

Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.
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Monday - Friday
7 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

HUNTINGDON/MARTINSBURG/SHADE GAP OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday
7 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Staying safe



by Wayne Miller
President & CEO

I HEARD a pretty amazing story recently. It involved two teens from Indiana, Lee Whittaker and Ashley Taylor, who were driving down the road with some friends when their car started to fishtail. Lee did his best to keep the vehicle on the road. But before he knew it, he was sliding straight into a utility pole — and that pole came down, lines and

all, right on top of the overturned car.

Now most folks faced with this situation would do what comes naturally: Get out of the car. But Lee and Ashley knew better. Less than a week prior, they had attended a safety demonstration at their school sponsored by their local electric co-op. One of the key messages relayed was, “Stay in your car if it ever hits a utility pole, so you’ll be safe from the path of any electrical current.”

The two did just that, and kept their friends in the car and family members at a safe distance after they arrived at the scene. As a result, the entire group walked away with just a few minor injuries. Without a basic knowledge of electrical safety, however, the outcome that night could have been much different.


The electricity Valley Rural Electric provides day-in and day-out is a phenomenal resource, powering our modern lifestyles in a safe, reliable and affordable way. But electricity must be respected. If safety isn’t made a priority,

what improves our daily lives also has the power to destroy them in an instant.

Lee and Ashley know this, thanks to the commitment of their local cooperative. We here at Valley Rural Electric Cooperative also strive to keep you informed about electrical safety issues, so you don’t have to learn a similar lesson the hard way.

Safety has been a part of the fundamental culture at Valley for more than 70 years. Did you know that “electric line worker” is ranked by the U.S. Department of Labor as one of the top 10 most dangerous jobs, on the same list as commercial fishermen, loggers and military service members? That’s why we demand that both our field and office personnel make safety a top priority.

We hope that you’ll take the same vigilant approach to safety as we do. I encourage you to visit www.valleyrec.com and follow the Save Energy link to the Library tab. There you’ll find a section called Fundamentals of Electricity that includes great information on how to stay safe around electricity. Spending just a few minutes looking at this helpful resource can make all the difference when you’re faced with a hazardous situation. For additional information, visit safeelectricity.org and electrical-safety.org.

I hope there won’t be any stories about Valley members getting into scary situations like Lee and Ashley did. But if there would be, a few minutes spent studying safety today could ensure a happy tomorrow. 

2010 BOARD CANDIDATES

IN FEBRUARY, Valley REC held nominating meetings in co-op Districts 7, 8 and 9. The members featured on this page were nominated for positions on the board of directors. Their names will be placed on a ballot and members attending the annual meeting April 16 at 7 p.m. at Mount Union Area High School can vote for the candidates of their choice.

Entertainment for this year's annual meeting will be provided by barber-shop quartet *New Found Sound*.

Children may also attend. They will enjoy a big-screen movie, refreshments and a dairy promotion presentation.

Each member who attends will receive a \$15 credit on his/her electric bill, an eco-friendly reusable shopping bag and an energy-efficient shower head. Those registered will also be eligible to win one of two \$250 Valley REC gift certificates. In addition, attendees may bring to the meeting any spent compact fluorescent lightbulbs (compact spirals only, please). Cooperative staff will properly dispose of them. Plus, each family that brings a CFL will receive a free replacement.

Please plan to attend — **April 16, 7 p.m., Mount Union Area High School.**

District 7

David Wright

5593 Pleasant Ridge Road
Needmore, PA 17238-8942

David Wright has held a post on Valley's board of directors since 1983, serving as vice president and secretary. He also serves on the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association board, holding the position of chairman for five years and treasurer for two years. A 1964 graduate of Allegany High School in Cumberland, Md., Dave attended Catherman's Business College, where he received an associate degree in business administration and accounting. Dave served as treasurer of Fulton County for 16 years. Prior to that time, he held managerial positions at Sagner, Inc. of McConnellsburg. In addition, he recently operated a small business known as "Dave's Funnel Cakes." Dave served as secretary-treasurer of the State Association of County Treasurers and treasurer of the State Association of Elected County Officials. He also was chairman of the Fulton County Chamber of Commerce and president of the McConnellsburg Volunteer Fire Co. He is a member of the Needmore Bible Church. Dave and his late wife, Carolyn, were married 31 years. He has two children and four grandchildren. Dave is 64 years old and has been a Valley member for 44 years. Dave's name will be listed first on the ballot for District 7.



Alton Hill

4158 Pleasant Grove Road
Warfordsburg, PA 17267-8823

Alton Hill has been a member of Valley Rural Electric Cooperative since 1952. His name will be listed second on the ballot for District 7. A 78-year-old native of Fulton County, Alton retired after 21 years at JLG Industries, Inc. of McConnellsburg, where he worked as a vehicle maintenance mechanic. Prior to that, he raised poultry and beef and grew grain on his family's farm. Alton now owns three farms, which he leases for various purposes. Alton is a 30-year member of the Warfordsburg Lions Club and a charter member of the Needmore Volunteer Fire Co. He has served as director of the Fulton County Farmers Association and on the Agricultural Stabilization Committee. In addition, he served on the board of Southern Fulton School District and is a member of two antique tractor associations. Alton attended Southern Fulton Junior/Senior High School in Warfordsburg. He and his wife, Leona, have been married for 57 years. They have three children, eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. The Hill family attends Needmore Bible Church.



District 8

Earl E. Parsons

20790 Parsons Farm Road
Blairs Mills, PA 17213-9448

Earl E. Parsons has served on the Valley REC board of directors for the past 24 years. He held the position of vice chairman of the board from 1996-97 and chairman of the board from 1997-2002. In addition, he served as Valley's representative on the board of directors of Allegheny Electric Cooperative from 1997-2001. Earl owns and operates a poultry farm in southern Huntingdon County, where he raises 120,000 turkeys each year. He plants 350 acres of corn and small grains and employs one full-time and one part-time assistant. A 1953 graduate of Orbisonia High School, Earl has completed several short courses through the Pennsylvania State University. He attends Saint Luke's United Methodist Church in Shade Gap and serves as a director for the Southern Huntingdon Medical Center. In addition, he is a charter member of the Shade Gap Lions Club and a lifetime member of the Shade Gap Volunteer Fire Co. Earl is 74 years old. He has been a Valley member for 44 years. He is running unopposed on the ballot for District 8.



Cindy D. Bigelow

2548 William Penn Hwy
Williamsburg, PA 16693-6506

A 55-year-old Williamsburg native, Cindy owns a 180-acre dairy farm. In addition, she is employed by Penn England Farms in Williamsburg. Her prior work experience includes six years with Leidy's Greenhouse in Williamsburg and two-and-a-half years as a baker with Brumbaugh's Old Fashioned Delites, also in Williamsburg. A 1972 graduate of Central High School in Martinsburg, Cindy is a member of several cooperatives, such as Land O' Lakes and the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau. She serves on the Blair County Dairy Promotion Committee and the Farmland Preservation Board of Blair County, and is involved with the Williamsburg Community Farm Show. Cindy has been a member of the Fairview Church of the Brethren in Williamsburg for 43 years, serving as a deacon and a member of the church board. Her hobbies include making crafts, baking and collecting milk bottles. Cindy and her late husband, Richard, were married 20 years. She has three children and three grandchildren. She has been a Valley member since 1980, and has served two terms on the co-op board of directors. Cindy is running unopposed on the ballot for District 9.



Lilies of Stone Valley

Local daylily growers prepare for this year's color show

BY SUSAN R. PENNING
Director of Member Services

VALLEY RURAL ELECTRIC member John Hewett and his partner, JoAnn Smith, don't need a calendar or weatherman to tell them when summer has settled into their densely wooded hollow in northern Huntingdon County. All they need to do is look out their back window.

As the small field on their 12-acre property bursts alive in a sea of colorful daylily blooms, it signals to the couple that warmer days will dominate the forecast.

"When I was a kid, my mom grew wild daylilies in her yard. When the flowers popped out, I knew it was officially high summer ... the best time of year," JoAnn reflects.

JoAnn's affinity for daylilies stems from her childhood memories of summer. But her appreciation for them grew greater as she began cultivating the perennials in her own landscape.

"What I discovered was that they were the perfect flower for me," she says with a smile. "They essentially look after themselves. Many varieties grow hardily here and they're disease-resistant. So, I can enjoy the different colors — whites, pinks, purples, yellows, variations of each — without a tremendous amount of effort."

"I always say that if there was a nuclear war, the only thing that would survive here

would be cockroaches ... and daylilies," John jokes.

What began as a hobby grew into a small business called Stone Valley Daylilies. For 13 years, John and JoAnn have been cultivating daylilies professionally. JoAnn, the official owner of the business, now grows more than 400 cultivars. In fact, the couple actually chose their current

"I always say that if there was a nuclear war, the only thing that would survive here would be cockroaches ... and daylilies." — John Hewett

home based on the acreage available for daylilies.

"People who love daylilies sort of develop an addiction to them," John chuckles.

Although JoAnn is the driving force behind the business, John has developed a deep interest in the flowers as well.

"I've tried breeding some new varieties," he admits. "Some of the more interesting ones we've named. For example, we have 'creamsicle,' 'purple kiwi' and 'bananarama.' Other names we've chosen are very personal, such as 'Josephine's Song,' which is a tribute to JoAnn's late grandmother."

John and JoAnn say their primary source of business at Stone Valley Daylilies comes via word of mouth. They take orders from local folks who stop by and also process mail orders. They've filled orders from as

PHOTO COURTESY OF STONE VALLEY DAYLILIES



far away as Oregon and Texas.

They usually charge \$6 or \$7 per plant, which includes two fans (the individual units of a clump, containing leaves, a crown and roots). Some varieties they can sell in bulk at a substantial discount.

For more information on Stone Valley Daylilies or for hours of operation, call 814/667-4747.

RADIANT GREETING: This daylily is a customer favorite and is featured in John and JoAnn's field at Stone Valley Daylilies, located on Route 26 north of Huntingdon. The couple grows more than 400 daylily varieties and sells a portion of them each year. They prefer to grow the most hardy cultivars, those that are exceptionally disease and drought-tolerant.

Describing a daylily

Daylilies are highly diverse in color and form, often resulting from hybridization by gardening enthusiasts. They can be grown in plant hardiness zones 1 through 11, making them some of the most adaptable landscape plants. The flowers of most species open at sunrise and wither at sunset, possibly replaced by another one on the same stem the next day. Some species are night-blooming. Originally native from Europe to China, Korea and Japan, the daylilies' showy flowers have made them popular worldwide. There are more than 60,000 registered cultivars. Only a few are scented. Some cultivars rebloom later in the season, particularly if their developing seedpods are removed. The flowers of some species are edible and are used in Chinese cuisine.

SMART FARMING: Energy efficiency provides new harvest

BY MEGAN MCKOY

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

TO GET THE BIGGEST bang for their electricity dollar, more and more farmers are turning to energy efficiency to boost their bottom line and productivity.

Electricity on the farm powers heating (water, space, heat lamps), pumping (irrigation, water wells, manure lagoons), refrigeration, ventilation, lighting, fans (drying grains, aeration) and materials handling (feed augers, manure conveyors, milking and egg conveyors). In the areas of motors and lighting alone, the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE) estimates farmers could save \$88 million annually by implementing cutting-edge efficiency measures using available technology.

EnSave, a Vermont-based farm energy audit group, has created a pyramid that reveals steps agricultural operations can take to cut down on energy use, arranged by costs and benefits of improvements.

First, farmers should analyze energy use. Next, they should implement energy conservation measures — changing

behaviors and subsequently using less energy daily. After this, the greatest savings may be achieved through energy efficiency — working smarter and saving money by using more efficient equipment.

Each farm offers different opportunities for efficiency upgrades, varying by region and crop. However, regular equipment maintenance provides universal benefits.

The following measures can help:

► **Clean equipment:** Remove dust, soot and debris from equipment. This allows it to do more work with less effort, extending its life and reducing energy use.

► **Inspect regularly:** Replace parts that are showing excessive wear before they break and cause irreparable damage.

► **Plug leaks:** Whether they are pin-sized holes in a hose or drafty barns, leaks waste money, fuel and electricity. Plug them and you could save a considerable amount.

► **Remove clutter:** Regularly flush hoses to clear them of debris. Ensure fan and motor intakes and exhausts are

clean to maximize circulation and efficiency.

Lighting presents another opportunity to harvest efficiency. Consider lighting only work areas rather than entire buildings, and use daylight instead of artificial lighting when possible. Install dimmable ballasts to help control light levels.

The types of lights used on the farm make a difference as well. Incandescent lightbulbs typically convert only 10 percent of the energy used into light. There are many other options available, including compact fluorescent lights, cold cathode fluorescent lamps and T-8 and T-5 lights with electronic ballasts.

For more regional and/or crop-specific energy-efficiency options, the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service provides farm energy calculators. From animal housing operations to irrigation estimates, the calculators assess how much energy your farm currently uses and provide insights on how to cut your energy costs. Learn more at www.energytools.sc.egov.usda.gov.

Sources: ACEEE, EnSave, U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Valley Rural Electric offers low-interest loans to its members for insulation, storm door, thermal window and heating system replacement projects that qualify. For more information, call 800/432-0680 or email memberservices@valleyrec.com.



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Co-op now offers CFL disposal at all office locations

Co-op consumers as well as members of the general public may now bring their spent compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs) to any Valley REC office, and co-op personnel will ensure that they are properly disposed of (compact spirals only, please). CFLs contain a very small amount of mercury sealed within the glass tubing — an average of 5 milligrams (roughly equivalent to the tip of a ball-point pen). Like paint, batteries, thermostats and other hazardous household items, CFLs should be disposed of properly. Do not throw CFLs away in your household garbage if better disposal options exist. Energy Star-qualified CFLs have a two-year warranty. If the bulb fails within that period, return it to your retailer.



DROP-OFF SPOTS: CFL recycling is another way the co-op is helping to preserve the environment.