

PowerLines

YOUR CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE NEWS CONNECTION

Central Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative



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Raise Your Voice

BY MATT BOSHAW
CEO & General Manager

Politics are divisive. In today’s environment, this is perhaps the most understated and obvious comment. It has been said that cooperatives were born in politics which, on the surface, makes the divisive nature of politics concerning to our business model. The good news is that while we are involved in political advocacy, we are not part of the divide.

Central Electric Cooperative (CEC), and cooperatives in general, are neither Republican or Democrat, or conservative or liberal. We are cooperative. Individual members, employees and board directors most certainly have their own respective political opinions and they advocate for candidates and policies that align with those opinions. Your cooperative, however, advocates for policies, laws and candidates that support the cooperative business model and our ability to provide safe, reliable and affordable electric service to our members. It is in this advocacy that

those with varied positions come together in support of their cooperative.

I don’t want to imply that we stay out of the fray of politics, quite the contrary. Whether through legislative initiatives or agency regulation, laws and regulations are regularly considered and changed, which can impact our ability to serve our members. When those issues are considered, we discuss, debate, argue and advocate for the best interests of our members.

So, how do we manage this process? Even though CEC is an independently self-governed, private, not-for-profit electric distribution cooperative, we aren’t alone in our advocacy. We are members of both statewide (PREA) and national (NRECA) associations that enable us to leverage the grassroots support of about 900 cooperatives and 42 million members across the country. Our efforts take a layered approach beginning with our local cooperatives and members advocating within the communities we serve. The next layer would be through our statewide association with 14 participating cooperatives in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, which represent 600,000 rural

Continued on page 2

residents. Finally, we work through our national association leveraging the entire 900 cooperative and 42 million member network. The process of organizing these efforts starts with our members. We suggest issues for discussion and organize resolutions representing the entire group. These resolutions provide direction to our state and federal lobbying efforts.

A couple of the weightier issues our lobbyists are actively pursuing include the electrification of the transportation sector and the transition of power supply away from fossil fuel generators. I mention these two in particular as they each come with a great deal of political controversy and are often debated independently, though they are directly linked.

Since we sell electricity, you may think the additional load of electric vehicles being added to our system would be a source of growth that would help to maintain the financial health of CEC, and you would be right. However, the devil is in the details. How and how quickly this happens can either lead to that positive or create the negatives of increased cost or lack of availability.

Similarly, the transition to alternate fuel supplies to generate electricity is not as simple as it is sometimes communicated. While an electron is an electron, not all generators are created equal. Scale, schedulability, and cost can vary significantly and there are other factors to consider as well. The link between these issues is as simple as supply and demand. As regulatory requirements require the closure of generating facilities before viable replacements are available, supply is decreased. At the same time mandates and incentives to increase electric vehicle production and usage lead to increased demand. I am not an economist, but my undergrad economics class told me that decreased supply and increased demand lead to increased costs. Compounding that is that electricity is an essential service and at some point, regardless of the cost, there is not enough supply to serve the demand, which has been demonstrated by rolling blackouts in some parts of the country during high demand periods.

These, and other, issues are complicated. Those making decisions need to be educated by those who understand them best and are most impacted by them. Your cooperative needs you to raise your voice and participate in our grassroots efforts. Lobbyists working on your behalf are not in the room and listened to because of money like big corporations and special interest lobbyists are. They are there and heard because they represent 42 million members, actual people who vote.

To that end we have the opportunity to participate in America’s Electric Cooperatives PAC, recently rebranded from ACRE and Co-op Owners for political action. The more of us that participate, the louder our voice when advocating for important cooperative issues. I am asking you to join me, your board of directors and staff as members of America’s Electric Cooperatives PAC and raise our collective voices in support of maintaining safe, reliable and affordable electric service. Raise your voice with your fellow members in support of your cooperative. Visit our website or give us a call for more information.



America’s Electric Cooperatives | PAC

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Matthew P. Boshaw

CEO & General Manager

Chester Conti

Director of Finance and Accounting/CFO

Lisa A. Hoover

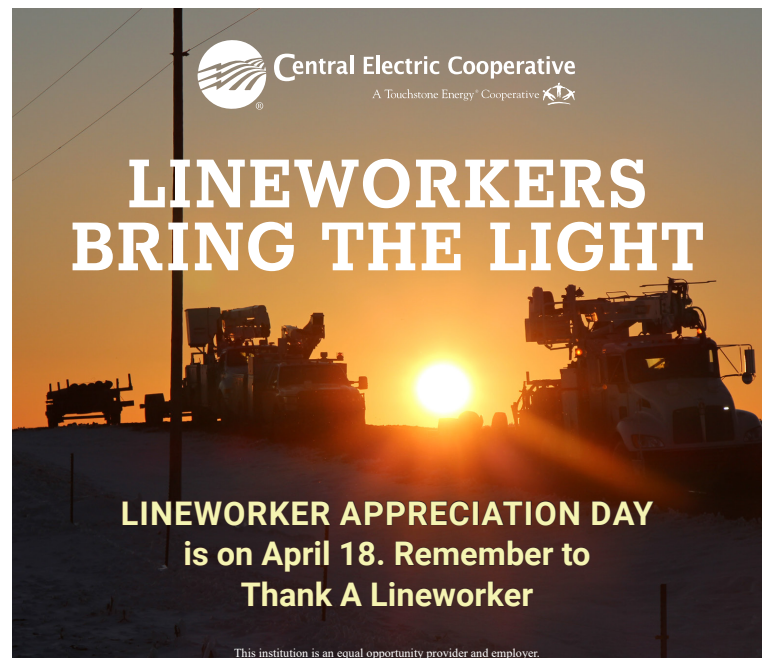
Director of Member Services

Christopher W. Kossman

Director of Information Technology

Fred E. Terwilliger

Assistant General Manager/COO



Save the Date for CEC's Member Appreciation Event!

June 14, 2024

CEC is thrilled to invite our members to the 2024 Member Appreciation Event. The event will take place at CEC's headquarters in Parker, PA on June 14, 2024, from 3-7 p.m. Members can expect an open-house style event that includes entertainment, educational information, children's activities, giveaways and raffles, opportunities to meet your board of directors and staff members, and refreshments. Come and experience CEC at your pace and at a time that is convenient for you!

Members will be able to explore the facility while having the opportunity to view CEC's fleet, take in EV

information, and learn from our lineman through our hotline and pole climbing demonstrations. CEC is also planning entertainment for attendees, such as a band, car show, a food truck, and more. This event will be perfect for the whole family as there will be attractions for children. Bucket truck rides, face painting, and electrical safety education will be available! You will not be leaving empty handed -- CEC will have giveaways and raffles set up throughout the event.

We hope to see you, our members, so we can share information, share in fellowship, provide a look beyond the lines, and most importantly, show our gratitude to the membership at the 2024 Member Appreciation event on June 14, 2024.

More information will be released in the coming weeks, but as always, feel free to contact CEC with any questions.

Help Make a Cooperative Difference: Join America's Electric Cooperatives PAC!

CEC cares about giving members reliable and reasonably priced electricity. While many of the cooperative's decisions are made internally, sometimes decisions affecting our membership are made by legislators in Harrisburg and Washington, D.C.

CEC recognizes the importance of expressing concerns and providing information about co-ops and rural communities to our national, state and local legislators. America's Electric Cooperatives Political Action Committee (PAC), formerly known as ACRE, provides a voice for electric cooperatives. The PAC is a non-partisan political action committee that aids legislators who support cooperative initiatives.

Your participation in the PAC will support legislators who understand our interests and fight for co-op members. Members can also support the PAC's initiatives by knowing co-op issues, engaging with local legislators as an electric cooperative leader, and by voting.

You can add your voice to this important cause and join the PAC by filling out the adjacent form and sending it in with your electric bill. For more information, visit our website at www.central.coop or contact your PAC coordinator, Toni Bresnahan, at 800-521-0570 x2161.

Sign Me Up Today!

Select:

- \$25 Regular Member
- \$50 Ambassador Club Member
- \$100 Century Club Member

Payment options:

- Add a one-time contribution to my electric bill
- Enclosed is a check payable to PREA ACRE

I affirm that my contribution has been made with personal funds:

Name: _____

Account # _____

Address: _____

Return this form to:

Central Electric Cooperative
Attn: ACRE
P.O. Box 329
Parker, PA 16049

Contributions to the NRECA America's Electric Cooperatives PAC are not tax deductible for federal income tax purposes. Contributions to America's Electric Cooperatives PAC are voluntary and will be used for political purposes. You have the right to refuse to contribute without reprisal. Federal law prohibits contributions from foreign nations who lack permanent resident status. Any contribution guidelines presented are merely suggestions. You are free to contribute more or less than the suggested amounts, or not at all. NRECA will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount contributed or a decision not to contribute.



Safe Driving Practices to Protect Linemen

by Dylan Linke, Manager of Safety and Loss Control

CEC serves over 25,000 members across 3,000 miles of line in seven counties surrounding our headquarters in Parker, PA. CEC linemen, engineers, meter servicemen, and other employees work hard every day to perform maintenance on our facilities, complete system improvement projects, and occasionally respond to an emergency event to restore an outage. This type of fieldwork typically occurs on the rights-of-way, with many of them being next to or adjacent to public and private roadways. The primary focus of this article is to protect linemen and field personnel from unnecessary harm, as well as provide valuable information about new laws and safe driving practices.

The safety of our linemen and other field workers is of the utmost importance at CEC. We strive to provide them with the necessary tools, equipment, and resources to complete their job in the safest way possible. By far, one of the biggest hazards faced by CEC employees is both working and driving on roadways where they are susceptible to an incident involving a motor vehicle. Pennsylvania has put forth a tremendous amount of effort to help protect utility workers, first responders, emergency personnel and general motorists from unexpected hazards along the side of the road.

Pennsylvania's "Move Over" Law requires drivers approaching an emergency response area, who are unable to safely merge into a lane farther away from the

response area, to "pass the emergency response area at a speed of no more than 20 MPH less than the posted speed limit and reasonable for safely passing." An emergency response area is defined as an area where an emergency vehicle has its lights flashing, or where road/utility crews or emergency responders have lighted flares, posted signs or other means of trying to warn oncoming travelers.

The law became effective April 27, 2021. The new penalty system legally and financially burden motorists who do not comply with the law's requirements. Penalties for violations range from an increased number of points applied on the motorist's driver's license, to license suspension periods and fines upwards of \$10,000. Penalties can double for violations committed in emergency response areas when crews or first responders are present.

Please remember to drive slowly and use caution when you see emergency vehicles and lighting, road flares, signage, and/or traffic control devices along the roadway.

The information in this article was sourced from PennDOT.



Role: Payroll Specialist
Employee Since: April 2005

Employee Spotlight: Jessica Mechling



Tell us about a professional success story that you are proud of. Completing and earning my HR degree in 1.5 years while working full-time with two busy kids.



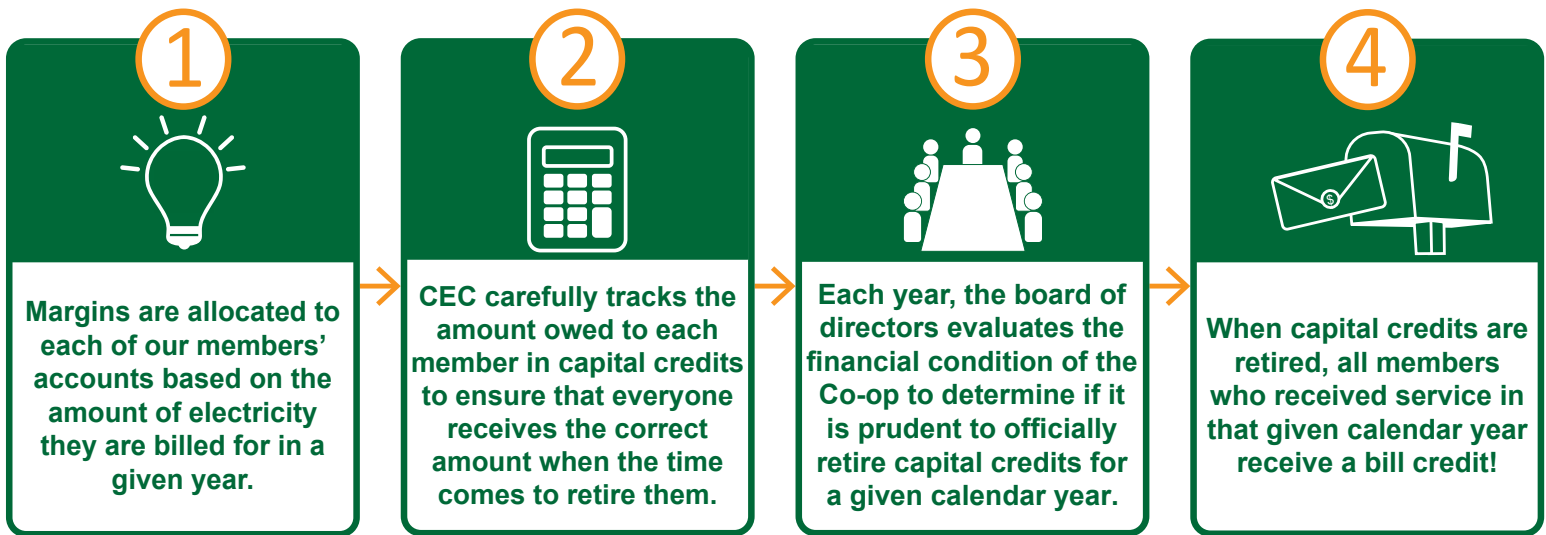
What is your favorite family tradition? Watching my kids, Ava and Aiden, bet and break the Thanksgiving wishbone each year.



What was your first job? I worked part-time at Ponderosa in high school. My first full-time job was at CEC.



Do you have any pets? I have a dog named Zeke who is 3-years-old. I also have a turtle named Tilly who is 13-years-old.



Capital Credits Clarification

Perhaps one of the most valuable benefits for members of an electric co-op are capital credits. Your cooperative is a not-for-profit, member-owned electric utility. We exist for our members, not shareholders. Capital credits are just one of the ways we are different from investor-owned electric companies. As a member-owned organization, CEC returns profits, called margins, back to members.

Over the years, CEC has returned millions of dollars in capital credit payments to both current and past members.

What are Capital Credits?

Capital credits are a return of members' equity or ownership in the cooperative that has accumulated over a period of time.

How does CEC decide how much capital credit money a member gets back each year?

A few factors determine how much capital credit money the co-op can retire. CEC must have enough cash on hand to cover operating costs to provide reliable service and pay expenses. Additionally, the co-op must maintain a good equity ratio. Retiring capital credits reduces CEC's equity ratio, so this must remain in good standing after paying members.

Once CEC's finance and accounting department determines how to keep the cooperative within a healthy equity ratio, the board of directors is presented with four options for approval. The board prefers an option that gives something back to everyone, whether the member has been with CEC for one year or 25 years.

Why don't members just get all of their money back from the previous year? Why are retirements spread out?

CEC operates on a 15-20 year capital credit rotation. The goal of the rotation is to maintain healthy business operations and equity levels.

How much is CEC retiring in 2024?

The co-op is retiring \$1.9 million in 2024. Members will see this appear as a bill credit on their April bill.

Why did my neighbor receive a check and I didn't?

Members who have an active account with CEC will receive their capital credits via a bill credit on their April electric bill. If someone has moved or is no longer a member, they will still receive their capital credit allocation. However, since they no longer have an account, a check is issued to them instead.

What does CEC do with unclaimed capital credits?

CEC seeks out former members who are due capital credits, even if they are no longer a member. If the member does not claim them and the capital credits remain unclaimed for three or more years, they are transferred to a fund for charitable and educational purposes. Scholarships, the Youth Tour program and various community donations are just a few examples of what unclaimed capital credits are used for.

Because capital credits may not be retired for several years, it is important that you keep the cooperative informed of your current address. If you move and are no longer a member, be sure to update your contact information so we can send you a capital credits check.

For more information on capital credits, please visit www.central.coop/capital-credits or call our office at 800-521-0570.

by Kessa Moore, Communication Specialist



GenerLink & Protecting Linemen

by Connie Long, Member Energy Specialist

Did you know that Linemen Appreciation Day is in April? We, of course, celebrate this day at the cooperative as the linemen play an extremely important role here. We all appreciate what they do and do our part to keep them safe. To help protect our linemen, CEC sells a device called a GenerLink that hooks up to a portable generator to prevent backfeeding.

Now, what is a GenerLink? A GenerLink is a device we offer to our members for purchase. It enables you to plug in a portable generator quickly and safely during an unfortunate power outage. We offer a few different models and sizes of GenerLinks. If you are interested in a GenerLink, please visit our website or give me a call to determine which GenerLink is compatible with your generator. Once we determine the type of GenerLink you need, I will schedule a convenient time to have a line service tech come out and install the GenerLink safely and properly. If you choose to be home when they install the device, they will gladly demonstrate step-by-step instructions on how to connect the generator and GenerLink correctly and safely.

One of the main goals of a GenerLink is to protect our

linemen. Choosing to have a GenerLink means when you connect your generator during outages, it will prevent backfeeding onto the lines. Backfeeding occurs when the flow of power is reversed. This usually occurs when someone hooks a generator up through an unapproved source. Not only could this send power into your home, but it also sends power back onto the power grid. This is extremely dangerous for not only our linemen, but also you, our members, and your neighbors. Backfeeding can cause fires, generators to explode, serious harm or even electrocution to our linemen while they work on restoring your power. So, please be cautious and take the extra step to do things safely. Check out our website or give us a call for any questions about a GenerLink. Let's all do our part to keep our linemen safe and if you see any of our linemen on April 18, let them know they are appreciated!



LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY
We thank lineworkers for their courage and commitment to powering our communities.

2024 Photo Contest

CEC invites you to submit your best photo for our 2024 Photo Contest. The top three winners will receive a prize: a \$100 bill credit for first place, a \$50 bill credit for second place, and a \$25 bill credit for third place.

Submit your photo for a chance to win! The photo can be of beautiful scenery, power lines, landscapes, or anything! Members must submit their photo before June 7. Members will vote for the top five photos from June 14 to July 26. Then voting begins for the top three photos from Aug. 2 to Oct. 18.

Voting will take place on CEC's website. Members can also vote for the top three photos using a ballot in the September issue of this newsletter. Winning photos will appear on CEC's website and in publications of this newsletter. Winners will be announced in late October.

By submitting a photo to this contest you grant CEC permission to use the image in any and all of its publications, including internal and external newsletters and website, without payment. However, photo credit will be given. CEC reserves the right to disqualify any photo deemed inappropriate or offensive.

Rules:

1. Only one entry per membership.
2. A CEC member must have taken the photo within one of CEC's seven service counties (Allegheny, Armstrong, Butler, Clarion, Forest, Mercer and Venango).
3. The photo should be submitted electronically through CEC's website by June 7. When submitting a photo, you must include where the photo was taken, your name, CEC account number, and a title for the photo.
4. Employees and directors of CEC, along with their immediate families, are ineligible.
5. The prizes will appear as a credit on the winners' bills and may not be redeemed for cash.

Please call 800-521-0570 if you have questions about the photo contest.

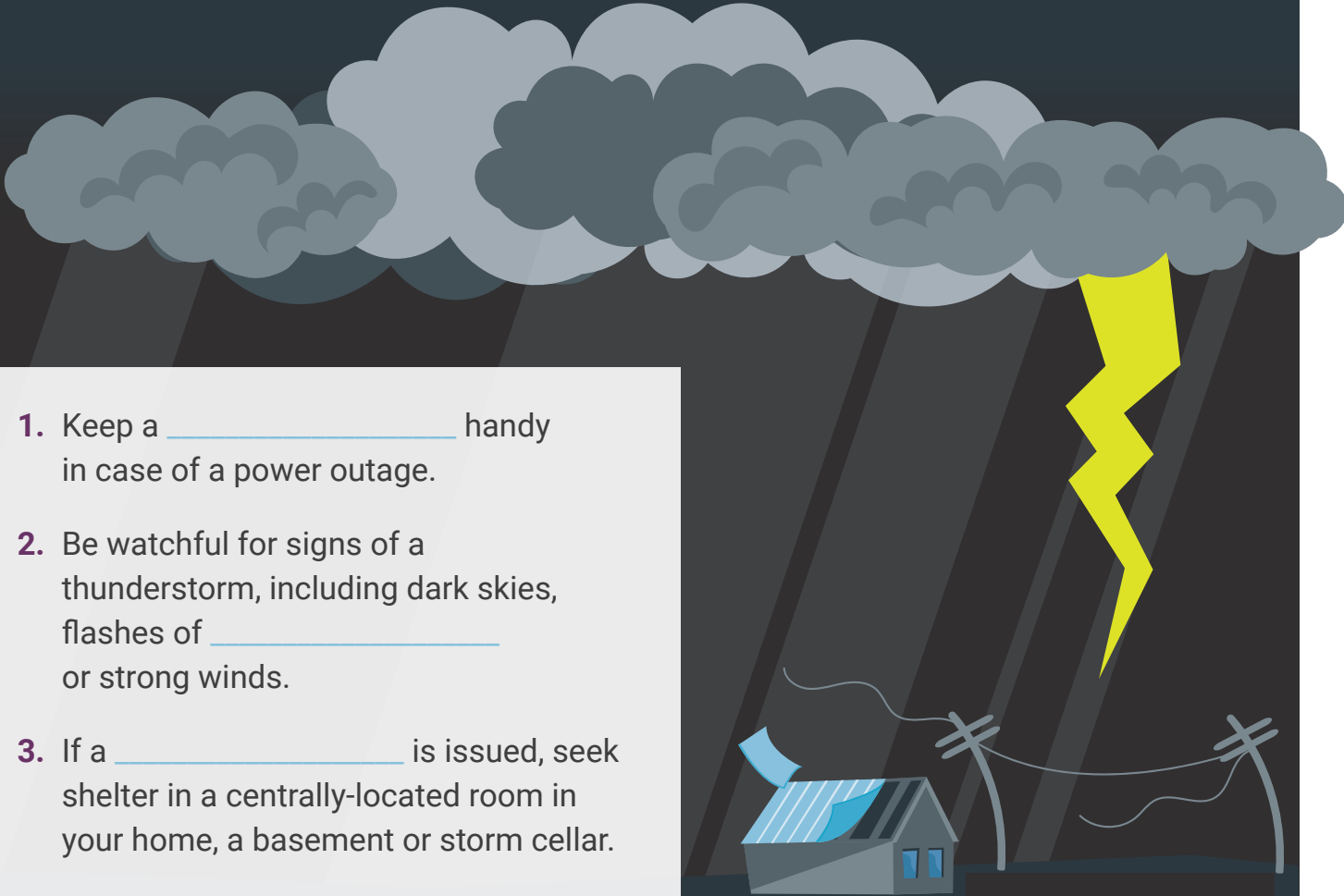
STORM SAFETY

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK



Spring is a wonderful season, but it can bring powerful storms.

Read the clues below, then use the word bank to complete the storm safety tips.



1. Keep a _____ handy in case of a power outage.
2. Be watchful for signs of a thunderstorm, including dark skies, flashes of _____ or strong winds.
3. If a _____ is issued, seek shelter in a centrally-located room in your home, a basement or storm cellar.
4. If you're outside and hear _____, go indoors immediately.
5. Practice a tornado _____ with your family once a year.

WORD BANK

- thunder
- drill
- flashlight
- tornado warning
- lightning

Answer Key: 1. flashlight 2. lightning 3. tornado warning 4. thunder 5. drill

From the Kitchen of:
Marge Terwilliger

RECIPE: **VEGETABLE PIZZA**



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 can crescent rolls
- Two, 8-ounce packages of cream cheese
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 envelope dry ranch mix
- 3/4 cup broccoli, chopped
- 3/4 cup carrots, chopped
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded

INSTRUCTIONS:

Heat the oven to 375 degrees. Flatten and press the crescent rolls onto a large cookie sheet. Bake for 11 to 13 minutes. Cream together the cream cheese, mayonnaise and dressing mix. Spread on the baked crescent rolls. Top with veggies and cheese. Refrigerate, then cut and serve.



**ON THE GO AND
IN CONTROL.**

MANAGE

your account

REPORT

service issues

VIEW AND PAY

your bill

RECEIVE

key notices

MONITOR

usage 24/7

*...all in the palm of your
hand and online.*



Central Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy* Cooperative

Your Board of Directors

From left (back row): Robert Smith, President, Butler County; Jody Weaver, Clarion County; **(middle)** Ken Durrett, Butler County; Rick Weaver, Clarion County; John Campbell, Vice President, Forest County; **(front)** Nancy Lendyak, Armstrong County; Ken Etzel, Venango County; and Althea Smith, Secretary/Treasurer, Venango County.



 central.coop/meet-your-directors

MISSION: CEC safely provides reliable and competitively priced electricity to our consumer-members and was established by and is committed to the communities we serve.

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www.central.coop

Newsletter Editor: Kessa Moore

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Missed an issue?

Catch up at www.central.coop

Read past issues of Power Lines and stay up to date on CEC news.

