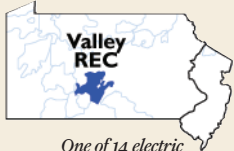


Valley
Rural Electric
Cooperative, Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

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FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Switch five this month



by Edward A. Dezich
President & CEO

LATELY, we have all been looking at ways to save money on everyday living expenses like fuel, groceries and other basic needs. In an effort to help you save a few bucks on your electric bills as well, I am encouraging all Valley REC consumers to participate in the Department of Energy's (DOE) "Change a Light, Change the World" campaign. Although

the primary objective of the program is to help protect and preserve our precious natural resources, participants also reap the benefit of significant energy savings. Here's how it works.

This month, you change out at least five of your home's incandescent lightbulbs to compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs). It's that simple. According to information provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the DOE, switching to CFLs will provide the following benefits:

- ▶ CFLs use at least two-thirds less energy than standard incandescent bulbs, provide the same amount of light and last up to 10 times longer.
- ▶ Homeowners can expect to save at least \$30 in energy costs over each bulb's lifetime.
- ▶ CFLs generate 70 percent less heat, so they're safe to operate and can cut energy costs associated with home cooling.
- ▶ In addition to other quality requirements, most CFLs turn on instantly, produce no sound and fall within a warm color range (unless otherwise noted).


▶ Thanks to new engineering, CFLs are available in many different sizes and shapes to accommodate most light fixtures (indoors and outdoors).

To get the most bang for your buck, it is recommended that you begin installing CFLs in your most-used fixtures. The five highest-use fixtures in a home are typically the kitchen ceiling light, the living room table and floor lamps, bathroom vanity and outdoor porch or post lamp.

CFLs can be purchased at most home improvement and hardware stores as well as some retail stores. The initial cost is higher but the long-term savings are significant and the payback is fairly quick.

If this plan is adopted across the United States, researchers estimate that switching to energy-efficient lighting would save consumers and businesses about \$18 billion annually in electric costs. Yearly energy demand for lighting would be reduced by the equivalent of what is generated by 30 nuclear power plants or up to 80 coal-based power plants.

The DOE estimates that if every American household replaced just five incandescent bulbs in high-use light fixtures with Energy Star-rated bulbs, each family would save about \$60 a year in energy costs. Together, we'd save about \$6.5 billion a year while preventing greenhouse gases equivalent to the emissions from more than 8 million cars.

This month, let's all switch five. We'll be helping to improve life for ourselves, our co-op, our country and our planet. 



Youth Tour students return with memories, lifelong friends

BY SUSAN R. PENNING
*Communications Specialist,
Member Services Department*

VALLEY RURAL ELECTRIC sponsored 10 high school students on the 2008 Rural Electric Youth Tour to the nation's capital June 15-20. The teens returned with new friends, a better understanding of American history and a lot of great memories.

They participated with more than 1,400 other juniors and seniors sponsored by electric cooperatives from all over the country — 85 from co-ops in Pennsylvania.

The trip was packed with activities, including meetings with federal legislators and rural electric leaders, visits to historic monuments throughout Washington, D.C., and tours to the Smithsonian museums, Holocaust Museum, National Zoo and Arlington Cemetery.

The agenda also included a cruise on the Potomac River, a parade at the Iwo Jima Memorial and a theater production at the Kennedy Center.

Points pondered

"The Sunset Parade at the Iwo Jima Memorial made me realize how hard our soldiers work and how dedicated they are to making this country as safe as it is today," says Ashley Morgan from Mount Union Area High School. Ashley attended the tour along with her twin sister, Alicia.

"This trip changed the way I see the world," adds Breanna Wingert from Southern Huntingdon High School. "Youth Tour was the best trip of my life."

Others echo her sentiments.

"The whole week was just an awesome experience for me," says Haley

Mundis of Huntingdon Area High School. "It helped prepare me for what college is going to be like. The people made the trip quite amazing for me, and I could honestly have stayed one or two more weeks there."

"I do not travel very often and meeting people from all over the country was a new and wonderful experience for me," notes Kimberly McAllister of Juniata Valley High School.

Selection process

Recommended by guidance counselors at their respective schools, the students were selected for the trip on the basis of academic achievement, leadership in extracurricular activities and community service.

Four of the Valley REC-sponsored students are from Juniata Valley High School. They include Nickolas Boonie,

LEFT: Valley REC's 2008 Rural Electric Youth Tour group pauses for a photo during a cruise on the Potomac River. The students are: (top row, left to right) Nickolas Boonie, Alicia Morgan, Rose Snow, Alyssa Balles, James Hawn; (bottom row, left to right) Carrie Lawler, Breanna Wingert, Haley Mundis, Ashley Morgan and Kimberly McAllister.

son of Randy and Kim Boonie of Petersburg; James Hawn, son of William and Lisa Hawn of Petersburg; Carrie Lawler, daughter of John Lawler of Huntingdon and Carolyn Janowsky of Petersburg; and Kimberly McAllister, daughter of Wesley and Paula McAllister of Petersburg.

Nickolas plays football, wrestles and is a member of Future Farmers of America (FFA). He also volunteers as a junior firefighter.

James is a member of the FFA and the National Honor Society (NHS), and is active in 4-H as well as his church youth group.

One of two seniors selected for the trip, Carrie plans to attend Juniata College in the fall. Before graduating from Juniata Valley, she served as class secretary and as a peer mentor. She also participated in student council and was named student of the month.



ON THE CAPITOL STEPS: U.S. Sen. Robert Casey Jr. (D-Pa.) talks about energy issues with Youth Tour students from across the Commonwealth.

Also a senior, Kimberly will be going to Penn State Altoona in the fall. While in high school, she played varsity basketball, ran track and was a member of the NHS and FFA. In addition, she was active in chorus, band and her church youth group.

Three students selected for the tour are from Southern Huntingdon High School. Alyssa Balles is the daughter of Robert and Haley Balles of Three Springs; Dorothy (Rose) Snow is the daughter of Frank and Diane Snow of Neelyton; and Breanna Wingert is the daughter of Titus and Deb Wingert of Three Springs.

Alyssa is very active in band and is a member of the NHS. She also competes in track and field.

Rose is in chorus and band. She plays field hockey and participates in track and field as well.

Breanna is editor-in-chief of The Daily News Press Club and president of the Photography Club. She is also a member of the NHS and plays in the band.

Two students, Alicia and Ashley Morgan, daughters of Ralph and Charlesetta Morgan of Mount Union, attended youth tour from Mount Union Area High School.


Alicia reigns as the Huntingdon County Fair Queen. She also participates in FFA and cheerleading and plays varsity softball.

Ashley served as the 2007-08 Huntingdon County Dairy Princess. She is also in FFA and cheerleading and competes in track and field and summer league softball.

Haley Mundis represented Huntingdon Area High School on Youth Tour. Haley is the daughter of Mary Ann Mundis of Huntingdon. She is a varsity cheerleader and member of the NHS and student council. She also sings in school, community and church choirs.

Valley Rural Electric is proud to sponsor these promising young people on a trip that allows them to see the world beyond their rural backyards.

"(Youth Tour) will stay with me for the rest of my life," Rose says. "I hope future Youth Tour kids have as great a time as I had. Thank you for the best week ever!"

To be eligible to participate in Youth Tour, students must be juniors or seniors in high school and must be sons or daughters of co-op members or employees. For more information about the Rural Electric Youth Tour, contact the member services department at Valley REC at 814/643-2650 or toll-free 800/432-0680. 



DOUBLE TAKE: Twins Ashley (left) and Alicia Morgan take in the view of the Washington Monument from the World War II Memorial.

Meet your employees

TAKING CENTER STAGE in this column is a recent addition to the Valley REC team, Kathy Luprek. Kathy came to the cooperative in October 2007, hired as a clerk in the billing department at Valley's corporate headquarters on Fairgrounds Road near Huntingdon.

As a billing clerk, Kathy has many responsibilities.

"I record meter readings, address high bill complaints and answer other questions members may have regarding their bills. I provide consumers with up-to-date account information and payment history," Kathy reports.

In addition, Kathy prepares monthly electric bills for mailing and assists the cooperative in reconciling delinquent accounts.

"I help negotiate payment arrangements with members who are at risk for having their service disconnected," Kathy notes. "Along with other co-op employees, I work to find solutions for them so they

can maintain their electric bills and keep their power on."

Kathy's previous work experience includes 12 years as a customer service representative and mapping department clerk at a private power company. After that, she spent more than four years working as a nurse's aide at a local nursing home before discovering that a career in the medical field just wasn't her cup of tea. She then looked for another job in the utility industry, which ultimately led her to Valley REC.

A native of Windber, Cambria County, Kathy is a 1987 graduate of Forest Hills High School. Her father and mother, Joe and Marilyn Luprek, live in Windber. Kathy has one brother, John, of Davidsville, Somerset County. John and his wife, Alison, have 12-year-old twin daughters, Karla and Kayla, and a 3-year-old son, Noah.

Kathy currently resides in Duncansville. She enjoys reading, fishing with her family (particularly at Trough Creek), shopping and hanging out with her nieces and nephew.

As for her new job, Kathy says she's glad to have the opportunity to work for a small, local company.

"The co-op is like a big family," she



Kathy Luprek

says. "You really get to know the people you work with. Plus, I enjoy the four-day work week."

Kathy says she also likes helping people and is happy doing what she's doing.

"I'm still learning and growing in my current position," she points out. "I can definitely see myself working here for a long time, perhaps retiring here."

Kathy's fellow "family members" at the cooperative look forward to working with her for a long time, too. She's one of the people you can count on. ☀

Floods can cause electrical hazards

As our prayers go out to the victims of the recent floods in the Midwest, our thoughts turn to the safety of our own Valley REC members. We believe it is our obligation to equip you with as much information as possible about the electrical hazards associated with rising waters so you can help keep your family safe in emergency situations.

It's important to remain alert when flooding threatens your area. Energized electrical equipment that comes in contact with water poses severe safety hazards. Of course, we realize that the prospect of an electrical shock is probably not the biggest thing on your mind when you're faced with a flooded basement or property. But ignoring the risk could lead to serious injury or even death. Before you set foot in any flood water, please pause to evaluate what

could be lurking underneath the surface and keep these safety tips in mind.

- ▶ Never walk into a flooded basement or other room if water may be in contact with electrical outlets, appliances or cords.
- ▶ Never attempt to turn off power at the breaker box if you must stand in water to do so. If you can't reach your breaker box safely, call Valley REC to send personnel to shut off power at your property.
- ▶ When you're wet or standing in water, never use electric appliances or touch electric wires, switches or fuses.
- ▶ Keep electric tools and equipment at least 10 feet away from wet surfaces. Do not use electric landscaping tools if it is raining or if the ground is wet.
- ▶ If an electric appliance has been in contact with water, have a professional



determine if it should be used again. It may need to be repaired or replaced.

- ▶ If possible, have ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) installed at your outlets. These safety devices can cut off power quickly if a problem is detected, saving you from electrocution. GFCIs are recommended for outdoor outlets, as well as outlets in your home near wet areas, such as the kitchen, bath and laundry area.

For more information on electrical safety, call Valley REC at 814/643-2650 or toll-free 800/432-0680.