

Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.
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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

James Stauffer
Chairman

Leroy Barnes
Vice Chairman
PREA Director

Kevin States
Secretary

Cindy Bigelow
Treasurer

Robert Holmes
Allegheny Director

Corey Brumbaugh
Mervin Brumbaugh
Earl Parsons
David Wright

CORPORATE OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday
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

FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

'Only you' can lessen peak demand



by Wayne Miller
President & CEO

STEVEN WRIGHT, the comedian known for his witticisms and one-liners, used to tell a story about Smokey Bear's slogan, "Only you can prevent forest fires." He said that, as a kid, he thought Smokey was talking solely to him, so every night he'd sneak out of the house with a pail of water, just in case.

That kid was doing his part, though he missed the point: While it only takes one careless person to start a forest fire, it takes vigilance on everyone's part, individually, to prevent fires.

Valley Rural Electric's approach to our demand response program borrows from Smokey: Only the participation of members, individually and collectively, makes the effort to reduce power costs worthwhile.

We are launching a new initiative to expand our demand response program by adding 450 new participating members to its ranks. Increasing the program will ultimately help us better manage the size and frequency of rate increases. Let me explain how it works.

In previous issues of this magazine, you may have read material about demand response or load management programs, or seen the term "peak demand." The demand for electricity at any given time is important to co-op members because it impacts the pricing of purchased power. When consumers are using a lot of electricity at the same time (the peak period), Valley REC, through its supplier, Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Allegheny), must pay more to obtain it. Curbing that demand by having demand response units (DRUs) temporarily shut off electric water heaters or heating/cooling systems can level out the peak, thereby moderating the price we pay to Allegheny.


Understand that as a Valley REC

member, you are also, by extension, an owner of Allegheny. Headquartered in Harrisburg, Allegheny is a generation and transmission co-op serving the 13 electric distribution co-ops in Pennsylvania and one in New Jersey. Allegheny is owned and governed by the co-ops it serves. Its board of directors is comprised of a director from each of the 14 co-ops.

So, as a owner-member of Valley REC, you not only have a say in the way your co-op operates (through your vote at annual meetings), but you also have invested in Allegheny's mission to supply power to your distribution co-op. After all, it's payment of your electric bills that, in part, pays for the generation plants that enable Allegheny to provide almost 70 percent of our power — from the Susquehanna nuclear plant, and the hydroelectric plants at Lake Raystown and on the Niagara and Saint Lawrence rivers.

While you help pay for those ownership expenses through your electric bill, choosing to participate in demand response is your chance to help lessen the price paid for that other 30 percent of our power — the electricity we use that is not produced by Allegheny's generating plants, but must be purchased on the open market.

Our initiative to expand demand response is truly a team effort. Our office staff will be happy to work with you to make an appointment for one of our installers to visit your home. There's no cost to you, and the DRU can be adjusted so you should not run out of hot water. You'll also receive a one-time \$25 bill credit, and you'll be eligible for rebates should you purchase a new water heater.

To the nearly 3,500 members already participating, I thank you for your efforts. To those who have not yet gotten on board, we hope you'll consider installing a DRU on your water heater. You'd be doing your part, and you wouldn't have to leave the house in the middle of the night with a bucket of water. 

2013 BOARD CANDIDATES

VALLEY REC held nominating meetings in February in co-op Districts 7, 8 and 9. The members featured on this page and Page 14c were nominated for positions on the board of directors. Their names will be placed on a ballot and members attending the annual meeting (April 12 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 "A Tribute to Patsy Cline" by Joanne Stiffler. She will take on the character of Cline and perform hits such as "Crazy" and "I Fall to Pieces." Children

may also attend. They will enjoy a big-screen showing of Dr. Seuss' "The Lorax," snacks and a dairy promotion presentation.

Each member who attends will receive a \$15 credit on his/her electric bill and an indoor/outdoor thermometer. Those registered will also be eligible to win one \$250 or one of three \$100 co-op gift certificates. 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 – April 12 at 7 p.m., Huntingdon Area High School.

District 7

David Wright

5593 Pleasant Ridge Road
Needmore, PA 17238-8942

Dave Wright has held a post on the Valley Rural Electric Cooperative Board of Directors since 1983, serving as vice president and secretary. He also served on the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association (PREA) board, holding the position of chairman for five years and treasurer for two years. He has earned board leadership certification and PREA's highest award, the Eminent Service Award.

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 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 67 years old and has been a Valley member for 47 years. Dave's name will be listed first on the ballot for District 7.



Gregory M. Henry

599 Plum Hollow Road
Hustontown, PA 17229

Greg Henry worked for Valley REC for 39 years. He joined Valley as a laborer in February 1969 and retired in February 2008 as Valley's manager of operations. He also worked as a lineman, a crew chief and manager of what was then the Hustontown-Shade Gap district.

Greg is a 1965 graduate of Forbes Road High School. He served in the U.S. Army from 1966 to 1968 as a repair specialist in the Quartermaster Corps. While working for Valley REC, he completed the Management Internship Program.

A native of Fort Littleton, Greg is president of the Forbes Road Lions Club. He is a charter organization representative for Cub Scout Pack 47, Hustontown. He is a member of Clear Ridge United Methodist Church, where he serves as treasurer and is a member of the Pastor-Parish Relationship Committee and an alternate delegate to annual conference. Additionally, Greg is a trustee for the Clear Ridge Cemetery Association and is active with the Clear Ridge Community Association that plans benefit events.

Greg and his wife, Erma, have three children, eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He is 65 years old and enjoys hunting, bicycling and spending time with the grandkids. Greg is also an avid reader. He has been a Valley member since 1972. Greg's name will appear in the second position on the ballot for District 7.



District 8

Earl E. Parsons

20790 Parsons Farm Road
Blairs Mills, PA 17213-9448

Earl Parsons has served on the Valley Rural Electric Cooperative Board of Directors for the past 27 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, Inc. from 1997-2001. (Allegheny is the cooperative that supplies power to Valley REC and 12 other Pennsylvania electric cooperatives.)

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 77 years old. He has been a Valley member for 47 years. His name will appear in the first position on the ballot for District 8.



Linda J. McMath

12007 Sawmill Road
Shade Gap, PA 17255

Linda McMath serves as a jury commissioner for the Huntingdon County Court of Common Pleas and is a substitute teacher in the Southern Huntingdon County School District. Linda retired in 2004 as a reading specialist at Shade Gap Elementary School. She worked in education for 19 years, including one and one-half years in the Mifflin County School District. For 12 years she operated McMath School of Gymnastics in Shade Gap. Linda and her husband, Tom, also operated a family farm in Taylor Township, Fulton County, for 25 years, raising beef, crops and Christmas trees.

For the past three years, Linda has served on the advisory board of Huntingdon County Childrens Services. She has served for four years as a youth counselor at Tuscarora Catholic Summer Camp.

A 1965 graduate of Southern Huntingdon County High School, Linda received her bachelor's degree in health and physical education from Slippery Rock University in 1970 and holds a master's degree in education (as a reading specialist) from Shippensburg University. Linda and Tom have been married since 1969. They have four children and five grandchildren.

The McMaths attend St. Mary's Catholic Church, Shade Gap, where Linda has served for the past six years as secretary of the pastoral council. She enjoys sewing, horseback riding, refinishing furniture and refurbishing old houses. Linda is 65 years old and has been a Valley member since 1973. Her name will appear in the second position on the ballot for District 8.



District 9

Cindy D. Bigelow

2548 William Penn Highway
Williamsburg, PA 16693-6506

A 58-year-old Williamsburg native, Cindy Bigelow 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 and agriculture organizations, such as Land O' Lakes and



the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau. She serves on the Blair County Dairy Promotion Committee and the Farmland Preservation Committee of Blair County, and is involved with the Williamsburg Community Farm Show. For the past year, she has served on the Huntingdon/Blair County Farm Service Agency Committee.

Cindy has been a member of the Fairview Church of the Brethren in Williamsburg for 46 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 four grandchildren. Cindy has been a Valley member since 1980. She has served three terms on the co-op board of directors and has served as board secretary since 2011. Cindy is running unopposed on the ballot for District 9.

Phone scams, identity theft still cause for concern

SEVERAL members have called Valley Rural Electric Co-op (REC) offices in recent weeks to report receiving phone calls during which they were asked to provide information such as utility account numbers or Social Security numbers. Members are reminded to be cautious about what information they provide, even if the caller claims to be from a trusted source.

"We have nothing to do with those calls," said Linda Kreidler, Valley REC's supervisor of office services. "It's not us doing this. Be careful about the information you're giving out."

Kreidler said Valley REC offices do not ask members to provide Social Security numbers by phone. Members signing up for service can provide that information over the phone, but in that instance, it's the member who has initiated the contact to the co-op.

Many state residents are receiving telemarketing calls from electric generation suppliers about switching to another provider. While no outside suppliers have contracted with Valley REC, co-op members could still receive phone calls if telemarketers operate solely from area code information.

"I think a lot of people are frustrated with these calls," said Kreidler. "But people are really trusting of Valley Rural Electric."

While telemarketing calls certainly can be from legitimate sources, residents should never feel pressured to provide personal information. Unfortunately, attempts at identity theft don't appear to be waning. Police in Huntingdon and Mifflin counties have reported phone

scam activity in one form or another in recent months.

In one instance, a caller fraudulently claims to be fundraising for the state police. The Lewistown Borough Police Department in March warned residents about two scams. In one, a caller was trying to gain credit card numbers by phone. In the other, someone posing as a buyer of items listed on internet classified sites would mail a check to the seller (the victim), but then back out at the last minute, asking that his or her money be returned.

One recent scam targeted members of an electric co-op in Ohio. Officials there reported that members were receiving phone calls about renewing subscriptions to the co-op's monthly magazine. The would-be identity thief asked that

subscription renewals be paid over the phone. Members became suspicious because, as is the case with Valley REC, the co-op magazine is provided to members without a subscription fee. ☀



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Keep energy efficiency in mind as the ground thaws and you plan spring landscaping. Properly selected and planted trees, shrubs, and bushes can create a wind break that lowers home heating bills in the winter and insulates your home year-round. Before you start, check on the right plants and techniques for your climate at EnergySavers.gov.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Traffic control training sharpens Valley skillset

BY DOUG ROLES

Director of Member Services

VALLEY REC employees received a refresher course in roadway work zone safety in March. It's especially important that those who do flagging properly set up work zones and keep alert on the job since many motorists today are distracted or are driving impaired, the training instructor noted.

Crews in all three Valley districts — Huntingdon, Shade Gap and Martinsburg — participated in the training sessions and obtained certification in traffic control.

Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association safety instructor Dennis Shawley told attendees that flaggers are responsible for the safety of themselves, the work crew, motorists and pedestrians, and for protecting work equipment. He said crews have to use common sense to adapt to conditions.

"I spend a lot of time on the road and probably one-third of the drivers I see have a cell phone to their ear or are texting," Shawley said. "If they're doing

that, they're not paying attention."

Shawley reported that as many as 60 percent of road users may be distracted. Additionally, studies show that most motorists tend to speed up when entering a work zone, Shawley said.

Shawley also warned his class that studies show one out of 10 motorists on the road at night is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, with that number increasing to one in five for weekend nights. In addition to speaking about impaired drivers, Shawley also talked to Valley employees about motorists who don't recognize hazards because they routinely drive certain routes every day and are fixated on getting to their destinations. One of the difficulties crews most often encounter in setting up a work zone in Pennsylvania is having a limited line of sight on winding back roads.

"Make sure you can be seen by oncoming traffic," Shawley advised. Shawley pointed out that work crews in Pennsylvania are not to allow traffic to back up beyond the initial warning signage in a work zone. To lessen the chance of this,

planners can access traffic data for state roads through the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) website. While PennDOT has jurisdiction over the setup of flagging on not just state, but also township roads, the state police and Occupational Safety & Health Administration inspectors can also spot check work zones. Valley REC requires its line workers and other staff to take the traffic control training every two years.

"Flagger training is important for Valley as a segment of our safety training," said Shade Gap District Manager Rick Polek. "It keeps our linemen apprised of the latest rules and regulations by combining classroom instruction and a practicum. It's important to keep our crews safe and make the public aware of safety in work zones on highways in our service area." 🌞



IN TRAINING: Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association safety instructor Dennis Shawley (center, foreground) talks with Valley REC employees at the Shade Gap District office March 4. Shawley's training on directing traffic focused on conditions Valley crews face on local roadways. Employees in the Huntingdon and Martinsburg districts also completed the training.