



KENTUCKY MUNICIPAL ENERGY AGENCY



Member Communications

Michelle Hixon

July 21, 2021

Dates to Remember

August

26 th at 10 AM	KYMEA Board Meeting
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September

30 th at 10 AM	KYMEA Board Meeting
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October

1 st at 9 AM	2021 Annual Member Conference
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2021 Annual Member Conference

Meet Our CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



Doug Buresh

President and CEO
Kentucky Municipal
Energy Agency



Andy Whitesitt

Senior Vice President &
Chief Business
Development Officer
ACES



Latif Nurani

Partner
Spiegel McDiarmid



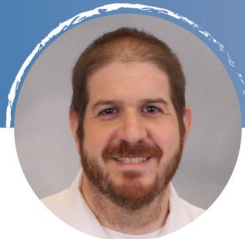
John Painter

CEO and Executive
Consultant
nFront Consulting



Robert Davis

Director of Planning and
Analytics
nFront Consulting



Paul Zummo

Director, Policy Research
and Analysis
American Public Power
Association



Carter Manucy

IT/OT & Cybersecurity
Director
Florida Municipal Power
Agency



Patrick Miller

Critical Infrastructure
Security & Regulatory
Advisor



Tim Blodgett

President and CEO
Hometown Connections

**Check your email for information on how to register for the
conference.**

2021 Community Spotlight Submission

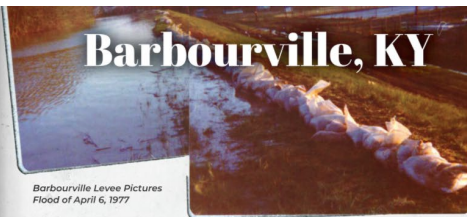
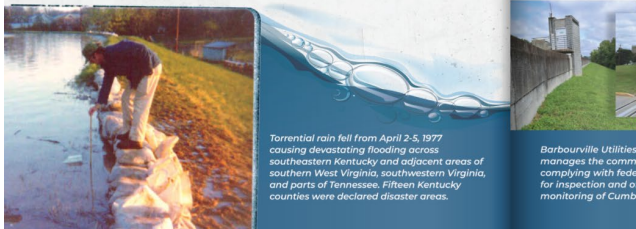
2020 Community Spotlight

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

The sun gently dabbles the rolling, verdant mountains that make up the complexion of southeastern Kentucky. There, quietly nestled amid its peaks, lies the town of Barbourville. Established in 1812, its storied past includes historic affairs ranging from Civil War skirmishes to the state's pioneer heritage. However, its rich history is also riddled with natural disasters that have shaped both the landscape and economy of this small, Appalachian community. Its wildly beautiful surroundings, while picturesque, come with consequence. Its location on the Cumberland River coupled with the enclosing, steep slopes make the town conducive to flooding; and, Barbourville has seen its fair share of Mother Nature's most powerful force. Since 1929, Barbourville has seen 11 major floods. But, despite being small, the town's resolve and subsequent, post-disaster solutions have been mighty, recovering stronger every time.

These remarkable recoveries have been thanks to the strong leaders within the Barbourville Utility Commission whose visceral passion for their community has created, implemented, and solidified plans that help protect its citizens and mitigate such disasters. The Utility Commission provides electric, water, and telecommunications to the town and, since its inception in 1938, has only had three general managers: Jack Wharton, Randell Young, and Josh Callihan. All three have fought for their community, keeping it safe and providing incredible, low costs services such as clean water, electric services, cable TV, and robust fiber communications; this is unheard of in small communities. The Utility Commission also has the unique responsibility of managing the town's flood control system. While all general managers have been instrumental in the facility's success, engineer, Randell Young, managed its largest flood which struck Barbourville in 1977.

"The '46 flood caused people to really perk up and consider building a levee," Young said. So, in 1953, construction began on a wall. More than 20,000 ft of levee and floodwall was built in places where there had once been drain pipes. However, just prior to its completion, another flood hit the town. Since the levee wasn't finished, water made its



way into the town of 3,700. Approximately 80% of the city was inundated to depths as much as 10 ft, and about 200 families were evacuated. More than \$1 million in damage occurred to residential, commercial, and municipal properties. "That would be the last flood to make it in," Young added with a hint of pride.

"Between '55 and '77," Young noted. Those fl Mayor and City for hel higher to protect agal thinking that they wo turned inward, asking asking for assistance, and the Boy Scouts. "I evacuation routes." Yo built to protect the cit

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Engineers reached out and decided that they would put it in their mission to help with flood mitigation plans. The evacuation plan was finally finished in September 1976.

Then, the day came - April 2, 1977 - when torrential rain equated a flooded river, and Young's taller wall and evacuation plan would be put to the test. A Flood Emergency was declared, so we put it into service that day. It all happened very quickly. The weather service, Fire department and sheriff's department all educated their people on what their roles would be, and we got everyone out of town," Young said. There were some residents, however, who stuck around to help. "One man's duty was to keep sandbagging the levee. That's what he did all day long," Young recalled. "How many times do you see a cement truck filled with sand getting a police escort?" Young laughed. That day, in addition to providing basic utilities, Young monitored the flood level. He even broadcasted radio warnings and updated residents of impending flood dangers. Young said that the day went "surprisingly well." No water made it into the town, despite the 45' crest being 3' higher than the previous levee. After a successful plan execution, the Army Corps of Engineers held a celebration dinner at Pine Mountain State Park. Young, his wife, mom, stepdad, and mother-in-law were the Guests of Honor. Unbeknownst to Young, he was also being honored at the event. "I was awarded a certificate and received a 'Patriotic Civilian' pin," he humbly recalled. "It was one of the proudest moments of my life."

Decades later, in 1995, the levee was raised to 55'. At the dedication, the theme was "Never Again." "That theme concerned me. Mother Nature has her own plans," Young joked. One fact is certain: Josh Callihan, Barbourville Utility Commission's current General Manager, had some big shoes to fill when Young retired. Josh's grit, determination, and foresight have continued to provide the exceptional leadership that Barbourville was accustomed to, and you can be confident that future floods will remain at bay, leaving Barbourville unscathed by Mother Nature's most powerful element.



Born in 1948, Randell Young grew up hearing about the historic 1946 flood that ravaged Barbourville. The natural disaster evidently influenced his career choice and trajectory, leading him to general manager of the Barbourville Utility Commission - a title he held for 35 years until he passed the torch to Josh Callihan in 2008.

1977 Flood Facts

The city of Barbourville's flood wall was raised 10 feet following the flood of 1977.

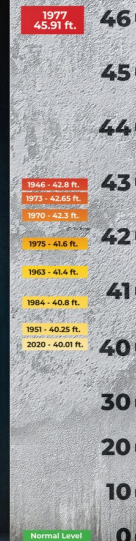
- Although the city was evacuated, sandbag enforced levees held back the water from coming into the town.
- News broadcasters stayed on until around 2 am, informing people about the flood and helping find loved ones.

Around 2/3 of the 3,000 people who lived in Barbourville had their homes damaged by the flood waters.

- In the early seventies, Barbourville devised two programs to help citizens prepare for destructive flood events: the Flood Emergency Evacuation Plan and the Apple Grove Flood Mitigation Program.

- More than 400 volunteers helped sandbag the flood wall.
- The cost of developing the Flood Evacuation Plan was around \$12,000, with about a \$1,000 annual cost to maintain equipment and supplies.

Around 11,000 sandbags were used.



Send your submission to mhixon@kymea.org by August 5th.