

New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

NEW ENTERPRISE RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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814-766-3221
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COOPERATIVE CONNECTION

National Co-op Month



**MARK
MORRISON**

OCTOBER IS SPECIAL TO THE electric cooperative network — and it's not just because of fall festivals, where we purchase our share of wooden pumpkins, ghosts and scarecrows and maybe even some kettle corn.

October is National Co-op Month, where we celebrate you, the consumer-members of this electric cooperative. We are thankful that you're a part of New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative (REC).

There are more than 800 electric cooperatives providing service to 42 million people and more than 21 million farms, businesses, homes and schools in 48 states. Electric cooperatives electrify 56% of the nation's landmass.

New Enterprise REC is part of the electric cooperative network. While all electric cooperatives are independent entities, we follow a similar business model.

Our cooperative was incorporated in 1938 and serves nearly 3,900 electric meters in Bedford, Huntingdon and Fulton counties. Our employees maintain nearly 400 miles of electric lines and rights of way to bring safe, reliable power to you.

Over the past few years, we have improved our service and reliability by upgrading substations, poles and conductors to prevent outages from weather. Thanks to your help, our right-of-way program has improved, too, to create a robust foundation to protect the line.

This year, we were proud to support local youth through our Youth Tour sponsorship. Three local high school juniors joined hundreds of other cooperative-sponsored students in Washington, D.C. They spent the week meeting with legislators and government leaders, touring monuments, and embracing American history.

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More Than a Match: Living Organ Donations Save Lives

WENDY CONLEY, MEMBER SERVICES REPRESENTATIVE

DID YOU KNOW MORE THAN 100,000 people are waiting for lifesaving organ transplants? And some have been on these waiting lists for years?

Did you also know that you can be a living organ donor and help save lives faster?

Most people on a transplant waiting list are hoping to receive a cadaver organ, which comes from someone who has been declared legally dead. A living organ donation, however, can decrease their wait time, shorten dialysis and even reduce the need for dialysis. Receiving a healthy organ can also decrease their chances of rejection.

About 6,500 living-donation transplants take place every year. After surgery, both donor and recipient can go on living normal lives. The most common types of living organ transplants are kidneys and livers. Also, if you donate an organ and later need one yourself, you will be moved up on the recipient list. In Pennsylvania, organ transplants are offered at UPMC Presbyterian/Montefiore in Pittsburgh and UPMC Harrisburg.

You do not need to know a recipient to become a donor. You can be what is known as a non-direct donor. To learn more, contact a transplant hospital and ask about the procedures to be tested and placed on a living donor list. Also, talk with others who have been donors to see how this could affect your physical and emotional health as well as your family life.

The following stories are from New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative members who, without an organ donation, would not be here today. Their testimony is that organ donations can save lives — and they wish more people knew about the benefits and were willing to step up and donate.

Rick: family comes first

At the age of 5, Rick Defibaugh needed a blood transfusion. In those days, blood wasn't tested, and Rick contracted Hepatitis C — something he didn't discover until 30 years later when his insurance company asked for bloodwork.

Rick took a number of medications, including six pills a day and three shots a week, which did not help his liver. After traveling to Pittsburgh and consulting with Dr. Abhinav Humar, Rick was placed on a transplant list. While he waited, he asked his wife, Jeanne, not to tell anyone. Eight months later, he decided it was time to look for a living donor, and after finally telling his family about his condition, Rick soon had an interested donor: Stefanie Fisher, Jeanne's sister-in-law.

Jeanne, however, was hesitant; Stefanie had a small child at home. But Charlotte Holsinger, Jeanne's dearest friend, stepped in with some wise words: She reminded



FOREVER FAMILY: Fifteen years ago, New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative member Rick Defibaugh needed a liver transplant and his wife's sister-in-law, Stefanie Fisher, offered him a living donation.



A SECOND CHANCE: New Enterprise REC member Wilber Holsinger has also benefited from a living organ donation. He is shown here with his wife, Charlotte.

Jeanne that her prayers had been answered. Rick had a potential donor, and saying no to Stefanie was like saying no to God's plan.

Before being approved as a donor, Stefanie had to undergo a number of tests in Pittsburgh, including bloodwork, ultrasounds and a psychological evaluation. Doctors also looked at the size of her liver to make sure it was suitable and viable. In addition, Stefanie had to confirm she had a caretaker and support system to help her after surgery. (It's important to note the spouses of transplant recipients are not allowed to be donors so they can provide post-surgery support.)

Stefanie and Rick were eventually scheduled for surgery on Oct. 26, 2010, and this month marks the 15th anniversary of the life-saving donation.

Stefanie was released from the hospital within a week of the surgery and returned to her job in six weeks. About 60% of her liver was donated to Rick, and it took only six weeks for it to return to a normal size. Rick, meanwhile, remained

in Pittsburgh for three weeks, and it also took six weeks for his new liver to grow to normal size.

Today, Rick routinely gets bloodwork done, follows up with Pittsburgh yearly, and takes an anti-rejection medication. More than a decade after his transplant, Rick says he feels great and is very thankful to Stefanie for her amazing, selfless act.

Wilber: a circle of support

After years of dealing with high blood pressure and not being treated soon enough, Wilber Holsinger learned his kidneys were failing. Eventually, he started dialysis three times a week, which kept him alive for two years until he was able to find a match.

Although several friends and family members stepped up to be tested, no one came through as a match. This included Wilber's sister-in law, Tina Detterline, who also is a New Enterprise REC member. However, through the paired exchange donation program, Tina was matched to another individual, and that individual's donor matched with Wilber. The "exchange" meant two life-saving transplants could take place at once. Wilber says without Tina, a suitable donor may never have been found.

He still remembers the day he received the call that a match had been found. It was Dec. 9, 2022. Charlotte, his wife — the same person who offered words of support to Jeanne Defibaugh years earlier — says the family experienced "joy beyond words," which was followed by many tears of happiness. Wilber, who worked with Dr. Amit Tevar, did eventually meet his donor, who didn't live far away. Like many transplant recipients, Wilber was supported by his family who hosted fundraisers. His children designed a T-shirt, featuring his hand, that was sold to cover his medical expenses. (Note: Donors do not incur expenses for testing or surgery. Those expenses are covered by the transplant recipient's health insurance.)

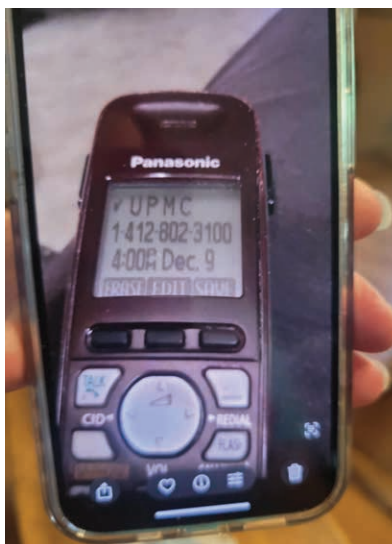
Wilber and Tina had surgery on Dec. 30, 2022. Wilber will need to take two anti-rejection medicines for the rest of his life; however, he has stopped dialysis and is very thankful to have been given a second chance.

Both the Holsingers and Defibaughs agree their faith in God got them through this challenge and continues to do so. Both families also say more education should be available to promote living organ donations.

Ryan: research is crucial

Another New Enterprise REC member, Ryan Hall, was a young man with a family when he was devastated by the news that both of his kidneys were failing — and doctors could not figure out the cause.

His wife, Megan, took matters into her own hands and began researching kidney transplants. She found there are many advantages to having a transplant before dialysis is needed. Megan also sought advice from a longtime friend,



LOVE AND SUPPORT: Above, Wilber Holsinger's children designed a T-shirt in his honor to help raise funds for his organ transplant. At left: Wilber gets the call he had been waiting for: A kidney donor had been found for him.



A PROUD LIVING DONOR: In 2010, Jeanne Defibaugh's husband, Rick, received a living organ donation. Three years later, Jeanne was able to pay that act of kindness forward when she donated a kidney to family friend Ryan Hall.

Jeanne Defibaugh, whose husband Rick (featured at the beginning of this article) had received a living organ donor.

Jeanne saw this as an opportunity to pay an act of kindness forward, so she jumped at the chance to be evaluated as a potential organ donor for Ryan. She was a match and on Sept. 18, 2013, Drs. Amit Tevar and Martin Wijkstrom performed the surgeries that would give Ryan a promising future with his wife and children. Twelve years later, Ryan feels great and was amazed at how much better he felt after the transplant. Like the others, he will need to take anti-rejection medication for the rest of his life. He also has regular checkups.

Megan, who encourages transplant patients to be their own advocates and do their own research, says being a living organ donor is a truly selfless act that many more people should consider. 🙏

**FROM THE GENERAL
MANAGER/CEO**

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The cooperative also offers the Family-In-Need program and partners with many other local organizations to provide resources that assist our community's most vulnerable people who are struggling to keep up with their energy bills.

New Enterprise is continuously seeking ways to operate more efficiently while providing the highest level of friendly, reliable service that you expect and deserve. After all, we're your local co-op. We were built by you, the members we serve.

Happy fall. Enjoy the local fall festivals, crafts, kettle corn and pumpkin spice — and always feel free to call or stop by the office to let us know how we're doing. 🍂

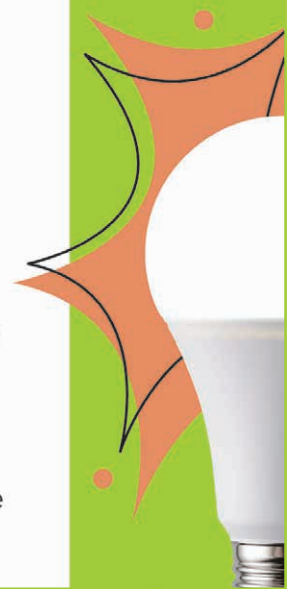
MARK MORRISON
GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

As winter approaches, now is the time to inspect your home for air leaks around windows. Leaks reduce indoor comfort and lead to higher heating costs.

If you can see daylight around the edges of a window frame or if a window rattles slightly when touched, air is likely leaking.

Caulking and weatherstripping are simple, effective methods for sealing windows. These materials are available in a variety of compounds and forms, each designed for different types of surfaces. Choose the right product and apply it properly to reduce heat loss, improve comfort and lower energy bills.



 **Safe
Electricity.org®**

Dress up with care for HALLOWEEN

When dressing your little ones (or yourself),
keep these safety tips in mind:

-  Always wear costumes that are labeled flame resistant.
-  Wear bright, reflective costumes or add strips of reflective tape to improve visibility.
-  Do not wear decorative (colored) contact lenses unless you have seen an eyecare professional.
-  Wear makeup and hats rather than costume masks that can obscure or obstruct your vision.
-  Test the makeup you plan to use in advance for a possible allergy.

In addition, inspect any plug-in decorations for signs of wear and tear (fraying or bare wires or broken plugs) and replace them if damaged.