

## Your Benton REA Board of Trustees

**Connie Krull**  
*President, District 7*

**Bob Evans**  
*Vice President, District 3*

**Catherine Russell**  
*Secretary/Treasurer,  
District 8*

**Buddy Treadway**  
*Trustee, District 1*

**Michael Freepons**  
*Trustee, District 2*

**Ron Johnson**  
*Trustee, District 4*

**Tim Grow**  
*Trustee, District 5*

**Scott Fisher**  
*Trustee, District 6*

## General Manager

**Michael J. Bradshaw**  
*mikeb@bentonrea.org*

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# Mail-in Ballots Due July 13 for Trustee Districts 2, 3 Election

Benton REA is governed by eight trustees who each represent a district of members. These trustees are elected by you—Benton REA members—to serve three-year terms.

Members who live in districts 2 or 3 will receive a ballot in June for the 2022 trustee election. Each membership receives one vote.

Members may submit their vote by returning a completed ballot in the postage-paid envelope provided with the mailing. Mailed ballots must be received by July 13 to be counted. Members may also vote in person at the Benton REA annual meeting on July 16 prior to the noon business meeting. Benton REA's 85th Annual Meeting of Members will be held at Leona Libby Middle School in West Richland.

Running uncontested for districts 2 and 3 are Mike Freepons and Bob Evans, respectively.

## July 16 Annual Meeting

All Benton REA members are invited to the 85th Annual Meeting of Members and Appreciation Lunch on July 16 at Leona Libby Middle School in West Richland.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. with activities for



**Mike Freepons**  
District 2 (uncontested)  
Prosser Area

More information, including a short biography of election candidates, is available on pages 28 and 29 of the June 2022 Ruralite. For questions regarding the election or how to vote, call 509-786-8260.

### District 1 Vacancy

District 1 Trustee Buddy Treadway resigned from the Benton REA board in May.

No candidates were nominated for District



**Bob Evans**  
District 3 (uncontested)  
Horse Heaven and East Roza

1 during the call for nominations March 1 through April 1. According to the Benton REA bylaws, vacant trustee positions will be filled by the current board of trustees.

Benton REA members who live in District 1 will be mailed a letter on June 1 soliciting candidates. Candidates will be vetted in July. A final appointment decision will be made in the fall. ■

the whole family to follow. The business meeting will begin at noon. Look to your June Ruralite magazine for a schedule of activities. ■

Weather permitting, free tethered hot air balloon rides will be offered, similar to the 82nd Annual Meeting in 2019. PHOTO BY ELECIA COPENHAVER



# Reduce Stress With AutoPay

Paying your bill should be hassle free. That is why Benton REA offers eight payment options including AutoPay.

AutoPay draws your electric or internet payment directly from your bank account or your credit/debit card. Automatic deductions occur on your choice of the 8th or 20th of every month from your checking or savings

account, American Express, Discover, Mastercard or Visa card.

When signing up for AutoPay with a checking or savings account, the first successful payment will occur the month following enrollment, after a successful prenote process with your bank is complete.

To sign up call 844-255-3685, log in to SmartHub or visit a Benton REA office. ■

## Your Payment Options



**Online** Click "Pay My Bill" at BentonREA.org to log in to your account.



**Mobile App** Download the SmartHub app in your mobile device app store.



**AutoPay** Schedule your auto payment on the 8th or 20th of the month.



**Phone** Call 844-255-3685 24 hours a day, seven days a week to pay by phone.



**Mail** Mail your payment stub and check to P.O. Box 1150, Prosser, WA 99350.



**Drop Box** Deliver your payment to our secure drop box at either office.



**In Person** Visit us in West Richland or Prosser, Monday through Friday.



**Off-Site Kiosks** Pay with cash, card or check—visit BentonREA.org for locations.

**Only \$6 a Year can help someone keep the lights on!**

**105.25 Your Bill**  
**+ .75 Round Up Donation**  
**=106.00 Total Due**

**If every co-op member rounded up their bill, together we could give more than \$5,250 each month to your neighbors in need!**



Learn more at  
BentonREA.org/BAP  
or call 509-786-2913



## IS YOUR POWER OUT?

If your electricity is out for more than a few minutes:

- Check your breaker box to see if a circuit breaker has tripped.
- Check to see if your neighbors have power.
- Report Benton REA outages by calling 800-221-6987 or 509-786-1626 or use the SmartHub app.

## COOPERATIVE INFORMATION

### BENTON RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Prosser Office  
402 7th St. | P.O. Box 1150  
Prosser, WA 99350  
509-786-2913

Office Hours: Mon. - Fri., 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

West Richland Office  
6095 W. Van Giesen St.  
West Richland, WA 99353  
509-967-2921

Office Hours: Mon.- Fri., 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Toll Free: 800-221-6987

www.BentonREA.org

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter

## MEMBER SERVICES

This newsletter is produced by the Benton REA Member Services and Economic Development Department:

Elecia Copenhaver, Marketing and Communications Coordinator

Troy Berglund, Vice President of Member Relations

Shannon Olsen, Assistant Member Relations Manager

May Hays, Community Relations Coordinator

Ron Mitchell, Electrical Advisor

Eric Miller, Energy Services Coordinator

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

If you're looking to add smart technology to your home, consider smart plugs. Smart plugs are inexpensive and can be used to control lighting and other electronic devices through a smart phone app.

With smart plugs, you can conveniently manage lighting, home office equipment, video game consoles and more. By powering off unused devices when you're away, you can save energy (and money!).

Source: energystar.gov



# Akinbade and Stoker Represent Benton REA on National Electric Cooperatives Youth Tour

Afton Stoker and Ezekiel Akinbade will represent Benton REA on the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Electric Cooperative Youth Tour June 18-24.

Afton is a home-school sophomore and takes classes at Hanford High School. She is the daughter of Anna and Ken Stoker of West Richland.

Ezekiel is a junior at Prosser High School and the son of Segun and Oluyemisi Akinbade.

After two years of cancelled trips to Washington, D.C., due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Youth Tour is back.

More than 1,700 student delegates selected by electric cooperatives across the United States will meet in the capital for one week. They will tour national buildings, museums and memorials, meet their state representatives in the federal government and listen to motivational speakers.

Three students from Washington



Afton Stoker

state will attend the 2022 trip. The third is sponsored by Big Bend Electric Cooperative in Ritzville.

During the trip, delegates will select a Washington representative for the Youth Leadership Council—a communications and leadership training program.

Youth Tour expenses are paid for



Ezekiel Akinbade

through Benton REA's education fund, supported through Benton REA members' unclaimed ownership credits.

In the fall, applications for the 2023 Youth Tour will be available to current sophomores and juniors at [www.BentonREA.org/youth](http://www.BentonREA.org/youth). ■

## We Trees, Too.

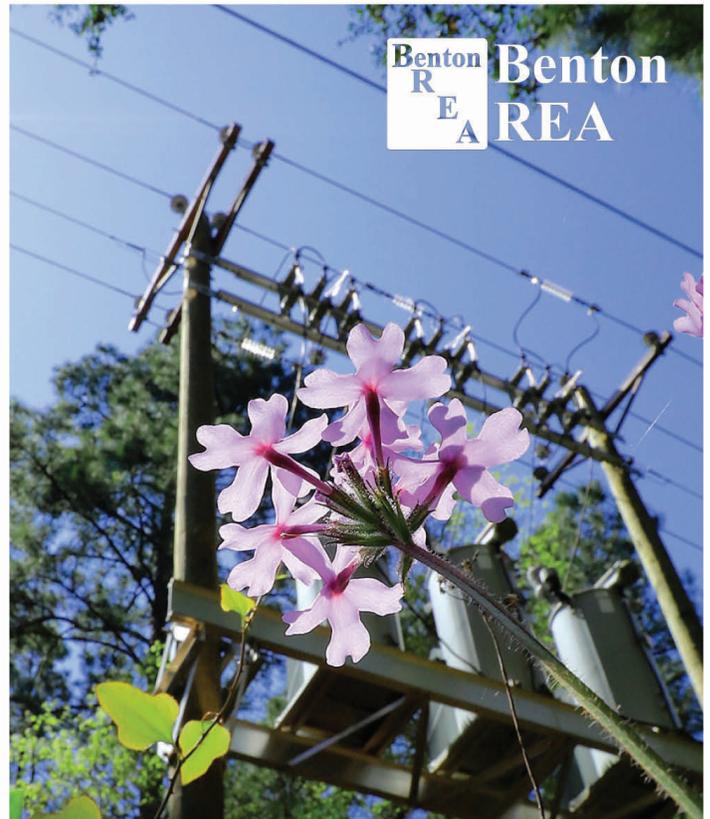
We know everyone in our community enjoys the beauty and shade trees provide. But trees and power lines can be a dangerous mix without regular pruning during the growing season.



**If you see tree pruners out in the community, remember the many benefits it brings:**

- Keeps power lines clear of tree limbs
- Helps us restore power outages more quickly
- Keeps crews and members of our community safe
- Reduces unexpected costs for repairs

**Pruning improves service reliability for you, the members we serve.**



# Kids' Electrical Safety Poster Contest

Posters are due Thursday, June 16, for this year's Electrical Safety Poster Contest. All elementary-age children whose parents or guardians are Benton REA members with active electric accounts are eligible. Prizes will be distributed at the Benton REA Annual Meeting on Saturday, July 16, in West Richland.

## The following prizes will be awarded for each age category:

- First place, \$50.
- Second place, \$25.
- Third place, \$15.
- Honorable mention, \$10.

## Age categories:

- Kindergartners and first graders.
- Second and third graders.
- Fourth and fifth graders.

## Entries must include the following on the back of the poster:

- Child's name.
- Address.
- Phone number.
- Child's school.
- Child's grade level.
- Parent/guardian's name.

## Contest rules:

- Parents and/or guardians must be members of Benton REA and have an active electric account.
- All poster entries must have an electrical safety theme.
- The poster must be 8½ inches by 11 inches or larger.
- Posters may be crafted using watercolors, acrylic paint, crayons, markers, pencils, ink, charcoal or paper cutouts.
- The poster must be the complete work of the student.

## Completed posters:

Posters are due June 16, and can be dropped off at either Benton REA office or mailed to:

Attn: Ron Mitchell  
P.O. Box 1150  
Prosser, WA 99350

For more information, email [rmitchell@bentonrea.org](mailto:rmitchell@bentonrea.org) or call 509-786-8265. ■



# Rebates Increase for Low-Income Homeowners

Rebates for heat pumps and hybrid electric water heaters have significantly increased for homeowners who qualify as low-income. Benton REA is making \$100,000 available to members through September 2023.



For heat pump upgrades and conversions from another heating system, the rebate is now as much as \$6,200. The installation of a single-head

Hybrid electric water heaters can cut water heating costs in half and can be installed in the home or garage. PHOTO COURTESY OF NEEA

ductless heat pump earns the homeowners \$3,800. Those who install a hybrid electric water heater can get up to \$2,000.

Rebates are also available to help low-income members pay for duct sealing, insulation, whole-house air sealing and Energy Star storm windows—all products that can reduce electricity use and energy bills.

“In some cases, these rebates might pay for the full amount of the installation,” says Eric Miller, Benton REA energy services coordinator.

Low-income assistance is determined based on the member's adjusted gross income and household size. Members must complete an online income verification application at [www.BentonREA.org/rebates](http://www.BentonREA.org/rebates) before submitting a rebate application.

When requesting a quote from a contractor for any home upgrades,

members are encouraged to tell them about Benton REA's rebate programs.

For assistance or answers to your questions about any of Benton REA's rebates, call 509-781-6751. ■

Measure	Max Rebate
Heat Pump	\$6,200
Ductless Heat Pump	\$3,800
Heat Pump Water Heater	\$2,000
Duct Sealing	\$500
Energy Star Storm Windows	\$10/sq. ft.
Additional rebates may be considered for whole-home air sealing and insulation of ducts, floors, walls or ceilings.	