

Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

James Stauffer
Chairman

Kevin States
Vice Chairman

Cindy Bigelow
Secretary

Robert Holmes
Treasurer

Leroy Barnes
PREA Director

James Stauffer
Allegheny Director

Gregory Henry
Randall Huntsman
Linda McMath
Joanne Whitsel

Corporate Office Hours
Monday - Thursday
7 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Huntingdon/Martinsburg/Shade Gap Office Hours
Monday - Thursday
7 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Outages & Emergencies
1-800-432-0680

Guest Column



Keeping the lights on in 2018

By Kevin Detwiler

GREETINGS from your cooperative's forester. I thank all of you who have cooperated with our tree contractors, B&L Tree Service and Penn Line Service, by allowing them to complete the required right-of-way maintenance on your property. By working with the co-op, you have contributed a great deal toward reducing costs and improving the safety and reliability of the distribution system.

Valley REC's vegetation management program had a very successful year in 2017. Trees and brush were maintained on 450 miles of overhead right-of way. Our contractors trimmed approximately 18,000 trees and removed an estimated 6,200 trees that posed a significant threat to our energized facilities.

Valley REC is also continuing to be proactive in the battle against the emerald ash borer epidemic. The entire system has been affected by large numbers of dead ash trees as a result of this invasive insect. The good news is we have a hazard tree removal program in place to mitigate many of the issues resulting from the tree-destroying pest.

The year has started off well with the tree contractors being ahead of schedule despite the long periods of below-average temperatures. Although most of us think the recent cold spell is not fit for anyone to be outside except for Yukon Cornelius and the Bumble, the contractors are able to use these weather conditions for their benefit. There are certain areas on the co-op's system, such as low-lying wet areas and farm fields, that are best accessed

by equipment when the ground is frozen. The tree crews typically prioritize the work that needs to be done so they can access these areas before spring.

Also this year, Valley REC will maintain vegetation on 420 miles of line across its system. The workload is heavy, but the results have proven to be highly effective. Since 2011, the cooperative has seen a significant decline in the number and types of outages that occur due to the success of our vegetation maintenance program. The rights-of-way are now more accessible to line crews, which promotes quicker outage restoral. The investments made toward the co-op's vegetation management program are a team effort that begins with the support of our board members and CEO, which is shared through the entire cooperative team, including our vegetation management contractors.

I also want to recognize and thank Valley REC's vegetation management contractors who have provided the company with excellent service for the past several years. B&L Tree Service and Penn Line Service have worked diligently to meet the requirements of the cooperative's forestry program. Their employees are deeply invested in our program and understand the hard work it takes to provide members with the best possible service. Also, many of their employees are cooperative members who are working alongside the rest of us to help keep the lights on. I pray that 2018 is a blessed year for you and your family. ☀️

Co-op holds nominating meetings in Districts 2, 4 & 6

By Ethan DeVore
 Director of Member Services

IN FEBRUARY, Valley REC held nominating meetings in co-op Districts 2, 4 and 6. The nominees shown on the following pages were selected to stand for election to the co-op's board of directors at the annual meeting to be held Friday, April 6, at Huntingdon Area High School.

Nominating meetings are held each year in three of the co-op's nine director districts. This year's meetings were for District 2 and 4, held respectively at McVeytown and Three Springs volunteer fire companies in Huntingdon County. The District 6 meeting was held at the East Freedom Fire Hall in Blair County.

Aside from the business portion of the meeting, the gatherings also give members the opportunity to hear an update on the co-op and to ask questions about their organization.



ABOVE: Valley REC President & CEO Rich Bauer answers questions asked by members residing in District 2 at the McVeytown Fire Hall.



ABOVE: Valley Energy Specialist Travis Kuhstos speaks with Peggy Snyder, member of District 2, about the demand response program offered through the co-op.

Valley REC's President & CEO Rich Bauer covered several topics at this year's nomination meetings. He kicked off the meetings by telling members that the cooperative continues to prioritize vegetation management. By doing so, the co-op is able to keep rights-of-way clear, which helps keep an efficient and reliable distribution system.

"Valley REC has added money to the hazard tree budget this year to help combat the emerald ash borer issue," said Bauer. "This will help the co-op stay proactive in its efforts to maintain clear distribution lines."

He went on to explain the benefits of having a demand response unit installed on your water heater. By doing so, you are helping the cooperative stabilize costs associated with capacity charges during peak electric consumption periods.

The cooperative also offers a \$100 bill credit to members for having a demand response unit installed on their water heater.

In addition, Bauer spoke to members about the programs Valley REC offers to help support local communities, such as the Community Service Grant program.

"In 2017, over \$41,000 was distributed across 52 members through the grant program," Bauer explained.

To wrap up the nomination meetings, Bauer fielded several questions ranging from inquiries on the Bosch heat pump installations offered through Valley Rural Energy Services to the electric consumption of CFL lightbulbs vs. LED lightbulbs.

"The cooperative is all about helping the membership," said Bauer. "My goal is to listen to the needs of the members and guide the co-op in the right direction to be able to satisfy those needs."

Valley Rural Energy Services is one example of a newly established service provided through the co-op to help members easily attain residential electrician services. For more information about Valley Rural Energy Services, contact Zach Yohn at 814-506-1651. ☀

BELOW: Members of District 4 attending the nomination meeting enjoy a buffet-style turkey dinner at the Three Springs Fire Hall.



2018 Valley REC board candidates

IN FEBRUARY, Valley REC held nominating meetings in co-op Districts 2, 4 and 6. The members featured on this page and the next were nominated for positions on the board of directors. Their names will be placed on a ballot, and members attending the annual meeting April 6 at 7 p.m. at Huntingdon Area High School can vote for the candidates of their choice.

Entertainment for this year's annual meeting will feature the Werner Family Band. Children may also attend. They will enjoy activities, snacks and a dairy promotion presentation. Each member who attends will receive a \$15 credit on his/her electric bill and a 25-foot triple-tap extension cord. Those registered will also be eligible to win one \$250 or one of four \$75 bill credits.

In addition, attendees may bring to the meeting any spent compact fluorescent lightbulbs (compact spirals only, please). Co-op staff will properly dispose of them. Please plan to attend the annual meeting at 7 p.m. April 6 at the Huntingdon Area High School.

District 2

James Stauffer
175 Aultz Lane
McVeytown, PA 17051



A 1978 graduate of Kishacoquillas High School, Jim owns and operates a 60-acre dairy farm with a herd of 130 milking cows. He farms a total of 170 acres and ships his milk through Dairy Farms of America Cooperative.

Jim was employed for 10 years as manager of Brookland Mills, a retail livestock feed and fuel oil delivery service in McVeytown. Prior to that time, he worked as a truck driver for a fertilizer plant in the Belleville area.

Jim and his wife, Carol, are members of Centre Union Church, Lewistown. Jim teaches an adult Sunday school class and serves as an elder.

Jim and Carol have three grown children, twins Ben and Britney, and their younger sibling, Josh. The Stauffers have been married for 37 years.

A native of Belleville, Jim is 58 years old. He has been a member of Valley REC since 1993 and has served on the co-op board of directors since 1997. He held the office of vice chairman for two years and currently serves as chairman of the board. He is running unopposed on the ballot for District 2.

District 4

Joanne Whitsel
7925 Windy Summit Lane
Mapleton Depot, PA 17052



Joanne has been a Valley REC member since 1971. She retired from serving as director of the Crossroads Pregnancy Center, a faith-based and life-affirming service with offices in Huntingdon, Mifflin, and Juniata counties.

She also served as jury commissioner for the Huntingdon County Court of Common Pleas for 14 years. For the past four years, she has served the court as tipstaff. Joanne graduated from Captain Jack (now Mount Union Area) High School in 1964, then completed a cosmetology program at Penn State Beauty Academy, State College. She worked as a self-employed hairdresser for 20 years.

A native of Wayne Township, Mifflin County, she likes to stay active and, when time permits, enjoys painting and drawing. A year ago, Joanne and her sister started an antique consignment business. They have a booth at the Duncansville Antique Depot, Blair County.

Joanne is a member of Cornelius Chapel Methodist Church and also attends Beech Run Brethren Church, both in Hares Valley. Joanne enjoys spending time with her extended family. She and her late husband, Nelson, have three grown children, Jonelle, Nathan, and Jonathan.

Since joining the board of directors in 2015, Joanne has earned her Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate. She is working toward a Board Leadership Certificate and has earned nine of 10 required credits. Joanne's name will appear first on the ballot for District 4.

Louis Mamakos
19916 Sugar Grove Road
Three Springs, PA 17264



Louis and his wife, Susan, live in Three Springs. Married for 29 years, Louis found his way to the area through his wife who graduated from Southern Huntingdon County High School in 1976. Susan's parents, Pat and Ted Rotz, were born and raised in Three Springs.

For most of his career, Louis has led internet-based technology companies and operated mission-critical networks and services.

He served as an executive vice president and chief technology officer at Vonage, a large independent internet telephone company. At that time, the telephone system served more than 2 million customers, including E-911 emergency calling. During his career, Louis became well versed in corporate governance, while also working closely with his board of directors.

Presently, Louis serves as principal network architect at AppNexus, where he's responsible for the operation of a global network and more than 7,000 computers used to deliver reliable service to customers.

Louis is also very involved in the community. He leads the tech lab at the Mount Union Community Library, has led summer technology and science programs for children, and assists the Three Springs Historical Society with their technology needs.

Louis earned a bachelor's degree in computer science from the University of Maryland. He is 58 years old and has been a Valley REC member since 2007. Louis' name will appear second on the ballot under District 4.

District 6

Leroy Barnes
 445 Sarah Drive
 Portage, PA 15946

Leroy Barnes has successfully operated his family's dairy farm in partnership with his brother, Barry, since 1968. They currently milk 220 Holsteins, and raise corn and alfalfa on approximately 700 acres of ground.

A 1966 graduate of Claysburg-Kimmel High School, Leroy holds an associate degree in computer management from the ICM School of Business in Pittsburgh.

Leroy is a member of the Mount Hope United Church of Christ near Blue Knob, where he serves on the consistory. He is a former member of the Blue Knob Fire Company and served three years as a director for Long's Dairy, a milk marketing cooperative in Tyrone. He currently serves as a director on the Allied Milk Producers board.

In his free time, Leroy enjoys hunting.

Leroy is 69 years old and has three grown children and six grandchildren. A native of Blue Knob, Leroy has been a member of Valley REC for more than 30 years. He has served on the co-op board for 18 years, including as vice chairman, and is currently the co-op's representative on the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association board.

Leroy's name will appear first on the ballot for District 6.



Joseph Apple
 1271 Dry Run Rd
 Duncansville, PA 16635

A Cambria County native, Joe Apple has spent the last 25 years living in Blair County. Now 66 years old, he currently resides in Duncansville. Joe graduated from Forrest Hill High School in 1969 before enrolling in Saint Francis University as a business major. He worked a few different jobs before spending most of his career owning and operating a Harley Davidson franchise in Altoona for almost three decades. He recently retired as the owner of his motorcycle store, Apple Harley Davidson, in July 2017.

Prior to running his own business, Joe worked for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, where he was a construction inspector for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources. He maintained that job for 10 years before serving as a United Parcel Service driver delivering packages for the next 15 years.

Joe is running for the District 6 board representative because he strives to become more involved in the community. In his free time, he enjoys maintaining and improving his property. He also enjoys meeting and talking with people in the community and staying abreast of current events. Joe has been a Valley REC member since 2010.

His name will appear second on the ballot under District 6.



Werner Family Band to perform at annual meeting

The Werner Family Band plays a mixture of traditional and gospel bluegrass music. The group from Mount Joy, Pa., consists of three brothers: Gideon (16) plays banjo and vocals, Stephen (15) plays fiddle and vocals, and Silas (12) plays mandolin. Joining them is Brett Beiler (17) on guitar and vocals. The brothers' dad, Henry, plays the upright bass.

The brothers first performed in 2014 when they were asked to play at the Remington Ryde Festival in Centre Hall, Pa., as part of the Youth Showcase feature. In 2015 their dad joined them as they performed at various bluegrass events,

festivals and church programs. In addition to playing together as a group, the boys enjoy entering individual instrument contests and have won awards.

The Werner Family Band performs bluegrass concerts and church programs, as well as playing for retirement communities, senior groups, fundraisers, and private events. For more information and to see videos of the boys playing, look them up on their YouTube channel or go to their Facebook page, The Werner Family Band. 🌞



PERFORMERS: From left, Gideon, Henry, Silas and Stephen Werner, and Brett Beiler perform as the Werner Family Band.

2018 Annual Meeting
 7 p.m., April 6, 2018 – Huntingdon Area High School
 Scenic territory slides – 6:30 p.m.
 Elections – Districts 2, 4 & 6

Activities and a dairy presentation for the kids

Door prizes – Co-op gift certificates
 1 – \$250 & 4 – \$75

\$15 OFF YOUR ELECTRIC BILL AND A GREAT NIGHT OUT!
YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS IT!