

Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

SULLIVAN COUNTY REC

P.O. Box 65
Forksville, PA 18616
570-924-3381
1-800-570-5081
Email: info@screc.com
Website: www.screc.com

STAFF

John Lykens, CEO
Todd Molyneux, Manager,
Electric Operations
Heidi Roupp, CFO
Diane E. White, Executive Assistant

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ann B. Henderson - CCD*/BLC/Gold Chair**

Stephan Paul Brady - CCD/BLC/Gold* Vice Chairman**

Kathy A. Robbins - CCD/BLC/Gold Secretary

**David L. Aumen - CCD/BLC/Gold
Karen Beinlich**

**Jeff Hamilton - CCD/BLC/Gold
Jim Lambert - CCD**

**Jay Lewis - CCD/BLC/Gold
David R. Rakestraw - CCD**

***Credentialed Cooperative Director**

****Board Leadership Certificate**

*****Director Gold Certificate**

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday
7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

From the Operations Department

WHEN MANY OF US THINK ABOUT rural living, visions of having privacy may come to mind. We assume interruptions will only come from the occasional herd of deer or maybe a bear or bobcat wandering through our property as we watch them through our windows or trail cameras.

So when you do see one or more people you do not recognize walking across your field or catch them while reviewing pictures on your trail camera, it can be disturbing. Some questions may come to mind: “Who are those people that just walked by?” “Why are they here?” “What are they doing?”

While there is always the slight possibility someone is up to no good, there is a strong chance they are employees of a company providing a service to you and the community.

While providing safe and reliable electrical service to you, the members of Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative (SCREC), co-op lineworkers and contractors may venture onto many properties in a day to maintain the electrical system that provides service to you and your neighbors. Through right-of-way and membership agreements, these lineworkers and contractors have a legal right to access any cooperative-owned equipment, including electric meters.

Your co-op provides safe and reliable electric service to 6,188 members across more than 900 miles of line. To accomplish this, SCREC employs nine lineworkers who can be identified by the utility vehicles they drive, each of which features the cooperative logo on the door. While not required to wear an official uniform, they all carry a SCREC identification card. Many have also been featured in *Penn Lines* articles over the past two years or will be featured in the coming months. Visit screc.com to read these issues of *Penn Lines* — under “News & Events,” “Past *Penn Lines*” — to get familiar with your cooperative lineworkers.

There are times when lineworkers will be on a construction project that may take days to complete. In this case, property owners are notified weeks in advance that a line crew will be working on their property. Almost every day, however, at least one crew — maybe up to four crews — is working on small jobs, such as reading electric meters, inspecting overhead and underground utility lines and rights of way, repairing electrical services, changing line equipment, and more. These crews and the jobs they do are highly mobile. Because of this, it is not feasible to schedule this work or notify members ahead of time.

SCREC also employs four local right-of-way maintenance crews (a.k.a. “tree-trimming crews”), all contracted through Spako’s Tree Service. Like our lineworkers, these crews can also be identified by their vehicles, each bearing a Spako’s Tree Service logo on the door and/or a “Contracted by Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative” sign.

Your co-op strives to communicate with you, the cooperative member, through letters when right-of-way crews will be in your area to trim and cut trees that threaten the reliability and safety of our lines. However, when there are only a few trees to be cut at various locations, SCREC does not notify members, mainly because it is impossible to schedule when and where the crews will be at all times.

I hope this article helps you identify your cooperative lineworkers and contractors and understand some of the reasons they may be on your property. If there are still doubts about the identity of workers on your property, you can always call the cooperative office at 570-924-3381 to find out if our crews are working in your area. 📍

TODD MOLYNEUX

MANAGER OF ELECTRIC OPERATIONS

Remembering Craig Harting

SARAH PARRISH, COOPERATIVE COMMUNICATOR

THREE MONTHS AGO, the family of Craig Harting said goodbye to a husband, father, grandfather, and friend. At Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative (SCREC), his work family said goodbye to their former CEO — a leader, reformer, and educator who served 32 years at the cooperative.

Craig received a Bachelor of Science in electrical engineering from Penn State University, a Bachelor of Science in business administration from Mansfield University, and a master's degree in business administration from Bucknell University. He served as manager of engineering services for Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative in Mansfield from 1980 to 1989 before starting at SCREC in September 1989. He replaced interim CEO James Miller, who was filling in after former CEO Ed Dezich retired.

"Craig was always willing to visit," recalls retired Manager of Electric Operations Walt Tubach, who worked with Craig his entire tenure at SCREC. "His door was always open no matter how busy he was. He always listened and was open to improvement."



WITH THE GUYS: Craig was determined to be out with the lineworkers during outage restoration. He spent many hours with retired Manager of Electric Operations Walt Tubach.



ALL SMILES: If you had the privilege to know Craig Harting, the cooperative's recently retired CEO, then you know he loved to talk and laugh. Harting passed away Nov. 30, 2023, following a battle with cancer.

Making things better

When Walt started at the cooperative in 1984, the average member's yearly outage time was 38 hours. By the time he retired, the average outage time was only five or six hours, thanks to improvements Craig helped to initiate. This included hiring four trimming crews from Spako's Tree Service to clear countless miles of right of way and moving line out of dense woods, swamps, and creeks to easier, more accessible locations.

Craig also centralized the co-op

at its current location on Route 87, relocating the garage, warehouse, and pole yard. Heated garages were added to thaw trucks and equipment that had been out in the weather, and he also approved the addition of three more bucket trucks and a skid steer, which have saved a lot of labor and time.

Walt's fondest memories of Craig are from outage restoration events. Even on four- or five-day outages, Craig would be out every single day from start to finish, he says.



OUT IN THE FIELD: Riding along to outage restoration familiarized Craig with the cooperative's 900-plus miles of line. He was able to take folks out in the field to show them advances being made by the operations department.



TALKING ... AND LAUGHING: Craig's ability to talk was well known, but so was his great sense of humor and easy-going, down-to-earth personality.



SPECIAL AWARDS: Craig was a strong advocate of cooperative communications and of the cooperative story. It's only right his efforts were rewarded from time to time.

"He didn't want to be in the office; he wanted to ride along to help and support the linemen," Walt says. "He was a great ground man for me; we worked a lot of time together. He really enjoyed being out with the guys, too."

Time in the field helped Craig learn the cooperative's more than 900 miles of line very well. He was able to help other co-ops navigate the system when they came to help during outage restoration. Craig's dedication to line relocation, right-of-way clearing, and the construction of substations in Dushore and Kellyburg are just a few examples of improvements made during his time at SCREC. The co-op added approximately 1,400 accounts during Craig's career, too.

"He had a real concern for the member," reminisces retired Accounts Payable Specialist Diane Cusson, who worked with Craig his entire time at SCREC. She says he was always out and about in the community and talking to members.

She remembers when he oversaw the office renovation from 2009 to 2010. The existing office was freshened up for the employees. A board room, operations center, and a new locker room for lineworkers were also added onto the existing office.

Executive Assistant Diane White worked with Craig every day for 10 years.

"He was so easy to talk to. We could

have conversations about anything," she recalls. "He was very observant and had a great memory — plus a great sense of humor. He was really easy going."

Together, the duo attended monthly board meetings, conducted a full membership survey, and promoted grassroots lobbying to our members.

"He really cared about the members," Diane White says. "He always had time to talk to them; he even wanted to talk to salesmen on the phone!"

'Caring and kind'

Craig was infamous for his thorough tours of the co-op office, warehouse, and garages he would



ON TOUR: Craig was infamous for his thorough, detailed, and lengthy co-op tours. If you ever had the honor to take part in one, you learned a lot.

give visitors. He took pride in the leaps and bounds the cooperative made during his tenure.

His dedication to the cooperative business model was evident in his work with the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association (PREA), which serves as the voice for the 14 cooperatives in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and with cooperatives across the country.

"It didn't matter if you were in Harrisburg, Baltimore or Kalamazoo, someone knew SCREC because of Craig," says Dave Aumen, who has served on the cooperative's board for 20 years. "He was so caring and kind — he had great people skills."

SCREC Board Chair Ann Henderson seconds this testament.

"Craig had been the CEO at SCREC for seven years when I was elected to the board of directors," Ann recalls. "I was the youngest director and had much to learn. Craig was an excellent teacher. He patiently answered questions and helped me understand the cooperative business."

Craig developed a two-day New Director Orientation to help newly elected directors get off to a good start. He always made sure each director had the necessary information to make important decisions at their board meetings.

"He lived, worked, and breathed SCREC; he really cared about this co-op — it was his life," Dave says.

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HELPING AND LEARNING: Whatever it was, if Craig didn't know it, he was going to learn it. Then he used that knowledge to help his co-op improve.

"He knew its ins and outs — what each employee was working through, the co-op's history, different parts and equipment used ... He really was the right man for the co-op at the right time."

"He was a hardworking man of integrity, intelligence, and a friend to all," Ann adds. "I am honored to have worked with him and known him as my friend."

Craig, who retired June 2, 2022, was the recipient of the 2023 PREA Miracle Mile Eminent Service Award, which is the organization's highest honor and is only bestowed when someone is deserving of it.

"If anyone deserved that, he did," Dave notes.

Employees Craig worked with at the co-op over three decades include: Kendall Achey, Connie Albertson, Susan Baumunk, Judson Benjamin, Russell Bennett, Nolan Chase, Don Curry, Diane Cusson, Tom Eberlin, Jon Ebright, Denise Feese, Ron Gutosky, Darrick Higley, Steve Iannone, Dave Kepner, Dave King, Ralph

Kisinger, Dennis Klem, George Kline, Alex Laudermilch, Tom Livezey, Lee Lorow, Steve MacElhaney, Jim McCarty, Ron McCarty, John Miller, Todd Molyneux, Chad Phillips, Kim Phillips, Jim Rinker, Nancy Rosbach, Wayne Rosbach, Don Shaffer, Aaron Signor, Pete Signor, Emery Smith, Mark Smith, Nancy Smith, Jeff Spako II, Jeff Spako Sr., Jon Tice, Walt Tubach, Richard Valentine, Diane White, Greg Wilcox, Lori Williams, Tyler Worthen, and John Zelewicz.

An inspiration to all

Craig was actively involved in the community. He served as trustee and administrative board chairman of Valley United Methodist Church in Muncy Valley and was treasurer for the Eagles Mere-Laporte Lions Club and the Eagles Mere-Laporte Lions Foundation. He served as president of the Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce, chairman of the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission Workforce Board, and was a member of the commission's Executive Committee. He also enjoyed working outdoors around his home.

Craig passed away Thursday, Nov. 30, 2023, after battling cancer twice.

"He served as an inspiration to us all," says current SCREC CEO John Lykens. "He loved the Lord, his wife and family, and his cooperative family. His life here on Earth was cut short, but I know he is in heaven resting in the arms of his Heavenly Father. He is and will continue to be truly missed."

If you wish to honor Craig's legacy and life, memorial contributions in his name may be made to the Eagles Mere-Laporte Lions Foundation, P.O. Box 105, Laporte, PA 18626 or to Valley United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 185, Muncy Valley, PA 17758.

I, the author, never worked for Craig at SCREC, but I did work with him while I was employed at the *Sullivan Review* (also known as the *Sully*) for various articles, including a spread in the "2022 Tourist Guide" celebrating the co-op's 85th anniversary. Between the *Sully* and SCREC I worked a short stint at Unity Laundry Systems in Dushore. Craig personally called me and urged me to apply for the open cooperative communicator position.

I had just started a new job at Unity and wasn't particularly looking to start a new job again, but I applied, and I couldn't be happier with the career choice I made. While John Lykens and Dennis Klem hired me, I think Craig had a hand in getting me into the co-op office — and I'm eternally grateful to him.

Craig did more than just impact the lives of those connected to the co-op. He made impressions on everyone he took time to visit with and will be remembered throughout our community, state, and the electric co-op world. 🍷



IN THE OFFICE: Craig served SCREC for 32 years: from September 1989 to June 2022.