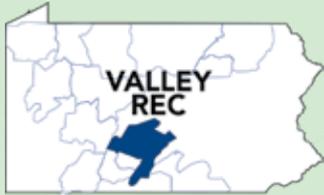


Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

VALLEY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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1-800-432-0680
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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

James Stauffer
Chairman
Allegheny Director

Leroy Barnes
Vice Chairman
PREA Director

Cindy Bigelow
Secretary

Randall Huntsman
Treasurer

Gregory Henry
Linda McMath
Kenneth Soder
Kevin States
Joanne Whitsel

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

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

Outages & Emergencies
1-800-432-0680

Guest Column

No Two Households are Exactly Alike



TRAVIS KUHOSTOS

In an industry where there seems to be more change than ever — think data centers, supply and demand imbalance, and the growing electrification of homes and cars — it's nice to know that one of the basics of energy use has not changed: No two consumers or households are exactly alike.

Looking back through energy-efficiency articles in our co-op publications, I recently came across a story that appeared in a 2008 issue of *Valley News*, the co-op's former bi-monthly newsletter. The piece, "Comparing Bills Doesn't Add Up," asked consumers if they have ever wondered why their electric bills are higher or lower than their neighbor's bills. The article led with the idea that it seems logical to consider each appliance you have in common with others and assume your electric use would be similar as well.

But then, as it is now, the reality is that electric bills are difficult, if not impossible, to compare. The article stated that no two households share the same living habits, and people in the same family don't use electricity the same way. That has not changed.

Here are a few more things the article mentioned that are as true now as they were nearly 20 years ago: Heating and cooling costs can vary widely. Insulation values in attics, ceilings, and walls may differ greatly among older and newer homes. Seals on doors and windows may not be tight. And occupants don't always remember to turn down their thermostats at the same time each night.

Water heating is another expense that varies according to use. Teenagers are notorious for taking long showers. Add a baby, and laundry becomes a daily chore. Even how you wash dishes affects your water heating costs.

When calculating your electric use, you must consider your lifestyle. Do you purchase every electronic device that comes on the market? Do you cook meals in the oven or microwave? Do you turn the TV on to watch your favorite show or do you leave it on as background noise day and night? Do you hang laundry on the line or let it tumble in the dryer?

It's not reasonable to compare your electric bills with those of other consumers. You may be willing to pay for the convenience that electricity provides without questioning the cost, but others may not. It's too late to conserve when the bill arrives and you find you may have wasted energy while your friends or neighbors were using it more efficiently.

Just as we were telling consumers in 2008 and before, comparing electric bills just doesn't add up. Instead, focus on controlling your energy use and see the impact you can have on your expenses. 🌱

TRAVIS KUHOSTOS
ENERGY SPECIALIST

Co-op Holds Nominating Meetings in Districts 1, 3 and 5

DOUG ROLES, VICE PRESIDENT, MEMBER SERVICES

NEARLY 400 MEMBERS and guests gathered at February's nominating meetings to select board candidates for Valley Rural Electric Cooperative's (REC) Districts 1, 3 and 5. The nominees were selected to stand for election to three-year terms on the cooperative's nine-member board of directors.

The election will take place at the co-op's drive-thru annual meeting, set for 4 p.m. Friday, April 10, at the Huntingdon County Fairgrounds.

CEO rate update

This year's nominating meetings were held at Morrison's Cove Memorial Park, Blair County, as well as at the Woodcock Valley Lions Club and Shavers Creek Community Building, both in Huntingdon County.

The names of nominated members will appear on the annual meeting ballot, and nominees will be elected through an at-large election. This means all members attending the annual meeting, regardless of the district in which they live, will vote for candidates in Districts 1, 3 and 5.

At each meeting, Valley REC President and CEO Rich Bauer provided an update about the cooperative and then answered questions. Rich explained how increasing demand for electricity — driven by data center development and the closing of coal and nuclear plants — and increasing transmission costs have led to an increase in prices for consumers.

Valley REC instituted a penny increase in the co-op's kilowatt-hour rate and a \$5 increase in the basic monthly charge, both of which took effect for February's electricity use. Valley REC's rates remain about 34% lower than those of neighboring investor-owned utilities.

"It's nothing that has gone up at Valley," Rich said. "We've tried to



UPDATING MEMBERS: Valley Rural Electric Cooperative President and CEO Rich Bauer, standing, speaks to District 5 members at the Shavers Creek Community Building about wholesale power costs.

keep expenses in line and cut back. It has everything to do with the market. It's a pass-through."

Rich said competition with data centers has increased the cost of energy transmission, which is one of three components of wholesale pricing along with electricity generation and capacity charges.

"It's costing Valley an additional \$1.5 million just to get power to our substations," Rich explained.

The supply/demand imbalance has drastically increased capacity costs at wholesale power auctions. These costs are designed to cover the expense of ensuring enough power generation is available during times of peak demand. In 18 months, capacity costs have surged from \$28/megawatts-a-day to \$397.

"We need baseload generation in Pennsylvania," Rich noted. "Solar and wind cannot take the place of coal, natural gas, and nuclear."

FOOD & FELLOWSHIP: Members from District 1 enjoy a roast chicken dinner at Morrison's Cove Memorial Park.

'We need to know'

Rich warned that if trends continue, it's possible the East Coast would see rolling blackouts in the coming decade. He then apologized that he did not have good news to report.

"You're doing us a favor; you're enlightening us," one member responded. "A lot of us aren't aware, and we need to know."

Several members warned against artificial intelligence becoming too invasive and added that data centers driving up costs is unfair to consumers.

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2026 Board of Directors Candidates

THESE CANDIDATES WILL HAVE THEIR NAMES APPEAR on the ballot at Valley Rural Electric Cooperative's (REC) 2026 Annual Drive-Thru Meeting, set for Friday, April 10, at the Huntingdon County Fairgrounds. Attending members will vote for one candidate in each district regardless of the district in which the voting member resides.

Randy Huntsman works as an animal nutritionist with Renaissance Nutrition in Roaring Spring. He's also a crops manager for Kulp Family Dairy in Martinsburg and the bookkeeper for Hilecrest Farm in Sinking Valley. A 1977 Central High School graduate, Randy and his family operated a dairy farm, PA Fair Valley Farms, for more than 30 years. He also served on the North Woodbury Board of Supervisors for 24 years, many of which as a board chairman. Randy has a wealth of co-op experience as he is or has been a member of the following cooperatives: Land O'Lakes, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, Select Sire Power, Ag Choice Farm Credit and Bedford Farm Bureau. He has also served on various boards of directors, including those representing the Blair County Farm Bureau, Blair County Holstein Club, Blair County DHIA and the Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania. Randy and his wife, Karen, are members of Martinsburg Grace Brethren Church, where they serve as deacons, and Randy as an elder. In his free time, Randy enjoys touring the country on a Harley, hunting and spending time with his family. The couple have two sons and a daughter, and are Mimi and Pap Pap to four granddaughters and three grandsons. Randy is 66 years old and has been a Valley REC member since 2007, having served on the Valley REC Board since July 2016. Randy has earned his Director Gold Credential from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) for completing the required continuing education credits. Randy is running unopposed for District 1.



DISTRICT 1
Randy Huntsman
194 Fair Valley Road
Martinsburg, PA 16662

A 64-year-old native of Hesston, Huntingdon County, **Kevin States** works on his family's 200-acre farm. He also rents another 200 acres of crop land and feeds 120 head of young stock. The operation uses the services of the Bedford Farm Bureau Cooperative in addition to Valley REC. Kevin is a 1979 graduate of Huntingdon Area High School. He is a past member of the National Holstein Association and a member of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau. He was formerly involved with the Huntingdon County 4-H dairy and beef clubs and was a member of the Rural Electric Youth Tour delegation in 1978. The family's farm has received electric service from Valley REC since 1952; Kevin has been a member of the cooperative since 1982. He has served on the co-op's board of directors since 1999 and has held the positions of vice chairman and secretary. He also earned NRECA's Director Gold Credential, the highest level of training for electric co-op directors. Kevin has one son, one daughter, five grandsons and four granddaughters. In his free time, he follows NASCAR racing and enjoys going to local dirt track races. His name will appear on the ballot for District 3.



DISTRICT 3
Kevin States
12817 Redstone Ridge Road
Hesston, PA 16647

Todd Gates, 64, of Saxton, has worked for Martin Water Conditioning in Altoona since 2008. From 1990 to 2008, he was sales manager of the bottled water and water treatment divisions of Roaring Spring Water. A 1979 graduate of Tussey Mountain High School, Todd has held a residential water treatment certification from the Water Quality Association since the early 1990s. He is a 1996 graduate of the Blair County Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Blair County program. He served for eight years on the board of directors of the Blair County Convention and Visitors Bureau, including during the planning and construction of the Blair County Convention Center and the Altoona Curve's ballpark, PNG Field. Todd served for 10 years on the Blair-Bedford Builders Association's Home Show Committee and for six years on the Home Show Committee of the Builders Association of Central Pa. in Centre County. Todd is the head coach of the Tussey Mountain High School girls basketball team, a position he has held since 2005. He has accumulated more than 300 wins and four district championships. He is also an inaugural member of the Phil Speck Scholarship Committee. Todd has served as treasurer of New Hope Baptist Church in Broad Top since 2016. Todd and his wife, Wendy, have been married since 1993. They are the parents of three daughters and have three grandsons and three granddaughters. In his free time, Todd enjoys trout fishing and going to dirt track races. Todd has been a Valley REC member since 1995. His name will appear on the ballot for District 3.

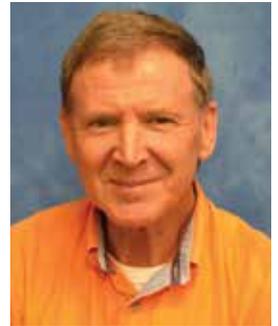


DISTRICT 3
Todd Gates
20238 Little Valley Road
Saxton, PA 16678

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2026 Board of Directors Candidates (cont.)

Ken Soder began working for Patton Township, Centre County, in July 1999. He started as the township's zoning officer and retired in 2024 as the public works director. Ken and his wife, Kathy, started the K BAR K Farm in 1997 in the Bald Eagle Valley area with 14 Dorset ewes. They moved to West Township in Huntingdon County in 2002 to accommodate their growing sheep flock. Since his retirement from the township, Ken has become a member of the Shavers Creek Volunteer Fire Company and joined the Twin Creeks Ambulance Service as an emergency medical technician. Ken is a 1979 graduate of State College High School. He obtained his bachelor's degree from Penn State's College of Agricultural Engineering in agricultural mechanization in 1989. He has been married to Kathy since 1991. Their son, Nathan Soder, was born in 2003 and attends Penn State University, studying criminology. Ken is an active member of the Petersburg Bethel Presbyterian Church. He has served as an elder and is currently a trustee. He has been a Valley REC member since 2002. In his spare time, Ken is a Shavers Creek 4-H leader involved with sport fishing and woodworking. Ken is running unopposed on the ballot for District 5.



DISTRICT 5
Ken Soder
5867 Eberle Road
Petersburg, PA 16669

NOMINATING MEETINGS

Continued from page 16B

"You can't eat what's in a data center," one member said. "You don't eat without rural America."

Rich said the cooperative's demand-response program is more important than ever to help stabilize future capacity charges. He also reported the co-op spent about \$2.5 million on tree trimming last year and said well-maintained rights of way have contributed to service reliability.

He added that neighbors are dependent on each other to permit maintenance crews to do a thorough job so hazardous trees aren't left standing to cause an outage for members "downstream."

"We go on about a four-and-a-half or five-year cycle on our system," Rich said. "We keep the floor mowed and the sides cut." 📍



A SHARED EFFORT: Left – Program Manager Travis Kuhstos, right, shows the demand-response water heater switch to Steve and Pat Cleck of Petersburg. Below – Valley Rural Electric Cooperative President and CEO Rich Bauer encourages members at the District 3 meeting at the Woodcock Valley Lions Club to participate in the co-op's demand-response program.



2026 ANNUAL MEETING DRIVE-THRU EVENT

HUNTINGDON COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

4-7 P.M. FRIDAY, APRIL 10

ELECTIONS - DISTRICTS 1, 3 and 5

Valley REC's 2026 Annual Meeting will follow a drive-thru format. Members can arrive at the fairgrounds anytime from 4-7 p.m.

Participants will receive a ballot, an annual report and a door prize as well as a \$20 bill credit.

Invitation letters and registration cards are being mailed this month!