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Valley Rural Electric
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10700 Fairgrounds Road
P.O. Box 477
Huntingdon, PA 16652-0477
814/643-2650
1-800-432-0680
www.valleyrec.com

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FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Independence Day



by Rich Bauer
President & CEO

MOST OF US look forward to the Fourth of July as a day free from work to gather with family and friends. Many people celebrate this special day with fireworks, cookouts, and cold drinks, and spend a lot of energy having fun. July is a great time of the year, and the weather is usually beautiful, which allows for gathering outside to enjoy the

beautiful scenery of central Pennsylvania.

While the Fourth of July is normally a celebratory day, I would ask you to take a moment to sit back and reflect on our country's forefathers and their determined efforts to bring about our nation's independence. I find it to be a truly amazing, as well as sobering experience to consider what they did.

What I truly love about this country and its people is the will to find a way. The United States has never settled for what it has; it has always fought to make what it has better. Whether it is through technology, sheer determination or just plain luck, this country has always pushed the envelope for something better.

In 1776, the 13 states didn't want to settle for what the British monarchy gave them; they wanted something better. They knew things would never advance as long as this new country was under the rule of a country half-way around the globe. The residents of the United States wanted to govern themselves, believing in the phrase, "By the people, for the people." We could have stayed status quo and not rocked the boat, but our forefathers knew that to prosper, we had to become independent

to make things better for the next generation. It took many long years and many lives before this vision became a reality.

When I look at Valley REC's history, as well as all the electric cooperatives around this country, it's obvious we have tried to follow a similar path. An inspired group of farmers who couldn't receive electric power from the investor-owned utilities because there wasn't enough profit to be made, didn't want to settle for the status quo. They wanted to make things better for themselves and future generations. They wanted electricity, so they banded together to improve their quality of life.

It wasn't easy, but 76 years ago, this group of farmers formed Valley REC to provide power to our rural areas. They didn't want a monarchy or a company that was concentrating on providing profits to stockholders, so this cooperative was formed as a not-for-profit corporation governed by its members. "By the people, for the people" never had a truer meaning. They did it themselves by pulling together and working cooperatively, a shining example of American determination and ingenuity.

People celebrate the Fourth of July many different ways for many different reasons. Please take a moment to reflect on the struggles our forefathers endured to ensure every generation after them enjoyed the freedoms we now enjoy because of their determination. "By the people, for the people" holds as true today as it did 239 years ago.

I hope you are safe and blessed before, during and after this Fourth of July. As always, if you have any questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to give me a call or email. God Bless. 

Co-op employees, friends pick up their putters for a good cause

VREC annual golf outing benefits two local teens

BY DOUG ROLES

Manager of Member Services

AND

LUANNE ECKENRODE

Vice President of Consumer Services & Public Relations

MORE THAN 180 co-op employees, friends and tournament supporters took to the links at the American Legion Country Club, Mount Union, June 11 to raise money for two area cancer patients. The fourth annual Valley REC golf outing benefited Southern Huntingdon County High School classmates Destiny Devlin and Wade Stains.

The 16-year-olds from Cromwell Township, Huntingdon County, and their families took part in the tournament, which raised more than \$20,000. This year's event returned to the golf course near Mount Union, Mifflin County, after being held at Iron Masters Country Club in Blair County in 2014 to benefit a local toddler there.

Valley REC employees share the workload and expense necessary for planning the golf tournament, and also reach out to local businesses and co-op vendors alike for donations and sponsorships.

"We believe it's our duty to give back to the community we serve," says Travis Kuhstos, who chairs Valley's Health & Wellness Committee. "I think it's absolutely amazing that all of Valley's employees come together and participate. It's a testimony to the type of company we work for."

Travis says Valley employees are happy to be able to give Destiny and Wade a day to remember as they fight disease in the prime of life.

Valley's tournament had 41 teams for the second year in a row. Valley REC began hosting a tournament in 2012, with a Mount Union event for a local cancer patient. Money raised from the 2013 event, also at the American Legion course, went to medical expenses for a couple injured in a car crash.

This year's recipients, Destiny and Wade, have been able to lean on each other as they fight cancer. Destiny is the daughter of Duane and Ronnie Hardy. She was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma in June 2011, a week after her 12th birthday. She has endured three rounds of chemotherapy, stem cell and bone marrow transplants, and has seen her cancer go into remission and return. Destiny has spent many weeks at Hershey Medical Center.

"It's a blessing how many people pulled together for something like this," says Destiny's stepfather, Duane. "It's nice that people care about these two young kids. It shows you how amazingly generous people are around here."

Wade is the son of Darren and Stephanie Stains. He was



PHOTO BY LUANNE ECKENRODE

GUESTS OF HONOR: The 2015 Valley REC golf outing benefits two local teens, Destiny Devlin and Wade Stains, Southern Huntingdon County High School classmates who are battling cancer. The two attended the event with their parents. From left are: Darren, Stephanie and Wade Stains, and Destiny Devlin with Ronnie and Duane Hardy.

diagnosed with neuroblastoma in May 2012, about a year after Destiny's diagnosis. He also has undergone treatments in Hershey and in Philadelphia. The disease has at times limited him to just several hours of wakefulness each day.

Stephanie says she's surprised at the continued level of support from the community over the past three years and how many people participated in the golf outing.

"I'm amazed at the support," she says. "We knew it was going to be big but we never expected this turnout."

This year's golf tournament will help these two families with medical and related expenses. The tournament is the largest event planned each year by the committee, which is comprised of co-op employees from all three district offices and the corporate office. Along with planning the event, the committee is responsible for selecting beneficiaries.

The tournament followed a four-player scramble, "best ball" format and included a putting contest and longest-drive contest.

Valley's Health & Wellness Committee has raised more than \$57,000 for charity since its inception in 2010. In addition to the golf outing, fundraising events have included a walkathon, a horseshoe tournament, a "Kickin' It For Cans" food drive, two softball tournaments and participation in Relay for Life events in 2011, 2012 and 2013. ☀

PHOTO BY LUANNE ECKENRODE



PHOTO BY JOHN BOOKWALTER



ROUND ONE: The winning team for the morning flight of the 2015 tournament is comprised of, from left: Colby Siebert, Travis Siebert and Daryl Davis. Absent from photo is Chip Pyles.



LINKS CRUISE: Destiny Devlin and Wade Stains, beneficiaries of Valley REC's 2015 golf outing, head out for a ride around the Mount Union American Legion Country Club golf course.



PHOTO BY LUANNE ECKENRODE



PHOTO BY JOHN BOOKWALTER

SIGHTLINES: Valley REC lineman Justin Berrier lines up a putt as crew chief Jeff Ruby holds the flag.

ROUND TWO: Christine Knode and Kevin Steel are on the winning team for the afternoon round of golf. Also on the team but absent from photo are Ray McMullen II and Scott Atherton.



FIELD TRIP: Third- and fourth-grade students at Juniata Valley Elementary School, Huntingdon County, learn about electrical hazards and line work during the annual "Valley Day" held May 15, 2015. Veteran Valley REC lineman Curt White (in bucket) and Doug Roles, Valley's manager of member services, visited the students. The day also included activities and displays by Juniata College's Science in Motion program, Alexandria Volunteer Fire Co., Huntingdon House, Pennsylvania. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and many others.

You can help cool future power costs.



Our **future electric rates** are partially **based on how much power you use** on hot, humid weekdays **between 1 and 6 p.m.** this summer. When you hear an announcement from your local electric cooperative about doing the "Electric Shift," try these simple steps:

- ▶ Set air conditioners at 78 degrees or use fans instead.
- ▶ Close curtains and blinds to keep things cooler.
- ▶ Operate washers, dryers, dishwashers, stoves and other major appliances in early morning or evening.
- ▶ Minimize the number of times you open your refrigerator and freezer.
- ▶ Cook with an outdoor grill or a microwave oven.
- ▶ Turn off any non-essential lights.
- ▶ Run pool pumps at night.

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