

# POWERLINES

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR THE MEMBERS OF WHITEWATER VALLEY REMC

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## APRIL DUE DATES

The due dates for payment of electric bills are **April 19** and **26**.






  
[wwwremc.com](http://wwwremc.com)

# WHATEVER IT TAKES: POWERING LIFE, FROM A LINEMAN'S PERSPECTIVE

BY CLAY SMITH



**CLAY SMITH**  
LINE FOREMAN

My name is Clay Smith, and I'm a Line Foreman at WWVREMC. I work every day in all weather conditions to make sure our community has the power to live their lives. I love my job. It's hard work, but it's very rewarding. I hope this will give you a better look into what we face and, more importantly, why we do it.

## THE DANGER

Many people know linework is dangerous because we work near high-voltage electricity. Move just the wrong way or lose focus for a split second, and it could be deadly. You must be aware of your surroundings and the safety of the person beside you. We often work on energized power lines, and you can't always tell they are energized by just looking at them. You're working with an element of danger that requires concentration, and there is no margin for error. The environment compounds the pressure because when you need power most, it is usually when the weather is worst. I often work in storms with rain, wind, extreme heat and cold, in the dark, or on the side of the road next to fast-moving traffic. Yes, it's dangerous, but that's what we're trained to do.

Many may not realize it, but we undergo years of training before we can officially be called a lineman. We typically start as an apprentice lineman who goes through a four-year program called The Hoosier Energy Apprenticeship Training and Safety (HEATS) program. During the HEATS program we also earn an associate degree. We also have to complete 8,000 on-the-job hours before transitioning to lineman status — that's when we're considered officially trained in our field.

But the education is ongoing. Linemen continuously receive training to stay mindful of safety requirements and up-to-date on the latest equipment and procedures.

## THE PHYSICAL DEMAND

The daily expectations of a lineman are physically demanding, but you won't hear any of us complain about that. I know what I signed up for — loading heavy materials, climbing poles, and in and out of buckets. We often go places the trucks can't, so I might be hiking through the woods loaded with 40 pounds of personal protective equipment. But that's the job. Most of us are just glad to be outside.

## THE SACRIFICES

There are some sacrifices to being a lineman. I'm often first on the scene of an emergency, seeing devastating things like car accidents, structure fires, and damage from severe storms. You don't know what type of situation you will face or when you will face it. We get calls at all hours and in the middle of the night. I've missed many baseball tournament games and family dinners, but my family is very supportive, and it pays off in the end. We ensure nothing is in the way of helping our friends and neighbors get back to normal life.

## IT'S WORTH IT

One thing that makes this job worthwhile is the camaraderie. My co-op is my second family, and the line crews are a brotherhood. In this work, you must depend on the person beside you in life-or-death circumstances. It's a culture of trust, teamwork, and service. It's all about keeping the teammate beside you safe and the lights on for everybody else.

I have a lot of pride in my work. Even when it's cold and wet, I know I'm working to keep people warm. There's a

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lot of satisfaction in hearing someone yell “thank you” from the window after the lights come back on or seeing people flipping the light switches on their porches after an outage is restored. No matter how tired I am or how long I’ve been working, that feeling always makes it worth it.

WWVREMC and its employees are members of this community. We live in the same neighborhoods. We shop at the same stores. Our kids go to the same schools. If your lights are off, there is a good chance ours are off as well. So, you can trust that we are doing our best to get the lights back on as quickly and safely as possible – so you can get back to normal life.

*Lineworkers are ranked as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in the country. The lineworkers at WWVREMC work rain or shine in often challenging conditions to ensure you have reliable electricity. We’re celebrating Lineman Appreciation Day on April 8, 2024.*

## INNOVATING FOR THE FUTURE

The energy industry is changing, but electric co-ops are known for adapting to their local members’ needs. As we plan for changes and challenges ahead, innovative solutions are essential. Here are a few ways we’re innovating for the future.



### Use of Advanced Technologies

Drones aid in power line inspection and maintenance. Smart meters provide real-time data and help pinpoint service issues.

### Preparing for Increased Energy Use

The demand for electricity is increasing as more technologies are electrified.

Co-ops are exploring innovative solutions like battery storage to meet demand.

### Energy Solutions for Members

Co-ops provide innovative efficiency services like HVAC rebates and flexible billing options to help members manage their energy use.

### Strength in Numbers

By working with and learning from other co-ops, we are uniquely positioned to improve service for our local communities.

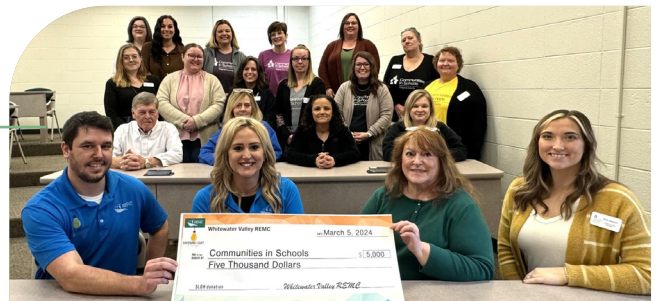


## Happy ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS DAY APRIL 24



## SHEDDING LIGHT ON HUNGER

We donated **\$5,000 to Communities in Schools** to support their ‘Feed Our Kids’ fund. We want to express our gratitude to our Shedding Light on Hunger sponsors, who have helped us reach out to those in need in the communities we serve.



# OPERATION ROUND UP 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Operation Round Up has benefited communities in the Whitewater Valley REMC's six-county service area since 2003. The cooperative members completely fund the program and their generous support enables the cooperative to give back to the community. **In 2023, a total of \$28,550 was awarded to 37 different non-profit organizations** from the funds provided by the membership.

## WHO RECEIVES ROUND UP ASSISTANCE?

The Trust is grateful for the generosity of all donations made to the program. The WWVREMC Community Trust, Inc.'s mission statement is to make a difference in our community by accumulating and disbursing funds for charitable purposes within the WWVREMC service territory. The program's goal is to assist the local population.

## GIVE WHERE YOU LIVE!

To support the program, you can sign up by calling 765-458-5171 and "round-up" your bill to the nearest dollar amount. Or you can sign up on our website: [wwwremc.com/operation-round-up](http://wwwremc.com/operation-round-up).

The average donation is 50 cents per month or \$6 per year, which is generally tax-deductible. Your contribution and that of other members who support this program, can significantly impact the lives of people in the WWVREMC service territory. The hidden account number is 1608800.

## ROUND UP TRUST BOARD

The Round-Up Trust board is comprised of Craig Hale, President; Sara Jane Moyer, Secretary; and Gary Stokes, Trustee.

Organization Name	Project Description	Amount Awarded
Alquina Blue Arrows Park, Inc.	Community basketball court renovation	\$1,000
Birth to Five	Participation in Safety Village	\$750
Boys & Girls Clubs of Wayne County	Art supplies for the annual art show program	\$750
Centerville HS After Prom Class of 2024	Centerville HS after prom	\$500
Centerville HS After Prom Class of 2025	Volunteer parent group organizing after prom	\$500
Centerville High School Green Club	Recycling project	\$500
Centerville Senior High School Drama Club	Microphones for drama club and music dept.	\$500
College Corner Union Elementary PTO	Replacing parts of playground equipment	\$1,000
Communities in Schools of Wayne County	Support at-risk students	\$1,000
Community Care in Union County	Preschool gardening project	\$750
Connersville High School After Prom	Volunteer parent group organizing after prom	\$500
Connersville Police Department	Obtaining new K9	\$1,500
Cross Road Christian Recovery Center for Women	Purchase LED lighting with motion sensors	\$750
Earlham College for Chanticleer String Quartet	Violin performance for elementary students	\$500
Everton Volunteer Fire Department	Battery-operated LED lighting	\$1,000
Fayette Co 4-H Council	Electricity learning workshop and kits	\$1,000
Fayette Co Homeland Security & Emergency Management	Purchase a public safety radio	\$1,200
Fountain City Police Department	Reprogram portable radios/purchase vehicle radios	\$1,000
Girls Inc. of Wayne County	Supplies needed to paint and refresh building's interior	\$500
Hagerstown High School Junior Class After Prom	After prom	\$500
Hope Center	Sexual risk avoidance program	\$500
Imagination Library - Union County Public Library	Books given to preschool-age children	\$500
Metamora Volunteer Fire Department	Update emergency lighting on apparatuses	\$1,750
Neighborhood Health Center	First aid and CPR equipment for training purposes	\$1,000
Northeastern Wayne Schools After Prom	Provide a safe, substance-free place	\$750
Play in the Park	Bus transportation for ten field trips to the park	\$300
Randolph County Literacy Coalition, Inc.	School book program	\$500
Randolph County Youth Leadership Council	Scholarships	\$500
Safe Passage	Domestic and sexual violence support	\$1,250
UCHS Parent After Prom Comte	Provide a safe, substance-free, fun place	\$750
Union County Parks and Recreation	Park amphitheater	\$1,000
Union County Soil and Water Conservation District	Union County Ag Day	\$500
Wayne County 4-H Association	4-H Youth Development programming	\$750
Wayne County Resource Inventory Council	Restrooms and maintenance at Indiana High Point	\$500
Wayne County Soil and Water Conservation District	Conservation Days for 3rd/4th graders	\$1,000
Whitewater Canal Byway Assn. Inc.	Brochures, internet upgrades, and website development	\$800
WWES Virtual Travel Club	Purchase supplies for art projects	\$500



## HIDDEN ACCOUNT NUMBER

Each month we hide an account number in the Powerlines. Did you find it?

# NO FEBRUARY WINNER

Keep reading your Powerlines each month. The next hidden account number could be yours!

## PAYMENT OPTIONS

### U.S. Mail

Whitewater Valley REMC, P.O. Box 350  
Liberty, IN 47353

### SmartHub

Log on at [wwwremc.com](http://wwwremc.com).

### Pay-by-Phone

Call 844-827-4759. Set up your PIN. Follow prompts.

### Liberty Office

In person or in the drop box.

### Automatic Withdrawal

Simply request a form and submit it to our office.

### FCN or Franklin County National Bank

In person or in the drop box. Bring payment stub.

### VanillaDirect

Visit [vanilladirect.com](http://vanilladirect.com) for payment locations and details.



For more information about payment options, please call us:  
765-458-5171 or 1-800-529-5557

## HELPFUL INFORMATION



### Liberty Office Hours

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday  
**CLOSED SATURDAYS, SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS**

### To Report an Outage or Emergency

Call 1-800-776-0493, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.  
Log in to your SmartHub account and report your outage.

### BE READY TO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- The name and account number under which your electric service is listed.
- Map location number.
- Your phone number – needed to call back or confirm power restoration.
- The type of problem you are experiencing – flickering lights, complete power outage, etc.



## BILL CREDIT WINNERS

Our monthly drawing for five \$20 bill credits from all voting members of the 2023 annual meeting continues. Here are the winners.

### APRIL

**James Graham, Connersville**

**Jerry Henderson, Cambridge City**

**Jerry Messer, Brownsville**

**Porter Advertising LLC, Richmond**

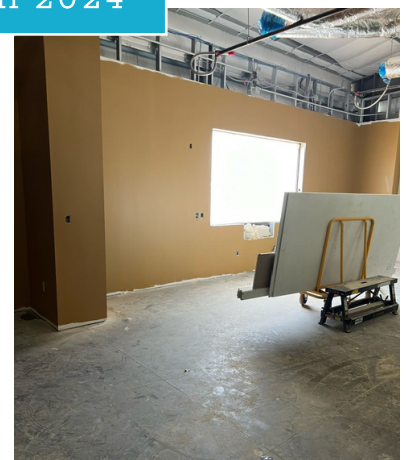
**John McGuane, Brookville**

## NEW FACILITY *update*

Exciting news! We are expected to move in by this summer! Stay tuned for more updates next month.



MARCH 2024



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President & CEO - Mary Jo Thomas • Powerlines Editor - Jennifer Scott