



People's Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Immediate NEWS RELEASE

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Bob Bardwell Honored as the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives #WhoPowersYou 2017 Grand Prize Winner

ARLINGTON, VA, Dec. 13, 2017– We are proud to announce that Bob Bardwell of People's Energy Cooperative was recently honored as the grand prize winner of the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives 2017 #WhoPowersYou Contest.

Bob was nominated by Gwen Stevens, the Cooperative's Director of Member and Community Relations. In her nomination, Stevens stated, "Bob Bardwell is one of the most inspirational people I have ever had the privilege to meet. He dared to dream big, went after it with laser-focused determination, and the dream continues to grow. After being around him, you can't help but feel compelled to dig deeper within yourself to serve others."

Congratulations Bob! People's Energy Cooperative is very proud of you and everything you do for our community and beyond!

Bob was honored for making a spiritual, social and emotional impact on his community with his faith-based ranch, Ironwood Springs Christian Ranch. What began as a simple lodge in 1976, has been transformed by this inspired paraplegic into a fully operational ranch that provides physically challenged children and adults with the opportunity to participate in a variety of sports in a supportive environment, with mentoring from Paralympic athletes.

The ranch also sponsors 'Operation Welcome Home,' a series of faith-based weekends that provide encouragement, hope and inspiration to active military, veterans and their families. Through Bob's vision and tenacity, over 50 retreats, serving more than 1,000 families, have been held.

The ranch and its programs are free to participants thanks to donations from businesses, organizations and individuals, secured through Bob's commitment.

This year's grand prize winner's motto is, "It's not what happens to you, it's what you do about it." And Bob's impact in the community couldn't hold truer.

Bob was honored along with the following three other #WhoPowersYou Contest winners:

- Second Place: Mike & Stacey Simmons of The Lord's Pantry, Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative
- Third Place: Mary Rio of Clothing Our Kids, Delaware Electric Cooperative, Inc.
- Honorable Mention: Chase Marvil of The Inspiring Project, Delaware Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Other PEC members nominated were Christopher Arendt of Eyota and Pat and Penny Thomas of Rochester. Christopher was nominated by Kathleen Schumann for his hard work and dedication to the Eyota Volunteer Ambulance Service. Pat and Penny were nominated by Ed Armbruster for their selfless service and support of three organizations; Starfish Ministries, The Nazarene Well House, and Retained Lives.

To learn more about these winners' tremendous efforts in the community, review their entries at whopowersyou.com. Winners were chosen by an independent panel of judges, and criteria was based on their positive impact on the community.

Touchstone Energy, would like to thank everyone who participated in this contest, including those who nominated the 124 incredible local heroes across 46 co-op territories in our network and the cooperatives who promoted the contest.

The contest was a huge success, and Touchstone Energy greatly applauds everyone across our co-op nation who makes a difference in the community.

About People's Energy Cooperative

People's Energy Cooperative is a member-owned electric cooperative celebrating 80 years of delivering retail electric power to its nearly 18,800 member-owners in Olmsted, Dodge, Fillmore, Mower, Wabasha and Winona Counties. People's Energy Cooperative is a Touchstone Energy® cooperative and a member-owner in the Dairyland Power system of electric cooperatives that generates and transmits reliable electric power in 62 counties of four states (Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois).

[Touchstone Energy Cooperatives](#) represents a nationwide alliance of more than 730 local, member-owned electric co-ops in 46 states dedicated to providing members with safe, reliable and affordable electricity. The #WhoPowersYou Contest was designed as a way to honor local heroes in the community and spread positive energy across the cooperative network.

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