

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: screc@epix.net
 Website: www.screc.com

Staff

Craig A. Harting, CEO
Dennis Klem, Manager, Finance and Administration
Walt Tubach, Manager, Electric Operations
Diane E. White, Executive Assistant

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David L. Aumen – CCD*/BLC/Gold*****
Chairman
Jay Lewis – CCD/BLC
Vice Chairman
Kathy A. Robbins – CCD/BLC/Gold
Secretary
Stephan Paul Brady – CCD/BLC/Gold
Jeff Hamilton – CCD/BLC
Ann B. Henderson – CCD/BLC
Jim Lambert
David R. Rakestraw

*Credentialed Cooperative Director
 **Board Leadership Certificate
 ***Director Gold Certificate

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

From the CEO



Employees I have worked with

By Craig A. Harting

ANY successful venture involves a group of people working together to accomplish a common goal. Over the years, I have been blessed to have worked with a wonderful group of employees who have gotten many things done and who have provided you with great service. I've been proud to have been a small part of that effort.

Many changes have come to our industry over the past 30 years. Technology has probably been the biggest change. When I started at the cooperative in 1989, we had very little technology, and now we can't operate without it. Trucks, equipment and procedures have also changed greatly, and we are now safer and more productive.

Over my 32 years at the co-op, we've added approximately 1,400 accounts, but the employee count has remained around 19 (when removing employees who were right-of-way trimmers, which is contracted work now). Here is a list of current and former employees I have worked with:

Current: Kendall Achey, Nolan Chase, Diane Cusson, Tom Eberlin, Darrick Higley, Dave Kepner, Dennis Klem, Alex Laudermilch, Tom Livezey, Todd Molyneux, Chad Phillips, Kim Phillips, Jeff Spako II, Walt Tubach, Diane White, Lori Williams, Tyler Worthen and John Zelewicz.

Former: Connie Albertson, Susan Baumunk, Judson Benjamin, Russell Bennett, Don Curry, Jon Ebright, Denise Feese, Ron Gutosky, Steve Iannone, Dave King, Ralph Kisinger, George Kline, Lee Lorow, Steve MacElhaney, Jim McCarty, Ron McCarty, John Miller, Jim Rinker, Nancy Rosbach, Wayne Rosbach, Don Shaffer, Aaron Signor, Pete Signor, Emery Smith, Mark Smith, Nancy Smith, Jeff Spako Sr., Jon Tice, Richard Valentine and Greg Wilcox.

Coincidentally, we've also had two employees with the same name working at the same time in our small group. Over the years, we have had two employees at the same time with the names of John, Ron, Nancy, Jim, Dave, Tom and Diane. In fact, right now we have two Toms and two Dianes working at the co-op.

I have greatly enjoyed working with all of these folks, and I am going to miss them immensely. I have appreciated all of their hard work to serve you the very best way we can. We are fortunate to have had these dedicated folks, and I know this will continue into the future.

I am very comfortable saying they will continue to provide you with great service for many years to come. I wish all of them the very best, and I thank them for their service. ❁

Makes natural soap at home with goat's milk

By John Zelewicz
Penn Lines Writer

SOAP. It's something that we use every day. We wash dishes with dish soap, our clothes with laundry detergent and our vehicles with car soap. And, of course, we use it to wash our hands and the rest of our bodies when taking a bath or shower.

But not all soap is created equal.

Commercial bar soap is normally produced on a large scale using harsh chemicals, synthetic ingredients, cheap fragrance oils and artificial colors. Some people look for an alternative to the soap sold at the local store. They don't like using a commercial bar soap because it can irritate their skin.

One such person is Madison Minnier. After getting some milk goats and then a farm, Madison decided to make her own soap using goat's milk.

"Store-bought soap has so many chemicals and fragrances," she says. "I try to stay more natural. The soap I make isn't as harsh."

Madison and her husband, Dillon, purchased the farm two years ago, and Madison started making soap about a year ago. At first, she made the soap just for herself, but then had family and friends asking if they could buy some from her. From there, she decided that, with all of the various events held each year in the area, she'd



THE GIVING GOAT: Madison Minnier has five goats, including a Nigerian dwarf and an Oberhasli/Alpine mix. Currently, she's only milking one goat for milk to drink and make soap.



FULL OF GRATITUDE: Madison Minnier began making and selling goat's milk soap about a year ago at her farm. Although originally called The Grateful Goat Farm, the property is now known as Minnier's Grateful Acres.

make and sell her soaps.

Of course, Madison didn't know anything about making soap and turned to the internet for help in getting started.

"Making soap doesn't require that much. I use olive oil, coconut oil, lye...pretty much everything I need, including silicone molds, I get online," she explains. "I also follow some of the soap-making groups on Facebook. The

online groups really had a lot of good information."

She begins by heating up the coconut oil and then mixes in the olive oil. Once the oil is ready, she'll mix the goat's milk/lye mixture into it slowly to blend it all together. She'll then add colors and essential oils before pouring the mixture into molds.

The soap mixture will sit in the mold for about 48 hours. Then it's taken out, cut into bars and set aside to cure for four to six weeks.

Prefers to make two batches at a time

When making soap, Madison normally makes a double batch using 2 pounds of coconut oil and 2 pounds of olive oil. The double batch will make about 15 to 20 bars of soap. There is a wide assortment of different sizes and shapes of molds available. It all depends on what kind of mold you want to use.

"The molds I use will make a four-to five-ounce bar of soap," she says. "The longer you let it sit and cure, the longer it will last. You want to let them cure long enough to get as much moisture out of them as you can."

What kind of soap does Madison make? She makes unscented, peppermint and eucalyptus, oats and honey, lemongrass and cedarwood ... and even one that's coffee-scented.

"We got honey from Justin Cott, who just lives down the road. My sister also has bees, and we'll get honey from her, too, for the soap," Madison says. "Oats and honey are good to moisturize skin, and coffee



SELLING SOAP: Madison Minnier first started making goat's milk soap just for herself, but it wasn't long before friends and family wanted to buy the soap from her. She sells the soap locally and online at Etsy.

soap is good for exfoliating skin. I picked them because they're good for your skin. I looked at what types of soap other companies make and then created my own combinations."

You may wonder how long a bar of soap will last. While an average bar of soap will last about a month, a lot depends on the amount of time spent taking a bath or shower and the water temperature. According to Madison, the best way to ensure soap lasts a long time is to allow it to dry after being used.

"If you use it for hand soap, it lasts a long time as long as you make sure it can dry out," she says. "You want to keep the soap out of moisture to make it last longer."

Of course, one of the most important ingredients found in goat's milk soap is...goat's milk. Madison and Dillon have five goats. Currently, they're only getting milk from one goat, but will

soon begin milking two.

"We get about a gallon of milk a day from our goat. That's way more than we can drink," Madison says. "We have a couple of pygmy goats, a Nigerian dwarf and an Oberhasli/Alpine mix. I mainly wanted a full-sized goat for the milk. The one goat is 3 years old and still gives us milk."

A name change

When Madison decided to start selling the soap she makes, she had to come up with a name. She and Dillon listen to the Grateful Dead a lot and felt that their goats were pretty grateful, so she named her business The Grateful Goat Farm. Recently, though, she decided to change the name.

"We recently changed our name to Minnier's Grateful Acres because we wanted it to be more about the farm than just the goats. We wanted to let



CUTTING AND CURING: While Madison Minnier doesn't produce wine-scented soap, she did find that a wine rack is an excellent way to dry the soap she makes. Once the soap is removed from the mold, it's cut into bars and set aside to cure for four to six weeks.

people know that we're not just a goat farm," Madison explains.

So where can you purchase Madison's soap? In addition to local shows and events, her soap will be available at the Between Bridges store near Forksville at the intersection of Routes 154 and 87.

Her soap is also available for purchase at Etsy, a global, online marketplace where people come together to make, sell, buy and collect unique items. It's a community pushing for positive change for small businesses, people and the planet. There is no Etsy warehouse — just millions of people selling the things they love.

There is a link to Etsy on Madison's Facebook page, Minnier's Grateful Acres. A four- to five-ounce bar of soap is \$6, while a two-ounce bar of soap is \$3.

In the future, Madison hopes to do more than make soap. The couple have pigs, beef cows and chickens and plan on selling the meat. In the meantime, Madison will keep busy with making the goat's milk soap that people can't seem to get enough of.

"The response to my soap has been good," she says. "I'm constantly having people contact me, saying they're getting low and asking me when they can get more." ❁

Youth tour students receive educational grant

EACH YEAR students are selected from member families to represent Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) at the annual Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. This year, Pennsylvania opted not to participate in the event due to safety reasons and uncertainty about the pandemic.

This annual event started in 1957, when then U.S. Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson spoke to electric cooperative leaders. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association began coordinating the program in 1964.

The Sullivan County REC Board of Directors decided to give each of the following students an educational opportunity grant this year since they will not be able to attend Youth Tour 2022.

Brianna Trueman attends Montoursville Area High School and is the daughter of Betsy and Mark Trueman. Brianna is a member of the National Honor Society, Homecoming Committee, National Math Honor Society and the National English Honor Society. She is on the varsity softball team and plays for Team Pennsylvania Fastpitch. Brianna enjoys ceramics, reading, painting, traveling, volunteering, and coaching younger athletes in her spare time.



Brianna Trueman

Brianna's career goal is to work in the biochemistry field.

Matthias Albert attends Montoursville Area High School and is the son of Ronda and Danny Albert. Matthias has been on the varsity soccer team for three years and has lettered each year. He has also been on the baseball team and is the president of FFA. When Matthias is not in school, he works as a snowboard instructor and in landscaping. He likes to hunt, fish, and do archery and woodworking. Matthias' career goal is to weld in the military.



Matthias Albert

Rocky Finnegan attends Sullivan County High School and is the son of Heather and Rick Finnegan. Rocky is a member of the National Honor Society and is on the soccer and wrestling teams. He is a member of the Spanish, history and ski clubs, and participates in Envirothon. Rocky likes weightlifting, hunting and fishing in his spare time. Rocky's career goal is to go into the military or law enforcement.



Rocky Finnegan

We at Sullivan County REC would like to congratulate these three students and wish them well on their future! 🌟

Thanks to our linemen!

Rural electric cooperatives celebrated National Lineworker Appreciation Day in April.

We would like to say thank you to our linemen at Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative. Because of them, the power stays on day and night and in good or bad weather.

- Kendall Achey
- Nolan Chase
- Darrick Higley
- David Kepner
- Alex Laudermilch
- Tom Livezey
- Todd Molyneux
- Chad Phillips
- Jeff Spako II
- Walt Tubach
- Tyler Worthen

OFFICE CLOSING

Sullivan County REC offices will be closed on Monday, May 30, 2022, in observance of Memorial Day.

PLUG INTO SAFETY

ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH
Make electrical safety a priority this month, and every month.