

Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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Guest Column



Valley offers its take on 'Gone for the Day'

By Doug Roles, Vice President, Member Services

THE LATE Ned Smith (1919-1985), the longtime editor of and contributor to *Pennsylvania Game News* magazine, penned a monthly column called "Gone for the Day." If you followed his outdoor diary — either in its original form in the Pennsylvania Game Commission's monthly publication or in the later, full anthology — you know Ned had a knack for summing up a month's worth of nature observation in a succinct but intriguing opening line.

A typical entry might state October is putting on a brilliant display of color, but a warm spell has deer seeking shade; or that spring peepers are celebrating the March thaw while the skunk cabbage has started poking through the snow.

He would then offer a smattering of observations from several dates that month. It was a practical and enjoyable way to catalog and share information, and worth a try, so here's a Ned Smith-esque offering from Valley Rural Electric:

August brings more electric shifting, trips to two county fairs and a variety of jobs for the co-op's electrical services division.

Aug. 1: It just wouldn't be summer without our Electric Shift radio and TV advertisements. We've run these ads for many years, and maybe by this point in the summer they're getting repetitive, but please keep on shifting when you hear these notices. Use large appliances, such as dishwashers, before 1 p.m. or after 6 p.m. You can also use a microwave or outdoor grill to spare using a conventional oven during these

peak-demand periods. Shifting helps stabilize future power costs.

Aug. 4: The Huntingdon County Fair seems to roll around faster each year. Having a booth in Laney Hall provides us a great opportunity to meet members and answer a wide range of questions. The fair runs through Aug. 10.

Aug. 6: Valley REC is hosting a blood drive on this day in the parking lot of the corporate office. It's open to the public. Stop by and give the gift of life.

Aug. 12 (or any other day): Valley REC Energy Services, the electrical services arm of the co-op, continues to tackle jobs large and small for area residents. Our electricians have been busy with everything from installing water heaters and whole-house standby generators to fixing light switches and upgrading panel boxes. We offer free quotes and prompt service.

Aug. 19: Our annual pole inspection will wrap up at the end of summer. Contracted crews are accessing Valley REC rights-of-way to sound poles with hammers and take core samples. This helps us identify deteriorating poles before they become problematic.

Aug. 25: Our offices are closed after 5:30 p.m. and Fridays - Sundays, but we're always available by calling 800-432-0680.

Aug. 31: If you missed us at the Huntingdon County Fair, Juniata County's event starts this day. Stop by and see us in the commercial exhibitor hall. The fair runs through Sept. 7. It's our last big event of summer. Soon enough we'll be enjoying brilliant fall foliage, and then winter will be here in all her glory. ☀

Valley Rural Electric golf tournament benefits local boy, mother of five in cancer fight

By Doug Roles

Vice President of Member Services

VALLEY Rural Electric Cooperative's 2019 Annual Benefit Golf Outing raised funds for two area families facing cancer and all the challenges the disease entails. The co-op closed its corporate office and all three district offices as employees joined golfers and other supporters for a day at the Huntingdon Country Club with the beneficiaries — Sawyer Werner of Mapleton, a 6-year-old who has been battling kidney cancer; and Heather Irvin of Petersburg, a mother of five, who has been fighting leukemia.

Forty-eight teams registered for the daylong best ball scramble, held June 27. The first flight hit the course at 8 a.m., while the afternoon flight began play at 1 p.m. Valley REC employees share the workload of planning and staffing the yearly tournament and reach-out to local businesses and co-op vendors alike for donations and sponsorships.

"Our benefit tournament brings together golfers and sponsors from across central Pennsylvania and beyond each

year for a good cause," said Valley REC President & CEO Rich Bauer. "We're grateful for all the support this event receives from our vendors, employees and the community."

The cooperative's eighth annual tournament raised approximately \$34,000. The recipients will split the proceeds. The event has raised nearly \$180,000 to date.

"We understand the financial impact cancer can have," Bauer said. "But today is about much more than fundraising; it's about giving the families a memorable day and the camaraderie of everyone coming together for a great cause."

In late May, Sawyer had his 10th and hopefully last chemotherapy treatment. He will need additional scans later this summer. Heather has been in remission since April 10. She was to travel to Pittsburgh in July for additional blood work.

Sawyer, nicknamed "Bean," lives in Cass Township, Huntingdon County, with his parents, Glenn and Megan Werner and younger sisters, Eliza, 3, and Millie, 2. He was midway through

kindergarten when he was diagnosed with Wilms tumor in February 2018. Since then, he has been undergoing chemotherapy and radiation treatments at UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh.

"It's great to be a part of this," Megan said. "And for the community to come together like this is awesome. Sawyer loved it. He was having fun riding around in a golf cart."

Sawyer is going into second grade at Spring Farms Elementary but has not been able to attend regular classes since kindergarten. It's possible he will resume normal classes by October. Megan works as a substitute elementary school teacher for the Southern Huntingdon County School District and is Sawyer's homebound instructor.

Glenn is a forest and wildlife manager at Raystown Lake and also does logging work. The family has insurance, but as other families in this situation know all too well, other expenses such as gas, meals, and hotel stays add up.

Heather and her husband, Wayne, *(continues on page 13)*



BELOW: The Sandy Ridge A&W team of Orbisonia is the afternoon flight winner and the overall tournament winner. The team, comprised of, from left, Brandon Brown, Kasey Kuhns, Matt Young and Tyler Brown, posted a score of 49. Teams used the bag-of-tricks cheats available to golfers registering for the charity tournament. At left: A team of Valley REC employees won the morning flight with a score of 52. The players are, from left: Mike Williams, Logan Booher, Jason Wilson, kneeling, and Tink Bucher, all from Valley's Shade Gap District.





BENEFIT GOLF OUTING: Valley REC President & CEO Rich Bauer, center, pauses for a photo with the beneficiaries of the co-op's 2019 Annual Benefit Golf Outing at Huntingdon Country Club June 27, 2019. The tournament benefited 6-year-old Sawyer Werner, fifth from right, and Heather Irvin, third from left. Family members include, from left, Wayne, Bentley, Regan, Ryker, Kyara, and Brianna Irvin, and Glenn, Megan, Eliza, and Millie Werner.

Thank you Valley REC Benefit Golf Outing sponsors and donors!

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Valley REC sponsors area students on Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.

By Doug Roles

Vice President of Member Services

VALLEY Rural Electric Cooperative sponsored 15 high school students from eight school districts on the 2019 Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., June 16-21. The teens spent their time in the capital meeting legislators, learning about the cooperative business model, and touring monuments and memorials.

They joined more than 1,800 other juniors from electric cooperatives all over the country. Of that number, 116 are from the 13 co-ops in Pennsylvania and one in New Jersey that comprise the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association.

The all-expenses-paid trip is packed with activities, including meetings with rural electric leaders, visits to historic sites, and tours of the Smithsonian museums, Holocaust Museum, National Zoo, and Arlington Cemetery.

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

Altoona High School had one student on the trip. Corey Lion is the son of Teri Lion and the late Christopher Lion of Altoona. He participates in chorus and drama clubs and serves as treasurer for Blair County Young Republicans. Corey hopes to pursue a career in politics.

One Claysburg-Kimmel High School student, Mackenzie Clemens, participated. She is the daughter of Adam and Kimberly Clemens of Claysburg.

"My favorite part was meeting people from all across the country, meeting people from Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee and getting to talk to them and learning more about what they do and how amazing D.C. is to them because they're so far away," Mackenzie said. "It is a great opportunity to learn about D.C. and electric co-ops."

Mackenzie is involved in her high



YOUTH TOUR: Valley Rural Electric Cooperative sponsors 15 students from local high schools on the 2019 Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. The students, who recently completed their junior year, are, from left: Saxton Smith, Elizabeth Flaherty, Adam Uplinger, Chelsea Mathieu, Joseph Kunsman, Mackenzie Clemens, Corey Lion, Brooke Jordan, Isabel Kruse, Caroline Sliver, Kelly Ardrey, Naomi Shemory, Jocelyn Pandolph, Colby Grubb and Nicholas Collare.

school's chapter of Future Business Leaders of America, along with yearbook club and student council. She plans to go into business management.

Jocelyn Pandolph represented Hollidaysburg High School. She has lettered in tennis and is active in student council. Through the Ophelia Project, Jocelyn speaks to girls in fifth and sixth grade to empower them against bullying. Jocelyn has a career goal of working as an interpreter or translator. She is the daughter of Michael and Melissa Pandolph of Duncansville.

Four Huntingdon Area High School students participated in the 2019 Youth Tour. They are: Kelly Ardrey, Colby Grubb, Isabel Kruse and Caroline Sliver.

Kelly is the daughter of Troy and Carolyn Ardrey of Huntingdon. She has been a Girl Scout for 10 years and serves on the stage crew for school musicals. She is on the swim team and field hockey team. She has a goal of working for the U.S. government developing defenses against biological weapons.

Colby is active in his local chapters of Future Farmers of America and 4-H, and has lettered in swimming. Colby has

a career goal of becoming a high school social studies teacher. He is the son of Dirk and Trisha Grubb of Huntingdon.

Isabel plays on Huntingdon's field hockey team and is active in yearbook club. She is a member of the Huntingdon Rotary Club's Interact Club for teens. Her career goal is to assist in the creation of climate change legislation. Isabel is the daughter of Gerald and Elizabeth Kruse of Huntingdon.

Caroline serves as class historian, participates in school choral ensembles and has acted in two school musicals. She plays varsity tennis. Caroline aspires to a career in social media management and service in the U.S. House of Representatives. Caroline is the daughter of Steven and Julie Sliver of Huntingdon.

Naomi Shemory represented Juniata High School. She serves as vice president for her school's chapter of Health Occupations Students of America. She is interested in World War II and Cold War history. Naomi would like to be an emergency room physician. She is the daughter of Charles and Jennifer Shemory of Port Royal.

Two Southern Fulton County High
(continues on page 13)

Golf tournament

(continued from page 12b)

know about frequent hospital stays and associated expenses. Heather's fight against acute myeloid leukemia has included chemotherapy treatments and multiple bone marrow biopsies at UPMC Shadyside, a hospital in Pittsburgh, since her diagnosis last August.

"This is a wonderful event. We can't thank everyone enough for the support," Heather said during the tournament. "I'm clear right now. It feels like it took forever, but we made it."

The couple resides in Oneida Township, Huntingdon County, with their five children – Reagen, 11; Brianna, 11; Kyara, 10; Bentley, 7; Ryker, 4.

They, too, have insurance, but it doesn't cover everything. Heather had worked as a janitor in the summers at Raystown Lake and did babysitting in her home during the school year. She had to give up her last couple weeks of work at the lake last summer due to her illness. Wayne works as a milling equipment operator for Glenn O. Hawbaker, Inc. in State College.

A committee comprised of employees from the co-op's corporate and district offices selects tournament beneficiaries

each year and plans the golf outing. Previous tournaments have benefited two high school classmates battling cancer; an adult who sustained serious injuries in a car accident; infants and

toddlers with congenital conditions; a high school senior with a life-altering digestive disorder; and a recent college graduate paralyzed in a swimming accident. ☀

RIGHT: Valley REC employees and golfers peruse silent auction and raffle items inside Huntingdon Country Club. Below: Golfers in the morning flight head to their carts prior to the 8 a.m. start time. Forty-eight teams participated in the daylong event.



Youth Tour

(continued from page 12d)

School students, Elizabeth Flaherty and Brooke Jordan, participated in the tour.

Elizabeth is a captain on her school's cross-country track team and is in marching band and jazz band. She plans to become a chemical engineer. Elizabeth is the daughter of Sean and Cynthia Flaherty of Needmore.

Brooke sings in the school choir. She plays soccer and runs track. Her career goal is to become an obstetrician. Brooke is the daughter of Donny and Michelle Jordan of Big Cove Tannery.

Nicholas Collare is from Tussey Mountain High School. He plays in concert band and county band and is on the track team. Nicholas loves history and wants to become a high school history teacher. He is the son of Jody and Chris Collare of Six Mile Run.

Joseph Kunsman, one of four Wil-

liamsburg High School students on Youth Tour, said meeting new people and swapping state-themed co-op pins were highlights of the trip.

"I made a lot of friends, traded some pins, and I learned a lot of history," Joseph said. "It's really good for networking, meeting people from across the U.S. and expanding your horizon."

Joseph plays basketball and football. He is also in marching and concert band. He would like to become a pharmacist. He is the son of Edward and Vicki Kunsman of Williamsburg.

Also from Williamsburg High School are Chelsea Mathieu, Saxton Smith and Adam Uplinger. Chelsea is involved in student council and National Honor Society. She is on the track and field team and plans to pursue a degree in marketing or physical therapy. Chelsea is the daughter of Darin and Marcy Mathieu of Williamsburg.

Saxton plays basketball and is a member of Spanish club. He is a National Honor Society student and is active in FFA. Saxton would like to have a career in the environmental sciences. He is the son of Jamie Smith and the late John Smith of Williamsburg.

Adam is active with FFA, serving as his chapter's treasurer and chaplain. He is on the basketball team and the track and field team. He plans to study business. Adam is the son of Aaron and Julie Uplinger of Williamsburg.

Valley Rural Electric Cooperative is a member-owned cooperative that serves more than 21,000 consumers in Bedford, Blair, Centre, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata and Mifflin counties. For more information on the Rural Electric Youth Tour, contact the member services department at Valley REC at 814-643-2650, toll-free 800-432-0680 or email memberservices@valleyrec.com. ☀