



Harrison Rural Electrification Association, Inc.

2100 Sun Valley Road
Clarksburg, WV 26301

800-540-HREA

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



www.harrisonrea.com

Cost versus benefit

WE HAVE SPOKEN QUITE a bit over the past few years about many of the changes the cooperative is undergoing to keep up with the demands of members and various governmental agencies. Change comes about through a perceived necessity to improve particular areas of our business. Many times the perception is so glaringly obvious that we are left wondering why we didn't make the change earlier. Obviously when it is a business that needs to make changes, someone needs to evaluate the cost versus the benefits of the change. While this may seem fairly uncomplicated on the surface, it is often quite difficult to truly quantify these parameters to determine whether a change will have the positive affect we expect.

As we progress through our initiative to better use the technological advances available to us, we also need to analyze the peripheral processes and proce-

dures that are affected in some way by these changes. Currently, we are making an in-depth analysis of the proposed outage management system (OMS). The communications and other interactions between the OMS with our recently completed geographic information (GIS) and advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) systems are fairly straightforward; the areas that we have identified as needing more focus are in-truck communications and office-procedural based. The bottom line is that unless we address the human element, the technology can only provide a less-than-desired benefit.

We are testing in-truck solutions that include devices that will allow field personnel to monitor progress in near real time. The geography of our area tends to be the biggest hurdle we need to overcome in solving this field-communications barrier. We have narrowed the possibilities to two choices and now need to determine the best performer. The actual devices the field personnel will use depends upon their primary job functions and could be one or a combination of a laptop, a tablet and a GPS unit. All can have satellite capabilities that provide the best coverage for uninterrupted mapping needs.

Procedurally, we have been taking an extended look at how outage information is handled by our telephone service and

Manager's Corner

by Terry Stout,
CEO/General Manager



our own internal communications between departments. The current telephone answering service does not have certain capabilities that are now available because of our other technological advancements. We have been in discussions with a cooperative call center that provides this service to several other electric cooperatives and are more capable to handle the large call volume associated with outage situations. This service also has the ability to take credit and debit card payments after hours and weekends and can have direct access to our OMS, where staff can monitor our map and enter calls. Internally, moving to a system that allows calls to be associated with a connectivity tree that can identify the devices affected and then predict the scope of the outage and take the incoming calls and associate them with this information would be a huge asset in our restoration process. We are still working on a few details, but we anticipate a change is imminent. As painful as it is, sometimes we just have to pay more to attain the proper cost-versus-benefit balance for standard of service we expect.

Hope everyone is having a safe and happy summer. ☺

Board of Directors

Greg Robertson, Dist. 2 President
C.B. Sharp, Dist. 1 Vice President
Darrell Powell, Dist. 6 Sec.-Treas.
Glenn Cox Dist. 3 James Stuart Dist. 4
Ron Watson Dist. 5 Michael Cross Dist. 7

Terry Stout, General Manager
Lloyd Mason IT Manager
Sam Satterfield Operations Manager
Scott Wyckoff Line Supervisor
Jon Paul McAllister Staking Technician
Brittany Grover Editor
Missie Stephenson Accountant
Office Hours
7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Mon.-Fri.

New apprentice lineman joins HREA



Trey Allison

BY BRITTANY GROVER

The HREA family has welcomed Reagan Jerome Allison III, also known as Trey, as a first-year apprentice lineman as of May 26.

Trey is from Doddridge County, where you can typically find him racing his dirt bike, fishing or riding around and hanging out. He attended Notre Dame High School but graduated from Liberty High School in 2013. Trey also attended a year at Marion Tech for lineman's school.

"I've always wanted to be a lineman. I love the work they do and wanted to be a part of it," he said.

Trey worked in the wash-bay at RG Honda Yamaha before applying at Harrison Rural Electric, or what he calls his "dream job."

Trey says he is most excited about being a lineman and serving the membership. He mentioned that he is also looking forward to working in such a tight-knit family-like group versus a large, over-populated company.

We're excited to have Trey as part of the crew and expect great things as he grows throughout his career here. So if you see our new lineman out on the lines, be sure to give him a warm welcome.

Curran retires after 29 years with HREA



Bill Jack Curran

BY BRITTANY GROVER

After nearly 29 years of service to our membership, William "Bill Jack" Curran is retiring from the cooperative as of July 6. Bill Jack started his career as a meter technician on Aug. 18, 1986, and since then has dabbled in every field, from reception to line work to meter technician.

Bill Jack has always graced HREA with a friendly, positive attitude and a great sense of humor.

You can always count on him to provide a mischievous smile and, most assuredly, a story along with it. Although we are not ready to lose his wisdom and knowledge out in the field, Bill Jack is ready for the next chapter in his life. He is looking forward to tending to his farm and training his dogs for bear-hunting season. Though he won't admit to it, you can tell that he is greatly looking forward to spending more time with his wife, Angie, and getting to work on her "honey-do" list that's been accumulating over their 42 years together. He's ready to have more time to spend with his children and his grandchildren and to start making up for all of the time spent away while working.

"HERA,' as a lot of people call HREA, has been a really good thing in my life and my family's," Bill Jack said, reflecting on his time with the co-op. "The consumers are great friends, and I have enjoyed working with them over the years. I have enjoyed being a part of this co-op family and hope they continue to grow as a family. Now, I'll enjoy time with the wife, my family, our farm and dogs. I'm looking forward to gearing up for bear-hunting season and many other frivolous hunting activities!"

Thank you, Bill Jack, for all of your hard work and dedication to this company — you will be missed. Good luck in all your future endeavors, and happy hunting!



If you see one of these people this month, be sure to wish him or her a very happy birthday!

Jody Swiger, cashier/receptionist — Aug. 9
Paul McAllister, staking technician — Aug. 30

Cutting the cable is a real possibility: Part 3

BY LLOYD MASON

Streaming used to involve a fishing pole or a canoe. Nowadays, streaming means something very different and very specific.

First, let's look at the definition of streaming: a method of transmitting or receiving data, especially video and audio material, over a computer network as a steady, continuous flow, allowing playback to proceed while subsequent data is being received.

Streaming has become the main tool we can use to cut the cable. It allows us to have in our homes the ability to control every aspect of a chosen piece of media. Until a short time ago, these controls were only possible with a recording device like a DVR or a previously digitized movie or TV show.

Now compare the companies dedicated to providing this kind of content. These companies are often referred to as "content providers," which means they work out all the licensing requirements needed to broadcast the content legally.

1) **Netflix:** Primarily a movie- and TV-streaming service with a wide selection and a stable, optimized interface that works on many different devices. Most feel that at \$9 per month, unlimited streaming is certainly within reach.

2) **Hulu:** What distinguishes this service right away is its wide assortment of TV shows that are available just after the original air date. Hulu offers the new episode and usually entire seasons, depending on Hulu's agreement with the show. Again, the modest price of \$8 per month is easy to part with when one considers the massive library at your fingertips and the cost comparison to most cable packages.

3) **Amazon Prime:** Amazon has decided to be a player in this growing sector, and they are ready to compete. A huge selection and lots of newly added content make the \$99 yearly fee to join Amazon Prime, roughly \$8.95 per month, equivalent to their competitors. But Amazon Prime offers perks with this yearly membership not offered with other services, including free two day shipping on many items in Amazon's marketplace, unlimited music streaming and a certain amount of photo storage. Amazon also offers movies and TV shows for purchase outside of the media available through your Prime membership.

4) **Sling Television:** This is a service that is very similar to cable without the high cost. For a paltry \$20 per month, Sling will provide live channels with no contract and no set-top box. For sports fans, this is the only streaming service to offer ESPN and ESPN2 without affiliation to another network. Other popular networks like CNN, TBS, Food Network and Cartoon Network are also thrown in to sweeten the deal.

5) **PlayStation Vue:** Because there is no time or space to cover them all, we will leave off with the PlayStation Network. This is a gamer-first network with some very nice non-gamer content added. The overall cost of this service is similar to cable or satellite, with the live multiplayer game aspect front and center. With that said, if your goal is to save money and get more programming for less, this service is not a good fit. For a gamer, this service is awesome, but for other people in the house who want content without an avatar login prompt or profile setup, this has the potential to be confusing.

Til next time @TECH CORNER — The Summary for Cutting the Cable 2015

LLOYD MASON is the manager of information technology at Harrison Rural Electric Association. He writes monthly on technology issues affecting our cooperative and members.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Periodically inspect your dryer vent to ensure it is not blocked. This will save energy and may prevent a fire. Manufacturers recommend using a rigid venting material — not plastic vents that may collapse and cause blockages.

Source: energy.gov

HREA sponsors 2 on Youth Tour 2015

BY BRITTANY GROVER

IN JUNE, HARRISON RURAL ELECTRIFICATION Association sponsored two students on a free trip to Washington, D.C., for the 2015 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Liberty High School junior Landon Davis and from South Harrison High School sophomore Ben Talbott joined 36 other students from Ohio and West Virginia, who are all members of electric cooperatives, on the week-long trip.

The trip allows teens representing electric cooperatives in 43 states to meet peers from all across the country, learn about government and electric cooperatives, meet with their elected officials in Congress, and see many of the famous Washington sites, including Lincoln and Jefferson memorials, Ford's Theater and the Smithsonian Institution.

"It was a fantastic experience," Landon said. "Visiting the places that birthed our nation really brought about a sense of patriotism. To stand where those men stood centuries ago was euphoric and amazing!" He also thoroughly enjoyed seeing George Washington's homestead Mount Vernon, the Washington monuments and memorials, and the museums. "It would be hard to leave not feeling satisfied."

Both students said they enjoyed meeting new people, making new friends and exploring Washington.

"To anybody considering this trip I would definitely recommend it because it is exciting and full of cool learning experiences," Ben said. "Every day was packed full of fun and exciting things to do. We went everywhere, it seemed, and got to meet new people and make new friends as the trip progressed."

Ben said he has broadened his views on public speaking, learned about budgeting and had a taste of how our government runs. He said this trip has changed his life; he's made lifetime friends, and will always have the memories of their trip with him. "All in all I would, without a doubt, recommend this trip to anybody who could go on it."

Landon agreed. "This will be one of those trips you remember for a lifetime," he said. "Getting to interact with new people and explore the monuments and sights of D.C. is an experience like no other. You'll make friendships that last decades, even if you don't think you will. Make the most

out of it. This is a fantastic opportunity. Don't waste it!"

HREA thanks Landon and Ben for representing their cooperative on the Youth Tour this year you both represented our cooperative and state well. We are grateful for your participation and willingness to step outside your comfort zones and allow yourselves this once-in-a-lifetime experience. ☺

Interested in going on Youth Tour?

Eligible students include sophomores and juniors in high school whose parents and/or guardians are currently members of HREA. If you or someone you know would be interested in participating in the 2016 Youth Tour, please contact the office at 304-624-6365.



Ben Talbott, left, and Landon Davis visited the Lincoln Memorial as part of the 2015 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour.