to a member's account

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# Safeguard your home with SurgeTamer protection

The day is bright, but thunderheads are building to the west. The clouds are piling up, looking like towers of cotton. Suddenly, a bolt of lightning bursts from the clouds, striking nearby. After the booming clap of thunder passes, you notice that your computer monitor has gone blank, your TV is not working and the microwave shows "PF" where the time should be.

Your sensitive electronic equipment has just been toasted.

Or has it? If you have Tri-County SurgeTamer surge protection devices installed, your chance of loss has been greatly reduced. SurgeTamer products provide your first line of defense against line surges caused by lightning and other sources of power surges.

Sophisticated circuitry in a SurgeTamer product either filters the surge or the device "sacrifices" itself to protect connected equipment. Without surge protection, you could be looking at replacing a computer, TV, microwave and any other electronic appliances knocked out by the lightning strike. With it, everything will be in fine working order and you can call Tri-County for free replacement of the damaged surge protection unit.

Occasionally, a surge is so quick and so severe that it not only cooks a SurgeTamer product, but also goes beyond to connected equipment. But do not panic. SurgeTamer devices come with a "down-line" warranty. Tri-County will replace the SurgeTamer product at no charge and call in a claim to the manufacturer. A statement from a certified technician or repair service accompanies the claim form for your damaged appliance or electronic device. (The warranty is secondary to your homeowners or renters insurance. It pays for damages up to the deductible amount of your homeowners policy, but not over that amount. As an example, if your appliance damages total \$500 and you have a \$250 insurance deductible, the SurgeTamer warranty covers \$250, but not the total amount. In the same

scenario, if damages total \$245, the warranty pays the full amount.)

Tri-County offers SurgeTamer surge protection units to its members at discounted prices. A variety of high-quality surge protection devices are available to meet your needs.

To help you evaluate your needs, a product list follows. For more information on Tri-County's SurgeTamer program, phone our Member Services Department at 570/662-2175 or 1-800-343-2559.

## SurgeTamer Product Line

**HG45:** Provides general protection for major household appliances, including washers, dryers and refrigerators. Installed by Tri-County personnel on your meter base.

**T40WS240:** Same as HG45, above, but wired into your home's panel box. Requires 30-amp, two-pole breaker and box.

**W200:** Two-outlet, plug-in model. Protects electronic equipment from power surges within the home. Recommended for televisions, VCRs, stereos, computers and microwave ovens. Also

available with telephone/FAX/modem protection.

**V1500S:** Eight-outlet, plug-in model with 6-foot cord. Protects electronic equipment from surges up to 20,000 amps. Recommended for televisions, home computers, microwaves, stereo equipment and answering machines.

**V1500T:** Eight-outlet, plug-in model with 6-foot cord. Protects electronic equipment from surges up to 20,000 amps. It includes protection for one standard telephone line. It would typically be used for a computer system with a modem, but could be used any place where a nearby phone needs to be protected.

**V1500D:** Eight-outlet, plug-in model with six-foot cord. Protects electronic equipment from surges up to 20,000 amps. It includes protection for one standard telephone line and two coax cable lines. It is typically used to protect a home entertainment system.

**ED 15, 20 & 30 (amps):** This device is designed to protect submersible pumps not located within the house or building. It boasts 78,000 amps maximum surge protection with less than one nanosecond response time.

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is based on energy consumption for the year.

Your electric cooperative retains margins for a period of time — historically about 20 years — to be used as working capital to repay long-term debt, maintain reserves for financing of plant replacement and to build and maintain the electric system. When the co-op is financially able to do so, it retires margins by returning capital credits, known as patronage capital, to members.

"I am extremely pleased to be able to return capital credits to members this year," adds Craig Eccher, Tri-County's executive vice president and

chief operating officer. "Because of a strong recovery following the storms of 2003, Tri-County's financial position is excellent, putting us in a position to be able to retire capital credits."

Ferd Irish, chairman of Tri-County's board of directors, notes that the board always considers the financial standing of the cooperative before approving the return of margins to members.

"Tri-County had a very good year in 2003," he says. "That we are able to return capital credits to members speaks to the health of the cooperative."