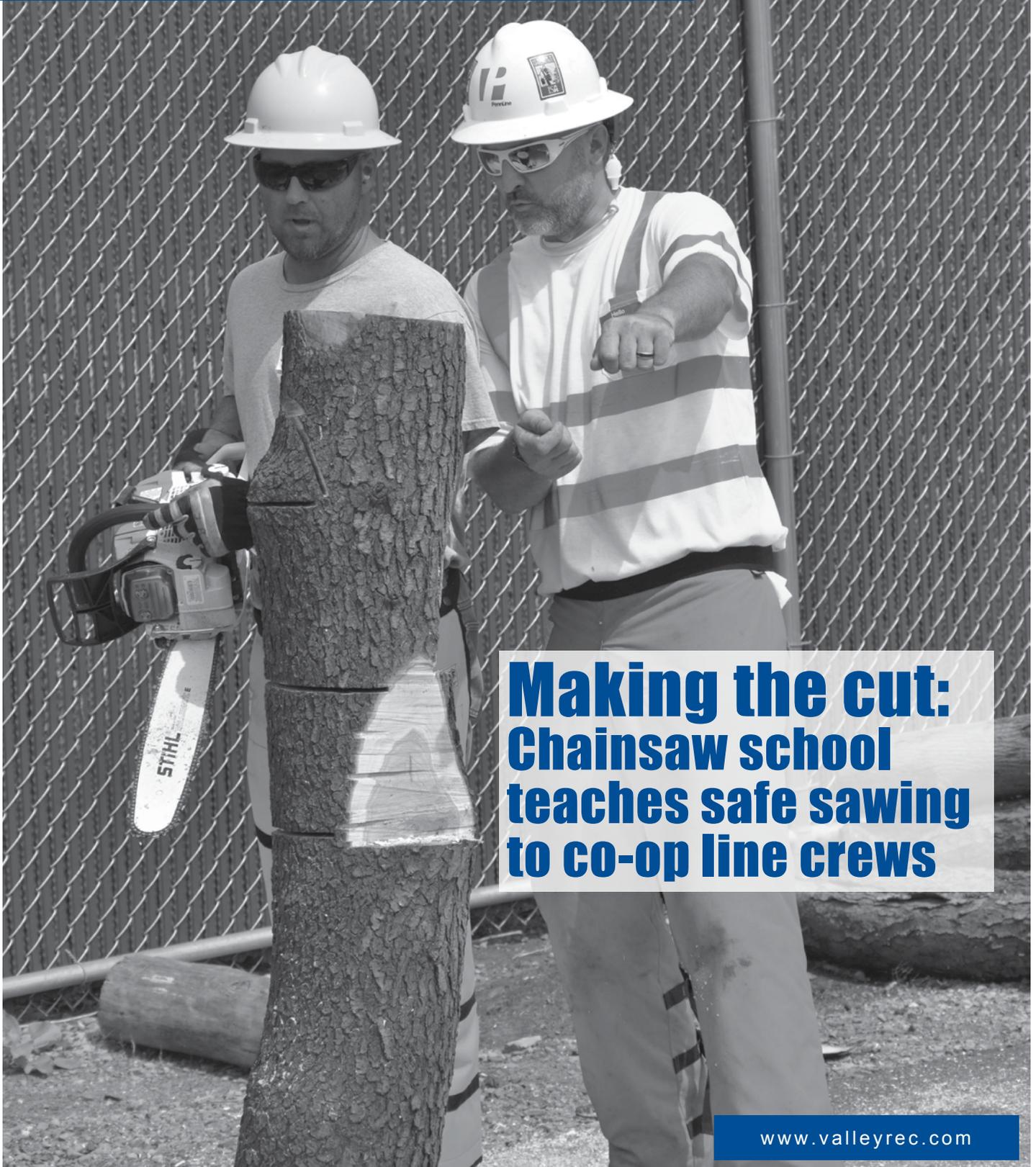


Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Valley News

September | October 2015

Volume 72 | Issue 5



**Making the cut:
Chainsaw school
teaches safe sawing
to co-op line crews**

www.valleyrec.com

Who do you want on your fantasy co-op team?

Monday mornings in the fall will find employees across the country updating their fantasy football rosters - often on company computers and company time - after Sunday's big games. The popularity of the statistics-driven hobby, started in 1963, has greatly increased in recent years as computers and mobile devices have made it easier to keep tabs on "your" players, at work and at home.

Previously seen as a major workplace productivity loser, fantasy football has gotten some good press recently. A number of organizations, including the job-seeker website Monster.com and CBS Money Watch, have reported companies that have a fantasy football league may reap the rewards of an inexpensive team-building exercise with minimal loss of productivity, if a smart approach is used. The pundits say that, as long as it doesn't get out of hand, creating a workplace league can offer employees a common subject for small talk as well as friendly competition as participants build a team roster through a player draft and then use National Football League stats to score points in virtual games.

Valley REC, like many co-ops, has long encouraged morale-boosting activities, as long as safety and productivity come first. The co-op's latest lunch-hour fantasy football draft saw a mix of employees building their teams in preparation for the start of the season. The hardcore fans there had their wish lists of star players compiled ahead of time. Other employees used "eeny, meeny, miny, moe" to build their "dynasty" or selected guys named "Johnson," "Jackson" and "Smith" since those surnames often appear on the rosters of great NFL teams. No doubt, the "team owners" who did their homework and made the best picks will have the winning seasons.

While owning an NFL team is a fantasy for most folks, owning an electric distribution co-op is a reality for Valley REC members. As a part owner, what would your ideal co-op team look like? Who would you want on your roster? You wouldn't go wrong choosing Valley REC players in your first round of picks.

To quarterback the team, you would need a veteran CEO and staff. A quick tabulation puts the collective experience of Valley's senior staff at well over 150

years (Fortunately, we don't feel that old!). Many of these folks, long past their rookie years, have come up through the co-op ranks and have weathered numerous changes in the energy industry. They know the game plan and can step up and deliver under pressure.

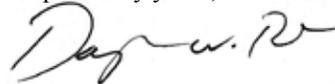
You're also going to want a bunch of tough, experienced linemen on your roster. Fortunately, your co-op's starting line-up is among the best in the league. Our 20 plus linemen average a decade and a half of experience and have kept the power on in some of the harshest conditions. Long days, summer heat, winter storms - they've seen it all before.

Rounding out the co-op roster are a variety of special teams and skills positions. These are the co-op's consumer, member and technical services and accounting and IT personnel. Valley REC also boasts a staff forester, an energy specialist and a number of staking engineers. Some of these employees are new additions, younger players who will keep the co-op in game-day shape for years to come.

All great teams need great coaching. Your co-op has a group of coaches in the form of a director from each of Valley's nine districts. And where do these leaders come from? They're elected by the membership, the owners of Valley Rural Electric Cooperative.

And that brings us back to you, the member-owner. Your next draft days will be the 2016 nominating meetings and the annual meeting. We'll provide those dates in the weeks ahead. Please mark your calendar and help draft a winning team.

Cooperatively yours,



Doug Roles
Manager of Member Services



Doug Roles
Manager of Member Services

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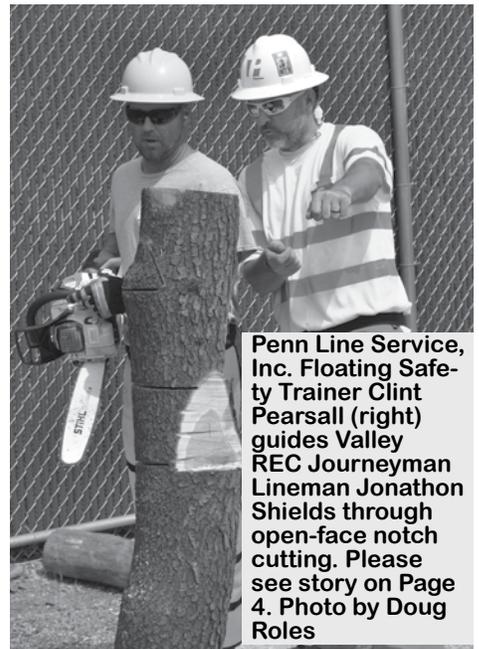
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Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

On the cover ...



Penn Line Service, Inc. Floating Safety Trainer Clint Pearsall (right) guides Valley REC Journeyman Lineman Jonathon Shields through open-face notch cutting. Please see story on Page 4. Photo by Doug Roles

Co-op now offers Marathon water heaters

Focal Points

Valley Rural Electric Cooperative is now making available to members Rheem Marathon electric storage tank water heaters. These highly efficient units are a great fit for the co-op's demand response program because power can be shut off to them during load control periods and there will be minimal heat loss.

The water heaters feature 2-1/2 inches of polyurethane foam insulation. The company states the units allow only five degrees of standby heat loss in a 24-hour period.

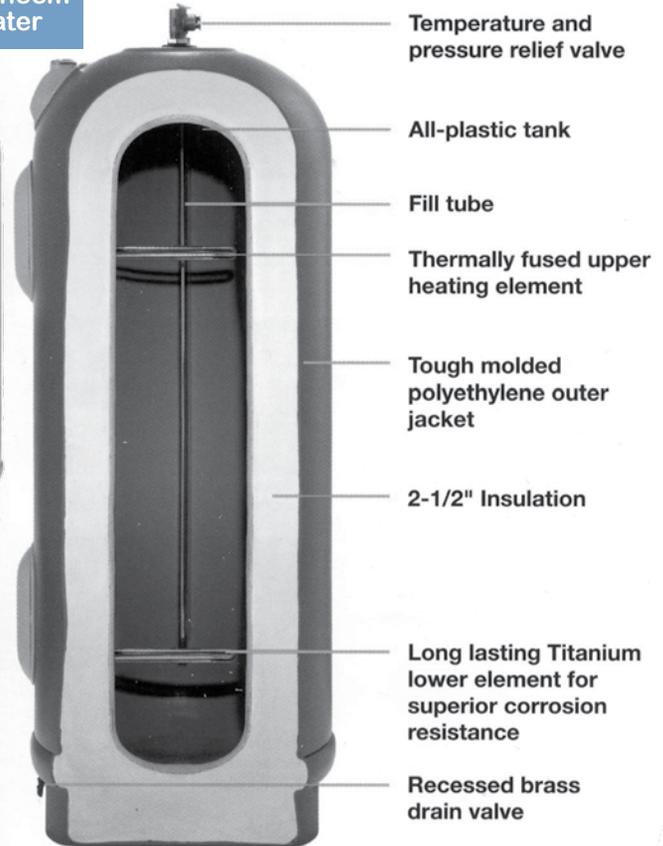
The water heaters boasts a lifetime tank warranty. The seamless, blow-molded polybutene inner tank will not rust or corrode, according to the manufacturer.

Water heaters are available in sizes ranging from 15 gallons to 105 gallons. The co-op's rebate program applies to units that are 50 gallons or larger, for members participating in the demand response program.

Orders normally will be filled within two weeks. Fifty-gallon and 85-gallon units may be in stock. Members who purchase a water heater will be able to pick up their unit at the nearest district office, in Huntingdon, Shade Gap or Martinsburg. For more information, please call 800/432-0680.

The Marathon's sleek, modern design will catch your eye, but its true beauty is more than skin deep.

Marathon Rheem water heater



Member Appreciation Days slated for mid-October in service districts

October is National Co-op Month! To celebrate, Valley REC will be holding Member Appreciation Days to give members a chance to stop by a district office and have a light picnic-style meal while co-op staff from the Consumer Services, Member Services and Billing departments are available to answer questions.

The events will be held from 3-5 p.m. The Huntingdon District event is Monday, Oct. 12; Martinsburg is Tuesday, Oct. 13; and Shade Gap is Wednesday, Oct. 14.

How 'lucky' can one farm get with spring calving?

By Doug Roles

Manager of Member Services

Co-op members Allen and Judy Aungst of Pine Grove, Schuylkill County (they have a cabin on co-op lines in Huntingdon County) contacted Valley REC with a story they thought *Valley News* readers would find interesting. Some readers might even be able to say they've lived this experience.

The Aungsts, who have been Valley members for nearly 40 years, have a small herd of Herefords. How lucky can you get with just a dozen head? Read on ...

"We had a lot of fun on the farm this spring," Judy writes.

She explained that on a cold morning while the family was at church making Easter candy, their son Art's cows had twins. Allen found two very cold calves when he went to check on the cow; one was in especially poor condition.

He and Art took them to Art's basement where they got a warm shower. The first calf responded quickly but the family had to use an electric blanket and a feeding tube for the other calf. While the second calf was still receiving care in the basement, another cow delivered twins but refused to feed one of that pair. That calf, named "Lucky 2" joined the first "Lucky" in the basement for a warm place to sleep and bottle feeding before they could be moved together to a small pen.

"Would you believe that our last cow to have her calf had



Seth Moyer of Danville bottle feeds "Lucky" while visiting the farm of his grandparents Allen and Judy Aungst in Pine Grove. Photo courtesy Aungst family

twins?" Judy writes.

Fortunately, both of these large calves thrived right away in warmer weather. No need for a "Lucky 3."

"Thank goodness. The farmers are getting tired of this nursery routine," says Judy.

The Aungst's cabin is located on Mill Creek Valley Road. Allen's father bought it in 1970. "We used to visit the cabin rather often," Judy says, "but with grandkids and community involvement, we probably get up about four times a year now."

Chainsaw school trains line crews to think before making the cut

Valley REC hosts three-day safety event for state's cooperatives

By Doug Roles

Manager of Member Services

For three days in early September the buzz of chainsaws could be heard in the garage area and woods at Valley REC's Huntingdon district office. More than a dozen linemen were sawing but not because they were getting a jump on stockpiling firewood for the winter.

All the cutting up was part of some serious business – the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association's (PREA) Advanced Chainsaw School, hosted this year by Valley and supervised by PREA's job training and safety staff. Two floating safety trainers from Penn Line Service, Inc. (one of the companies routinely contracted by Valley REC for tree trimming) conducted the class.

"The intent of our course is for the linemen to walk away with a more advanced skillset and to take the time to assess the work they are dealing with," says Penn Line trainer Jeremy Sowerbrower.

He and fellow Penn Line trainer Clint Pearsall started the first day of the class by saying chainsaw accidents cause about 40,000 emergency room visits annually, and more often than not those injuries are serious lacerations.

"Arm and hand areas typically are the highest number of injuries," says Jeremy. "The head injuries are usually a kickback from someone operating at head height or above,"

Jeremy explained that many of the hand and arm injuries occur when a cutter is using a small trim saw and inadvertently pulls the non-operating hand into the path of the saw while moving a tree limb. He said that left leg injuries happen much more frequently than right, as operators cut toward the left leg.

"Ninety-nine percent of all saws are right-handed," he says.

To prepare for hosting the course, Valley REC employees built a stretch of line behind the Huntingdon District office. The line was not energized, of course. But Jeremy and Clint did get to do something they'd normally not do: They cut trees onto the line to provide the students some tangled messes to clean up.

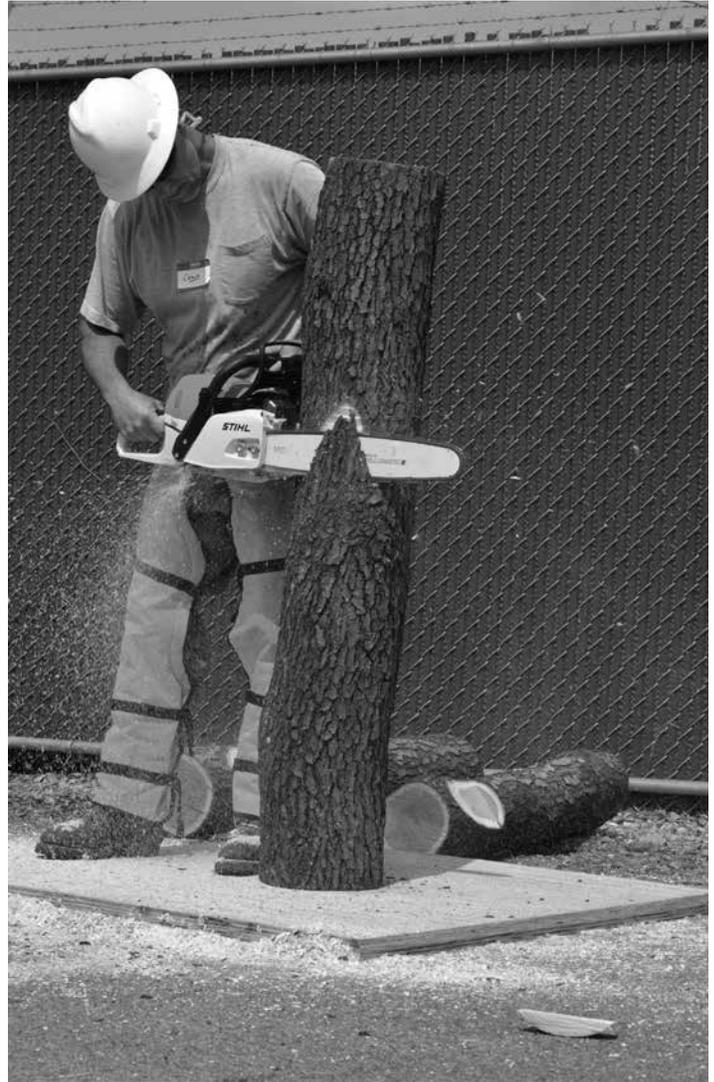
VREC linemen Kenneth Sipes and Jeff Ruby assisted in the training. The two linemen teach the basic chainsaw safety course. Sixteen linemen from co-ops across the state participated in the training which helps line workers identify common hazards and use best practices to clear trees and limbs from lines.

One of the things the trainers stressed is that cutters can avoid injuring others simply by not allowing anyone to be near them while the chainsaw is being used.

"When a guy is operating a chainsaw, no one should be within 10 feet of him," Clint says.

If another worker needs to get the attention of a cutter, he or she can throw something in front of him to get his attention, rather than risking startling the operator by approaching from behind.

The trainers reviewed the parts of a chainsaw, including two little-known items, the felling sights and the chain catch. Just as the name implies, the catch prevents a broken chain from being thrown back onto the user. Jeremy says it's "not unheard of for a chain to break" and said this is the reason to use a saw which has a wide handle bottom that offers added protection for the throttle hand.



Valley REC Crew Leader Craig Morrison cuts a notch during day one of the three-day Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association Advanced Chainsaw School. Photo by Doug Roles

The felling sights are marks on the body of the saw that are perpendicular to the blade and can be used to line up the path the cutter intends the cut tree to follow to the ground.

Jeremy and Clint also shared that the handles of many chainsaws are curved in a way to ergonomically let the operator cut common notching angles. Students were also warned that chainsaw chaps are not effective against contact with an electric chainsaw, since the material of the chaps is designed to fray and stall out the clutch of a gas-powered saw.

Other safety guidance included using puncture resistant gas cans with safety spouts and to keep blades sharp to avoid the practice of pushing a dull blade through material.

"Making sure the blade is sharp is crucial," Jeremy said.

Cutters were also reminded to keep their non-throttle hand wrapped around the handle so it is in place to trip the brake.

The course included a block of instruction on identifying some of the most common tree species, their hinging characteristics

and the hazards they can pose to cutters. One hazard becoming more common is the brittle overhead limbs of ash trees dying because of the emerald ash borer.

“The progression of damage in those trees is that they’re already damaged internally before you see it,” says Kevin Detwiler, Valley REC’s staff forester/arborist. “The way they’re dying, the tops become really weak. Once you see that orange bark start peeling, you don’t want to be up in it.”

The safety trainers listed black cherry as another tree that often is dead and decayed inside by the time the problem shows on the outside.

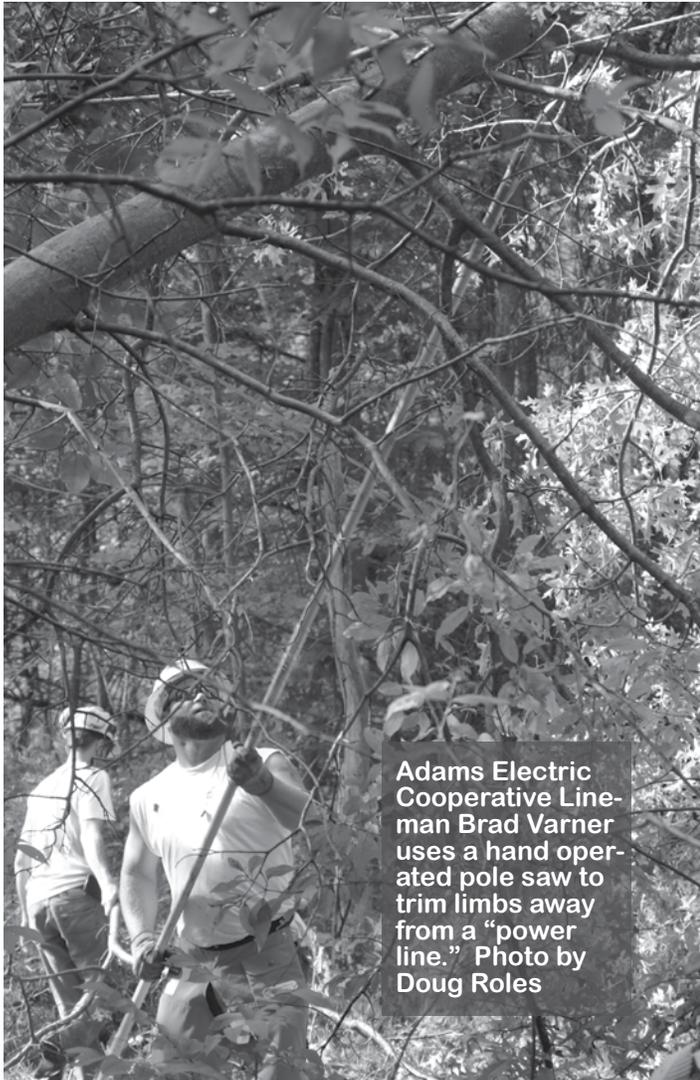
Timberers and those who cut standing fuelwood should take care in felling such trees.

“Use every tool you have to put that tree where you want it to go,” Clint advises.

Clint and Jeremy said cutters need to be especially cautious around springpoles – saplings that are under tension and can snap, splinter or jump upward when cut or when another tree is cut from on top of them. Trainers simulated this situation by placing pole wood under pressure (using a winch) and having students make small relief cuts. Clint says the situation often requires using a pole saw to keep the cutter out of harm’s way.

“The chance of the springpole jumping 12 feet is pretty slim,” Clint says.

Jeremy commended co-op linemen on how helpful they are to Penn Line crews in clearing of trees during outages. Even veteran co-op linemen said they took away some valuable information from the three-day course.



Adams Electric Cooperative Lineman Brad Varner uses a hand operated pole saw to trim limbs away from a “power line.” Photo by Doug Roles

Dennis Tursich, a journeyman lineman with Bedford Rural Electric, says he’s cut a lot of timber off of power lines in the past 15 years and always had some trepidation about the job.

“What we did always worked. But I was always a bit scared,” he says. “I’d say what they taught us here is a good safe way of doing things.”

Valley REC Journeyman Lineman Jonathon Shields said an added benefit of PREA trainings like this one is that they give line workers an opportunity to get to know and work with linemen from other Pennsylvania co-ops, something that proves invaluable when sister co-ops lend mutual aid to each other during storm-related outages.

“I enjoyed the course. We learned a lot of new ways of rigging. That was the main thing I took away from it,” Jonathon says. “The instructors were very knowledgeable.”

Jeremy and Clint noted that the Center for Disease Control reports incidents of chainsaw accidents are on the rise. One reason for this, they said, could be a lack of mentoring of youths using chainsaws around the farm, as used to be common. This experience gap leads to adults who take on cutting tasks beyond their ability without considering the dangers. The Penn Line trainers said it’s often the novice or the veteran cutters who get injured because they think nothing will happen.

“The things that don’t seem like they’ll get you are what usually do,” Jeremy cautions.

Local Feature



Above: Penn Line Floating Safety Trainer Clint Pearsall shows some of the most commonly used types of knots. Below: Linemen from Northwestern and REA Energy co-ops work together to pull a tree away from a deenergized power line. Photos by Doug Roles



THE
**Trading
Post**

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REAL ESTATE

3 BR, 1 BA on 2 acres near Raystown Lake & Tatman Run boat launch. Detached garage, \$145,900. Call Schrack Realty 814/643-6000 or Donna Napier at 717/348-3674.

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For sale: 1999 GMC 17' box truck & 2002 Nissan Quest w/ 92,000 miles or will trade for a 4-wheeler or a log splitter & load of logs or electrical work. For more information call 814/506-9165.

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VACATION RENTALS

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WANTED

Riding mowers, zero turn mowers, push, rototillers, snow blowers, mower parts of any kind, gas or diesel, running or not. Farm tractors of any kind, running or not. Motorcycles, mini bikes, go-carts of any kind running or not & any kind of parts for these. Also need used lumber. Any of the items above in Mifflin, Huntingdon, Centre, Blair & Juniata counties, we will come pick them up. Call any of the following numbers between 9 a.m. & 4 p.m. 814/386-0111, 814/386-0687, 814/506-2350 or send

a text after 4 p.m. Also wanted: scrap metals, appliance tin, roofing tin, iron & steel. Please call 814/386-0687, 814/386-7122 or 814/644-1132 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. or send a text after 4 p.m.

ANIMALS

12-18" colorful Japanese Koi \$100-\$300. 814/447-3630.

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MISCELLANEOUS

10' x 12' aluminum pergola, new in the box. \$900. 814/932-8908.

9 pc. maple dinette set, old, \$1,200; 10' orange counter top, gd. cond. \$75; like new queen size memory foam mattress set, \$500; 4' x 20' round swimming pool, needs liner, good pump, \$200. 814/447-3630.

Wooden slider ladder, \$50; portable Fleetwood sewing machine, \$25. 717/369-3576.

Table-size ceramic Christmas tree; medium size wooden desk, gd. cond.; cord or cordless Wahl rechargeable razor, used very little. 814/447-3735.

Faux suede headboard, 81-inch, \$20. Manual treadmill, \$25. Orange hunting jacket and pants, XL, \$150. Orange hunting jacket, M, \$60. Orange hunting hats, \$2. Deer hoist, new, \$15. Spotlight, \$10. Antique white armoire, 63" h x 42 1/2" w x 22" d. \$75. Hand quilted quilts, new, \$150-\$400. 814/658-3973.

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PA Game News (over 400 issues). 814/695-5393.

Logs - 10 ash, 1 maple, 1 walnut. Fresh cut on the ground, straight and clear, ready to be sized and hauled. 1' to 2' diameter. Orbisonia area. Best offer. 410/440-3900.

Glass display case, top & 3 sides all glass w/ 2 glass shelves & 2 sliding mirror doors. 5 ft. long, 3 ft. wide, 1 ft. depth, very good cond. \$250 OBO. Gun cabinet style wooden display case w/ bottom storage, 6 ft. high, 2 ft. wide, 1 ft. depth \$60 OBO. Call if interested 814/643-2042.

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Decker Electric Inc. Call us for all your electrical needs. We do quality work & comply w/all electrical codes. We offer free estimates & are totally insured. Call 814/599-0835 or 814/643-4338.

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Kenneth W. Reigh Carpentry & Masonry. Decks, landscaping blocks, siding, additions, kitchens & baths, screened-in porches, natural stone, brick, block & concrete. Fully insured, 35 yrs. exp. For estimates call 814/658-9998.

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Keller's Home Improvements. Free estimates. 814/667-2236. Fully insured. Specializing in replacement doors & windows, siding, decks, & other home improvements.

ES Ministries Thrift Shop. 7603 Shavers Creek Rd., Petersburg, PA 16669 at the Nazarene Church. Open Fri. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. & Sat. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Clothing, toys, books, household items. New items weekly. Current holiday items. Donations accepted during store hours. We cannot take TVs or electronic equipment.

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Littleton & surrounding areas. Fully insured & free estimates. Please call Jeff Croft at 717/491-0676. PA. Reg. #075050.

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EVENTS

Huntingdon Farmers' Market every Thursday, noon to 5 p.m. from the beginning of May through the end of October. Portstown Park pavilion (across from Laney's Feed Mill). Locally-grown fruits & vegetables, eggs, cheeses, hand-made pasta, baked goods, hand-dyed wool & honey. Cash, checks, Senior & WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program Vouchers, EBT & credit cards accepted.

Atkinson Mills Sportsmen's Club 2015 3-D Shoots at 55 Sportsmen Club Lane, McVeytown, PA 17051. September 20. Registration from 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. \$10 to shoot. Children under 12 shoot free w/ paying adult. Crossbows & recurves are welcome. Every time you shoot be entered to win a brand new Hoyt Ignite & other prizes from Valley Sports N Outdoors, Reedsville.

11th Annual Open House at Terrace Mountain Alpacas on Nov. 7 & 8, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., near Calvin. Come meet the newest crias, pull up a chair & stay awhile. Check out all the new items in the store, some made from our alpacas. Farm open most days for your convenience, call 814/643-2854. Store open: Fri. & Sat. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Website: www.terracemountainalpacas.com

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Safety Quiz for Kids

ELECTRICAL HAZARD ACTIVITY



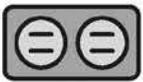
The Energy Explorers want to remind you to always practice electrical safety! Remember, electricity can be dangerous, so make sure to avoid electrical hazards.

DIRECTIONS: Circle the item that doesn't belong. **HINT:** If all three items in the row were combined, which would make the situation an electrical hazard?

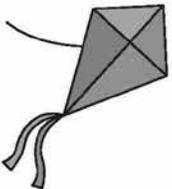
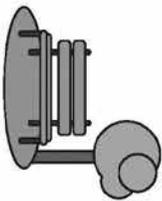
1



2



3



Answer Key

1. KNIFE
2. SINK
3. POWER LINES