

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

Our Appreciation of Lineworkers is Year-round



MIKE LANSBERRY

AS THE MANAGER OF ONE of Valley Rural Electric Cooperative's (REC) three service districts, I have the unique privilege of seeing firsthand what it truly takes to keep the lights on for our members. There's a special kind of people power behind the electricity that runs our homes, farms, businesses, and churches, and that's the commitment of lineworkers.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association — the national trade association representing nearly 900 U.S. electric cooperatives — observes National Lineworker Appreciation Day on the second Monday in April. It's a day to specifically recognize the year-round, 24/7 commitment of these highly skilled and essential crews.

At Valley REC, we appreciate the sheer dedication of our lineworkers. There's a lot of sacrifice that goes with the job. Holidays and birthday parties are interrupted because Mother Nature doesn't take breaks. Most often, it seems outages — whether from storms, motor vehicle accidents or equipment failures — happen at the most inopportune times. But it's all part of the job for these guys.

As much as their work in all kinds of weather brings them credit, there's another type of dedication I see — one that doesn't get as much attention — and it's the way our veteran lineworkers teach and mentor our younger guys.

After several retirements across the cooperative in recent years, we now have quite a mix of veteran and apprentice lineworkers. Our senior workers are stepping up and helping with training while passing on knowledge to our younger lineworkers. The senior guys have learned the tricks to our system — how things work in different locations — and those are the things they have to pass on to the next generation of Valley REC crews to stay efficient.

Our longtime lineworkers are also instilling a culture of safety. It's a priority because we want everyone to go home to their families at night just the way they came to work that morning.

I truly think lineworkers are a breed all their own. They work in the summer heat, the winter cold and everything in between. They're fiercely loyal to their craft and to each other. And their dedication doesn't stop at the co-op territory's boundary.

At times, serving our neighbors means going beyond our own service territory through a process known as mutual aid. During major outages, Valley REC crews stand ready to assist neighboring co-ops — sometimes close to home, sometimes across state lines — to help restore power. This spirit of mutual aid strengthens all cooperatives and ultimately benefits the members we serve should Valley REC's crews be the ones that need a helping hand.

As a district manager, I understand very well how frustrating it can be for our consumers any time the lights go out and everyday life grinds to a halt. When that happens, as it surely will, just remember there's a team of relentless and resilient professionals ready to take on the physically demanding and sometimes dangerous work of getting the lights back on. 🛠️

MIKE LANSBERRY
MARTINSBURG DISTRICT MANAGER



Golf Tournament to Benefit Six Area Families Facing Serious Illness

DOUG ROLES, VICE PRESIDENT, MEMBER SERVICES

VALLEY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S (REC) 2026 Annual Benefit Golf Outing will benefit six area families facing serious health challenges. The event will be held Thursday, June 25, at the Huntingdon Country Club.

As in previous years, the tournament will feature a morning and afternoon flight of golfers in a shotgun-start best-ball scramble.

The co-op's golf committee began planning this year's event in February. Valley's corporate office and three district offices will close on the day of the tournament as all employees assist on the course for the employee-driven fundraising effort, which includes a silent auction.

"We appreciate everyone who has supported our tournament in the past and hope this year's event will lighten

the load just a bit for these families," Valley REC President and CEO Rich Bauer says. "It amazes me how everyone pulls together — employees, sponsors, players and donors — to make this tournament successful."

Beneficiaries

Five-year-old **Abby Sholly** was diagnosed with leukemia in June 2025. She has endured a bone marrow biopsy and blood transfusions and has two years of chemotherapy ahead of her. This resilient youngster is the daughter of Glenn and Sarah Sholly of Mill Creek.

Alyssa Starr of Huntingdon is a devoted mother of two beautiful children, Grayson, 13, and Ivy, 4. On her 32nd birthday last August, Alyssa was diagnosed with Stage 4

metastatic breast cancer, which has spread throughout her body. She is undergoing chemotherapy and radiation treatments and has leaned on her strong faith in God through everything.

Blake Grove, 4, of East Waterford loves to play outside. He enjoys trucks, cars and dinosaurs. Recently, he was diagnosed with three brain tumors. He had surgery in January to remove two of the tumors, and his medical team is planning the best path forward for him. Blake is the son of Steve Stoutzenberger and Maddie Grove.

Since his birth in June 2025, little **Liam Hughes** has required many surgeries to his spine and abdomen. He has spina bifida and complications from having just one kidney. He remains a happy boy



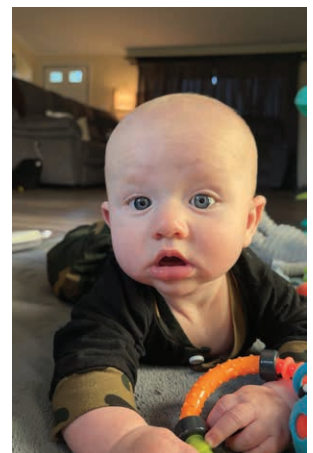
ABBY SHOLLY



ALYSSA STARR



BLAKE GROVE



LIAM HUGHES



WES & SHERRY HONSTINE MILES

despite his medical condition. He is the son of Shawn and Brooke Hughes of New Enterprise.

Still grieving the sudden loss of her grandson, Carter Wagner, in July 2025, **Sherry Honstine Miles** and her husband, Wes, of Hesston learned that Sherry had esophageal cancer. A November surgery to remove part of her esophagus

revealed complications with a blood vessel. After more testing, she had reconstructive surgery in December and will now undergo chemotherapy.

Izzy Boyd, 14, of Huntingdon has a progressive and terminal degenerative disease. Her condition has advanced significantly and her mobility has declined. As Izzy's needs increase, providing her care has



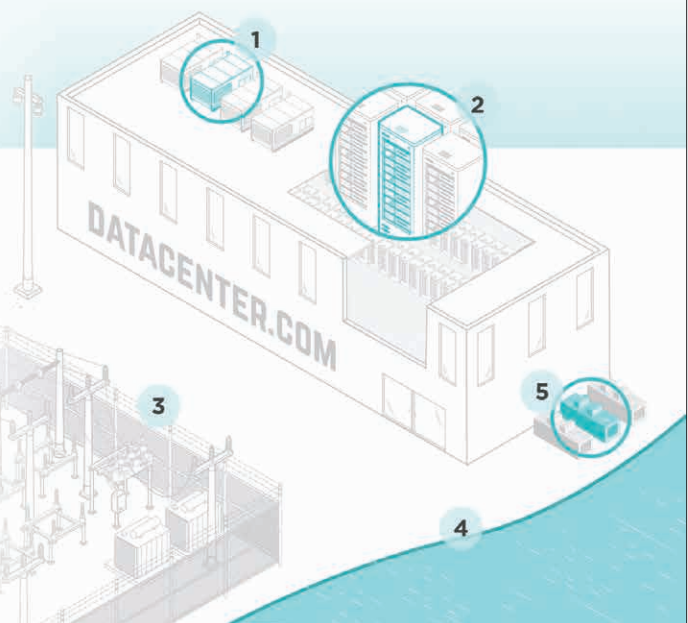
IZZY BOYD & FAMILY

become increasingly challenging. Izzy's brother Alex, 21, has the same condition and is further along in the disease progression. Izzy's mother, Samantha Gladfelter, has faced the grief of the sudden passing of her husband, Johnny Gladfelter, in January as the family continues to battle medical conditions. 📞

Big Data, Bigger Demands

Many companies are choosing rural areas for their data centers because of cheaper land, available power and potential tax breaks. Data centers require huge amounts of electricity to operate, which presents new opportunities and challenges for electric co-ops.

- 1 **HVAC:** Constant cooling is needed to ensure the servers function properly.
- 2 **Servers:** Servers run applications and process data 24/7. One server rack can consume enough electricity to power a small home. A large data center can house thousands of server racks.
- 3 **Infrastructure:** Data centers often require new electrical infrastructure to meet their power needs.
- 4 **Water Source:** Many large data centers are deploying evaporative cooling, which is more efficient than compressor-based systems.
- 5 **Backup Power:** On-site generators keep data centers running during power outages and can also be used to help lower demand when electricity use spikes.



Meet Your Employees: Bruce Perow

DOUG ROLES, VICE PRESIDENT, MEMBER SERVICES

VALLEY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (REC) recently welcomed Bruce Perow to its team. He works from the co-op's Martinsburg district office as a lineman second class and joined the co-op in October 2023.

Bruce is a 2020 graduate of Huntingdon Area High School, where he played soccer and tennis. After graduation, he enrolled in Mount Aloysius College.

"I went to nursing school to be an RN [registered nurse]," he says. "My brother is a doctor, and his wife is a nurse, but then COVID hit, and I decided not to pursue medicine."

Bruce then went to work for Henkels & McCoy as a telecommunications lineman. Medicine and linework may seem worlds apart, but both run in his family.

"My pap was a lineman for Penelec — basically his whole life," Bruce recalls of his grandfather, Robert.

The Henkels & McCoy crew that Bruce was on did contracted work with Valley REC's sister co-ops, Claverack REC in Wysox, Pa., and Tri-County REC in Mansfield, Pa., as they developed broadband service. While working in telecommunications,



NEW TO THE TEAM: Bruce Perow joined the Valley REC team in 2023. He works as a lineman second class in the Martinsburg district.

Bruce gave his resume to people at Valley REC in hopes a position would become available.

"I knew this was where I wanted to come," he says. "The co-op seems more like a family than a corporation. I like the guys I work with. This is a really good environment."

Bruce works around energized secondary, lower-voltage lines and helps senior lineworkers with the maintenance and repair of primary lines. He works from an aerial bucket and climbs poles. His goals are to advance to lineman third and fourth class and eventually become a journeyman.

Through the Job Training & Safety (JT&S) program, offered through the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, Bruce has completed basic and intermediate classes on using rubber gloves and fiberglass "hot sticks" to work around energized equipment. He also completed a

basic chainsaw safety course. Bruce says he likes the way the JT&S courses are structured and that his day-to-day work at Valley helps prepare him for the courses he takes.

"It's nice to train with those other co-ops," he adds, "and meet other linemen you might have to work with sometime, if there are large outages."

Bruce lives with his parents, Gary and Sherry Perow, in Huntingdon. He has spent most of his spare time renovating a home he purchased in Walker Township that will soon be move-in ready. When not working at Valley or on the house, he enjoys camper camping at Raystown Lake with his family.

"My parents have a boat, and I have a jet ski," he says. "We also like going to Bethany Beach in Delaware."

Though it's very different from RN work, we're glad a co-op career was the right prescription for Bruce. He's one of the people you can count on. 🇺🇸

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