

Meet your cooperative's board of directors

Luke Pohl: 'Make Decisions Locally'

Luke Pohl is a Westphalia native and 1976 graduate of Pewamo-Westphalia School. He earned a bachelor's degree in industrial education from Central Michigan University, then taught at Grand Ledge High School. He formerly owned Pohl Oil and Propane Company, and is currently owner of Pohl's Travel Plaza north of Grand Ledge. He also coaches boys' varsity basketball at Pewamo-Westphalia Schools.

He and his wife, Janet, have three sons, Gavin, Austin and Landon. They are members of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Westphalia, where he is an usher and previously chaired the parish finance committee. He is also president and co-founder of Austin's House in Westphalia.



Luke Pohl says he can get intense when he's coaching; here, he's keeping an eye on action behind the play in a big rivalry game against Fowler. Photo by Kacey Hengesbach.

How did you become involved with the co-op?

"We became members in 1981. When Carl Morton retired in 2014, the co-op notified members in District 3 that the seat was open, so I sent in a letter of application. I had been a director of Westphalia Broadband, chairing the board for 10 years, so I understand how utility-type boards can work."

What does it mean to you to be on the board?

"I enjoy being on the board. Meeting people from different co-ops has been a lot of fun." (Pohl earned his Certified Cooperative Director designation from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association by attending a week-long directors' school; this fulfilled a board policy requirement of becoming certified by the end of his first full term as a board member.)

What are highlights so far?

"Learning about electrical utilities and how they operate. Also, getting to know the fine people employed at Tri-County."

What do you think of member self-regulation?

"I like self-regulation. Decisions should be made at the local levels."

What challenges do you see ahead?

"New technology. Solar. Wind. EPA regulations."

How can members get more involved?

"I would recommend they come to the district meetings. And also the annual meetings. It is informational, and fun to be a part of a member-owned utility." ■

On your board of directors, Luke represents District 3, which is Clinton County except Bingham, Duplain and Greenbush townships, which are part of District 5. He was most recently re-elected to the board in 2015.

Watch the mail in late April for an invitation to your district's annual membership meeting.