

# THE CURRENT



*Energy news from around Philadelphia and beyond*



## **The Energy Co-op's Superpower—Our Members!**

The Energy Co-op's members have been powered by our energy programs for several decades, and The Energy Co-op has been powered by our members. Superpowered, in fact. Like any cooperative, we are dependent on our members, dependent on each other. Not only to purchase energy from our programs, but also to help us get the word out about what makes The Energy Co-op a different kind of energy supplier. A better one. In fact, the best!

Since last year, we have invited all our almost 5,000 members to join us for lunch or dinner to talk about what they're looking for from us and what assistance they could offer us. We really enjoyed meeting the dozens of members who took us up on the offer. The Energy Co-op has a lot of very bright, committed members! Best of all, during those get-togethers, several of you answered the call to help us grow our cooperative.

So, as we prepare for our first virtual Annual Members Meeting on June 25<sup>th</sup>, we want to highlight this month the engagement of just a few of the many members who have recently worked with us to help advance our common mission.

*Educational Engagement*

**Bob Groves** has been a Renewable Electricity member of The Energy Co-op since 2011 and member volunteer since 2019. We first met Bob at a member event last year, at which he was quick to demonstrate a keen interest in addressing and educating our community about climate change and the grave environmental dangers resulting from man-made carbon emissions. Bob tells us, “For me, purchasing 100% renewable energy from The Energy Co-op helps bridge the gap between personal and larger scale actions that combat climate change. The more demand we create for renewables, the more it will be available and affordable for all.” An important part of The Energy Co-op’s mission is to educate and inform our community about energy matters. So, Bob set up several speaking engagements for us during the last year, including to a Chestnut Hill Rotary Club and a class that he taught on climate change for Temple University’s Lifelong Learning program.

### *Congregation Engagement*

**Joy Bergey**, a longtime member of The Energy Co-op and director of Chestnut Hill United Church's Environmental Justice Center, worked to bring Renewable Natural Gas to Chestnut Hill United Church’s sanctuary this past winter, which had already been a member of The Energy Co-op for renewable electricity. After Joy signed up for RNG for her own home, she and other church members felt it was important to work with their faith community to do the same. In her words: "Fighting for ever more clean energy is deeply important to me as a way to slow climate change and improve air quality, and thus the health of Philadelphians. We know that communities of black and brown people here and across the country are disproportionately hurt by the burning of fossil fuels, so the work of The Energy Co-op to displace fossil fuels with cleaner alternatives directly addresses environmental racism. This is why Chestnut Hill United Church buys renewable electricity and renewable natural gas from The Energy Co-op."

### *Community Engagement*

**Milton Meyer** teaches at the University of Pennsylvania and volunteers on the Swarthmore Borough Environmental Advisory Council. EACs are important governmental bodies that are appointed by local governments throughout Pennsylvania to recommend policies and ordinances that address environmental and energy matters. Like other Energy Co-op members, Milton has been concerned about climate change for many decades and decided long ago to do something about it. “I first became aware of global warming when I taught an Environmental Ethics course at Cornell University in 1985,” he tells us. “I now teach at Penn and have been a member of The Energy Co-op for more than a decade, participating in the renewable natural gas and renewable electricity programs... When people ask me what they can do to contribute to a solution to global warming, I say, ‘Electrify everything and buy your renewable energy from The Energy Co-op.’” Meanwhile, Milton is helping us understand how we can better engage our region through its Environmental Advisory Councils.

### *Neighborhood Engagement*

**Steve Weinberg** is a social entrepreneur who is passionate about green jobs

and healthy local economies. His calm demeanor masks a very active, imaginative mind. A member of The Energy Co-op since 2010, Steve has sent us many useful suggestions for neighborhood organizing. We are eagerly awaiting the time when we can safely work with him to expand our outreach in person. Stay tuned for the implementation of his yard sign initiative in Mt. Airy. “More than ever we need solutions that strengthen our region now and in the future. The Energy Co-op inspires me by powerfully addressing our call for shared prosperity and health with locally supplied renewable energy available to all.” You inspire us, Steve!

Bob, Joy, Milton, and Steve are just a few of the many member volunteers whose insights and passion have helped us to both grow The Energy Co-op’s membership and expand the scope of its reach and activities over the last year. Whether arranging speaking engagements, introducing us to their congregations or local environmental groups, or just good old-fashioned neighborhood organizing, we appreciate the efforts of all our member volunteers and look forward to meeting even more members later this year. Thanks to all of you for your support in advancing our common goals.

April Cat  
Caption  
Contest Winner  
Below!

### **And While We’re on the Topic of Bright, Committed Members....**

The Energy Co-op Board and Staff are undertaking a review and revision this year of its risk management practices, and specifically those relating to the operation of its renewable energy programs. We know that The Energy Co-op has a lot of talented members out there. So, if you have relevant experience and expertise, we’d really appreciate it if you would reach out to Executive Director Ronald Fisher at [ron@theenergy.coop](mailto:ron@theenergy.coop).

## **Annual Member Meeting on June 25<sup>th</sup>— Save the Date!**

The Energy Co-op’s Annual Member Meeting is fast approaching, so mark your calendars! The Energy Co-op is member-owned, which means our members are our bosses. And we’re democratic—one member, one vote. No hostile takeovers allowed.

Our Annual Member Meeting is when members have the opportunity to hear about our progress from the past year *and* to elect new directors to the Board.

Keep an eye out for a link to register in the next few weeks. If you are unable to attend the meeting, we will also share materials that will allow you to record your vote and assign someone to serve as your proxy.

Due to current social gathering restrictions, this year’s annual member meeting is now scheduled to take place in the virtual universe. If that changes, you’ll be the first to know. For now, the meeting is scheduled to take place on Zoom. We look forward to Zooming with you at 5:30 on June 25th!

## The Energy Co-op in The Community

- [How to celebrate Earth Day's 50th anniversary while following stay-at-home orders](#)--By Frank Krummer, Philadelphia Inquirer
- Webinars:
  - *The Power of Cooperatives in Renewable Energy* with Weavers Way, 4/22/2020
  - *Commercial Property-Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE)* with the Philadelphia Energy Authority (PEA), 4/24/2020
  - *Renewable Natural Gas Webinar* with the Clean Air Council, 4/27/2020
  - Thank you to everyone who attended! We are planning more webinars in the future, so stay tuned!
- The Energy Co-op also launched partnerships this month with Weavers Way Food Co-op, the Clean Air Council, and the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia!
- Our Executive Director, Ronald Fisher, was interviewed by Charles Ellison on WURD on 4/2/2020 about the effects of COVID-19 on the energy industry.

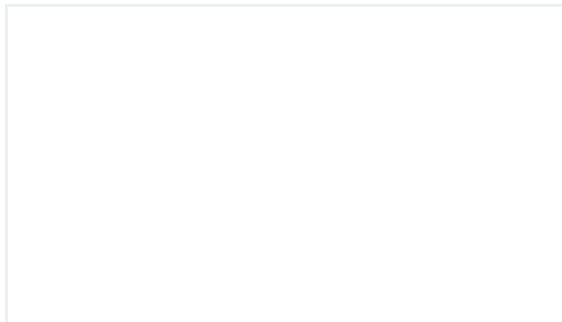
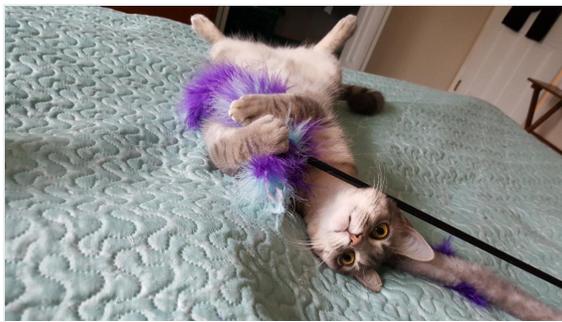
## Recent Energy Co-op Blog Posts

[A Beginner's Guide to Environmental Advisory Committees](#)--What is an environmental advisory committee? How can you join or start one? Learn more about EACs and how they help city governments protect the environment. By Georgia Mae Lively.

[Buyer Beware! Electricity Slamming Could Happen to You](#)—Learn what slamming is and how you can prevent your electricity service from being changed without your knowledge or consent. By Meryl Sands and Georgia Mae Lively.

[Clean Jobs In Pennsylvania? Growing Fast With More To Come](#)— Pennsylvania's green energy sector is growing, according to a new study on 2019's clean job landscape. By Georgia Mae Lively.

## Cats of The Energy Co-op Caption Competition!



## *Ahhh, bliss!*

Congratulations to the winner of our April Cat Caption Contest, John I. McEnerney! Caption Contest winners will have a choice of \$35 gift card to Weavers Way Food Co-op, a \$35 donation to the Clean Air Council in their name, or a one-year membership in The Bicycle Coalition.



This month's cat is Haley, whose owner is Bethany Bender, our Heating Oil Program Manager! Submit your caption [here](#) by 5/20/2020 for a chance to win!



**THE ENERGY CO-OP**

Leading the Energy Evolution

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