

OCTOBER 2026

PENN LINES

A Battle for Survival

Inside the Movement
to Bring Bats Back

TIPS TO SEAL
DUCTWORK
FOR SAVINGS

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YOU'RE DOING
GREAT

TAP MAPLE
SYRUP
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INSIDE!
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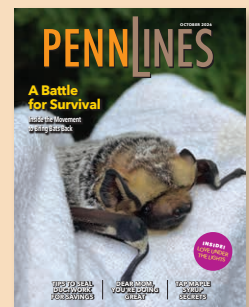
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ON THE COVER

This month's feature is all about bats. The one above is among those that have been rescued by the Pennsylvania Bat Conservation and Rehabilitation Center in Berks County. Others in the state are helping, too.

PHOTO BY
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Electric Affordability

Why Energy Policy Matters at the Polls



**MATT
LEONARD**

KEEPING ELECTRICITY AFFORDABLE is a basic part of the cooperative model. Your local co-op is owned by you, the people it serves, and it works every day to manage costs while providing the reliable service you expect.

That work has become more challenging. The cost of buying and delivering electricity has increased across Pennsylvania, with many of those expenses determined in regional markets beyond the control of any one cooperative. Now, a wave of proposed data centers could add significant new demand to the power grid.

More than 100 data centers have been proposed in Pennsylvania, although only a fraction have entered the environmental permitting process. Proposed does not mean built. Still, the scale of the plans has put an important question before state and federal policymakers: Who should pay for the new power plants, transmission lines and other equipment these facilities may require?

While data centers are expected to bring investment and jobs to Pennsylvania, their growth must be planned responsibly and paid for fairly. As we move forward, large-load users should bear the cost of their construction and operation, not families, farms, and small businesses already on the line.

The people we elect on Nov. 3 will help decide how Pennsylvania handles that growth.

Voters will choose a governor, half of the state Senate, all 203 members of the state House and members of Congress. The winners will shape policies affecting power generation, permitting, transmission and large-load development. Those decisions will influence the cost and reliability of electricity for years to come.

For cooperative members, voting is an opportunity to influence what happens next. As you consider the candidates, look for those who understand the cooperative model and will keep reliability, affordability, and the needs of the communities that co-ops serve at the center of energy policy.

You can start with a few practical questions: Does a candidate understand the pressures driving electric costs? Does that person believe large-load users should pay their fair share? Will rural communities and their local cooperatives have a seat at the table when energy policy is being written?

The answers matter. Decisions made in Harrisburg and Washington eventually reach the local level, sometimes in ways that are easy to overlook until they appear on an electric bill.

Co-ops Vote, an initiative started 10 years ago by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, offers a simple way to prepare for Election Day. The nonpartisan program does not endorse candidates or tell co-op members how to vote. Instead, it encourages consumers to register, learn about the issues and make a plan to get to the polls. You can find out more and also take the voter pledge at vote.coop.

Electricity may be only one of the issues voters consider this fall, but it is an important one. Pennsylvania must find a way to meet growing demand without losing sight of the people already paying for power every month.

Cooperative members have a direct stake in that conversation. On Nov. 3, they also have a say in who leads it. 

MATT LEONARD
PREA/ALLEGHENY MANAGER, GOVERNMENT & REGULATORY AFFAIRS

Penn Lines (USPS 929-700), the newsmagazine of Pennsylvania's electric cooperatives, is published monthly by the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, 212 Locust Street, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108-1266. *Penn Lines* helps 168,000 households of co-op consumer-members understand issues that affect the electric cooperative program, their local co-ops, and their quality of life. Electric co-ops are not-for-profit, consumer-owned, locally directed, and taxpaying electric utilities. *Penn Lines* is not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts. The opinions expressed in *Penn Lines* do not necessarily reflect those of the editors, the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, or local electric distribution cooperatives.

Subscriptions: Electric co-op members, \$8.52 per year through their local electric distribution cooperative. Preferred Periodicals postage paid at Harrisburg, PA 17107 and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes with mailing label to *Penn Lines*, 212 Locust Street, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108-1266.

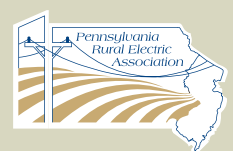
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MY PARENTS' ENERGY POLICY

Growing up, my parents enforced a strict energy policy in the home. It was not written down, and there were no regulatory filings and certainly no public comment periods. But the rules were clear: Turn off the lights when you leave a room, use renewable energy – otherwise known as the sun – to dry your clothes, and ride your bike if you needed to get anywhere.

Perhaps influenced by the energy worries of the 1970s, those house rules taught us a lesson about saving resources – and money. It's a lesson electric cooperatives have put to work for four decades: The cheapest energy is the energy you never have to produce.

That commonsense principle is at the heart of one of the most successful programs in Pennsylvania cooperative history: the Coordinated Load Management System (CLMS), which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. Created by electric cooperatives in this state working with their wholesale power provider, Allegheny Electric Cooperative, CLMS helps reduce electricity use during periods of peak demand, when power is most expensive.



Because cooperatives operate to provide the most affordable power possible, they asked: Instead of buying this costly electricity or building additional generating resources to meet these periods when demand is at its highest, why not reduce or shift demand during those peaks?

For the past 40 years, cooperative members have helped answer that question. By voluntarily allowing water heaters, heating systems and other equipment to be cycled off during periods of high demand, participating members help lower the amount of electricity that must be purchased when prices are at their highest.

CLMS does not produce electricity. Instead, it produces value by helping cooperatives avoid costs before they occur. Individually, each act of participation may seem small. Collectively, those choices have helped cooperative members avoid nearly \$185 million in purchased power costs since 1986.

As we observe National Cooperative Month this October, CLMS continues to prove that some of the best solutions are also the simplest. And that cooperation remains one of our most powerful energy resources. For cooperatives, it's simply common sense – a policy my parents would fully endorse.

PETER A. FITZGERALD
EXECUTIVE EDITOR



EASING TRAFFIC: The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission recently decided it will move forward with a plan to construct a bypass at the Breezewood interchange in Bedford County. The new route will provide a direct connection between the turnpike and Interstate 70.

PASSING THROUGH

Plan to create bypass on Pa. Turnpike at Breezewood receives commission's blessing

Changes are coming to the Pennsylvania Turnpike in Bedford County.

The state Turnpike Commission recently decided it will move forward with changes to the Breezewood interchange. The plan includes modernizing Exit 161 with a bypass that will provide a direct connection between the turnpike and Interstate 70.

Currently, traffic moving between the turnpike and I-70 must detour onto a quarter-mile stretch of U.S. Route 30, lined with traffic signals and businesses. A direct connection would improve safety, ease congestion and keep through traffic moving.

In 2022, 2.65 million turnpike exits and 2.83 million turnpike entrances were recorded at Breezewood — 37% of them involved trucks. The bypass is expected to reduce backlogs and accidents on local roads. A feasibility study also found that the redesign may unlock new developable land and generate millions in long-term economic impact.

Construction timelines will be announced as the project develops. To learn more, visit paturnpike.com.

STAY SAFE

Measles outbreak in Pa. rises to hundreds of cases, four deaths

The measles outbreak in Pennsylvania continues to expand.

The state Department of Health (DOH) announced in September that 676 cases have been confirmed in 37 counties. As of mid-month, four measles-related deaths have also been reported.

Officials continue to work with healthcare providers, the public and organizations to provide information about the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Since the outbreak began in April, state health officials have administered more than 3,900 MMR vaccinations at more than 100 pop-up health clinics in affected communities. In all, state health center staff have administered more than 5,700 MMR vaccine doses to Commonwealth residents in 2026.

The vaccine, 97% effective after two doses, is available by contacting your healthcare provider, your county or municipal health department, the state health center, or the federally funded Vaccines for Children Program.

People who believe they were exposed to measles and are experiencing symptoms should contact their healthcare provider or call the DOH's toll-free hotline at 877-PA-HEALTH (877-724-3258).

AWARD WINNERS

***Penn Lines* earns writing awards, former editor honored**

Penn Lines recently received two awards for writing at the 2026 Willies Awards, hosted by the National Electric Cooperatives Statewide Editors Association (SEA) in Pittsburgh.

The magazine won a first-place honor for "Peak Performance," published in July 2025. The feature told the story of Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc.'s Coordinated Load Management System, a model cost-savings energy program in the state.

Penn Lines also received a second-place Award of Excellence for "More Than a Meal," which appeared in the March 2026 issue. The feature

highlighted cooperative efforts to overcome food insecurity in rural areas.

In addition to the writing awards, former *Penn Lines* Editor Perry Stambaugh was presented with the SEA Lifetime Achievement Award. Stambaugh, now an elected state representative, is also a former editor of *RE Magazine*, the flagship publication of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. He helped found American MainStreet Publications, which connects advertisers with millions of rural consumers through cooperative publications, including *Penn Lines*.

The Willies Awards — named for Willie Wiredhand, the rural electric cooperative mascot — is an annual competition that drew more than 400 entries this year from cooperative publications nationwide. 🍷



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENTS: Former *Penn Lines* Editor Perry Stambaugh accepts the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Electric Cooperatives Statewide Editors Association (SEA) this summer in Pittsburgh. *Penn Lines* also took home two SEA writing awards.

TIME LINES



OCTOBER 2016

A decade ago, *Penn Lines* put Pennsylvania's midterm elections in the spotlight, listing candidates running for seats in the state House and Senate. The issue also recognized the next generation of cooperative leaders, announcing the recipients of the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association Scholarship in Memory of William F. Matson and the Jody Loudenslager Memorial Scholarship. And as *Penn Lines* marked its 50th year, readers were invited to join the celebration by participating in three essay contests. Selected entries appeared in the magazine throughout the year.



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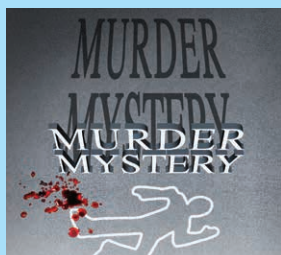


DO IT LIVE!

Improvised comedy and song will be on display at the Struthers Library Theatre in Warren, Warren County, on Oct. 7. Cast members of "Whose Line Is It Anyway?" will perform their traveling show, "Whose Live Anyway?" Tickets are \$55 to \$67.50, and the show starts at 7 p.m. For more, visit strutherslibrarytheatre.org.

MYSTERY MUSINGS

James T. Baumgratz will lead a special discussion on murders, mysteries and hauntings Oct. 16 and 17 at the Winery at Wilcox in DuBois. While there is no cost to attend, you must RSVP to reserve a seat. Learn more at duboispatchamber.com.



OYSTERS GALORE

The York County History Center will be the site of the 52nd Oyster Festival Oct. 18 in downtown York. Admission is free, and those who plan to slurp those mollusks on the half shell can pay as they go. Live music, kids' activities and demonstrations will also be offered. Learn more at yorkhistorycenter.org.

SPOOKY SPIRITS

The Endless Mountains HalloWINEfest is set for Oct. 31 at the Wyoming County Fairgrounds in Meshoppen, and it's sure to offer some spooky spirits for those 21 and older. In addition to local wine, food and craft vendors, there will be a costume contest at 2 p.m. Presale tickets are \$20, while those who wait for the gate will be charged \$30. For more, visit wyomingcountyfair.com.



A BATTLE FO

PHOTO BY PAULA PIATT



OR SURVIVAL

Inside the Movement to Bring Bats Back

PAULA PIATT

Penn Lines Contributor

Terry Lobdell was drowning in his carpentry shop.

Left with a mountain of scrap wood, he built some bat houses to soothe his self-admitted “OCD about not wasting things.”

It was not wasted on the bats living nearby.

“I shined the light up at dusk and I saw all these little faces looking down at me from the crevices,” he says of his early shelter attempt. “It was just the deepest experience, and I think it was at that moment I got hooked.”

For the Townville, Pa., resident and Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) member, the experience began a decades-long journey of all things chiroptera — a more formal word for bats — that includes houses, presentations, education and innovation. Lobdell even shares his Crawford County property with a colony of about 150 big brown bats.

Today, he’s northwest Pennsylvania’s “go-to” bat guy, one of a small — but dedicated — group throughout the state helping our struggling bat population.

‘The damage was done’

At one time, Pennsylvania was home to an estimated 10 million bats. Nine species are considered “residents.” In the fall, the hoary, eastern red and silver-haired bats wing their way south, while the big brown, little brown, tri-colored, Indiana, small-footed, and northern long-eared bats find a cave or abandoned mine, where they will sleep through the cold months.

All was well until the winter of 2008-2009. Greg Turner, the Pennsylvania Game Commission’s state mammologist in the Wildlife Recovery Division, remembers it well.

“That was the first time we documented it,” he says of white-nose syndrome, a fungus that took only two years to travel from upstate New York to the Keystone State. “And then it just took off. By 2012, the damage was done; it spread across the entire state and killed 99.9% of our cave bats.”

Winter roosting sites, once home to 35,000 bats, were left with 70; a mine with an estimated 50,000 bats was empty.

The fungus thrives in a cold, damp environment and, as true hibernators spending

six months sleeping in caves, bats were helpless against its march. As the disease attacked their skin and wing membranes, the bats became dehydrated and emaciated, which disrupted their sleep.

“They weigh about 7 grams,” says Turner, describing little brown bats, one of the hardest hit species. “They have 1 gram of fat to last six months underground and 95% is used coming out of hibernation.”

Periodically, bats leave the cave to groom, get a drink and maybe something to eat. Those infected with white-nose fungus wake up three to four times more often, thirsty from dehydration. Heading out into the winter landscape, they become prey for hungry predators or simply freeze to death. As the winter (and the fungus) wears on, their fat reserves dwindle, leaving them even more vulnerable.

Science, research and storytelling

Those bats that survive white-nose still face innumerable challenges. Encounters with roaming cats, striking windows or becoming trapped in uncovered chimneys and glue traps are just some of the issues that bring bats to Stephanie Stronsick’s Pennsylvania Bat Conservation and Rehabilitation Center in Berks County. With the mission of “protecting Pennsylvania’s vital ecosystems by rescuing,

rehabilitating and returning our misunderstood bats to the wild,” it’s the only state organization dedicated solely to the only flying mammal.

“They’re very complicated to rehabilitate, with unique injuries. They also have unique [treatment] protocols to have successful recovery and reintroduction back into the wild,” says Stronsick, a licensed rehabilitator and the center’s founder and executive director.

Of the almost 400 bats the rescue treats each year, the majority are found on the ground, some the victims of white-nose syndrome. “We get a lot of emaciated bats with dehydration,” she says. “They don’t have enough energy to forage or do daily activities.”

But this trio of bat conservationists — Stronsick, Turner and Lobdell — is undeterred. Working together on numerous projects, they’re bringing some light to the end of a long, dark bat cave.

Immersed in science, Stronsick works with Game Commission biologists as well as virologists at Penn State University, pathologists at the University of Pennsylvania’s PennVet Wildlife Futures Program, and microbiologists at Rutgers University, trying to understand these animals.

“We’re really science-based,” she says of the center and her work. “We heavily rely on ethical research, especially



THE REAL BAT CAVE: Deep in a Blair County abandoned mine, Pennsylvania’s once-dwindling bat population is coming back to life. Greg Turner with the Pennsylvania Game Commission, shown in far-right photo, led the effort to create a climate-controlled environment that’s helping protect bats from white-nose syndrome. The fungus spread throughout the state in the early 2000s and nearly wiped out the state’s bat colonies. Today, the mine has more than 1,200 winter residents and is the third largest hibernation site in the state. It’s also one of the largest tri-colored bat roosts in the northern U.S.

PHOTOS BY PAULA PIATT



dealing with an animal that has a unique immune response. A lot of it has to do with disease surveillance. Wildlife rehabbers are in a unique position when there's a disease epidemic, whether it impacts humans or not."

Stronsick has also helped develop treatment protocols for white-nose syndrome, which are used across the Northeast and Canada.

Turner surveys the landscape — monitoring, trapping and tagging a sample of the state's remaining bats. That's how he discovered that correct hibernation temperatures can make a big difference when it comes to surviving white-nose syndrome. Finding that the fungus slows down in colder temperatures, he theorized that if he could manipulate the winter roost's temperature, perhaps he could help the colony. Turner created a climate-controlled mine in Blair County, a region served by Valley REC, and gave the bats what they needed: a winter temperature between 38 and 42 degrees.

Soon, one tri-colored bat became 83, four big brown bats moved in, more than 1,000 little brown bats joined the two original survivors, and this past year, the first federally endangered Indiana bat returned to the mine. Turner is eagerly awaiting a northern long-eared bat, also federally endangered, to join the party. At more than 1,200 winter residents, the abandoned mine has become the third largest hibernation site in the state and one of the largest tri-colored bat roosts in the northern U.S. Six other sites have been modified with varying degrees of success.



Turner now combines temperature regulation with another treatment, developed by a Lock Haven University mycologist, that slows the fungus behind white-nose syndrome. After two years of treatment with a petroleum-based product (found in everything from cosmetics to toothpaste), the pair has reduced the disease in little brown bats by 66% and by 90% in big brown bats.

"The treatment delays exposure," Turner explains, giving the bats a healthier hibernation.

From northwestern Pennsylvania, Lobdell brings the bats' story to the people.

"Throughout the year, I probably do 10 or 12 public talks," he says. "I collaborate with county conservation

COURTESY OF THE PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION



PAULA PIATT





PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE FOUNDATION FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTS



districts, and I do a lot with the Game Commission.”

His message is pretty simple: Bats are an important part of the ecosystem, and we really should be doing everything we can to help them. “They are very important to our agriculture and forestry economy in Pennsylvania,” Lobdell says, “because of the insects they consume.”

Turner’s calculations put those numbers somewhere between 900,000 and 1 million insects per year, per bat. Over the course of a summer, each bat averages 5,500 mosquito-sized insects per night.

“If you’re a farmer and you have a colony of 300 bats in your barn,” he says, “and they’re eating 300 million insects around your farm, including the ones that are laying larvae that eat the roots of your crops, that’s free pest control.”

A place to call home

A homeowner with a “bat problem,” however, isn’t thinking about the farmer down the road.

“As beneficial as they are, you don’t want them in your house. They want your attic because of the heat; they only come down into your living space by accident,” Lobdell says. “If there’s an existing colony and people are willing, I help them out whenever I can.”

His solution? Offer them a house outside yours. And that’s where Lobdell really shines — his house-building innovations have had a big impact on bat conservation. Stronsick has several of his designs at the Berks County facility.

“She requires specialized bat houses,” Lobdell says, “so I’ll build one specifically for her needs.”

Lobdell’s houses also help rehabilitate bats at the Delaware Bat Rehabilitation and Conservation Center as well as the Lube Bat Conservancy in Gainesville, Fla. There, he’s created an observation bat house that can be

lowered with a winch. A door reveals the bats behind a plexiglass window.

“That’s what I enjoy doing the most,” he says. “If somebody needs a specialized design, I build it and take it to them.”

Closer to home, Lobdell volunteers with the Foundation for Sustainable Forests (FSF) in Spartansburg, Pa., a nonprofit land trust overseeing more than 3,700 acres of working woodlands, including the 106-acre Northwestern REC Community Forest in Cambridge Springs, Crawford County.

Adjacent to the cooperative’s offices, the property was acquired through the generosity of the co-op and a grant by the USDA Forest Service Community Forest Program. It’s managed as a sustainable working woodland, but also hosts recreation and education opportunities.

For a bat project, the foundation knew just who to ask: Terry Lobdell.

“Terry was enthusiastic,” says Bennett Gould, FSF’s conservation and outreach coordinator. “In 2024, he spent a week with a Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps crew, working with them on bat-box projects.”

Effective bat houses tower over the landscape at 12 to 20 feet, so they were going to need a pole. Rural electric co-ops certainly have one or two, and with Northwestern REC right next door, it was a natural partnership, Gould says.

“They brought over a bucket truck and a utility pole, set the pole for us, and then put Terry up in the bucket to hang [the bat house],” he says. “It was awesome to collaborate with them on that.”

Of course the co-op was happy to help, President & CEO Ryan Meller says.

“Northwestern REC places a strong value on being good stewards of the natural world,” he says. “This reflects our cooperative principle of ‘concern for community,’ and it’s



A PLACE TO CALL HOME: Terry Lobdell, shown in the second photo from left, is a key part of a statewide effort to increase Pennsylvania's bat population. In the accompanying photos, Lobdell worked with a crew from the Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps in 2024 to build and install bat boxes at the Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative Community Forest in Crawford County. The effort was coordinated by the Foundation for Sustainable Forests, a nonprofit land trust. The Outdoor Corps, which is overseen by the state Department of Conservation & Natural Resources in partnership with the Student Conservation Association, is a paid job-training and conservation program for young adults.

why we were so pleased to partner with the Foundation for Sustainable Forests on this project. Projects like this demonstrate our commitment to supporting local ecosystems while working alongside organizations that share those same values."

According to Gould, it's not the first time Northwestern REC has stepped up.

"Working with the co-op has been a real pleasure, from the initial conversations about the community forest, to volunteers, to partnering on events and different things. They've been so supportive and receptive," he says. "It's fantastic to see how committed they are to the communities they serve and to partnering with us in our work."

Back at the community forest, Lobdell didn't stop at just one bat house. In addition to the permanent installation just off Route 86 outside Cambridge Springs, six of his portable "rocket box" designs dot FSF holdings throughout northwestern Pennsylvania.

"In our region, there's so much tree growth. With a successful bat house, if trees begin to shade the house, the bats will leave, because they require full sun," Lobdell says, explaining that they need high temperatures to raise their pups in June. "A 50-pound bat house on a 16-foot pole set 36 inches in the ground is a lot of work to relocate. With the portable [rocket box] base, one person can do it in 10 or 15 minutes."



'Not all doom and gloom'

Turner, the wildlife biologist, uses the word "recovering," albeit carefully, when referring to Pennsylvania's bat population.

"It's not all doom and gloom for all species," he says, having seen some improvement in little brown and big brown bat numbers. "If those juveniles are surviving, if the actions we are employing now, and if future actions developed by other researchers can all help improve survival [from white-nose syndrome], then yes, I think recovery can happen."

"The sooner we start, the more it'll grow and compound," Turner adds, "so, hopefully, in 10 years' time, we'll be at a significantly increased and stable level with all our species."

For all their efforts, this trio can't save the bats by themselves; they need help. By reducing pesticide and herbicide use, and planting more native plants, home and landowners can help sustain insect populations and the biodiversity that bats rely on, Stronsick says.

Another valuable step: letting go of the irrational fear surrounding these fascinating animals and giving them a place to live. Every bat house is important, Lobdell says.

"Even if you never get a colony, one or two bats will use a bat house during spring and fall migration just to rest" — something he and the other bat conservationists in the state will likely never do. 🦇

Data Center Discussions Refocus on Consumer Protections

MICHAEL T. CRAWFORD, SENIOR TECHNICAL EDITOR

DATA CENTER DISCUSSIONS have all but made a U-turn as local zoning debates, community concerns, and rising electric rates have state and federal policymakers reconsidering their support of what many first saw as economic engines.

“Policy discussions have shifted to ensuring residential consumers are not footing the bill for data centers coming online,” explains Matt Leonard, manager of government & regulatory affairs for the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association (PREA) and Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Allegheny). “If anything, the discussions have slowed the push for data centers as policymakers consider how to address local concerns.”

A supply and demand crunch

Data centers resemble warehouses containing rows upon rows of computer processors, powering everything from email to video streaming. Hyperscale data centers, the ones powering artificial intelligence, are adding major new electric loads faster than the grid is adding the generation and capacity needed to reliably serve them.

“The nation’s grid has been facing a supply and demand crunch for years,” PREA/Allegheny President & CEO Steve Brame says. “Generation resources have been going offline before the end of their useful lifespan, and new resources have not been coming online fast enough to replace them. Now, the large-load data centers are demonstrating the consequences of that imbalance.”

Gov. Josh Shapiro recently issued an executive order establishing how



CALLS FOR ACTION: Dozens of bills have been introduced in Pennsylvania to regulate data centers, including measures that would require large loads to pay for the generation and transmission costs they create. So far, however, no bill has made its way to the governor’s desk.

state agencies will evaluate data center projects seeking permitting, including requiring formal approval from local governments. Projects that do not comply may still proceed under existing law, but they would likely face longer timelines.

The governor, who once welcomed data centers as job creators and economic drivers, is not alone in adjusting his position. Rival gubernatorial candidate and State Treasurer Stacy Garrity, who last year supported data centers in rural Pennsylvania for their economic potential, has called for a pause in data center development until municipalities can update their zoning laws.

Accommodating new data centers will also require new transmission infrastructure. Under current rules, the costs of building that infrastructure would be spread across the system, affecting those who use it.

In Pennsylvania, dozens of bills

have been introduced to regulate data centers, including measures that would require large loads to pay for the generation and transmission costs they create. No bill, however, has made its way to the governor’s desk.

“Crafting responsible, equitable policy around handling data centers will require cooperation at all levels of government with active engagement from local communities,” Brame says, “and cooperation is what we were made for. Cooperative leaders are part of those conversations, working with policymakers and other stakeholders to help protect reliable, affordable electricity for their consumer-members.”

ALLEGHENY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC., based in Harrisburg, Pa., is the wholesale power provider for the 14 rural electric cooperatives in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The cooperative has a proud history of investing in sustainable energy solutions to benefit the communities it serves while providing reliable energy at an affordable price.

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Local Lore

United Electric Cooperative

'This Bud's for You'

Sazaar hops and Bohemian barley: These ingredients are at the core of American-made beer — and one of America's most popular beers, Budweiser. In fact, the "Budweiser Bohemian process" was what helped get the product off the ground more than 100 years ago.

As a result, dozens of brewers across the country began using the term "Budweiser" while naming their own beers.

Among them? DuBois Budweiser.

It was Frank Hahne's idea. A German orphan, Hahne came to America at age 19 and found work in the brewing industry in Milwaukee. After bouncing around the country for more than a decade, he was drawn to DuBois for its clean water, which he believed was perfect for brewing. From there,



MADE IN DUBOIS: German immigrant Frank Hahne created DuBois Budweiser after being drawn to the city for its clean water.

DuBois Brewing Company was born.

He, like his brewing brethren, argued that the term Budweiser spoke to the fact that his beer was brewed in the same way beers were brewed in Budweis, a European city. Anheuser-Busch, which owns Budweiser, took note, and in 1940, sued DuBois Budweiser for the name.

A judge sided with the "King of Beers" and ordered Hahne to drop the term from the beer's name.

But that's not all: DuBois appealed the decision — and won.

According to court documents, circuit judges agreed that "Budweiser" was a descriptor and not a trademark. As such, DuBois Budweiser continued to exist all the way until 1972, five years after the company was bought by Pittsburgh Brewing Company.

It's all to say that Budweiser's famous tagline, "This Bud's for you," certainly held true — especially for the folks in DuBois. 🍺



Main Office: DuBois, Pa.
Consumer-members served: 19,128
Website: unitedpa.com



Autumn art

This month's artwork comes from Brantley Brumbaugh, 11, whose parents, Adam and Jessica Brumbaugh, are members of Valley Rural Electric Cooperative. Brantley said he wanted to depict scenes near his house with his drawing. "I drew this tree because there are lots of trees at my house that look similar, and it has many different types of leaves to make it very colorful," he says. "It makes me feel calm and adventurous." Thank you, Brantley, for sharing your artwork with us!

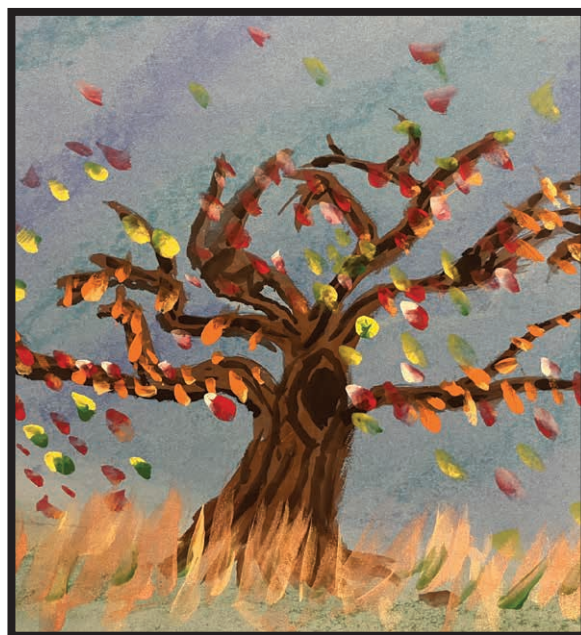
Brantley Brumbaugh, age 11, Valley Rural Electric Cooperative

CALLING ALL KIDS, ages 5 to 17:

Show off your artistic skills!

Each month, we'll feature the artwork of our young readers (or our readers' youngsters), inspired by something they've read in *Penn Lines* or seen on their travels. Paints, pencils, crayons, clay, sand — any physical medium is OK! You may send digital photos of the creation to CommunityCorner@prea.com, but please: no digital artwork.

Please include the artist's name, age and electric cooperative, plus a 25- to 50-word description of the art.



REA Energy Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Website: www.reaenergy.com
Email: reaenergy@reaenergy.com

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OFFICE HOURS
Indiana Office: 7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Ebensburg Office: 7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Monday, Wednesday and Friday
Closed Tuesday and Thursday

COOPERATIVE CONNECTION

The Cooperative Difference



CHAD CARRICK

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL COOPERATIVE MONTH, a time to recognize what makes electric cooperatives unique. As costs continue to rise across nearly every aspect of daily life, REA Energy Cooperative knows that many families are carefully managing their budgets and looking for ways to make every dollar count. We understand those challenges because we live and work in the same communities we serve.

As a member-owned cooperative, our mission is different from that of a traditional investor-owned utility. We are not driven by the interests of outside shareholders; we are accountable to our members, and every decision we make is guided by what's best for the people and communities we serve.

Combating rising costs

While many factors affecting the cost of electricity are beyond our control, it is our responsibility to manage those challenges wisely. That's why we remain focused on maintaining reliable service while working diligently to control costs, operate efficiently, and make thoughtful investments that strengthen our electric system for the future.

At REA Energy, our focus is always on solutions. We continually evaluate our operations, seek efficiencies, and look for opportunities to help members manage their energy use and lower their monthly bills. We take the trust our members place in us seriously and remain committed to delivering the greatest possible value from every dollar invested in the cooperative.

National Cooperative Month is also a reminder that you are more than a customer. As a member, you are an owner of REA Energy. Through your elected board of directors, you have a voice in the cooperative's future, and through capital credits, you share in the financial success of the organization. That local ownership and accountability are what set cooperatives apart.

For generations, electric cooperatives have been built on the principle of neighbors helping neighbors. While the energy industry continues to evolve, that commitment remains unchanged. Thank you for your trust, your support and your membership.

At REA Energy, you, our members, are the reason we work every day to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity for our communities. 🇺🇸

CHAD CARRICK, MBA, CFPC
PRESIDENT & CEO

You're Not Just Paying the Bill, You're Part of the Team

KAYLA KING, CCC, MARKETING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

IF YOU RECEIVE POWER FROM REA Energy Cooperative, you are more than a customer. You are a member and an owner of the cooperative. That is one of the things that makes electric cooperatives different from other utilities.

Operated with local members in mind

REA Energy was built to serve our local communities. Unlike investor-owned utilities that are owned by shareholders and operated to earn profits, REA Energy is owned by the members it serves. Every member has a voice in how the cooperative operates.

Electric cooperatives came to be during the rural electrification movement of the 1930s. At that time, many rural areas did not have access to electricity because it was too expensive for private companies to build power lines to farms and small communities.

Undeterred, residents worked together to form electric cooperatives and bring electricity to their rural neighbors. Nearly 90 years later, that same spirit of working together to serve our communities is still at the heart of REA Energy.

As a member of the cooperative, you help shape its future. Members elect a nine-member board of directors from among their fellow REA membership. These directors represent you and help make decisions about REA Energy's operations and long-term goals. Each member gets one vote, no matter how much or little electricity they use.

Following values of yesteryear

Electric cooperatives follow a set of values known as the Seven Cooperative Principles. These principles come from a group known as the Rochdale Pioneers, who started one of the world's first successful cooperatives in Rochdale, England, in 1844.

The Seven Cooperative Principles are:

- ▶ Voluntary and Open Membership
- ▶ Democratic Member Control
- ▶ Member Economic Participation

- ▶ Autonomy and Independence
- ▶ Education, Training and Information
- ▶ Cooperation Among Cooperatives
- ▶ Concern for Community

These principles guide the decisions that REA Energy makes every day. They help the cooperative focus on providing reliable service, supporting its communities and meeting the needs of its members..

Being a member pays

Another vital part of being a cooperative member is understanding how a not-for-profit electric cooperative works. Being not-for-profit does not mean the cooperative does not earn money. Instead, it means the cooperative operates at cost and does not exist to make profits for outside investors.

The money that members pay for electric services is used to maintain power lines, replace equipment, improve reliability, and keep electricity flowing safely to homes and businesses. It also helps cover daily operating expenses.

If REA Energy collects more money than it needs to cover expenses in a year, those extra funds are called margins. Instead of going to shareholders, margins are assigned back to members as capital credits. Over time, and when the cooperative's financial condition allows, those capital credits may be returned to members.

Investing in our members, now and in the future

Because REA Energy is owned by its members, decisions are always made with them in mind. The cooperative focuses on providing dependable service and making investments that benefit the communities it serves.

REA Energy works to improve the quality of life throughout its service area. The cooperative supports safety events, vocational school program development, community projects and does it all through our subsidiaries, REA Energy Services and In The Stix Broadband. These efforts reflect the cooperative principle of concern for community and demonstrate a commitment to helping our communities grow and succeed.

Being a member of REA Energy means being part of something bigger than just paying a monthly bill. It means having ownership in a local organization that is focused on serving its members. It means having a voice, sharing in the cooperative's success and working together to strengthen our communities.

At its core, an electric cooperative is neighbors helping neighbors. That commitment has guided REA Energy for generations and continues to power our communities today. 🌱

CELEBRATE NATIONAL COOPERATIVE MONTH WITH REA ENERGY!

October is National Cooperative Month, and REA Energy is proud to join more than 40,000 cooperatives serving communities across the country.

As part of the celebration, members who did not attend the cooperative's online annual meeting can receive a gift packet. To participate in this Member Appreciation Event, visit our office in Indiana or Ebensburg during October or November and present the Member Card from your Annual Meeting Notice. Gift packets are available on a first-come, first-served basis, with one packet per membership while supplies last.

Members who received the \$15 bill credit for participating in the online meeting are not eligible for a gift packet.

Don't Cry, Squonk! A Local Legend Worth Celebrating This Halloween

KAYLA KING, CCC, MARKETING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

WITH HALLOWEEN APPROACHING, thoughts often turn to ghosts, goblins and other creatures that go bump in the night, playing tricks and scaring people. Here in Pennsylvania, however, we have our own legendary creature that's a little different from the rest. It doesn't haunt old houses or terrorize travelers. In fact, it's too shy to do either.

Meet the Squonk, Pennsylvania's very own hometown cryptid. According to Pennsylvania folklore, the Squonk lives deep in the hemlock forests near Johnstown and the Laurel Highlands region. It's known for being sad, not scary.

Stories describe the creature as small, with a hog-like appearance, loose, wrinkled skin, and patches of hair that makes it self-conscious. Legend says the Squonk spends much of its time crying over the way it looks.

A puddle and a story

The Squonk's mournful sobs are said to echo throughout the woods, drawing curious people closer. However, anyone hoping to catch it may be disappointed. According to folklore, whenever the Squonk is cornered or captured, it dissolves into a puddle of tears, leaving behind little more than a good story to tell around the campfire.

While nobody can say for certain whether the Squonk ever really roamed Pennsylvania's forests, its legend has been passed down for generations. The tale traces its roots to the lumber camps of the early 1900s, where loggers shared stories after long days in the woods. The Squonk was later immortalized in William T. Cox's 1910 book, "Fearsome Creatures of the Lumberwoods," helping secure its place as

one of Pennsylvania's most beloved pieces of folklore.

Part of the Squonk's charm is that it isn't a monster at all. In a world full of fierce dragons, hairy beasts and things that go bump in the night, the Squonk is surprisingly relatable. It reminds us that everyone feels awkward, embarrassed or out of place from time to time. Rather than inspiring fear, the Squonk inspires sympathy and maybe even a little affection.

This relatability may be why the legend has endured for more than a century. The Squonk may not be brave, powerful or glamorous, but it has become a treasured part of Pennsylvania's identity. From local artwork and festivals to campfire stories and community traditions, this tearful cryptid continues to capture the hearts of people across the Commonwealth.

In fact, with its deep Pennsylvania roots, commitment to staying local and reputation for bringing people together through storytelling, the Squonk might qualify as an honorary REA Energy member. Like the communities REA Energy serves, the Squonk is uniquely Pennsylvanian, deeply connected to local history and part of a story that has been shared from one generation to the next.

This Halloween as you carve pumpkins, hand out candy or gather with family and friends, take a moment to appreciate one of Pennsylvania's most unique legends. And if you happen to hear faint sobbing from a nearby stand of hemlocks, don't be alarmed.

It might just be the Squonk.

And if all you find is a puddle of tears, you'll know you were almost lucky enough to meet Pennsylvania's most famous cryptid. 🐾



REA ENERGY OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED ON
WEDNESDAY, NOV. 11, FOR

VETERANS DAY

THE INDIANA OFFICE WILL REOPEN ON
THURSDAY, NOV. 12, AND THE
EBENSBURG OFFICE ON FRIDAY, NOV. 13.

TO REPORT AN OUTAGE OR MAKE A
PAYMENT, PLEASE CALL 844-920-3395.

STAY CONNECTED

Keep your contact information up to date so you never miss outage alerts and service updates. You can update your details through SmartHub, by calling 724-349-4800, or by writing the changes on the back of your REA Energy bill and returning it with your payment.

Your phone number is especially important for reporting outages and receiving real-time updates. If it's outdated, you could miss critical information when you need it most.

Take a moment to review your information:

- Make sure your primary phone number is correct
- Use a number you can access anytime

Staying connected helps us respond faster and keep you informed at critical times.
Update your information today to be prepared for tomorrow.

Right-of-Way Management/Facility Construction News

REA Energy contractors will be completing tree-trimming work in the following areas in October:
Contractor crews from Penn Line Tree Service will be trimming the rights of way of the Locust substation service territory, in addition to emergency maintenance areas.
Members in affected areas will be notified. Contractors will perform all right-of-way work per REA Energy specifications. All contractor employees will carry identification cards and their vehicles will display their company name.
For more information, call 724-349-4800 or view the specifications online at reaenergy.com.

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REA Energy is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



PREPARING FOR THE BIG HUNT

As hunting season approaches, excitement builds for time outdoors. But before you head into the woods, make sure electrical safety is part of your preparation checklist.

Before you climb that tree stand, look out for power lines.

Never install a tree stand near a power line or on a utility pole. Electricity can arc through the air up to 10 feet from high-voltage lines. This means you don't even have to touch a wire to be at risk of electrocution.

Never shoot near or toward power lines, utility poles, transformers or substations. Stray bullets or pellets could damage equipment, possibly interrupting electric service. Even more concerning, they could drop a power line to the ground, causing a hazardous scenario: those who get within 50 feet of a downed line could be shocked or electrocuted.

Keep these tips in mind to stay safe:

Scout the area. Before hunting, scout your area during daylight. Look for power lines, poles and electrical equipment. Note their locations to avoid them later.

Power safely. If you're using a portable electrical generator, don't use it inside a cabin or RV, or in a confined area. Make sure it's used outside with plenty of ventilation.

Avoid aiming toward power lines or equipment. A stray bullet could knock down a line, interrupt power or create a deadly hazard.

Keep your distance. Stay at least 10 feet away from overhead lines, poles and other electrical infrastructure when setting up or taking down tree stands.

Never climb a utility pole. Even if it looks like the perfect vantage point, don't do it. Poles carry high-voltage lines, and climbing them can be deadly.

Don't use utility poles for support. Tree stands or blinds should never be attached to or supported by power poles or electrical equipment.

Watch for downed lines: Stay at least 50 feet away from downed power lines or damaged electrical equipment. Call 911 or your utility immediately.

Learn more at:



Tips to Seal Ductwork for Savings

MIRANDA BOUTELLE

IF YOU LIVE IN A home with a forced air furnace, the biggest energy waster may be out of sight. About 20% to 30% of the air you pay to heat or cool is lost through leaks, holes or poorly installed ductwork in the average home, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. If you've had a hot room all summer, the culprit might be a leaky or disconnected duct.

Properly sealing ducts can reduce wasted energy and improve indoor air quality. Leaking return ducts can pull air from the spaces they run through, such as attics and crawl spaces, leaving you breathing dirt, dust, and insulation. If you have gas appliances, such as a gas water heater, dryer or furnace, leaking return ducts can inadvertently cause backdraft, introducing combustion gases back into the home instead of outdoors where they belong.

You can seal ducts yourself. Start with a visual inspection to determine your duct type. Most homes have flexible or metal ducts.

Metal ductwork comes in various shapes and sizes with options for turns and connections. Ducts should be insulated when they run through unconditioned spaces, such as crawl spaces, attics and garages. If your metal ducts are insulated, you must remove the insulation to properly seal them and then reinsulate.

Flexible ducts typically have an inner and outer layer with insulation in between. The inner layer is made of bendable plastic reinforced with wire, like a stretched-out Slinky covered in plastic. The outer layer holds the insulation in place. The inner liner in flexible ducts can become brittle over time, cracking easily and causing leaks. If your inner liner is in bad shape, replace the flexible duct.

Check for any obvious disconnections, gaps, extra bends or sagging ducts. Improve airflow by using short, straight, taut runs and limit turns.

Metal ductwork should be fastened together at each joint using sheet metal screws to keep the joints from separating over time. For flexible

ducts, use Panduit straps — durable, heavy-duty nylon zip ties that offer long-term durability.

Seal every joint and seam using duct-sealing mastic — a thick paste that can be applied with a paintbrush or gloved hand. When it dries, mastic creates a flexible, airtight seal, eliminating duct leakage. Use mesh tape to bridge larger gaps before applying mastic. Remove register covers inside the home to seal the joints and seams there. You want a good seal where the duct meets drywall or flooring.

In easier-to-reach areas, you can opt to use Underwriters Laboratories-listed foil-backed tape designed for ductwork. Do not use duct tape; fluctuations in temperature cause the adhesive to fail.

Duct sealing is messy, so make sure to protect yourself and your home. Use drop cloths to protect flooring. Metal tape and the edges of metal ducts are sharp, so put on coated work or garden gloves underneath nitrile or latex disposable gloves. To protect your arms, wear a long-sleeve shirt tucked into your gloves or a long sock with the toes cut out.

After air sealing, have an HVAC professional test the airflow during your next annual maintenance visit.

If you don't feel comfortable getting into your ducts, hire a professional. Most companies that install ductwork or heating and cooling systems can also seal ducts. 🛠️

MIRANDA BOUTELLE is the chief operating officer at Efficiency Services Group in Oregon, a cooperatively owned energy efficiency company. She has more than 20 years of experience helping people save energy at home, and she writes on energy efficiency topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.

MIRANDA BOUTELLE, PIONEER UTILITY RESOURCES



PREP WORK: A little preparation goes a long way. After inspecting your ductwork, gather products designed for the job based on the type of ducts in your home.

GENERATOR Safety

When you have lost power, a portable generator can temporarily provide needed electricity. However, it may present serious hazards if not used properly. **Follow these tips to ensure everyone's safety:**

- Select a generator that can provide the amount of power you expect to need.
- **Read all instructions** before using.
- Always operate the generator on a **stable, dry surface**.
- Set up your generator in a **well-ventilated** area outside the home—out and away from your garage, doors, windows, and vents into the home. Generators produce **DEADLY** carbon monoxide.

- Use a **heavy-duty extension cord** to connect appliances to the outlets on the generator.
- **NEVER plug a portable generator into your home.** This can cause electricity to feed back through your home onto the utility's system. This "**backfeed**" can be **deadly** for lineworkers and anyone near downed power lines.
- Always allow the generator to **cool before refueling**.

Learn more about generator and storm safety at **SafeElectricity.org**.

 Safe
Electricity.org



Love Under the Lights

Co-op Couples Reflect on Reaching a Milestone

KATHY HACKLEMAN

Penn Lines Contributor



PENN LINES IS MARKING A MILESTONE THIS YEAR —

60 years of sharing the stories of rural Pennsylvania. But as it turns out, we have plenty of company in the anniversary department.

After asking readers to tell us about couples who have been married 60 years or more, we heard about those who have built marriages across decades of work, family, change and all the ordinary days in between.

That kind of longevity is rare. According to the National Center for Family and Marriage Research at Bowling Green State University, only 8% of currently married couples reach their 50th anniversary, and just 2% make it to their 60th.

Researchers point to many reasons some marriages endure: strong communication, shared values and interests, commitment, emotional maturity — and, of course, the blessing of a long life.

Every long-married couple has a story. Here are a few.

Robert and Elizabeth Dolges – 72 years United Electric Cooperative

Elizabeth Dolges was smitten from the start.

“I was in high school, and I happened to be looking out a window at the school when some guys from Northern Cambria were driving by,” she recalls of her first glimpse of Robert, the man who would become her husband. “It was love at first sight. I was 16 and he was a couple of years older.”

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT: Elizabeth Dolges knew her husband, Robert, was the one after watching him drive by her high school. The couple, shown here on their wedding day, July 24, 1954, have been together 72 years.



Not all of the years since July 24, 1954, were filled with happy moments, but she says “we always cared for each other enough to see us through the arguments.”

The pair have enjoyed spending time together, from hunting and fishing in the early days to more quiet times later. She also attributes their lengthy marriage to good health as they are now 89 and 91.

“We were always busy,” she says. “We don’t like to sit too long, and we ate a good diet and always got lots of exercise.”

The couple have eight children, 17 grandchildren, and 17 great-grandchildren, most of whom live in the area and help out as needed.

For many years, the couple has lived on the farm in Hastings, Pa., where Robert grew up. Early on, they milked cows and raised pigs and chickens. They ground their wheat to make flour and grew vegetables and fruit. Recently, relatives gave them a hothouse so they can continue to garden, although the pair limits it to what they can eat since Elizabeth has cut back on massive canning projects. Baking ... well, that’s a different story.

“I like to bake,” she says. “I just baked four pans of apple dumplings.”

Byron and Delma Over – 71 years New Enterprise Rural Electric Cooperative

Byron Over grew up on the farm north of Woodbury, where he and Delma, originally from New Enterprise, have lived for many years. The couple married Feb. 12, 1955, after meeting at a square dance in Loysburg.

The couple, now 91 and 96, were married at Koontz Church of the Brethren in New Enterprise. She wore white lace, her redesigned high school prom dress. For 60 years after that, they operated their dairy farm. In between, they raised two daughters and welcomed four grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

“We were lucky,” Delma says. “We worked together really well. I can’t say we never had a fight. We argued a little, but not often. He’s not one to argue. We just understood each other.”

They spent a lot of time together, as they both milked cows, planted and harvested crops, and baled hay. They milked at 5 a.m. and again every evening, each daily shift taking about three hours. She also cooked for the family and hired hands.

“Maybe we were just too busy or too tired to argue,” she says with a laugh.

Harold and Marjorie Brown – 70 years Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative

Harold and Marjorie Brown first crossed paths at the Tioga County Fair, where both were showing dairy cattle — an appropriate beginning for a couple who would go on



FROM FAIR TO FARM: Marjorie and Harold Brown, who met while showing cattle at the Tioga County Fair, cut their wedding cake on June 17, 1956. For seven decades, they’ve built a life together on Harold’s family farm near Liberty, Pa.

to build a life on Harold’s family farm near Liberty, Pa.

After they married on June 17, 1956, in Wellsboro, Marjorie arrived at the homestead, but she wasn’t alone: Her cattle were in tow.

That farm is now a Centennial Farm, having remained in the same family for at least 100 years. Over the decades, the Browns built a life there that went well beyond the dairy barn. They grew crops, raised chickens and pigs, cut timber, and made maple syrup.

They had three children, and the Tioga County Fair became part of the family story again when one of their two surviving daughters met her husband there, too. The Browns also have two grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

Theodore and Donna Wingrove – 68 years Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative

Donna Wingrove was a teenager working at the drug store in Connellsville, Pa., when a serviceman she had never met placed an unfamiliar order. However, what he really wanted was her name and address.

“He was only home for a couple of days before he went back,” she recalls, “but he had my address so he started writing and we just kept writing and writing.”

Ted completed his service in September 1958, and they were married a few weeks later on Nov. 27, Thanksgiving Day. She was 18 and he was 20. They lived in an 8-by-28-foot trailer until they outgrew it and built the house where they have lived since 1963. The couple have six children, 16 grandchildren and a dozen great-grandchildren.

They found a common bond over their love for

automobiles, eventually opening Ted's Transmission Service in Connellsville, where they both worked until they retired.

Herbert and Miriam Nachbar – 67 years Valley Rural Electric Cooperative

Miriam Nachbar's father had a rule: No child of his would get married before they were 23. But she and her boyfriend, Herbert, had other plans. She was 19 and he was 21 in 1959 when they drove to Cumberland, Md., where parental consent for underage marriages wasn't required.

"We sent a telegram to everyone telling them we were married so they had to accept it," she says.

Since then, their family of five has grown to include 10 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Both grew up in Youngstown, Ohio, but moved to Lancaster County in 1976. They have owned a seasonal residence near Shade Gap, which is served by Valley Rural Electric Cooperative (REC), for about 25 years. Originally a place for recreation, the cabin is now used primarily as a base for hunters in the family.

The couple's secret to a happy marriage? "We have respect for each other," Miriam says. "He is very thoughtful.

He is just a good guy, and I wanted to keep him for sure."

She adds with a laugh, "I am a good cook, so I think that's why he kept me."

In addition to priding herself on being a good cook, she also loves to sew and quilt. Herbert works on Wednesday mornings at an auto auction and collects antique vehicles. They like to travel and enjoy going to thrift shops. They also own five rental properties that keep them busy.

Robert and Frankleen Gibson Sr. – 62 years Valley Rural Electric Cooperative

With grandfathers in a feud reminiscent of the Hatfields and McCoys, as teenagers, Bob and Frankleen Gibson had to work harder than most to get approval for their wedding.

She was 16 and he was 17 when they tied the knot on June 20, 1964. He was from Grantville, Pa., and she was from nearby Annville in Lebanon County.

The couple met at the roller rink and dated for a year before deciding to marry. The ceremony was simple: A friend gave Frankleen a white dress along with a beautiful wedding cake. An aunt bought her a wedding hat and shoes. Other family members, embroiled in the feud, refused to acknowledge the union.

Frankleen dropped out of high school, and Bob started a full-time job to support them. When their two sons were young, they worked opposite shifts at Hershey Foods so they could take care of them. Both retired in 2004 after 37 years of service. In addition to their sons, they have two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, who live near them in Lebanon County. The Gibsons also own a seasonal residence near Huntingdon, served by Valley REC, where the family gathers to hunt and relax.

The couple view their marriage as a blessing. Bob says his wife is the person who has had the most influence over him, noting she changed his life significantly. As the years progressed, feuding family members saw their devotion to each other and began accepting the decades-long union, too.

Although their marriage has been successful, the Gibsons see some disadvantages to marrying so young.

"We lived within our means, although we struggled for a while," Frankleen says. "And when we worked different shifts, sometimes we didn't see each other much except passing in the hallway. It involved a lot of coordination.

"But if you want to make a go of it, and you are both working toward the same goal," she adds, "it can work out."

Editor's note: Penn Lines had more than 100 cooperative couples reach out to us for this story. While we couldn't recognize them all, we do recognize the love and dedication it's taken to build a successful decades-long marriage. Happy anniversary to all Penn Lines readers who are celebrating 60-plus years along with the magazine.



YOUNG LOVE: Donna Wingrove was working at a Fayette County drug store when she caught Ted's eye. They married on Thanksgiving Day 1958. She was 18 and he was 20.

Dear Mom, You're Doing Great

ABIGAIL ZIEGER

IMAGINE A YOUNG MOTHER: a toddler on her hip, a diaper bag hanging on her shoulder, and three older kids tugging on her arm, asking questions. Then tell her to take the kids for a fun outing even though she hardly slept last night.

Watch her miraculously open car doors with her arms full, wrangle a folding stroller into the trunk and finagle a screaming baby safely into the car seat. Envision her corralling all four children to their destination. Watch her attempt to keep her composure as two of them start hitting each other, then the third makes a run for it while she is nursing a baby. All of this is happening while avoiding stares from onlookers in the public place that was supposed to be fun.

That was me not all that long ago.

When you have four kids, you've seen it all. Diaper blowouts on the highway when you forgot to pack an extra onesie? Check. Toddler running away from you at the amusement park? Check. Kid inadvertently throwing a library book at the librarian's face? Check. I think I have been through nearly every whirlwind of flustered-mom scenarios there could be.

Well-meaning folks would often comment that I "had my hands full." I heard it regularly — at the grocery store, at the park, at the museum. Yes, absolutely, my hands were full. So full that sometimes I thought I couldn't do it.

Don't get me wrong: There was lots of joy, love and magical moments. But looking back, I don't know how I survived that season of sleeplessness and chaos. What really got me through it was the other people who just seemed to get it. The older gentleman who held the door open as I shuffled through. The nurse who helped get my fussy toddler to sleep in the hospital. The art teacher who held my baby while she taught a group of preschoolers.

The years have passed, and we are in a different season now. My youngest is fairly independent, and my oldest is almost a legal adult. The things that seemed so difficult years ago now seem like a distant dream. The kids all

walk to the car on their own, and they even carry their own backpacks. Now, I'm the older mom who's made it through that trial-by-fire season — and I'm determined to be the person who gets it.

Recently, my daughter and I were walking into a restaurant. On our way in, we noticed an empty car outside with its door ajar. We asked around inside and discovered the car belonged to a woman with two young children. One of them had left it open. Later, I saw a sippy cup sitting abandoned at the register. I asked the same mom if it was hers. She said yes, apologizing for being "a

hot mess." I told her not to apologize and that she was doing great; really, she was.

"No," she replied. "I'm really not."

"Yes, you are," I answered. "Even if you don't realize it now."

I think about that mom and see the younger version of myself who thought she was failing. We both had our hands full, and we were both apologizing for "hot messes" that were actually just parenthood.

If you see a mom of young kids out there, be the person who gets it. Their hands are truly full, and they could use some encouragement. And if you are that mom, know this: You are probably doing much better than you think.

Yes, the hard days are real.

But if you're showing up day after day, loving your kids, and teaching them right from wrong, then you're doing more than great. You are doing it exactly right. 🍷



ABIGAIL ZIEGER is a music teacher and singer by trade, but also enjoys capturing life experiences through writing. When not singing, teaching or typing, she can be found working in her kitchen, helping her kids with school or consuming copious amounts of coffee. A member of Claverack Rural Electric Cooperative, Abigail lives with her husband and four children in northeast Pennsylvania.

Tap Maple Syrup Secrets

ANNE M. KIRCHNER

HAVE YOU EVER VISITED VERMONT in early fall? Indigenous sugar maples explode with orange, gold and crimson leaves. Nature trails beckon wandering souls. Farm-to-table restaurants offer mouth-watering menus. And retail gift stores endorse the state's famous sweetener — maple syrup.

Three grades of maple syrup offer opportunity for food lovers. Golden has a mild, delicate maple flavor. Drizzle it over waffles, fresh fruit or roasted vegetables. Amber is most common — its rich, pronounced flavor pairs well with pancakes and vanilla ice cream. Dark offers a robust, molasses profile and is perfect for meat marinades. 🍁

ANNE M. KIRCHNER focuses her writing on human connections, travel and culinary arts, researching food origins, exploring cooking techniques, and creating new recipes.

PHOTOS BY ANNE M. KIRCHNER



MAPLE DIJON CHICKEN

- 4 skinless chicken thighs
- 2 teaspoons barbecue seasoning
- 4 thick bacon strips
- ¼ cup Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- ¼ cup dark* maple syrup

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Coat chicken thighs with barbecue seasoning. Wrap a bacon strip around each thigh. Place bacon-wrapped chicken in a greased baking dish. In a small bowl, whisk together Dijon mustard, balsamic vinegar and maple syrup until smooth. Pour mixture over chicken. Bake uncovered for 30 to 40 minutes. *Makes 4 servings.*



MAPLE GLAZED VEGETABLES

- 3 carrots, peeled and sliced
- 8 Brussels sprouts, quartered
- 4 medium beets, peeled and cubed
- 3 cups cauliflower pieces
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup apple cider vinegar
- ¼ cup golden* maple syrup
- ½ teaspoon onion powder
- ¼ teaspoon coarse black pepper
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place carrots, Brussels sprouts, beets and cauliflower in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, whisk together remaining ingredients to make a dressing. Pour dressing over vegetables and toss to coat. Spread vegetables on a parchment-lined cookie sheet. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until vegetables are fork-tender. *Makes 6 to 8 servings.*



MAPLE ICE CREAM

- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 cup whole milk
- ½ cup amber* maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- Chopped walnuts, optional garnish

In a bowl or pitcher, stir together cream, milk, syrup and vanilla extract. Refrigerate 4 to 6 hours. Pour mixture into an ice cream machine and churn according to the manufacturer's instructions. Top with chopped walnuts and a drizzle of maple syrup. Ice cream can be stored in a freezer-safe container for one to two months. *Makes 6 to 8 servings.*

**Some stores do not offer the three grades of maple syrup. Amber is the most common option and can be used in all recipes.*

A Case for Being Lazy

GEORGE WEIGEL

AS ANOTHER GROWING SEASON winds down, it's tempting to "clean up the garden," but there's a difference between cleanup and counterproductive sanitizing, and that calls for some careful consideration on what to remove and what to leave behind.

Fallen leaves and frost-killed foliage offer several benefits, such as providing insulation for plant crowns and winter habitat for beneficial insects and pollinators. In a meadow, frost-killed foliage decays into soil-feeding organic matter, deposits seed for next year's growth and lays down mulch to discourage winter annual weeds. Even on a lawn, when leaves are mowed over instead of blown or raked off, grass draws vigor from the nutrients and broken-down organic fragments.

Bottom line: Go easy with the rake and pruners. You don't have to remove every browned-out leaf from the yard.

So what jobs should a nature-sensitive gardener do (or not do) now? Here are five takeaways:

1. Once frost kills the annual flowers, potted tropicals, and summer vegetables, remove and compost the mushy blobs that used to be green plants. They won't be coming back next year, except maybe a few hardy exceptions, such as blue salvia, dusty miller, snapdragons and gloriosa daisies. It's OK to clip potential survivors back to a few inches and leave the roots in the ground to see what happens in spring. Or leave it all alone and mulch over it instead.
2. Remove any fallen or dead foliage that's been damaged by bugs and disease. Removing

these will remove disease spores and possibly bug eggs that could lead to renewed trouble next year. Don't put bug- or disease-ridden leaves in the compost pile unless you're turning it enough that heat will kill the pests.

3. Remove and compost fallen leaves that are stacking up to the point of smothering lawns or evergreen ground-cover beds. Otherwise, mow over light layers of leaves in the lawn and let them remain in garden beds to serve as winter mulch, especially around shrubs and over perennials that have died back for the season. If leaves in the beds bother you, remove them in spring or simply toss fresh mulch over top of them then.
4. Wait until spring to cut back dead perennial flowers and ornamental grasses. Overwintering birds appreciate standing perennials for their seeds, and beneficial insects often lay eggs in ornamental grasses and perennial foliage. Birds like grasses as nest-building material, too.
5. Prune dead branches from trees and shrubs (but be sure they're dead). Thin and shape shade trees and summer-blooming shrubs once the leaves are off and the plants are dormant. In general, the end of winter is a better time to do most woody-plant pruning once you can assess any damage that's been done.

Another job to skip for now: pruning evergreens. The wounds can lead to increased moisture loss over winter, and the plants will look "chopped" until growth resumes in spring. End of winter through mid-summer is better for evergreen pruning.

GEORGE WEIGEL



LEAF IT ALONE: Resist the urge to remove every leaf from the yard in fall. Fallen leaves provide insulation for plant crowns, habitat for beneficial insects and pollinators and mulch to discourage winter annual weeds.

Stay away from pruning spring-flowering shrubs (forsythia, lilac, azalea, etc.) or you'll cut off the flower buds that have already formed. Anything that blooms before June is best pruned (if needed) immediately after the plants flower.

If you really want to be out there doing something, pull weeds, plant bulbs or take a walk around to plan what changes you'd like to make next year. Otherwise, have a favorite drink and enjoy the fall colors. 🍷

GEORGE WEIGEL is a retired horticulturist, author of two books about gardening in Pennsylvania, and garden columnist for The Patriot-News/PennLive.com in Harrisburg.

PREA Announces Scholarship Winners

Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association Scholarships in Memory of William F. Matson

Eight Matson Scholarships were recently awarded to outstanding students whose homes are served by rural electric cooperatives in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Selection for the annual scholarship is based on academic excellence, community involvement, need and cooperative membership. The scholarship is named for William F. Matson, who served 22 years as president of PREA and Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc., until his death in June 1986.

The recipients are Sara Bollinger, REA Energy Cooperative; Grace Colwell, Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative (REC); Hannah Keebaugh, Mya Lohr and Marley McMillen, Bedford REC; Matthew Miller, Somerset REC; Anna Taylor, Valley REC; and Brenna Zeafla, Tri-County REC.



Sara Bollinger, a graduate of River Valley High School, is the daughter of Michael and Beth Bollinger of Blairsville, Pa. Sara will be attending Stetson University in DeLand, Fla., to major in chemistry. While in high school, she was the president of the National Honor Society. She also was captain of the varsity softball team and a member of the golf team and Storm Softball travel team. In addition, she was president of the River Valley Chapter of Future Business Leaders of America and participated in Envirothon and Quizbowl. She also runs her own small business, Dream Harbor Co.



Grace Colwell is the daughter of Matthew and Angela Colwell, of Centerville, Pa. Grace was home-schooled and graduated from

the PA Virtual Charter School. She will be attending PennWest University at Edinboro to major in fisheries and wildlife biology. Throughout high school, Grace was involved in the National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta and the Science National Honor Society. She performed a number of community service projects, including picking up roadside trash, knitting hats and scarves for the Erie City Mission, serving meals at the St. James Soup Kitchen, peer tutoring, and caring for members of the Galloway Church of Franklin by providing childcare and making meals. In the summer, Grace works as a wrangler at Miracle Mountain Ranch. Grace's long-term goal is to work at a wildlife rehabilitation center or with the Pennsylvania Game Commission.



Hannah Keebaugh, daughter of James and Jennifer Keebaugh of Everett, Pa., was valedictorian of her class at Everett Area High School. Hannah will be attending Miami University of Ohio, where she is majoring in nursing. Throughout high school, Hannah was involved in many activities, including Student Council, Future Business Leaders of America, the National Honor Society, Students for Education in Pennsylvania and 4-H. She also participated in varsity track and field and indoor track and field. In addition, Hannah has volunteered at a senior center, tutored middle school students, coached younger athletes in soccer and softball and decorated her town for holidays.

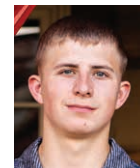


Mya Lohr is the daughter of Rick and Marcia Lohr of Schellsburg, Pa., and a graduate of Chestnut Ridge Senior High School. Mya will be attending Mount

Aloysius College, where she is majoring in biology, with the goal of becoming a physical therapist. While in high school, Mya was historian of the National Honor Society, and she achieved more than 100 volunteer hours. Her favorite volunteer event was the Veterans Day project she designed for the Jean Bonnet Tavern in Bedford. Mya also completed 30 college credits while in high school. Outside of school, Mya is employed at the Jean Bonnet Tavern and attends Faith Brethren Bible Church.



Marley McMillen, daughter of Matthew and Christy McMillen of New Paris, Pa., is a graduate of Berlin Brothersvalley High School. Marley will be attending Conemaugh School of Nursing, where she will be majoring in nursing. Marley currently works as a phlebotomist at Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center in Johnstown and as an EMT with Hilltop Ambulance Association, Station 28. Outside of her work, Marley is also affiliated with the Bedford County Wilderness Search & Rescue Team, the Greater Johnstown Saddle Club, the Sheriff's Mounted Posse of Somerset County and the Ruff N' Tuss Bedford County Horse Club. These activities combine Marley's love of horses and the outdoors.



Matthew Miller is the son of David and Melissa Miller of Berlin, Pa., and a graduate of Berlin Brothersvalley High School. Matthew will be attending the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown and majoring in mechanical engineering. While in high school, Matthew served as senior class president, president of the Berlin Tech Ed Club, and treasurer of the National Honor

Society, and was active in many other school clubs and activities. Matthew was also a varsity soccer and basketball captain, earned ICC All-star honors and 1st Team All-County Goalkeeper in soccer, and was part of two state-finalist basketball teams. Outside of school, Matthew is an active member of the Trinity United Church of Christ and Mount Olive Lutheran Church.



Anna Taylor, daughter of Christopher and Danielle Taylor of Petersburg, Pa., is a graduate of Juniata Valley High School.

Anna will be attending Mansfield University where she will be majoring in biomedical sciences. In high school, Anna was president of the Class of 2026, the Student Council, the National Honor Society and Varsity J. She was also captain of CHAMP and the cross country and basketball (for three years) teams. She also served as football statistician, track scorekeeper, yearbook treasurer, and Life Skills classroom helper, organized blood drives at the high school, and served on the morning announcement crew and Prom Committee. Outside of school, Anna was a junior youth adviser at Petersburg Bethel Presbyterian Church and queen of the Shavers Creek Volunteer Fire Company. She was employed at Farm BBQ and Bakery.



Brenna Zeafla, a graduate of North-Penn Liberty High School, is the daughter of Dennis and Jenny Zeafla of Liberty, Pa.

Brenna will be attending Bloomsburg University, where she is majoring in speech language pathology. During high school, Brenna was involved in several clubs, including Student Council, Key Club, Future Business Leaders of America, the National Honor Society and Yearbook Club. She also was senior class secretary.

Outside of school, Brenna is a server at the Liberty VFW.

Jody Loudenslager Memorial Scholarship

Three students selected to participate in past NRECA Youth Tours have been named recipients of Jody Loudenslager Memorial Scholarships. They are Adeline Barkman, Somerset REC; John Bruner, REA Energy; and Maia Montross, Claverack REC.

The scholarship is named in honor of Jody Loudenslager, a 1995 PREA Youth Tour student from Trout Run, Pa., who was among 230 passengers who died in July 1996, when TWA Flight 800 exploded shortly after take-off from New York.



Adeline Barkman, a graduate of Rockwood Area High School, is the daughter of Reno and Amy Barkman of Rockwood, Pa. Adeline attends Washington and Jefferson College, majoring in data science and mathematics. In college, Adeline has maintained a 4.0 grade-point average and Dean's List honors and is a part of the Washington Fellows Leadership Program. She also participates in Soccer Club and intramural sports. Outside of school, Adeline does service activities with the Kingwood Church of God, Washington County Mobile Food Bank and Together 21 Association.



John Bruner, son of Clark and Connie Bruner of Blairsville, Pa., was home-schooled. He attends Penn State DuBois, majoring in wildlife technology. John has been a 14-year member of the Pa. 4-H program, completing a variety of projects, focusing on forestry, wildlife, compound archery, shotguns and hunting skills. He has served his local clubs in various leadership positions and is a member of the Pa. 4-H State Council and a National 4-H Shooting

Sports ambassador. He has also received the 4-H Diamond Award. At Penn State, John is vice president of the Pa. Student Chapter of the Wildlife Society, a member of the bird banding team, and assists with hawk trapping and deer management programs. He has served as president of the Governor's Youth Council for Hunting, Fishing, and Conservation and is active as a deacon at the Blairsville Presbyterian Church. John's long-term goal is to serve as a game warden with the Pa. Game Commission.



Maia Montross was valedictorian of her class of Tunkhannock Area High School and is the daughter of Shane and Rebecca

Montross of Tunkhannock, Pa. Maia will be attending Bryn Mawr College, majoring in biochemistry and molecular biology. While in high school, Maia was the treasurer of the National Honor Society, president of the Honors Art Club and a member of the Spanish Honor Society. She was also captain of the school's SkillsUSA Quiz Bowl Team, which was the state champion this year and got the opportunity to compete at the national level. Outside of school, Maia is very active in Girl Scouts.

GET READY

2027 Youth Tour will be held **June 17-22** in Washington, D.C. Please contact your local rural electric cooperative for additional information.



ISSUE MONTH AD DEADLINE

December

October 14

January

November 16

February

December 16

Please note ads and **corresponding payment** must be received by the ad deadline to be included in requested issue month; ads received after the deadline will run in next issue. Written notice of changes/cancellations must be received 30 days prior to issue month. **No ads accepted by phone/email.** For more information, please call 717-233-5704.

CLASSIFIED AD SUBMISSION/RATES:**ELECTRIC CO-OP MEMBERS:**

\$20 per month for 30 words or less, plus 50¢ for each additional word.

NON-MEMBERS:

\$70 per month for 30 words or less, plus \$1.50 for each additional word.

SPECIAL HEADINGS (Additional Fee):

\$5 for co-op members, \$10 for non-members. The **special heading fee** applies to any heading not listed under "COMPLIMENTARY HEADINGS," even if the special heading is already appearing in *Penn Lines*. For ads running a special heading in consecutive months, the fee is a one-time fee of either \$5 (members) or \$10 (non-members) for all consecutive insertions.

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Please make **CHECK/MONEY ORDER** payable to: **PREA/Penn Lines**. Insertion of classified ad serves as proof of publication; no proofs supplied.

SEND COMPLETED AD COPY AND PAYMENT TO:

Penn Lines Classifieds
P.O. Box 1266
Harrisburg, PA 17108-1266

PLEASE SUBMIT A CLEARLY WRITTEN OR TYPED SHEET WITH THE FOLLOWING REQUIRED INFORMATION:

- ☐ Cooperative members should please submit the mailing label from *Penn Lines* as proof of membership.
- ☐ Non-members should submit name, address, phone number, and email address, if applicable.
- ☐ Month(s) in which the ad is to run.
- ☐ Ad copy as it is to appear in the publication.
- ☐ Heading ad should appear under, or name of special heading (additional fee). See below for complimentary heading options.

COMPLIMENTARY HEADINGS (No extra charge for these headings):

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Around the House | ☐ Motor Vehicles & Boats |
| ☐ Business Opportunities | ☐ Nursery & Garden |
| ☐ Employment Opportunities | ☐ Real Estate |
| ☐ Events | ☐ Recipes & Food |
| ☐ Gifts & Collectibles | ☐ Tools & Equipment |
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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

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EXPERTS IN HARD-TO-FIND LEAKS! Roof repairs – all types. House, barn roofs painted. Slate work, chimney repairs. Southwestern PA for over 40 years. Speedyservice! 814-445-4400.

AROUND THE HOUSE

CLOCK REPAIR: If you have an antique grandfather clock, mantel clock or old pocket watch that needs restored, we can fix any timepiece. Macks Clock Repair: 814-421-7992.

ON SALE! – CO-OP COOKBOOK GIFT PACK FOR \$12, includes shipping. "Country Cooking" and "Recipes Remembered" are collections of recipes from electric co-op members of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Payable to: Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108. Write Attention: Cookbooks.

BUILDING SUPPLIES

STEEL ROOFING AND SIDING. Over 30 years in business. Several profiles cut to length. 29- and 26-gauge best quality residential roofing – 40-year warranty. Also, seconds, heavy gauges, accessories, etc. Installation available. Located in northwestern Pennsylvania. 814-398-4052.

FACTORY SECONDS of insulation, 4 x 8 sheets, foil back. R-value 6.5 per inch. Great for pole buildings, garages, etc. Many thicknesses available. Also blue board insulation sheets. 814-442-6032.

CONSULTING FORESTRY SERVICES

RAYSTOWN FORESTRY CONSULTING. Timber sales, appraisals, wildlife habitat management. Dedicated to sustainable harvests for present and future generations to enjoy. 45 years experience. 814-448-0040 or 814-599-4375.

DUMPSTER RENTAL

ROLL-OFF DUMPSTER RENTAL SERVICE available in Adams, Cumberland, Franklin, and Fulton counties, Pa., and beyond. Contact us for pricing and scheduling. 717-860-6274 or heckconstruction33853@gmail.com. Heck Construction, based in Orrstown, PA 17244.

ELECTRIC/GENERATORS

GARY & SONS, INC. OFFERS ELECTRICAL SERVICES to homes within a 45-mile radius of Falls Creek, Pa. We install Generac® generators and do generator maintenance using only American-made Amsoil® synthetic oil. We also install new panels, EV-charging stations, outlets and light fixtures, and do electrical repairs. We have flexible scheduling and experienced electricians. Mention this ad to receive \$500 off a new generator installation. Call 814-204-2633 or go online to garysinc.com. PA192811.

GIFTS & COLLECTIBLES

ON SALE! – CO-OP COOKBOOK GIFT PACK FOR \$12, includes shipping. "Country Cooking" and "Recipes Remembered" are collections of recipes from electric co-op members of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Payable to: Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108. Write Attention: Cookbooks.

HEALTH INSURANCE

DO YOU HAVE THE BLUES regarding your health insurance? We cater to rural America's health insurance needs. For more information, call 800-628-7804. Call us regarding Medicare supplements, too.

HEATING & COOLING

GARY & SONS, INC. HEATING AND COOLING – Save money on fuel oil, propane, or your electric bill without sacrificing comfort – add a heat pump! Contact Gary & Sons, Inc. of Falls Creek, Pa., for a FREE estimate: 814-204-2633 or garysinc.com. A Lennox® Premier Dealer and Mitsubishi® Diamond Elite Contractor, Gary & Sons installs and services heating and cooling equipment and hot water tanks, and cleans ducts and dryer vents. PA192811.

LEATHER & VINYL REPAIR/RESTORATION

LEATHER DOCTOR – Professional mobile leather and vinyl repair. Furniture, autos, boats, RVs. Rips, cracks, discoloration and more. For a quote, text photos of damage to 814-423-0684.

MEATS

ANGUS FREEZER BEEF. \$3.75/LB. HANGING WEIGHT, plus processing. No antibiotics or hormones, grass-fed, grain-finished, excellent marbling. By the quarter, half or whole – discount for halves and multiple quarters. Allison Farmz, Alexandria, Pa. 814-669-4014.

MISCELLANEOUS

FOR SALE: BUCKETS, FORKS, THUMBS, grapple buckets and pallet forks for skid loaders, backhoes, and excavators. Tires for backhoes, rubber tire loaders and excavators also. Call 814-329-0118.

FOR SALE: SEA CONTAINERS for storage, 20' and 40', used or new. One-trip use, also with side doors. Delivery available! Bedford County. Cove Container Sales, 717-475-1190.

NURSERY & GARDEN

TREES AND SHRUBS for all your landscaping needs. Rare, unusual, amazing. Bloomfield Nursery, 167 Sproul Mountain Road, Roaring Spring, PA 16673. 814-224-4508.

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WATER ISSUES? IT'S TREATABLE! GARY & SONS, INC. can install a HALO® Water System to solve chlorine or hard water problems. All natural and environmentally safe, HALO systems do not require mountains of salt and allow healthy minerals to remain in place. Installed by our experienced plumbers, call 814-204-2633 for details or go online to garysinc.com. We now offer residential plumbing services within a 45-mile radius of Falls Creek, Pa. PA192811.

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VIRGINIA'S EASTERN SHORE. Fishermen and beach lovers' paradise. Access the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean within minutes. Waterside Village 3/4-acre (+/-) homesites near marina from \$22,900 with beautiful common areas. Waterfront homesites in Clearview on scenic cove just minutes to the bay. \$150,000 and \$199,900 with dock. View properties on Kirkwoodontheshore.com. 757-678-7631.

REAL ESTATE

LOOKING TO BUY OR SELL? Timberland Realty specializes in land, sporting properties, camps, cabins, farms, waterfront, exquisite second homes and timberland since 1987. Call our office at 716-962-9935 or agents by region – Western Pa.: Ron Westover, 724-422-5525. Central Pa.: John Rudy, 717-319-0082. Northern Pa.: Dave Anderson, 585-808-5696. Brian Bullard, Managing Broker, 716-499-5608. www.timberlandrealty.net.

NEW LISTING! CLEARFIELD COUNTY – 46 acres, 2,023 sq. ft., three-bedroom house, private mountain living, \$499,000. 440 acres in Pike Township, timberland investment, \$1,750,000. Indiana County – 4.95 acres, Route 286 frontage, \$35,000. Bedford County – 8.1 acres, pavilion, \$89,000. Cambria County – 18.2 acres, gas well, \$99,000. Butler County – 139-acre Girl Scout camp, \$3,850,000. www.timberlandrealty.net. Ron Westover: 724-422-5525, 716-962-9935.

TIMBERFRAME HOME ON FIVE ACRES with spectacular panoramic views. Located between Seven Springs and Hidden Valley resorts. Five minutes to each entrance. Six bedrooms, five bathrooms. 5,500 sq. ft. \$1,750,000. Phone: 850-865-1794.

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TWO CAMPS/CABINS WITH 75 ACRES OF LAND. One is approximately 1,440 sq. ft.; the other is 2,020 sq. ft. Located on Little Pine Creek Road, Waterville, PA. \$900,000. 570-634-3651.

REAL ESTATE

CAMP/COTTAGE. Four-and-a-half acres, 4 Mile Road, Emporium, Pa. 1500 square feet, completely renovated, well furnished, turnkey sale, two great rooms, wood stove, two sleeper sofas, two bedrooms, two bathrooms. Septic, well, propane heat, front/back covered porches, cedar siding, two-story barn, spring-fed pond, tree house. Call 717-497-8254.

RECIPES & FOOD

ON SALE! – CO-OP COOKBOOK GIFT PACK FOR \$12, includes shipping. "Country Cooking" and "Recipes Remembered" are collections of recipes from electric co-op members of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Payable to: Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108. Write Attention: Cookbooks.

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A great collector item; order in time for the holidays!

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Blue is for Boys, Pink is for Girls

JOHN KASUN

ONE OF THE BEST REASONS for living in Pennsylvania is the fall. The brilliant, vibrant colors and the fresh, cool morning air, mixed with the warmth of a midday sun, has always made me feel most alive. For me, the best thing about fall has always been bow season.

As a teenager, fall took on a different meaning when I added the challenge of hunting with a bow. I had no idea how much it would impact my life.

I met the girl who would become my wife in high school, and many of our early dates were spent walking in the woods or at the target range while I shot my bow. Eventually, she bought her own bow and wanted to learn to hunt. By the time we married, our lives and the outdoors were totally intertwined.

Today, our home looks like the inside of a sporting goods store, filled with all kinds of fishing, hunting and archery gear. Over the years, we have enjoyed much success in our hunting and outdoor travels and created great memories — even some funny ones.

While I handle any technical equipment issues for both of us, we each pack our own personal gear for our hunts.

This can lead to some confusion because our backpacks are identical.

We were packed and ready to go for our bow hunt one evening when my wife came down with stomach cramps and insisted I go alone. As the rut was in full swing, I didn't need a lot of convincing. After making sure she was comfortable, I headed afield. I parked my truck, grabbed a backpack and bow, and headed for my stand.

To minimize our scent, we always dress lightly when moving and add our outer layer of clothing at the stand. I made it to my stand with little time to spare and was

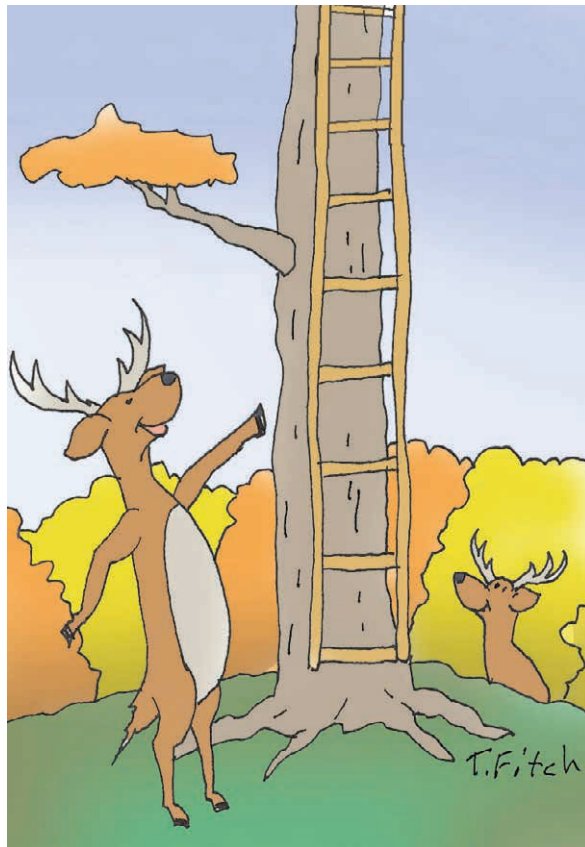
looking forward to a perfect evening. Climbing into the stand, I pulled the backpack up and unzipped it, only to find I had grabbed my wife's pack. I had my bow and arrows, but I had her clothes and no time to return to the truck for my pack. I had no choice; I had to do the best I could.

My wife is an attractive, slim blonde — I am not. Her pants came up to just over my knees but refused to go farther. Her jacket would never fit, so I draped it over my back and tied the sleeves around my neck. I normally wear a knit hat, but my wife wore a camo boonie hat two sizes too small for my head. I looked like a circus clown with a tiny hat that barely covered the top of my head.

I sat in my stand holding my bow feeling like an idiot. Just as the sun set, my greatest fears were realized — not one but two bucks were approaching me. Restricted by my wife's clothes, I realized I could not draw my bow for an accurate shot. I remained seated, drowning in my embarrassment and on the verge of tears as the bucks passed within easy shooting range. I swear the bucks snickered as they walked by me.

At least my wife shed tears with me, in a way, as she laughed out loud when I shared my story. I learned one thing for sure — there's some merit to color coding. If I ever get remarried, I will have a prenuptial agreement stipulating my wife must always tie a pink ribbon onto her hunting pack. 🙄

JOHN KASUN, a lifelong Pennsylvanian with more than 30 years of writing experience, looks for the humor in everyday life and then tells a story from that perspective. He is a member of Huntingdon-based Valley Rural Electric Cooperative.



Fall in Full Effect

A COUNTRY ROAD WITH **FALLEN** leaves as the sun sets. Ominous clouds that paint the sky as night falls. A dog resting in shallow water before exploring the rest of the outdoors. Or a child reconnecting with some chicks as the afternoon passes. All these things are indicative of autumn's beauty and appeal, a reminder that perhaps the calendar year's second-to-last season could just be the prettiest of them all.

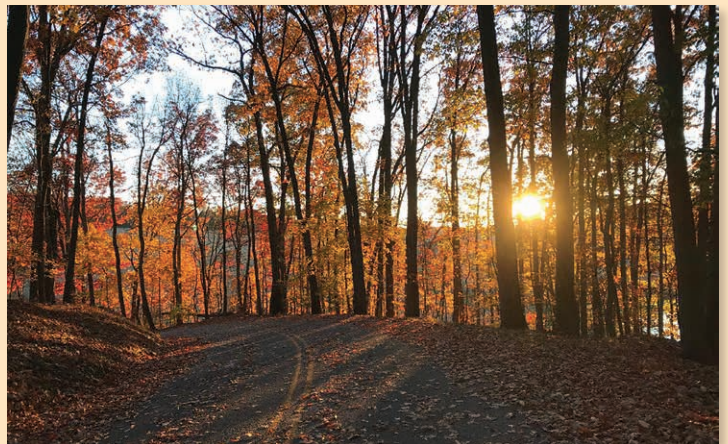
Looking to share some of your own beautiful images? Submit your photos to our Rural Reflections contest. The best photos in each of five categories (animal, artistic, human, landscape and editor's choice) will run in the January 2027 issue and receive a \$75 prize. Runners-up will run in the February 2027 issue and receive \$25. 📷



TINA SHRUM • BEDFORD REC AND REA ENERGY



ROGER MAZZARELLA • UNITED ELECTRIC



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How to enter

TO SUBMIT ENTRIES, email your photos (no more than five digital images per person, per year) to photos@prea.com or send prints to *Penn Lines Photos*, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA, 17108-1266. With your entries, be sure to include your name, address, daytime phone number and the name of the rural electric cooperative that serves your residence, business, or seasonal home.

Remember, our publication deadlines require that we work ahead, so send your seasonal photos to us early. *Please note:* Hard-copy, physical photos mailed to our office will not be returned. Therefore, if you mail a photo, please make sure it's not an original.

ADDRESS CHANGES:

For change of address, please contact your local electric cooperative. For cooperative contact information, please visit www.prea.com/member-cooperatives

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