

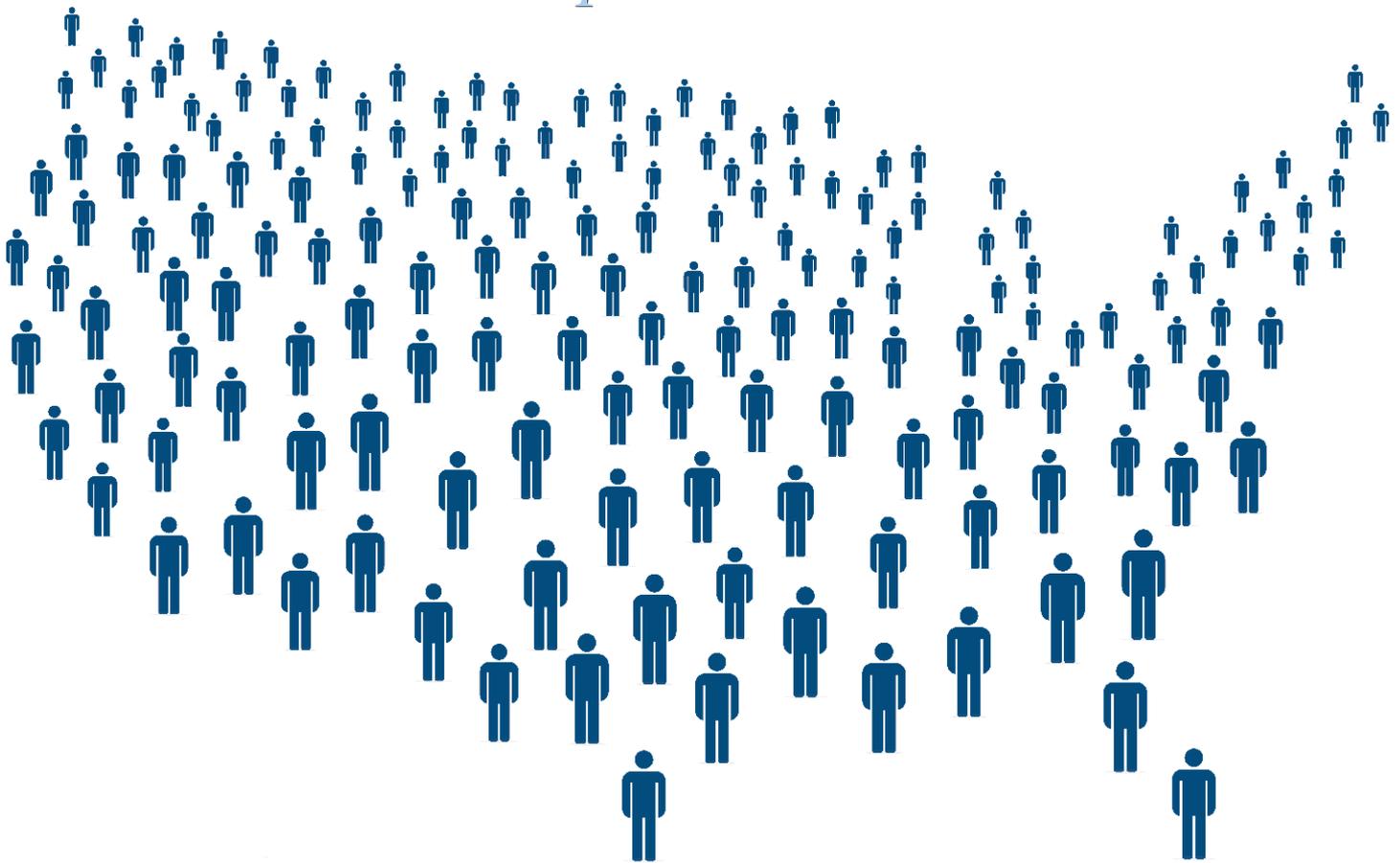
JANUARY 2020

# PENN*lines*

THE MAGAZINE YOU COME HOME TO

## Strength in numbers

*Census count vital to rural  
representation*



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Energy savings in the new year

Easing out of the holidays

Showcasing ag opportunities

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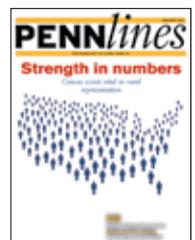
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**ON THE COVER**

"Census Day" is officially April 1. 2020 census forms will arrive in the mail, and they can be completed online, by phone, or by mail. Residents who do not complete the form will have an in-home visit by an employee of the U.S. Census Bureau.



# Counting on you

## *Census numbers help tell rural story*

By Frank M. Betley

Being an engineer, I've always loved numbers. As a kid, I used to pore over the backs of baseball cards to see how my favorite Baltimore Orioles performed from year to year. From hits and runs to wins and losses, the data always fascinated me. Today, as a cooperative CEO, it's more about bottom lines and balance sheets, but the numbers still captivate me — and still reveal wins and losses.

Numbers certainly tell us how we're doing in business. For the past several "seasons," I would say that Allegheny Electric Cooperative (Allegheny) — your generation provider — has had a winning record. In fact, Allegheny's strong financial numbers have prompted the board of directors to lower your electric generation rate once again, making it three years in a row.

*Penn Lines* has also had a success-

ful run. A 2019 readership survey revealed that 90% of cooperative members read this magazine on a regular basis, making it one of the most widely read cooperative publications in the country. I think those kinds of numbers really show how engaged cooperative members are.

I have always been drawn to what numbers can tell us. If you look closely, you can find a story behind the numbers. That's why I'm excited about 2020. The start of a new decade means it's time for a new U.S. census — and new numbers. Constitutionally mandated, the census seeks a count of all residents every 10 years. Census numbers help determine congressional representation, but the process goes well beyond this basic function. In gathering this data, the census tells the story of our country and its people.

It's critical that rural residents take part in this story. The U.S. census will arrive in the coming months and must be completed by April 1. This is a chance to tell our story, and numbers are an important part of telling that story. After all, numbers decided the fate of rural Americans in the early days of electricity.

In the 1930s, only three out of every 100 farm families across the country had electricity. Private power companies looking at bottom-line profits didn't like the numbers they saw in rural areas, so they stuck to serving cities and towns. It took rural residents banding together — in numbers — to form cooperatives in order to bring electricity into their communities.

Thanks to government-backed funding to support this infrastructure, electric cooperatives could begin serving this vital need, forever changing the landscape of rural America.

As we look to rural America's future needs — everything from health care to high-speed internet, census numbers will play an important role. The data pulled from the census will not only determine political boundaries, but also how areas of the country are represented when it comes to federal spending. Census numbers are used in deciding where federal funding goes and how much of it gets used for a variety of programs, including rural infrastructure development and certain health initiatives. This makes getting an accurate count crucial for our rural communities.

Unfortunately, rural America has traditionally lagged behind urban areas in terms of census response. In past census surveys, rural participation in Pennsylvania has been at about 75% compared to 80% in urban areas. What this means is that the country is missing a big part of the story when it comes to rural America. Without that story being told, critical needs in rural areas go unaddressed.

While the numbers haven't been very good for my Baltimore Orioles in recent years, I am hoping for a different story from our rural areas this spring. We already know how engaged *Penn Lines* readers are. As the U.S. census comes to your community, please take the time to complete it and tell your story. We're counting on you. 🌞



**Frank M. Betley**  
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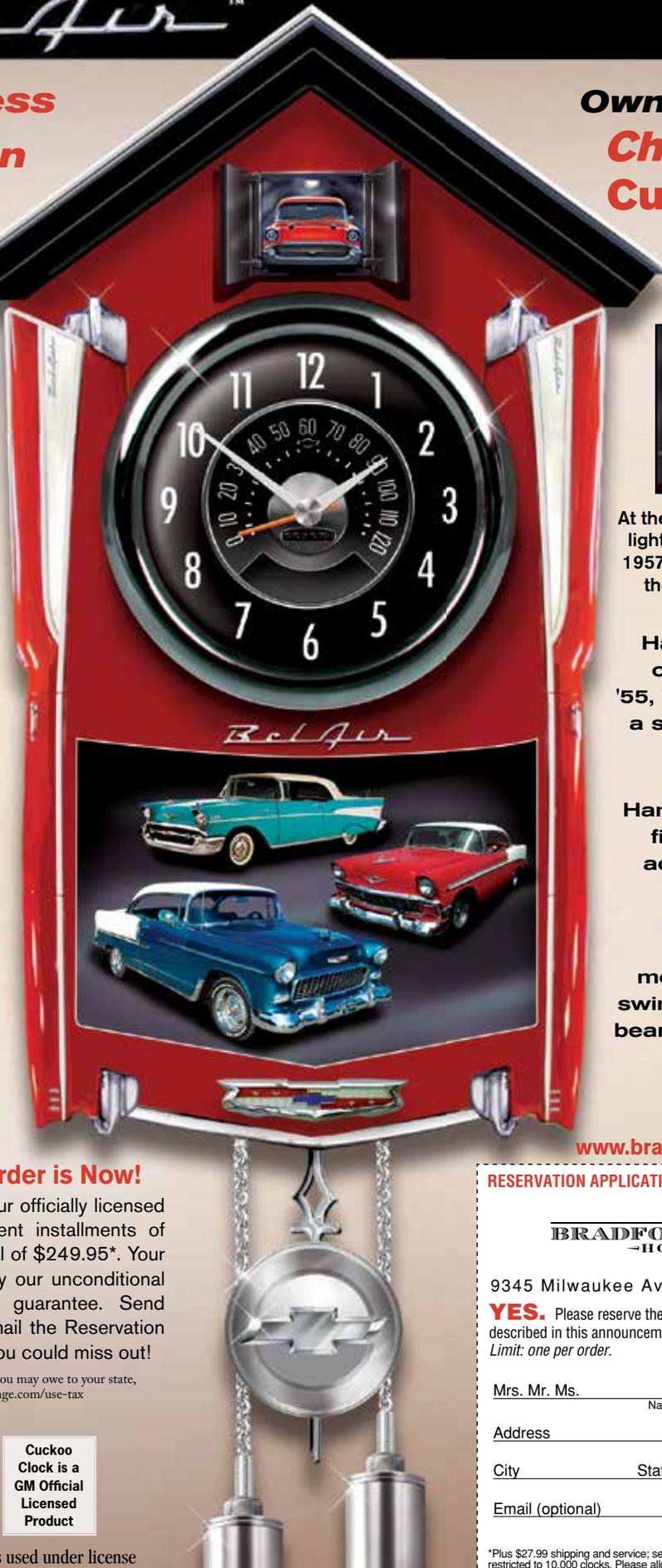
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## News from across the Commonwealth

### State to honor active military, veterans at 2020 Farm Show

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs are joining forces to recognize veterans and military service members at the 2020 Pennsylvania Farm Show in Harrisburg on Jan. 9.

“Veterans are the 2% who protect us, and farmers are the 2% who feed us,” said Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding, a member of Gettysburg-based Adams Electric Cooperative. “We want veterans who spend time at the 2020 Farm Show to know just how much we appreciate their service and sacrifices for our freedom; and we want those who have found post-military careers in agriculture to know how much we appreciate their continued service to our communities.”

Throughout the day on Jan. 9, special music, competitions and ceremonies will honor veterans and their families for their service and their connection to agriculture. Some vendors will offer special military discounts and giveaways to active military and veterans with identification. The

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs’ Mobile Veterans Outreach Van will be present and staffed with accredited veteran service officers, who will provide information and assistance to veterans and family members who may be eligible for programs, benefits, and services.

The day’s schedule is available online at [farmshow.pa.gov](http://farmshow.pa.gov). The 2020 Pennsylvania Farm Show begins Jan. 4 and runs through Jan. 11.

### Pennsylvania sees record bear harvest

Although final results aren’t yet available, hunters have set a new Pennsylvania bear harvest record as preliminary figures show at least 4,577 bears were taken. The previous record was set in 2011 when hunters took 4,350 bears.

State officials say expanded hunting opportunities provided by new special-firearms and muzzleloader bear seasons and an expanded archery bear season have helped to increase the 2019 bear harvest. A record number of bear license sales — more than 200,000 — and good weather on peak hunting days also contributed to the increase.



The preliminary report notes that bears were taken in 59 counties. Lycoming County led the state with 283, followed by Clinton County with 267 and Tioga County with 261.

### Sunday hunting comes to Pennsylvania in 2020

Governor Tom Wolf has signed into law legislation that will permit additional hunting on three Sundays per calendar year — one within archery deer season, one within firearms deer season and one selected by the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

The law takes effect Feb. 25, 2020. It is expected that the Pennsylvania Game Commission will identify the new Sunday hunting opportunities soon thereafter.

In Pennsylvania, Sunday hunting has been limited to the hunting of foxes, coyotes, crows and feral hogs during open seasons.

Legislators who backed the bill in the state House and Senate said weekends are the only time that many people who work or are in school have a chance to get out into the woods to hunt. They expect Sunday hunting

*(continues on page 25)*

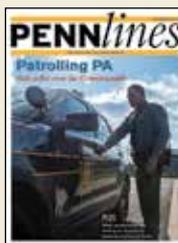
### READER RESPONSE

Dear Editor,

*This letter is regarding the Keeping Current article in the December issue of Penn Lines entitled, “Ruffed grouse has uncertain future in Pennsylvania.”*

*The Audubon Society scientists said climate change is affecting grouse populations. Not one word was mentioned that three states’ grouse biologists are stating that West Nile Virus is the main cause for population decrease, along with habitat. Working closely with Pennsylvania grouse biologist, never once was it mentioned about climate change. I think the Audubon Society should rethink its statement, unless it has a political agenda.*

David Grove, Sullivan County REC



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# Strength in numbers

## *Census count vital to rural representation*

Rural Pennsylvanians did not participate in either the 2000 or 2010 census in as great a number as their urban and suburban neighbors, and officials are determined that history won't repeat itself in 2020. Because an accurate count matters, rural residents can expect to hear a lot about the census in the months leading up to "Census Day" on April 1, 2020.

Barry Denk, executive director of the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, is among those encouraging rural Pennsylvanians to stand up and be counted through their responses to a few simple questions on the 2020 census form. Denk, a member of the Governor's Census 2020 Complete Count Commission, says he is functioning as a voice for rural Pennsylvania as the state develops and implements strategies to accurately count everyone living in Pennsylvania on April 1. To make replying easier, U.S. households can re-

By Kathy Hackleman  
Senior Editor/Writer

spond to their census invitation — 95% of which will be delivered via the U.S. Post Office — by filling out the form online, by phone or by mail.

"In 2000 and 2010, there was an 80% urban response rate in Pennsylvania," Denk reports. "In rural Pennsylvania, the rate was 75%. That means 25% of rural Pennsylvanians were not counted in the two most recent censuses, and that has a dramatic economic impact."

### **Economic impact**

It is vitally important to count every single resident — rural, suburban or urban — as it is the data from the decennial census that determines how federal dollars are allocated for the coming decade.

"About \$2,100 per person was provided to Pennsylvania as a result of the 2010 census," Denk explains. "And

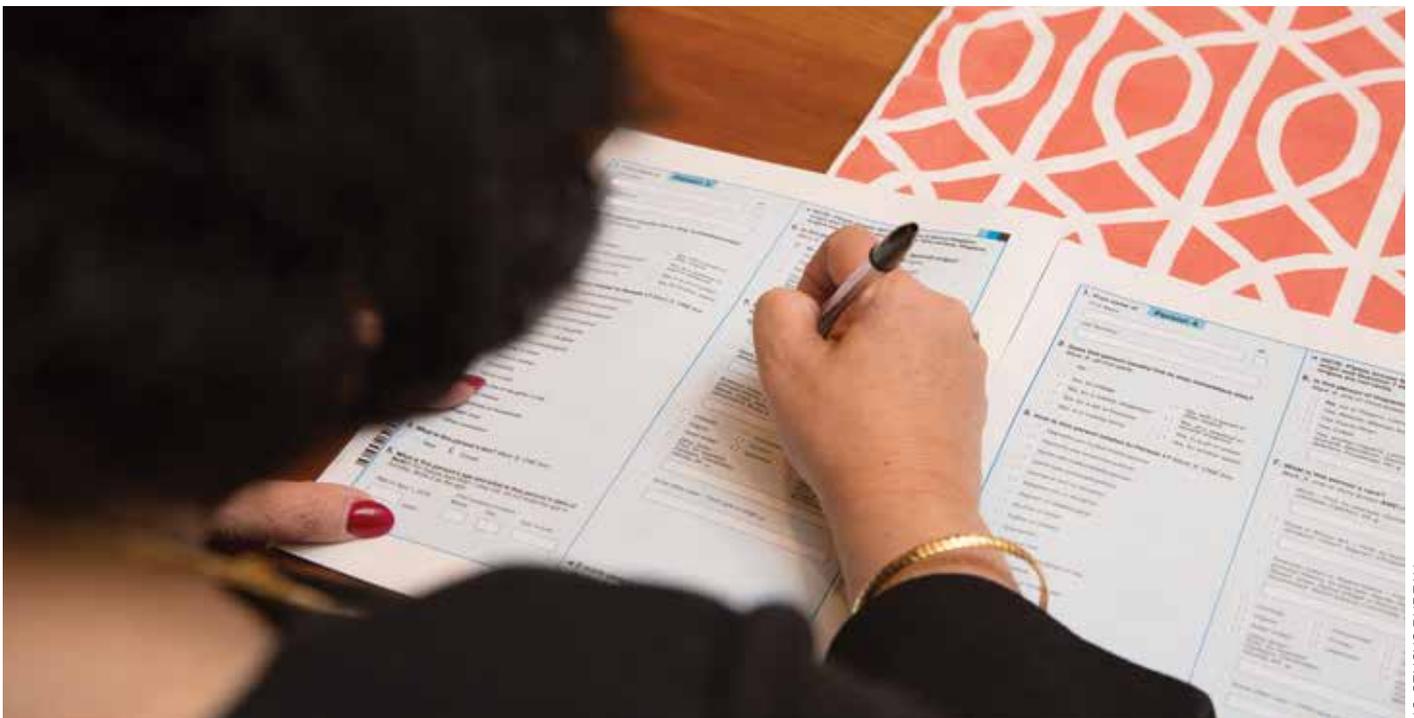
that's every year for 10 years. When a person is not counted, that in effect means \$2,100 each year over 10 years is lost because that person was not included in the count and therefore was not a part of the formula that agencies use to disburse dollars."

Just what are these agencies and what do their dollars fund?

Listing off Medicare, Medicaid, children's health care programs, food stamps, nutrition programs, agriculture programs and block grants, Denk says, "You actually would be hard-pressed to identify one agency of the federal government that does not use census data as part of its funding decisions."

Because of the unique issues in getting a more robust count of rural residents — from geographic isolation to a wide-

**COUNT ME IN:** All U.S. residents are to fill out the 2020 census form that will arrive in the mail this spring. Census Day is April 1, however forms can be completed prior to that date through the mailed questionnaire, by phone or online.



U.S. CENSUS BUREAU



spread reluctance to provide personal information to the government — Denk is determined to get the word out about how important it is for Pennsylvanians to participate in the census.

For older residents who wonder if it's really important to fill out the census form, Denk points out that federal funding goes to a variety of services that benefit them, including senior centers, health care services and Medicare. Younger residents benefit from programs that financially assist first-time homebuyers, job creation initiatives and infrastructure.

"All of us benefit from a complete census count," Denk emphasizes.

### Rural representation

There's a second, critical reason to make sure as many people as possible are included in the census count.

"We lost one congressional seat in 2010 and there is a distinct possibility we will lose another congressional seat as a result of the 2020 count, especially if we don't get a complete count," Denk says. "Chances are, it will be rural Pennsylvania that will lose a seat. ... The census is also used for redistricting within the Commonwealth. If our population count isn't as accurate as it should be, it will affect redistricting and could result in larger districts for rural areas, which makes it harder for the representatives to serve the diverse needs of those residents. This affects

our voice both in Harrisburg and in Washington, D.C."

And finally, according to Denk, information from the census is core to the Center for Rural Pennsylvania's mandate to collect and analyze data in rural areas.

"Businesses look to market goods and services, and they want to understand the population down to the township and borough levels," he says. "Census data is extremely comprehensive and used by all kinds of businesses looking for data to sell goods, provide health care, learn about potential workers. It's absolutely critical for a whole host of community and economic development purposes."

The 45-member state commission on the census, of which Denk is a member, consists of individuals representing business, academia, community and nonprofit organizations, religious communities, health care communities, elected and appointed officials, and employees from all levels of government. The goal is to promote a complete count of all Pennsylvanians.

The commission is operating under the direction of Norman Bristol Colon, executive director of the Governor's Census 2020 Complete Count Commission. An employee of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, he worked as a volunteer during the 2000 census and for Gov. Ed Rendell on the Governor's

**I'M HERE FROM THE CENSUS BUREAU:** Residents who do not complete their census form will be visited by an employee from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Latino Commission in support of the 2010 census.

### Everybody counts

"Everyone is impacted by the census," Bristol Colon emphasizes. "Funding that comes back to the state is dependent on the census data that is provided. The only number that is used to determine funding is the number provided by the U.S. census. Between 2010 and 2020, more than \$270 billion will come from the federal government to the Commonwealth."

Much of that aid flows directly to rural areas, Bristol Colon says, noting he has counted at least 55 programs that provide more than \$750 million annually in federal aid to rural communities. Those programs provide money for low- to moderate-income housing, water and waste disposal systems, business and industry loans, Extension services, and even rural electrification loans and loan guarantees.

The impact of a census undercount is huge, he adds.

"According to the George Washington Institute of Public Policy, the fiscal costs of a census undercount to Pennsylvania is a strong blow to the state's fiscal stability," Bristol Colon says. "In 2015, the projected fiscal loss

# 2020 census questions

1. How many people were living or staying in this house, apartment or mobile home on April 1, 2020?
2. Were there any additional people staying here on April 1, 2020, that you did not include in Question 1?
3. Is this house, apartment, or mobile home A) owned by you or someone in this household with a mortgage or loan? B) owned by you or someone in this household free and clear without a mortgage or loan C) rented or D) occupied without payment of rent?
4. What is your telephone number?
5. What is the name of each person living here?
6. What is each person's sex?
7. What is each person's age and date of birth?
8. List information about Hispanic origin of each person.
9. What is each person's race (including country of origin)?

in federal medical assistance percentage-guided programs per person missed in the 2010 census in Pennsylvania was \$1,746, the second-highest loss in the country. The projected FY2015 loss in those program funds due to each 1% undercount in the 2010 census for Pennsylvania was \$221,762,564.”

Like Denk, Bristol Colon also notes the importance of having as much congressional representation at the federal level as possible.

“Today, we have half the members of Congress that we had in the early 1900s,” he says. “If we don’t do a complete and accurate count, we could lose another congressional seat. ... Independently of who is president, we need representation in Congress. Our roads, bridges and other infrastructure are getting old. It is extra important to have our congressional delegation fighting for fair funding for Pennsylvania.”

## Census outreach

Because of the importance of getting a complete and accurate count, the commission set up a timeline that members hope will ensure the best possible result in the 2020 census.

“We have been in the education phase of the campaign, which lasted through December, working to let people know about the upcoming census,” Bristol Colon says. “In January and February, we are in the awareness phase, making sure people know they will be receiving a card in the mail from the federal government, and that they can fill it out as soon as they get

it. March and April will be the motivation phase, when we remind people how important their participation is for Pennsylvania resources and funding.”

The wrap-up — known as the reminder phase — is scheduled for May through July.

“If you haven’t responded by completing your form, someone will knock on your door during the reminder phase,” Bristol Colon says. “We will notify law enforcement authorities in each area, telling them when census employees will be knocking on doors and how those individuals will be identified.”

Background work to get a complete and accurate census count isn’t just happening at the state level. County groups are also encouraging residents to participate in the census.

Warren County Commissioner Ben Kafferlin, a member of Warren Electric Cooperative, appointed Dan Glotz, Warren County planning director, to chair the local Complete Count Committee in Warren County.

“Our primary role is to promote the census and encourage everyone to complete the census forms by April 1,” Goltz reports. “Right now, census takers are working on address verification to make sure every address or occupied building is identified. Later, after the Census Bureau has given people time to complete and return the census form, census takers will go out and visit households one on one that haven’t responded and help those people complete their forms, so we will be promoting that part of the program as well.”

As part of their promotion efforts, the Warren County group is providing posters for facilities, setting up a series of newspaper articles about the importance of being counted in the census, and letting people know how important it is to have an accurate count because of the many programs that rely on census data.

“Right now, we are encouraging everyone to complete the form,” Glotz says. “It’s short, just a few questions. It can be done online, over the phone or on paper. We want to make sure we receive our fair share of federal and state dollars, and that depends on accurate census data.” 🌞

## Privacy and security

- ▶ Your census responses can never be used against you. By law, the U.S. Census Bureau cannot release any information that identifies you individually.
- ▶ Your answers can only be used to produce statistics. The information gathered is used to help decide representation in Congress, how state legislative districts are drawn and how federal public spending is distributed.
- ▶ Your information is protected from cyberattacks, threats and leaks. The U.S. Census Bureau has a team of cybersecurity experts monitoring and protecting the technology in order to keep your data safe.
- ▶ Your answers are safe, whether you respond online, by mail or in person. The whole process is designed with layers of security to keep your data safe. Just make sure the address begins with “https” and includes a lock symbol if you are answering online.
- ▶ Protect yourself from scammers and fraud. Do not respond if you are asked for your Social Security number, bank or credit card information, money, donations, or anything on behalf of a political party. The census will never ask for this type of information. If someone visits your home for the 2020 census, check for a valid ID badge with their photo, U.S. Department of Commerce watermark and an expiration date. If you suspect fraud, call 800-923-8282 to speak with a U.S. Census Bureau representative. If the person is not with the bureau, call your local police department.

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## Whole Life Insurance.

Are you between the ages of 45 and 85\*?

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Our graded death benefit whole life insurance policy can be used to pay funeral costs, final medical expenses...or other monthly bills. You know how important it can be to help protect your family from unnecessary burdens after you pass away. Maybe your own parents or loved one did the same for you. OR, maybe they DIDN'T and you sure wish they would have!

The important thing is that, right now, you can make a decision that could help make a difficult time a little easier for your loved ones. It's a responsible, caring and affordable decision. And, right now, it's something you can do with one simple phone call.

You may have been putting off purchasing life insurance, but you don't have to wait another day. This offer is a great opportunity to help start protecting your family today.



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**COMPANION LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY**  
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Your affordable monthly rate will “lock-in” at your application age\* ...

Age	\$3,000.00 Benefit		\$5,000.00 Benefit		\$10,000.00 Benefit		\$25,000.00 Benefit	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
45-49	\$10.45	\$8.80	\$16.75	\$14.00	\$32.50	\$27.00	\$79.75	\$66.00
50-54	\$11.50	\$9.70	\$18.50	\$15.50	\$36.00	\$30.00	\$88.50	\$73.50
55-59	\$14.20	\$11.95	\$23.00	\$19.25	\$45.00	\$37.50	\$111.00	\$92.25
60-64	\$17.20	\$13.30	\$28.00	\$21.50	\$55.00	\$42.00	\$136.00	\$103.50
65-69	\$20.50	\$16.00	\$33.50	\$26.00	\$66.00	\$51.00	\$163.50	\$126.00
70-74	\$27.40	\$21.40	\$45.00	\$35.00	\$89.00	\$69.00	\$221.00	\$171.00
75-79	\$37.00	\$30.10	\$61.00	\$49.50	\$121.00	\$98.00	\$301.00	\$243.50
80-85	\$50.50	\$42.55	\$83.50	\$70.25	\$166.00	\$139.50	\$413.50	\$347.25

The rates above include a \$12 annual policy fee.

This is a solicitation of individual insurance. A licensed insurance agent/producer may contact you by telephone. **These policies contain benefits, reductions, limitations, and exclusions to include a reduction in death benefits during the first two years of policy ownership.** In NY, during the first two years, 110% of premiums will be paid. Whole Life Insurance is underwritten by United of Omaha Life Insurance Company, 3300 Mutual of Omaha Plaza, Omaha, NE 68175 which is licensed nationwide except NY. Life insurance policies issued in NY are underwritten by Companion Life Insurance Company, Hauppauge, NY 11788. Each company is responsible for its own financial and contractual obligations. Not available in all states. Benefit amounts vary by state. Policy Form ICC11L059P or state equivalent (7780L-0505 in FL, 828Y-0505 in NY).

\*Ages 50 to 75 in NY.

\*\*In FL policy is renewable until age 121.

\*\*\*All benefits paid would be less any outstanding loan.

# How electric vehicles will shape the future of driving

By Paul Wesslund

**P**redictors of future auto and energy forecasts say that by the end of this new decade, some versions of electric vehicles (EVs) could account for half of auto sales in the world. The trends that could lead to those projections include better battery technology and a rising interest in energy efficiency for buses, rideshare vehicles and even electric scooters.

EV sales jumped 75% from 2017 to 2018, according to the Alliance of Auto Manufacturers, but by the end of 2018, EVs only accounted for less than 2% of the overall vehicle market.

Auto companies see those numbers as an opportunity for growth. Around the world, they are investing \$225 billion over the next three years to develop more EVs. Industry groups report manufacturers are now offering more than 40 models of EVs, a number expected to grow to more than 200 over the next two years. An analysis by the J.P. Morgan investment firm sees traditional internal combustion engine vehicles falling from a 70% share of the market in 2025 to 40% by 2030.

## The efficiency of electricity

What's powering those predictions is the worldwide interest in the related desires for less pollution, higher efficiency and greater economy. A study by the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE) concludes that generating electricity produces less greenhouse gases than other forms of energy, especially with the increasing use of renewable power sources. The ACEEE study cites transportation as a sector of the economy that could produce the biggest gains in energy efficiency, mainly due to a shift toward EVs.

While efficiency and environmen-

## EV Market Growth

Electric vehicles (EVs) accounted for just 2% of the 2018 vehicle market, but EV sales increased by 75% from 2017 to 2018—a significant jump.

Source: Alliance of Auto Manufacturers

tal concerns provide reasons for EV growth, it also helps that they're getting cheaper. One of the biggest costs of an EV is the battery, and competition is driving down prices. The incentives for researchers and manufacturers to lower costs have reduced battery prices about 15% a year for the past 20 years. As a result, the cost of the battery has dropped from more than half the cost of an EV four years ago, to one-third today, and is expected to be down to about one-fifth the cost by 2025, according to the research firm BloombergNEF.

## Electric buses, scooters and ridesharing

Newer batteries last longer, which addresses one of the biggest roadblocks to more people buying EVs. There's a term for the concern that an EV battery will run out before you're done driving for the day — range anxiety.

But batteries can now provide a range of 200 miles before needing a recharge, well above the 40 miles a day that most people drive.

Which brings up another potential roadblock to EVs — how you charge them. One easy place to charge an EV would be in your garage overnight, and your local electric co-op can help

you with advice on how to do that. There are different ways to charge your car, from a standard outlet, which takes longer, to higher-voltage techniques that might require an upgrade your co-op can help with.

Some electric co-ops in the United States are also helping to install charging stations — another factor people will want available before buying an EV. That number is growing as well. The Department of Energy reports that in the past two years, the number of EV charging stations in the U.S. has increased from 16,000 to 22,000.

Experts expect some of the strongest growth of electric transportation to come in specialized uses that could expand to wider acceptance. Bloomberg expects that by 2040, 81% of municipal bus sales will be electric. Ridesharing services like Lyft and Uber are another expected market. More than a billion people around the world use ridesharing services and the stop-and-go nature of rideshare driving could make the greater efficiency of EVs attractive to those drivers.

As the Bloomberg study concludes, "Electrification will still take time because the global fleet changes over slowly, but once it gets rolling in the 2020s, it starts to spread to many other areas of road transport. We see a real possibility that global sales of conventional passenger cars have already passed their peak." 

*Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation's landscape.*

# Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

### Tri-County REC

22 North Main Street • P.O. Box 526

Mansfield, PA 16933

570-662-2175

Website: [www.tri-countyrec.com](http://www.tri-countyrec.com)

Email: [trico@tri-countyrec.com](mailto:trico@tri-countyrec.com)

For emergencies call:

1-800-343-2559

Secure Pay by phone:

1-888-678-2013

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**Barbara Carleton**, *Director, Financial Services*

**Bryan Berguson**, *Director, Member Services*

### Office Hours

Monday through Friday

7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Jeff Fetzer, CCC, *Local Pages Editor*

## From the President & CEO



## We want to hear from you

By Craig Eccher

WE LIVE in a device-driven world. Our smartphones, tablets, laptops and an assortment of other devices help us communicate and connect. Companies spend billions pushing out a steady drumbeat of messages and information, and we are constantly bombarded with one-way communication. But is anyone listening on the other end?

At Tri-County, we are not only listening, we are eager to hear from you. Whether you text us, respond to a survey or social media post, send an email, or simply stop by and chat in person, we thrive on your feedback.

In fact, it was members' feedback about the desire for high-speed internet that put us on the path to building a fiber-optic broadband network across our service territory. Your voice matters, and we listened. Our broadband subsidiary, Tri-Co Connections, will be connecting our first members to our fiber network in the Coudersport area this month!

Connecting with you helps us keep pace with our local communities' priorities and needs.

Because we are a cooperative, we have a different way of operating. Tri-County exists to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, the members of the co-op.

Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve. We hope you will consider us as

not only your energy provider, but also as a local business that supports our communities and powers economic development and prosperity for the people of the region.

You will notice that throughout the year, we create opportunities for you and other community members to attend co-op gatherings and events in order to hear from you. These include our annual meeting at the Troy Fair, our Member Appreciation Day at the Potter County Fair and senior citizens expos in Tioga and Potter counties.

We also conduct an annual survey to gather feedback so that we can plan for new initiatives, technical upgrades and improvements on existing co-op programs and services. Our planning is led by local members just like you, who understand the needs of the community and are looking out for the long-term interests of our region.

Your cooperative works to continually learn from our members about their priorities so that we can better serve you, because your electric co-op was built by the community, for the community. But we can only improve, adapt and effectively plan for the future if we have two-way communication.

For our co-op and communities to thrive now and in the future, we depend on hearing from you. I hope you will connect with us and let us know your perspective. We're listening. 

# Official notice of director elections

Candidates sought for Districts 3, 5 and 9

ELECTION by majority is one of the hallmarks of membership in a rural electric cooperative.

As a member, you can take an active role in the democratic process by running for a seat on Tri-County's board of directors. Or you can exercise your democratic rights by simply voting in your district's election.

This year, Tri-County will hold director elections for Districts 3, 5 and 9, currently served by directors Nicholas Reitter, Matthew S. Whiting, and Lowell W. Geiser, respectively.

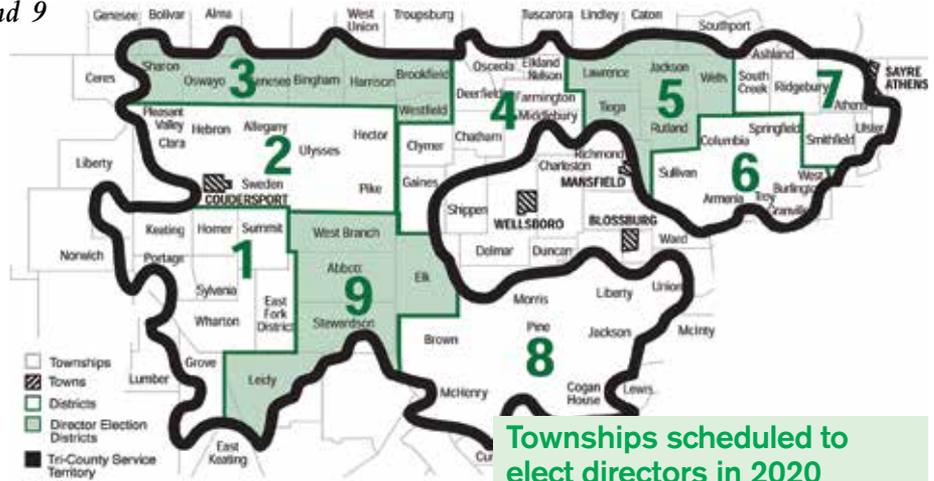
## Duties of a director

Directors are responsible for developing co-op policies and long-range plans. They voice members' concerns and make recommendations to Tri-County's management staff.

Nine directors comprise Tri-County's board. Each board member represents a specific area within the co-op's service territory, as the accompanying map illustrates.

Directors serve three-year terms. Elections take place on a rotating basis, with three of the co-op's nine districts voting each year.

Candidates must be able to attend



**Townships scheduled to elect directors in 2020**

**District 3:** Bingham, Genesee, Harrison, Oswayo and Sharon in Potter County; Brookfield and Westfield in Tioga County; Ceres in McKean County.

**District 5:** Jackson, Lawrence, Richmond, Rutland and Tioga in Tioga County; Wells in Bradford County.

**District 9:** Abbot, Stewardson and West Branch in Potter County; East Keating and Leidy in Clinton County; Elk in Tioga County.

monthly board meetings held in the co-op's Mansfield office the fourth Tuesday of each month. In addition, directors are required to attend various training courses and educational workshops, as well as state and regional director functions.

To be eligible for director candidacy, you must also meet all guidelines listed in the cooperative's bylaws, which can be viewed online by visiting [tri-countyrec.com](http://tri-countyrec.com). A copy of the bylaws can also be obtained by contacting the cooperative or by visiting the co-op's Mansfield office.

To serve on the board, you must be a member and a bona fide resident of the

district you seek to represent. You cannot be a close relative of a Tri-County employee or board member.

## Election procedures

Residential members from Districts 3, 5 or 9 interested in running for a position on the cooperative's board of directors must be nominated by a petition signed by at least 15 members residing in the candidate's respective district. Petitions and further instructions are available by contacting Rachel Hauser at the Tri-County office at 570-662-2175 or 1-800-343-2559.

Petitions must be received by Monday, March 30, 2020, in order to be considered. The election of directors will be conducted via mail-in ballots; therefore, adequate time is needed for the petitions to be received and reviewed by the cooperative's Election and Credentials Committee.

Qualified candidates will also be asked to submit a brief biography, which will be published in *Penn Lines*. 

## SmartHub: Manage your account from anywhere

SmartHub, Tri-County's online bill payment and account management program, lets you manage all aspects of your account online or with your mobile device.

### WITH SMARTHUB, YOU CAN:

- ▶ View bills online
- ▶ View billing history
- ▶ Change account information
- ▶ Receive billing notifications
- ▶ Pay your bill online using your checking account, credit or debit card
- ▶ Receive a paperless bill
- ▶ Access your account info on your smartphone or tablet
- ▶ Report power outages
- ▶ Monitor your electric use with average daily consumption graphs.



Signing up for SmartHub is easy. Visit our website, [tri-countyrec.com](http://tri-countyrec.com), click on the SmartHub icon and follow the registration instructions. The SmartHub mobile app is available for download through your app store.

## LIHEAP offers help with heating bills

If you need assistance paying your heating bills or have a heating emergency, help may be available through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

LIHEAP offers both cash grants and crisis grants. Cash grants help families pay their heating bills. If you are eligible for a cash grant, the grant will be sent directly to your utility or fuel dealer, and the payment will be credited on your bill.

Crisis grants are available to help those who have emergency situations in which they are in danger of being without heat. Those situations include: having broken heating equipment or leaking fuel lines; lack of fuel; having utility service terminated; or being in danger of not having fuel or having service terminated. Crisis grants are sent directly to the vendor or utility.

If you have a heating emergency, or for more information about LIHEAP, call your county assistance office or the toll-free LIHEAP hotline at 1-866-857-7095.

You can apply for energy assistance directly through COMPASS, the state's online health and human services benefits application site, by visiting [compass.state.pa.us](http://compass.state.pa.us).

Below are the income guidelines for acceptance into the program:

Household Size	Household Income
1	\$18,735
2	\$25,365
3	\$31,995
4	\$38,625
5	\$45,255
6	\$51,885

*Add \$6,630 for each additional member of the household*

## Deadline to apply for Youth Tour nears

HIGH SCHOOL juniors interested in competing for a chance to take part in an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., this summer have until Friday, Jan. 31, 2020, to submit an application. (If mailing the application, it must be postmarked by Jan. 28, 2020.)

The 2020 Rural Electric Youth Tour, a weeklong sightseeing excursion to the nation's capital that mixes fun and education, will take place June 21-26.

Coordinated annually by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association since 1964, Youth Tour is expected to draw more than 1,800 students to Washington, D.C., this summer. While there, students have the opportunity to explore the capital's historic sites, visit the Smithsonian, make friends with Youth Tour

students from throughout the United States, meet with federal legislators and learn about electric cooperatives and the cooperative movement.

Youth Tour is open to all high school juniors whose parents or legal guardians are members of Tri-County or who reside in a school district located within the co-op's service territory. Complete contest rules and online application form can be accessed by visiting the Tri-County website, [tri-countyrec.com](http://tri-countyrec.com), and clicking on the Youth Tour links that appear under the Member Services drop-down menu near the top of our homepage.

For more information about the Youth Tour and the 2020 agenda, call Tri-County's Mansfield office at 570-662-2175 or 1-800-343-2559. ☀



TOP VIEW: Tri-County's 2019 Youth Tour delegation checks out the Gettysburg Battlefield from atop Little Roundtop. The co-op contingent tours the historic battlefield and stays overnight in Gettysburg before heading to Washington, D.C., for the official beginning of the weeklong Rural Electric Youth Tour.

### Keep current with Tri-County on Facebook

Looking to keep up with the latest news involving your local electric cooperative? Join us on Facebook.

By "liking" Tri-County, you will receive updates about power outages, alerts about Co-op Connections Card discounts and special offers, as well as information about system projects, current events and other items of interest.

You can link to the Tri-County Facebook page from our homepage at [tri-countyrec.com](http://tri-countyrec.com).

# Steps for reporting a power outage

EVEN with the advances of our computerized outage management system, members still play a vital role in the co-op's power restoration efforts.

The first thing you want to do when you lose power is call the cooperative at 1-800-343-2559 to report the outage. You can also report outages through our SmartHub application. **Please do not report the outage through Facebook because it is not monitored at all times.**

When you call in to report an outage, the more information you are able to provide, the sooner Tri-County can

have you and your neighbors back in service.

Here are simple steps to follow when an outage occurs:

1. Never attempt to fix or move an electric line yourself. Fallen lines often remain energized. Contact with live wires can result in injury or death.

2. Check your circuit breakers and fuses. If nothing appears out of the ordinary, call the cooperative.

3. Call 1-800-343-2559 to let us know you are out of power, or report the outage through the SmartHub application.

4. If calling to report the outage, be sure to provide the telephone number of the account that is out of service.

5. Report when you lost power. Also tell us if all or only some of your lights are out, or whether your lights are flickering or dim.

6. If possible, tell the Tri-County operator whether or not your neighbors have electricity.

7. Report if you noticed downed lines, trees on electric wires, sparking transformers, flashes of light, explosions or unusual noises, broken poles, tree-blocked roadways, car accidents, etc. 

## Family-In-Need Fund

*It's common cents*

With today's higher energy costs, more and more cooperative families struggle to keep up with their energy bills.

You can help some of your neighbors in need by participating in Tri-County's Family-In-Need Fund.

This voluntary program allows you to assist members of the cooperative who have difficulties paying their electric bills. Participating in the program is inexpensive – less than \$1 a month – and helps unite the entire co-op as members help each other through difficult financial times.

### CONTRIBUTING IS EASY

The concept behind the Family-In-Need Fund is simple. You allow Tri-County to "round up" your

monthly electric bill to the next dollar amount. The difference between the round-up amount and your actual bill amount – which can be no higher than 99 cents in one month – goes into the fund.

For example, if your electric bill is \$100.32, then you would pay \$101. The extra 68 cents goes into our member assistance fund for needy families of the cooperative.

In addition to being a great way to help neighbors in need, participating in the program can also make balancing your checkbook easier.

### A FEW CENTS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Your donation of less than a dollar a month doesn't amount to a large sum of money over the course of the

year. On average a member would end up donating about \$6 annually to the program.

But your pocket change, when pooled with contributions from all of the other participating members of the co-op, can truly make a difference for a family that has fallen behind on its electric bill.

### HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP

If you would like to help your co-op neighbors, the Family-In-Need Fund is an easy way to do just that. Just fill out the form below and enclose it with your next electric bill. If you decide you no longer want to participate in the program, just call the office and ask to stop.

The success of this program depends on the generosity of members. Neighbors helping neighbors – it's the cooperative way. Please send in your form today.

### Yes! I want to become a volunteer for the Family-In-Need Fund!

*I understand that my bill will be rounded up to the next dollar amount. My total bill will include my monthly contribution to the program, and I am responsible for paying that amount. I also understand that to stop donating to the fund, all I need to do is call the office and ask to stop.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Account No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



# What Kind of Hearing Aids Do Doctors Use?

The same ones they recommend to their patients!

**Advanced Digital Hearing Aid Technology**

**BUY 1 GET 1 FREE** Reg: ~~\$399.98~~  
**Only \$199<sup>99</sup>**  
 Each When You Buy a Pair – **LIMITED TIME ONLY!**

Doctors love MDHearingAids® for the same reasons patients do. These FDA-registered, medical-grade hearing aids have the same high-tech features found in more expensive hearing aids at a fraction of the cost.

“MDHearingAids are better than expensive clinic hearing aids, which cost thousands more,” says retired physician Dr. Robert A.

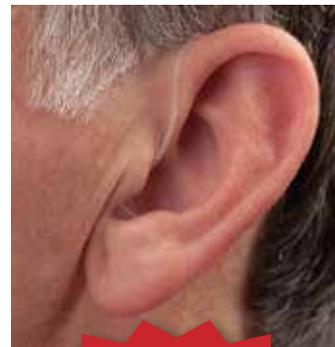
“I have had five pairs of expensive hearing aids and MDHearingAids are just as good,” adds retired neurosurgeon Dr. Brian L.

### Doctors Are Tired of Watching Their Patients Waste Money on Over-Priced Clinic Hearing Aids

MDHearingAids are the best value on the market, says Dr. Clarke:

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# Start the new year right with energy savings

By Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen

**D**ear Pat and Brad: My neighbor claims they were able to cut their energy bills nearly in half. Is that even possible? What would I have to do to get there? — *Luke*

**Dear Luke:** The story you heard is not far-fetched. We've been involved with energy efficiency programs that have achieved those kinds of results. Here are some energy-saving measures you can do right away and a plan for greater savings down the road.

## 1. Dial in savings.

**Now:** The first place to start is your home thermostat. In most homes, the largest portion of the energy bill goes toward heating and cooling. Setting back your thermostat by 7 to 10 degrees for eight hours a day can save you up to 10% a year on heating and cooling. In the winter, you could aim for 56 F at night and when no one is at home, and 68 F when you're up and around. If you're used to a warmer house, it may mean throwing on a sweater or pair of slippers.

**Later:** Make sure to adjust your air conditioning settings next summer. If you have a manual thermostat and don't always remember to adjust it, consider purchasing a smart thermostat or one that's programmable.

## 2. Set refrigerator and freezer temps for efficiency.

**Now:** Make sure your refrigerator and freezer aren't set to a colder temperature than needed. The fridge should be at 38 F to 40 F and the freezer compartment should be 5 F. If you have a separate chest freezer, set it to 0 F. Also check your water heater setting — aim for a setting of 120 F.

**Later:** Old refrigerators and freezers can use a lot of electricity. If yours



was made before 1993, you can save upward of \$65 a year with a new Energy Star® model. If you eliminate a second refrigerator or freezer, you can save even more.

## 3. Maximize the heat you've got.

**Now:** Look around each room and make sure the vents and radiators aren't blocked by furniture or other objects. If the floors feel cold even when the room is warm, put down area rugs for additional warmth. Open curtains and blinds to let the sunshine in, and close them at night.

**Later:** Enlist the help of an energy auditor or to test for duct leakage and ensure your whole system is balanced and running efficiently.

## 4. Make bright moves.

**Now:** The obvious first step is to make sure lights are turned off when they're not in use. If you're still using incandescent bulbs, you could switch the five most-used bulbs to LEDs and save about \$75 per year. LEDs last much longer and use about one-fourth as much energy.

**Later:** Over time, plan to replace all your old incandescent bulbs, and con-

sider smart lighting options that can be programmed to turn off when a room is not in use.

## 5. Eliminate drafts.

**Now:** Look carefully around your home for signs of air leaks. If you have a gap under an exterior door, you can block it with a towel or better yet, install some weather stripping. Make sure windows are sealed with caulk, and you can also seal areas around plumbing and wiring penetrations.

**Later:** Have an energy auditor do a blower door test to find air leaks.

Taking some of these steps now should provide some quick energy savings. To save even more, you'll need a plan for the "later" steps. An energy audit can help you determine a much better plan, and your electric co-op may be able to provide an audit or recommend a qualified local auditor. ☀

*This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on starting the new year right with energy saving, please visit: [www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips](http://www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips).*

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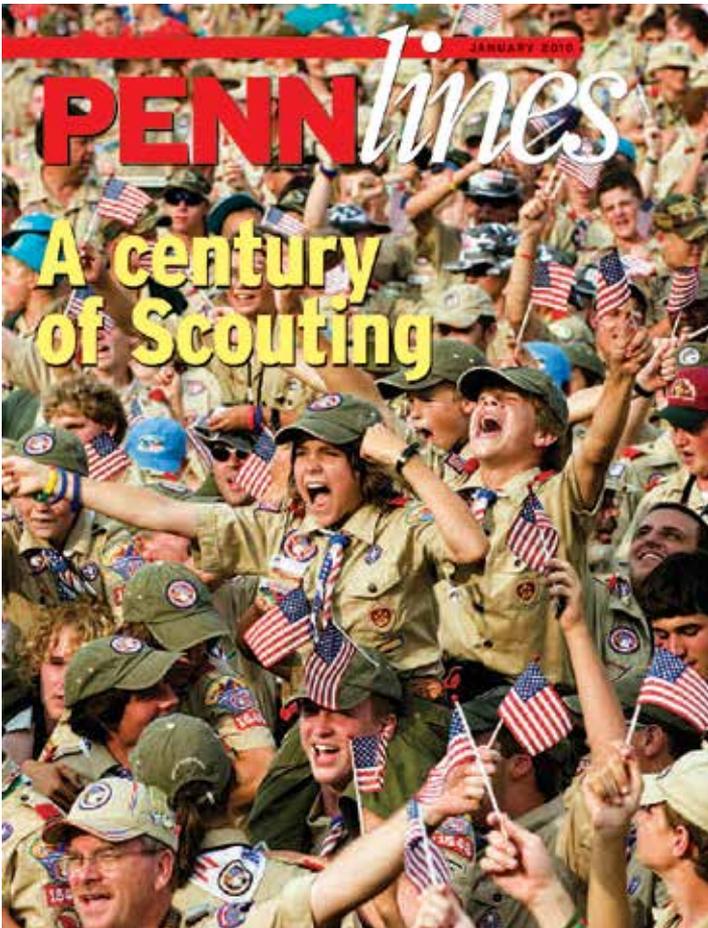
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Your Newsmagazine Through the Years



As Boy Scouts across the country gear up to celebrate 100 years of Scouting in 2010, Warren County residents take special note of the centennial celebration because it is only three years until they celebrate the same milestone.

Officially designated as the oldest existing, continuously registered, non-merged council in the United States, the Chief Cornplanter Council, based in Warren since its founding in July 1913, was the 17th council to receive a charter from the Boy Scouts of America. The first 16 either disbanded or merged with other councils.

Originally chartered as the Warren County Council, the group was renamed Chief Cornplanter Council in 1954 to honor a local Seneca chief.

Boy Scouts of America was incorporated on Feb. 8, 1910, under the laws of the District of Columbia by W.D. Boyce. In the 1920s, the organization's National Executive Board authorized development of a program for younger boys, which eventually became the Cub Scout program.

2010



2000

Ice forms on the lower falls at Campbell Run, a tributary that feeds into the Pine Creek Gorge at the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon in Tioga County.



1990

Small gas stations across the state are closing after the passage of federal and state legislation to regulate and clean up underground gasoline tanks.



1980

*Penn Lines* contemplates how happy the new year will be as a recession looms, prices are skyrocketing and shortages are commonplace.



1970

Patricia Holliday, 21, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Archie Holliday, West Monterey, Clarion County, is crowned "Miss Pennsylvania Rural Electrification."

# 10 Quick Tips to Avoid High Winter Bills

Looking to lower your bills this winter? Use the 10 tips below to conserve energy.



Seal air leaks and insulate well to prevent heat from escaping and cold air from entering your home.



Reduce waste heat by installing a programmable thermostat.



Turn off lights when not in use.



Lower your water heater temperature. The Dept. of Energy recommends using the warm setting (120 degrees) during fall and winter months.



Unplug electronics like kitchen appliances and TVs when you're away.



Open blinds and curtains during the day to allow sunlight in to warm your home.



Close blinds and curtains at night to keep cold, drafty air out.



Use power strips for multiple appliances, and turn off the main switch when you're away from home.



Wash clothes in cold water, and use cold-water detergent whenever possible.



Replace incandescent light bulbs with LEDs, which use at least 75 percent less energy.

# Easing out of the holidays

By Janette Hess

In the post-holiday season, stovetop casseroles are just the thing to wean us from overly abundant buffets and multi-course meals. When these casseroles are packed with interesting flavors, the transition is all the easier.

Jambalaya with Sausage and Ham is a southern-inspired treat perfect for winter evenings, because the andouille sausage and Cajun seasonings impart heat beyond the actual pan temperature. Asian-inspired Chicken and Rice offers umami, that savory essence present in soy sauce. Spanish-style Stovetop Paella features several tasty specialty ingredients, most notably Bomba rice and salami-style chorizo. If not available in local gourmet shops, these items may be ordered online.



A trained journalist, **Janette Hess** focuses her writing on interesting people and interesting foods. She is a Master Food Volunteer with her local extension service and enjoys collecting, testing and sharing recipes.

Once assembled, these rice-centric casseroles simmer undisturbed on the stovetop until dinner. What a January bonus! 🍁

## Jambalaya with Sausage and Ham

- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 8 ounces fully-cooked andouille sausage, sliced
- 8 ounces smoked ham, diced
- 1 cup diced yellow onion
- 1/2 cup diced celery
- 1/2 cup diced bell pepper
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 generous cup long-grain white rice
- 1 14 1/2-ounce can lower-sodium chicken broth
- 1 14 1/2-ounce can petite-diced tomatoes with juice
- 1/2 teaspoon creole seasoning
- 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme

In large, straight-sided skillet or pot, heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium heat. Add sausage slices. Cook and stir until sausage is lightly browned on edges. Remove sausage from skillet and combine with ham; set aside. Add remaining oil to hot pan, along with onion, celery and bell pepper. Sauté 5 minutes, or until vegetables start to soften. Add garlic, reduce heat and sauté 1 minute longer. Add reserved meats to pan, along with rice, broth, tomatoes and seasonings. Bring to boil. Cover and reduce heat. Simmer for 20 to 25 minutes, or until rice is soft and most liquid has been absorbed. Serve with hot sauce, if desired. Makes 6 servings.

## Asian-inspired Chicken and Rice

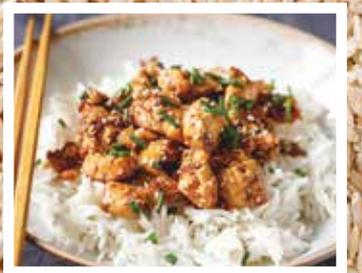
- 1 1/2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed
- 5 tablespoons soy sauce, divided
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 3/4 cup unsalted, dry-roasted peanuts
- 1 1/2 tablespoons peanut oil, divided
- 2 1/4 cups unsalted chicken stock
- 2 teaspoons Asian garlic-chili sauce, plus more for serving, if desired
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 1/2 cups converted white rice
- 3 to 4 green onions, sliced

Place chicken in bowl with 2 tablespoons soy sauce and 1 tablespoon rice vinegar. While chicken is marinating, heat 1/2 tablespoon oil in large, straight-sided skillet or pot. Add peanuts. Sauté until peanuts just begin to brown. Quickly transfer out of skillet and set aside. Add remaining oil to skillet. Blot thighs and add to hot oil. Cook until just beginning to brown; flip over and repeat. Whisk together stock, garlic-chili sauce, sugar and remaining soy sauce. Add rice and stock mixture to skillet. Cover and simmer for 20 to 25 minutes, or until liquid is absorbed. Remove from heat and top with peanuts and sliced onion. Makes 6 servings.

## Stovetop Paella

- 1 3/4 to 2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed
- 1/2 teaspoon saffron threads
- 3 1/4 cups unsalted chicken stock
- 4 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 red pepper, roasted, peeled and diced
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 1 large tomato, halved
- 4 ounces Spanish (salami-style) chorizo, cut into small pieces
- 1 1/4 cups Spanish Bomba rice
- 1 1/2 teaspoons smoked paprika
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt, plus extra for seasoning chicken

Season chicken with salt and set aside. In hot skillet, toast saffron threads until slightly fragrant. Place threads on small piece of parchment paper; fold over and crush. Place chicken stock in saucepan, add saffron and bring to low simmer. In large, straight-sided skillet, heat 3 tablespoons olive oil over medium to medium-high heat. Brown chicken in hot oil before removing from pan and setting aside. Add remaining 1 tablespoon oil to pan; add red pepper and onion. Sauté for approximately 5 minutes, or until vegetables are softened. Coarsely grate tomato pulp into vegetable mixture; discard skin. Stir in chorizo, rice, paprika and garlic powder. Nestle chicken thighs into rice mixture. Add hot stock and 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt. Simmer uncovered until rice is soft and liquid is absorbed, about 25 to 30 minutes. Allow paella to rest at least 5 minutes before serving. Makes 6 to 8 servings.





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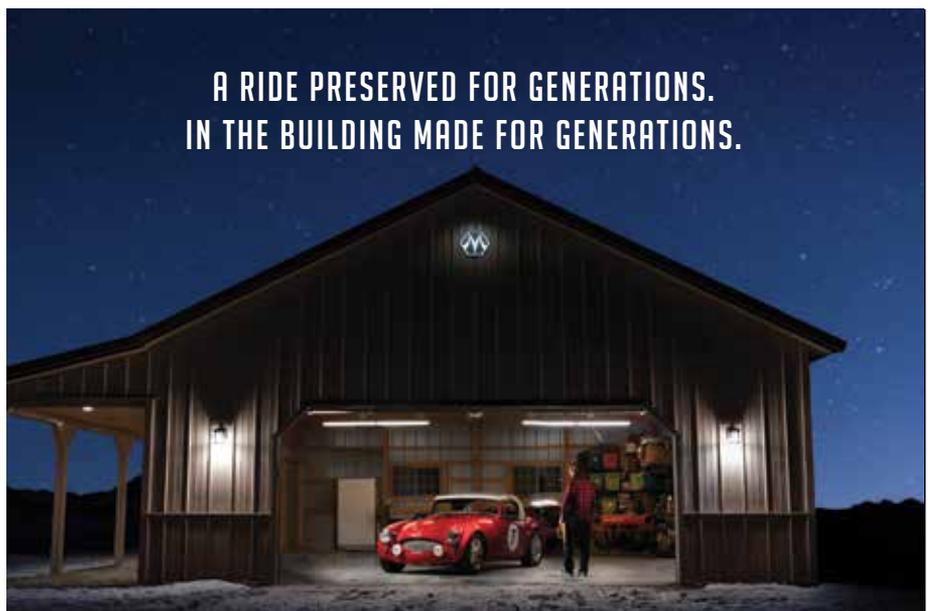
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## Attention High School Seniors

At least five \$1,000 Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association Scholarships in Memory of William F. Matson are available for the 2020-21 college year.

### Who is eligible?

The Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association Scholarship Trust Fund in Memory of William F. Matson is offering scholarships to sons and daughters of members and employees of electric cooperatives in Pennsylvania and New Jersey who belong to the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association. Applicants must currently be high school seniors and be able to furnish necessary aptitude test scores and financial need information. At least five \$1,000, one-time scholarships will be awarded.

### Important dates to remember

All applications and required information must be received no later than May 6, 2020. Finalists will be sent a follow-up questionnaire that must be returned by June 12, 2020. Scholarship awards will be announced at the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association Summer Meeting in July 2020.

### How to apply

To receive an application, simply fill out and mail the accompanying coupon or contact your local electric cooperative office. If you would like to receive the application via email, please include your email address or visit our website, [www.prea.com](http://www.prea.com), for more information.

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To request a scholarship application, mail coupon to:

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Or visit [www.prea.com/prea-scholarship-trust-fund-memory-william-f-matson](http://www.prea.com/prea-scholarship-trust-fund-memory-william-f-matson)

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# Showcasing Ag opportunities

## *Industry on display at Pennsylvania Farm Show*

**A**griculture holds a special place in the Commonwealth, and there's no place like the Pennsylvania Farm Show to learn more about it. The 104th Farm Show, scheduled for Jan. 4 – 11 in Harrisburg, Pa., is expected to draw around a half-million attendees.

Sure, those 500,000 people will be entertained (think about square-dancing tractors or politicians trying to milk a reluctant cow), but even more importantly, they will be exposed to the diversity of agriculture today.

“The Farm Show theme this year is ‘Imagine the Opportunities,’ and we are inviting visitors to envision themselves as part of agriculture’s exciting future,” says Shannon Powers, spokesperson for the Pennsylvania

By Kathy Hackleman  
Senior Editor/Writer

Department of Agriculture.

“For young people dreaming of what they want to do, or older people thinking about changing jobs, there are endless opportunities at the Farm Show to meet people who work with animals, people who navigate drones and precision equipment to improve crop yield, people who protect the environment through conservation, people who raise food in newer, safer ways,” Powers says.

### **Ag on display**

In addition, there are diverse exhibits and competitions — about 12,000 in all — that cover the entire breadth of agriculture.

“Basically, it is eight days and a

**THIS IS HOW YOU MILK A COW:** Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding, a member of Adams Electric Cooperative, participates in the “Celebrity Cow-Milking Contest” at the 2019 Pennsylvania Farm Show. Redding, a dairy farmer, led his team to victory with 1.5 pounds of milk.

million square feet of opportunities to learn about agriculture,” Powers says. “Agriculture in Pennsylvania generates \$136 billion for our economy every year. Pennsylvania has 58,000 farms and 7.6 million acres of farmland. Agriculture is tremendously important to our communities and our economy.”

Katie Miller is a perfect example of an exhibitor who is involved in agriculture on a day-to-day basis. The 14-year-old daughter of Timothy and Janine Miller, members of Gettysburg-based Adams Electric Cooperative, Katie will be showing three sheep

and one pig in the 2020 Farm Show. Her first Farm Show was in 2017.

A high school freshman with a straight-A average, Katie has already been on the show circuit for a decade, and regularly shows livestock across Pennsylvania, Virginia, New York, Delaware, and Kentucky.

“I was 4 when Cody, my older brother, was showing goats at the Shippenburg Fair, and I knew that’s what I wanted to do,” Katie remembers. “I started showing breeding does and bucks soon after that, and then I joined 4-H when I was 8 and began showing through 4-H.”

Her family now has 43 goats, 13 sheep and one pig, and she’s planning to expand into showing cattle. Every day, Katie spends two to three hours in the barn, helping her parents feed and water the livestock; however, she is fully responsible for the care of her show animals, which she selects based on specific qualities valued by judges.

Katie plans a career as a veterinar-

ian with a focus on large and small animals.

## Food for thought

While many people think of farm animals like Katie’s when they hear the words “Farm Show,” the event is also famous for offering something for anyone who eats — in other words, everyone.

“There are demonstrations on stages throughout the venue, everything from how to cut up your own meat to how to prepare all kinds of artisan dishes for your family and use local products while doing it,” Powers says. “People can learn where their food comes from, how to use a new product, how to raise food for your own pleasure, how to generate income from your backyard.”

Maple syrup producers Jim and Dora Tice, members of Mansfield-based Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative, represent that type of exhibitor. Now retired, they spend the late winter/early spring tapping maple trees — their own and some of their



PENNSYLVANIA FARM SHOW

**A FAMILY AFFAIR:** Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative member Pam Foors displays prize-winning sticky buns, made by her daughter, Courtney, left, and her own sticky buns, right, which took fifth place in the annual baking contest at the 2019 Pennsylvania Farm Show.



PENNSYLVANIA FARM SHOW

**BEST OF SHOW:** Troy Lehman, left, co-owner along with Ben Kishbaugh of Big Hill Ciderworks, accepts the Secretary Redding Cup at the 2019 Pennsylvania Farm Show from Mary Bigham, representing the Pennsylvania Cider Festival, Pennsylvania Cider Guild and Cider Culture. Lehman and Kishbaugh, a member of Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative, won the “Best of Show” competition with their Manchurian cider in both the 2019 and 2018 hard cider competitions.

neighbors’ trees as well.

They sell syrup at festivals throughout the year, but the Farm Show provides their largest source of potential customers, and it’s also a time to spend with friends as they coordinate the set-up, competition, educational area, and volunteer schedule for two booths for syrup producers.

“All of the maple people are ‘sweet’ people,” Dora Tice likes to say. “The Farm Show is the only time I ever see some of them, so I look forward to that.”

When they first started coming to the Farm Show, the Tices just wanted to sell syrup. Through the years, they have taken on more responsibilities as coordinators and also regularly take home the top prize in a number of categories, including syrup in different sizes and multiple colors, maple cream, maple candy, coated candy, maple crum (granulated maple sugar), and value-added products (gift baskets, etc.).

As for the secret to a winning entry, Dora says the secret is “just keep trying.” She explains the couple entered every possible contest their first year and won only one blue ribbon (for

“other maple candy”), but instead of being discouraged, they took to heart suggestions from other friendly competitors and came roaring back to win multiple first-place ribbons and plaques the following years, including several “best syrup of the show” ribbons.

### Great PA Bake Off

Speaking of yummy things to eat, the four Foor women (Pam and her adult daughters Courtney, Alexis, and Mad-die), members of Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative, recently counted their combined fair/Farm Show ribbons and came up just three shy of 5,000 — all for entries in various baking categories.

To enter the Farm Show’s apple pie,

**A WINNER:** Heidi Barkley, daughter of Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative members Brian and Melanie Barkley, center, competes in the Master Showmanship competition at the 2019 Pennsylvania Farm Show. Named the winner in the contest that requires entrants to show multiple types of animals, Barkley has the use of a 20-foot trailer for one year and her name has been engraved on a plaque that will remain at the Farm Show Complex indefinitely.



KATIE MILLER

**A VETERAN AT 14:** Katie Miller, daughter of Adams Electric Cooperative members Timothy and Janine Miller, holds Mariah, who won the overall grand champion commercial doe at the JABGA Regional Show in West Virginia in June 2019. Miller has shown sheep and goats at the Pennsylvania Farm Show for the past three years and this year is adding a pig.

chocolate cake, and angel food cake categories, a baker must win at a local fair and then use the same recipe at the Harrisburg event. Dozens of other baking entries are “open class,” mean-

ing anyone can enter.

The family’s top baker is proud that she has passed her talent to her daughters.

“They all three are very good cooks and they like to bake,” she says, adding that she expects her nearly 1-year-old granddaughter will be the next family member to take up the spatula.

The women use the same basic recipe with only minor adjustments for most of the categories they repeat from year to year. That is the case for the sticky bun category, and it was Courtney who took home the blue ribbon in 2019 with an unexpected addition of pecan bourbon liqueur.

Pam Foor says she doesn’t envy the contest judges, as selecting the top entrant is hard work.

“If you win a category, you can be a judge in that category the following year,” she notes. “That’s how I got to judge chocolate cakes one year. I got to see what the judges are looking for and see the different flavors and tastes that people put together.”



PENNSYLVANIA FARM SHOW



**PRINCESS AT WORK:** Brooke Emery, daughter of Valley Rural Electric Cooperative members Bill and Lisa Emery, center, meets with other agriculture royalty at the PA Preferred Reception at the 2019 Pennsylvania Farm Show. Emery served as both the Huntingdon County Dairy Princess and Pennsylvania State Dairy Princess last year.

In the baking contest, each judge is responsible for a table full of entries. That judge ranks the entries on his or her table, then chooses three to advance to the next round. All of the judges then taste each of the finalists' entries before naming the winners. In order that they are not competing in the first round against each other, the Foors submit an entry, wait until that table is full of entries, then submit another entry, and so on until all of their entries are on different tables.

Farm Show week is not a relaxing one for the women as the baking contests are held on different days. They travel back and forth to Bedford County several times during the week, baking at home and driving the entries to Harrisburg. Most items with the exception of sticky buns can be prepared the evening before with multiple

entries made if the first attempt isn't deemed "contest-worthy." However, on "sticky bun-baking day," Pam is up at 3:30 a.m. to complete her entry. Her daughters follow in line until all family members who are competing that year are done. Then it's off to Harrisburg.

"All of us have (the sticky bun) recipe down so it's pretty good the first time we make it," Pam says. "The trick is to use fresh ingredients and realize that if we run out of time, we just have to go with what we have."

### Ag future

While most of the Farm Show entries, like those of Katie Miller, the Tices and the Foors, would still be considered "traditional," event organizers have an eye on how they can showcase the future of agriculture, as well as its past and present.

"This year, one of the demonstrations on the *Lancaster Farming* stage will feature an ag drone project," Powers says. "Kids will be able to fly a drone through a target hoop and drop a payload into a bucket on the other side. They can try the technology

that is now being used in innovative ways on farms. ... Drones are used to provide custom plans for farmers, how they can target irrigation, pest control, herbicide and soil amendments for their specific farm."

Officials say many of the anticipated 75,000 job openings in the agriculture/food industry in the next decade are expected to be filled by employees who did not grow up on a farm. Perhaps, Powers says, they attended a Farm Show as a child — or as an adult — and learned how massive and innovative the agriculture industry is in Pennsylvania and decided to explore the possibilities.

"We need all kinds of people to imagine themselves in agriculture," Powers said. "There are so many amazing careers in agriculture, from hands-on caring for animals to working for a lab developing new techniques to make food safer or health better to putting technology to use in innovative new ways."

The 2020 Pennsylvania Farm Show is the place to learn more about those amazing careers, and have some fun while doing it. 🌞

# Making space

By Mitchell Kyd

“News from the Path Valley Hotel”

Have you ever re-gifted gift boxes and found old pine needles inside? We call that a bonus gift at our house, and it's a reminder why January is a prime month for making space. There are only so many days after the holidays that you can reasonably keep your newest treasures on display under a crispy Douglas fir, no matter how artfully arranged. When holiday decor turns to tinder, it's time to make permanent space for Santa's most recent deliveries.

That's easier said than done for anyone who hasn't grown up under the tutelage of a master stower as I did. My mom knew how to integrate, consolidate and incorporate items into a household like the last woman standing in a reality show and yet continued to keep a clean and tidy home. That's an important talent if you're fortunate to have an abundant life filled with family and friends who love gift-giving. It's a critical skill if you also really appreciate those gifts and like hanging on to your stuff.

If you're a collector of anything, you know how stuffing begins. You latch onto a little item that calls your name, maybe a sock monkey or bone china elephant. It could be an old military mess kit or wicker fishing creel. Someone who loves you sees that you like it and buys another for your birthday. Suddenly gift-giving gets really easy. Every occasion becomes an opportunity to turn your small pleasure into a seeming obsession. Faster than you can change the channel on an episode of *Hoarders*, pachyderms are parading across all your



horizontal surfaces or you've amassed enough metal dinnerware to host a late supper for an entire Army battalion. The next thing you know, you are stuffing your stuff everywhere.

You might think that the cubic footage where you had been storing the holiday gifts you gave would have opened up by New Year's and be equal to the space you need in a quid-pro-quo kind of way. Nope. That's not how it works. (I think that's due in part to the fact most of us don't use our car trunks and clothes hampers as storage units — full time.) By January, the jig is up. There is no more finding space; you have to make it.

There's an upside. All that dresser-drawer diving and closet excavating often turns up some wonderful finds, remnants of previous stuffing expeditions when you had to search and rescue space for other goodies. I'm happy to report I've been rewarded with some treasures like those in *Christmas Vacation*, the holiday classic where Clark Griswold unearths a cache of old home

movies while stranded in his attic.

My latest, favorite find is my mother's high school yearbook. It's been buried since I closed my parents' farm eight years ago. Anyone who says there's no such thing as a time machine has never peered in on the freeze-framed life of the kid who grew up to be her mother.

I was astounded by her list of school activities and proud it was my mom who had been voted most likely to succeed. The editor's comments included jokes about her would-be suitors, although her sweetheart was my dad, even then. I caught a glimpse of the authentic her smiling in her band uniform and posing with her best friend Slim. They both had that subtle, Mona Lisa grin that said they laughed a lot, shared delicious secrets and had broken a few hearts along the way. It made me sad I had never known that girl. The book was a magical discovery just the same and not a bad return on the investment of simply making space.

Making space in January? Employ those famous boxes labeled: *Keep*, *Trash* and *Donate*. Turn off your phone, put on some music and simply enjoy the adventure. And whatever you do, don't tell *anyone* if you've started collecting old gas pumps, surfboards or phone booths! 🌟



**YVONNE BUTTS-MITCHELL** writes and blogs ([deadmousediaries.com](http://deadmousediaries.com)) under the pen name Mitchell Kyd. The “News from the Path Valley Hotel” series was inspired by her encounters with contractors, critters and assorted creepy crawlies while rehabbing her family cabin after its 17-year stint as a giant closet.

**Keeping Current**

(continued from page 6)

will boost interest in the sport while providing reasonable protections for farmers and landowners. In addition to adding Sunday hunting, the bill also gives Pennsylvania Game Commission officers the authority to investigate private land trespassing complaints and enforce trespassing violations as a primary offense.

**Flu expected to hit hard this season**

In mid-December, the Pennsylvania Department of Health reported the flu is widespread across the state. As of Nov. 30, there had been 2,667 laboratory-confirmed cases of flu with five deaths statewide.

As flu season intensifies, Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine urged residents to get their flu vaccine if they have not already done so.

Influenza is a contagious disease caused by the influenza virus. It may include the following symptoms: fever, headache, tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, nasal congestion and body aches.

Health officials recommend that everyone 6 years of age and older get a flu vaccine each year. It takes about two weeks for the antibodies from the vaccine to develop protection against infection.

In addition to getting vaccinated, Pennsylvanians are encouraged to practice healthy habits such as covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, frequently washing your hands during flu season, and remembering to disinfect commonly touched objects such as door knobs, light switches, countertops, cellphones, and computers.

If you do become sick with the flu, it is important to stay home and rest. If you are at risk for developing serious

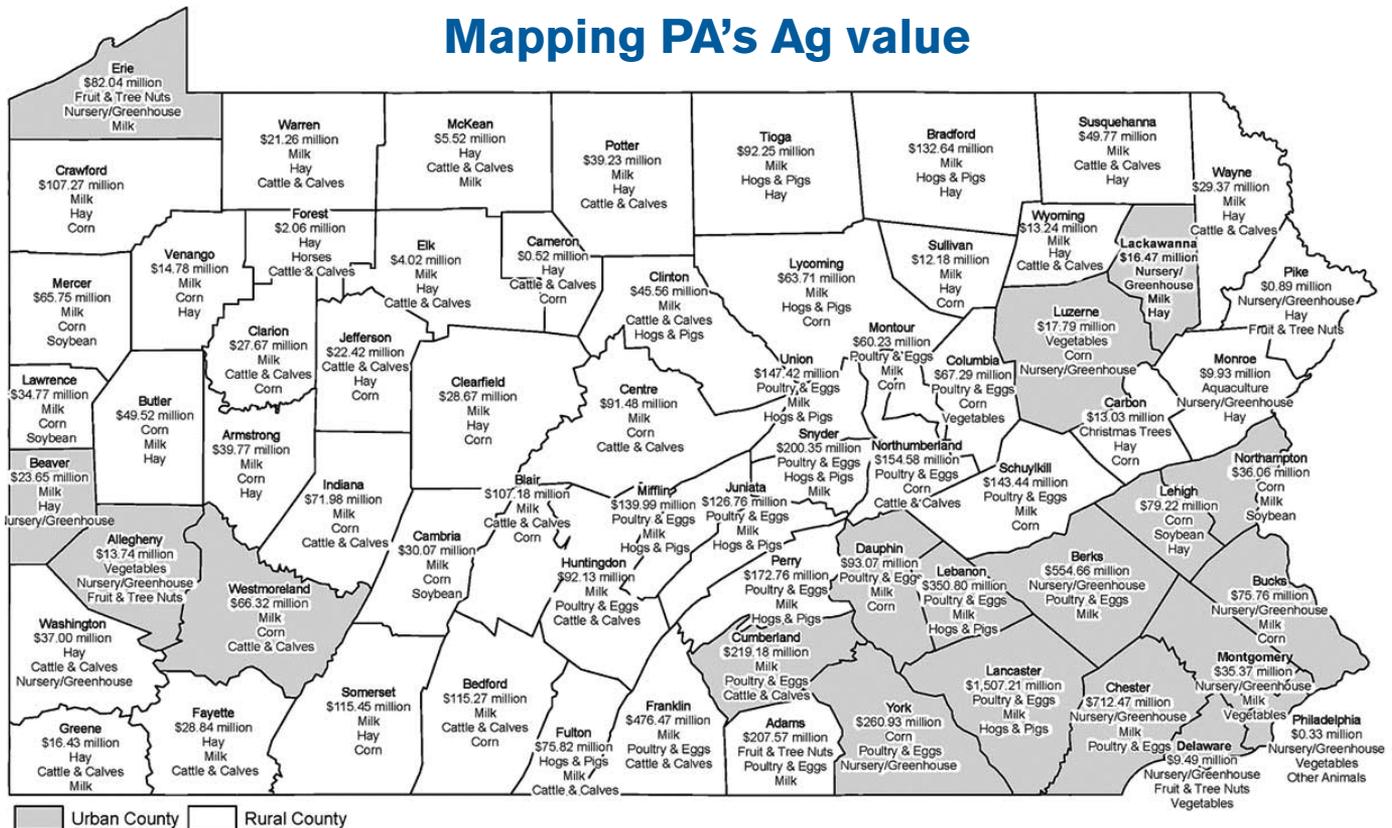
complications from the flu, or feel extremely ill, you should see a medical professional immediately.

**Pennsylvania Turnpike promotes safe driving**

The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC), the Indiana Toll Road and the Ohio Turnpike have jointly launched a new campaign focused on addressing challenges associated with distracted driving. The “What Message are You Sending” video campaign showcases the impacts a driver’s poor decisions can have on those around them.

Agency officials note distracted driving can take many forms, but the most common usually involves a motorist using their cellphone while driving. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates more than 3,000 people were killed by distracted driving in the United States in 2017.

**Mapping PA’s Ag value**



**TOP VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL SALES:** According to a map recently released by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania using data from the 2017 Census of Agriculture, the top three commodity groups in Pennsylvania in 2017 were: milk from cows, \$1.98 billion; poultry and eggs, \$1.68 billion; and nursery/greenhouse, \$1.02 billion. Total value of commodity sales in Pennsylvania in 2017 was \$7.76 billion. The map shows the top three commodity groups with the highest reported value of sales in each county, and includes only commodities with reported values (in some counties, commodities were not reported due to confidentiality rules). The dollar figures represent each county’s total value of sales of agricultural products.

# Classified Advertisements

<b>ISSUE MONTH</b>	<b>AD DEADLINE</b>
March 2020	January 17
April 2020	February 18
May 2020	March 17

**Penn Lines** classified advertisements reach nearly 166,000 rural Pennsylvania households! Please note ads must be received by the due date to be included in the requested issue month. Ads received beyond the due date will run in the next available issue. Written notice of changes and cancellations must be received 30 days prior to the issue month. Classified ads will not be accepted by phone, fax or email. For more information please contact Michelle M. Smith at 717-233-5704.

## 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 FREE heading options.

### FREE Headings:

- Around the House
- Business Opportunities
- Employment Opportunities
- Gift & Craft Ideas
- Livestock & Pets
- Miscellaneous
- Motor Vehicles & Boats
- Nursery & Garden
- Real Estate
- Recipes & Food
- Tools & Equipment
- Vacations & Campsites
- Wanted to Buy

## 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.

### Ad in all CAPITAL letters:

Add 20 percent to total cost.

### SPECIAL Headings:

\$5 for co-op members, \$10 for non-members. Fee applies to any heading not listed under "FREE Headings", even if the 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 or \$10 for all consecutive insertions.

### PAYMENT:

**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

## "AA" ROOFING

EXPERTS IN HARD-TO-FIND LEAKS! Roof repairs – all types. House-barn roofs painted. Slate work – chimney repairs. Southwestern PA for over 40 years. Speedy service! 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.

SPECIAL OFFER – BOTH COOKBOOKS FOR \$12. "Country Cooking" – \$5, including postage. "Recipes Remembered" – \$7, including postage. Both of these cookbooks are a collection of recipes from men and women of the electric co-ops of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Payable to: Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108. Write Attention: Cookbooks.

## BUILDING SUPPLIES

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.

STEEL ROOFING AND SIDING. Over 25 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 northwestern Pennsylvania. 814-398-4052.

## BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

TOOL AND KNIFE SHARPENING small engine repair shop on 1+ acre lot with 3,100 sq. ft. building in York County on major road. All tools included. 717-577-4708.

## CONSULTING FORESTRY SERVICES

NOLL'S FORESTRY SERVICES. Timber Sales, Appraisals, Forest Management Plans, Forest Improvement Work, Wildlife Habitat Management. FREE Timber Land Recommendations. 30 years experience. Visit [www.nollsforestryservices.com](http://www.nollsforestryservices.com). Call Ron, 724-422-5525.

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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 814-448-2405.

## CRANE SERVICE

NEED A LIFT? Crane service for all your lifting needs. Experienced, fully insured, Owner-operated and OSHA-certified. Precision Crane LLC, Linesville, Pa. 814-282-9133.

## GIFT & CRAFT IDEAS

SPECIAL OFFER – BOTH COOKBOOKS FOR \$12. "Country Cooking" – \$5, including postage. "Recipes Remembered" – \$7, including postage. Both of these cookbooks are a collection of recipes from men and women of the electric co-ops 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.

## HUNTING LEASES

WANTED HUNTING LAND – Now taking smaller tracts. Call for evaluation of your property. Professionally managed hunting leases. Yearly income. \$1,000,000 liability insurance. Know who is on your property. [www.nollsforestryservices.com](http://www.nollsforestryservices.com). Call Ron, 724-422-5525.

## INCOME PROPERTY

CABIN COLONY – CAMPGROUND – YOGA RESORT – FAMILY RETREAT – LODGE & Hunting Club - Northeast Pa. 25-acre income property with endless potential. \$50,000 - \$150,000 6-month seasonal income. \$50,000 - \$100,000 annual gas royalties. 200 ft. lakefront. One 2-story main lodge with stone laid fireplaces. One 3-bedroom cottage. One 6-bedroom bunkhouse. One 1-bedroom caretaker's bungalow. Eight rustic cabins with woodstoves. 60+ full-service water, electric, sewer RV campsites and huge recreation hall, kitchen, weight room, fitness center. Private mountaintop location only 5 minutes away from 70,000-acre game land parks. For sale by owner – only \$1.2 million – turn-key cash buyer/partners or owner financing with 50% down. Call 570-730-1957.

## LAWN & GARDEN EQUIPMENT

HARRINGTONS EQUIPMENT COMPANY, 475 Orchard Rd., Fairfield, PA 17320. 717-642-6001 or 410-756-2506. Lawn & Garden equipment, Sales – Service – Parts. [www.HarringtonsEquipment.com](http://www.HarringtonsEquipment.com).

## 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.

# Classified Advertisements

## POWDER COATING

ALMOST ANYTHING METAL can be powder coated: auto parts, lawn furniture, wheels, etc. Restores, protects, preserves. 1,200-degree manifold coating. Arthurs Powder Coating, 263 Sexton Road, Indiana, PA 15701. 724-349-3770.

## REAL ESTATE

VIRGINIA'S EASTERN SHORE. Fishermen and beach lover's paradise. Access Chesapeake Bay or Atlantic Ocean within minutes. Waterside Village 3/4 acre homesites near marina from \$18,000 with storage for RV and boat. Beach access nearby. Clearview 1.8-acre waterfront on scenic cove \$119,900. Many free boat ramps within minutes. Low, low taxes. Kirkwoodontheshore.com. 757-678-7631.

THINKING OF SELLING or want a free market analysis of your property? We specialize in farms, land and getaways. Give Juniata Realty a call at 814-652-2234.

COMMERCIAL BUILDING FOR LEASE. 2,400 sq. ft., like new in Somerset County, 6108 Lincoln Highway, Stoystown, Pa., adjacent to Flight 93 entrance, paved parking, code compliant, for more information call 814-233-0351.

## RECIPES & FOOD

SPECIAL OFFER – BOTH COOKBOOKS FOR \$12. "Country Cooking" – \$5, including postage. "Recipes Remembered" – \$7, including postage. Both of these cookbooks are a collection of recipes from men and women of the electric co-ops of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Payable to: Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108. Write Attention: Cookbooks.

## SHAKLEE

FREE SAMPLE Shaklee's Energy Tea. Combination red, green and white teas that are natural, delicious, refreshing, safe. For sample or more information on tea or other Shaklee Nutrition/Weight Loss Products: 800-403-3381 or sbarton.myshaklee.com.

## TRACTOR PARTS – REPAIR/RESTORATION

ARTHURS TRACTORS, specializing in vintage Ford tractors, 30 years experience, online parts catalog/prices, Indiana, Pa. 15701. Contact us at 877-254-FORD (3673) or www.arthurstractors.com.

## VACATIONS & CAMPSITES

NEW SMYRNA BEACH, Fla., condo rental. Two bedrooms, two baths, pool. 200 yards from beach. Not available January - March. \$650 per week or \$2,400 per month. 814-979-8058 or 814-635-4020.

## WANTED – OLD BARNs

WE BUY QUALIFIED OLD BARNs. We also dismantle old sheds, warehouses, and outbuildings. Call 814-766-9925.

## WANTED TO BUY

BUYING VINTAGE HONDA motorcycles. 1960-1980. XR-75, CT70, ST90, SL70, Z50, CL70, CT90, S90 - all types big and small. Parts collections, parts bikes, non-running, rough, all considered. 724-972-8701.

See what a difference it makes...

**PENN**lines

## Attention Past Rural Electric Youth Tour Students

At least two \$1,000 scholarships in memory of Jody Loudenslager are available through the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association Scholarship Trust Fund in Memory of William F. Matson for the 2020-21 college year.

### Who is eligible?

The scholarship is available to any college-bound or college student who participated in the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association (PREA) Youth Tour. Applicants need to furnish necessary aptitude test scores, GPA and financial need information.

### Dates to remember

All applications and required information must be received no later than May 6, 2020. Finalists will be sent a follow-up questionnaire that must be returned by June 12, 2020. Scholarship awards will be announced at the PREA Summer Meeting in July 2020.

### How to apply

To receive an application, simply fill out and mail the accompanying coupon to: Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108-1266. If you would like to receive the application via email, please include your email address or visit our website, [www.prea.com/jody-loudenslager-memorial-scholarship](http://www.prea.com/jody-loudenslager-memorial-scholarship), for more information.



Jody Loudenslager, a 1995 Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association Youth Tour student from Trout Run, Pa., was among the 230 passengers killed July 17, 1996, when TWA Flight 800 exploded shortly after take-off from New York. Since Jody was committed to higher education, the scholarship was created to honor her and help Youth Tour participants with college costs.

fill out and mail this coupon -----

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Name of your electric cooperative \_\_\_\_\_

Year on Youth Tour \_\_\_\_\_

# Smart security options for your home

By Maria Kanevsky

Many consumers are beginning to realize the convenience and comfort that smart home technologies provide. Smart home devices are different than traditional devices because they are connected to the internet and have the potential to communicate with other electronics. A smarter home can save time and reduce stress, especially with a smart home assistant that can integrate all the devices together.

One reason many people are deciding to make their homes smarter is because of safety. Homeowners want peace of mind when it comes to the protection of their family.

Most smart home security options are remotely accessible through smartphone apps. Whether at work or on vacation, you can keep an eye on your home at any time.

## Smart security cameras

Security cameras are one of the basics of technology used to monitor your home. Many models are weatherproof, making them suitable for indoor or outdoor use. Wireless cameras are a great option because they allow for placement anywhere inside or outside the home, but wired versions are less expensive. There are many smart security cameras available on the market that offer a variety of features like free cloud storage, built-in spotlights or motion-activated sensors.

Camera prices vary based on features and capabilities.

## Smart doorbells

If you want to see who's at your front door at any time, a smart doorbell can do just that. Many smart door-



**SECURITY CAMERA:** The Ring Spotlight Camera is one of the basics of technology used to monitor your home. Many models are weatherproof, making them suitable for indoor or outdoor use.

bells can capture footage up to a few hours or can keep footage just before a disturbance was detected. Smart doorbells are similar to smart security cameras, but instead are built into the doorbell instead of a separate camera. A key difference is that a smart camera captures footage all the time, while the smart doorbell only captures footage when it detects motion.

## Smart locks

Another option to upgrade your traditional security to a smarter version is by installing a smart lock system. You can control access to your home anywhere by simply using your phone. Through a smartphone app, you can also add permanent or temporary users and set schedules for specific days and times. In addition to safety, smart locks can solve many minor issues, such as forgetting your keys,

locking the door before bed or letting a friend in when you're not home.

Most smart lock systems connect to your Wi-Fi network or Bluetooth. If you use a smart home assistant, consider smart locks that can be paired with your existing system.

## Smart security system

For smart security across your entire home, a smart security system is the best way to reduce your overall safety concerns. One advantage of having an entire system is that all the smart devices in your home will work together, for example, having all the doors unlock automatically if the smoke alarm goes off.

There are DIY home security systems that are typically cheaper, and there are professional home security systems that cost more in subscription fees for professional monitoring, which also contacts emergency responders in case of an emergency.

Depending on your needs and budget, all of these smart security options can significantly improve your home security. With a little research, you can determine the products that make the most sense for you and your family. Smart security technologies can make it easier for you to relax knowing you can control your home's security right from the palm of your hand. 🌟

*Maria Kanevsky is a program analyst for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation's landscape.*

# World is filled with containers if you look in the right place

By Earl Pitts, American

Remember last month when I told you about my little boy, Earl Junior, openin' a cupboard and gettin' buried in a Tupperware avalanche? Almost took the kid out. My better half, Pearl, had to thin out her storage collection after that — for the safety of the family.

Well, I got an update for you. It's a lot worse out there than I thought. Pearl took me to the mall over the weekend for some after-Christmas shoppin'. Just to drive me crazy, probably. Anyways, you know what they got in there? A storage store. A store that sells nothin' but storage containers, boxes, shelves, drawers and chests. To store stuff. Yeah, they got boxes in there that they made just to put stuff in. Makes you wonder how their boxes come to them. Probably in boxes. Which they never thought to use after they took the boxes out. That's sad.

Let me tell you something. America has gone stupid. Because back in our day, we would never buy stuff just to store stuff. No sir, you'd use your God-given country ingenuity.

You know what we used to store stuff in when we were kids? Shoeboxes. When you got new shoes, you'd get home, and the shoebox would be just as valuable as the shoes. My big brother, Merl, would say, "You want that shoebox?"

And I'd go, "Heck yeah, I want my shoebox."

I'd put baseball cards in there or green Army men. I swear to you — if you go to my parents' house right now, they'll have more shoeboxes in the closets than most shoe stores.

My daddy used baby food jars and coffee cans in the garage. Still has a

55-gallon drum of somethin' in there. He found the drum by the road. My mama used oleo bowls. She's still got a shoebox filled with somethin' in the freezer. Nobody's got the guts to look in there. Of course, it might be shoes. Who knows?

Wake up, America! In rural America, where I come from, a container and storage store would go broke. On account of the good Lord seen fit to fill the world with containers. We're just too lazy these days to see them. I'm Earl Pitts, American.

Come home one day recently and Pearl announced we was goin' to her parents' house for the weekend. Her daddy said come for overnight and tell Earl to bring his tools.

Well, I always enjoy that — on account of Pearl's daddy, Stone, is one of the original do-it-yourself geniuses in these parts. I do believe if he had been born 50 years later, he would be on the cable TV tellin' us how to DIY anything. I mean, this is one of the first guys I know that installed a hot tub in his backyard. And this goes way back. I asked him once what was the inspiration, and he said he built a koi pond and wired up the fountain wrong. Where some people see failure, Stone Askins saw a 10-person hot tub.

Anyway, Pearl's mama decided she wanted the wood paneling out of the family room.

I says to Stone, "Pearl's mama finally tired of how dark this makes the room look?"

He goes, "No, Chip and Joanna are tired of it. And you know Pearl's mother. She wants whatever Chip and Joanna want."

My question to you is, have you ever

ripped out 1970s wood paneling? You got them nails in there look like them come in a pin cushion. You can't grab 'em for nothin'. So, you just got to find a bow-y spot and start to rippin'.

And Stone's like, "Be careful Earl, I need full sheets!"

I'm starin' at him, sayin', "You gonna re-use this stuff?"

And he goes, "Your mother-in-law always wanted hardwood floors in the bedroom." He smiles and says, "Her dream is about to come true."

OK. Well, we found that hole cut about a foot to the right of where the light switch was supposed to be. They just hung a picture at a funny height. Everybody totally forgot. And in the corner by the fireplace, we found a giant, extinct beehive. About 4-foot square. That left Pearl's daddy scratchin' his head.

He goes, "You know, all those years I thought that buzzin' was the wirin' in the walls going bad."

I says, "You never checked?" and he goes, "I bought a fire extinguisher."

Wake up, America! And you know what we found under all that 1970s paneling? 1960s wallpaper. Guess we will be goin' back for another weekend vacation soon. I'm Earl Pitts, American. 🌞



Social commentary from **Earl Pitts** — a.k.a. GARY BURBANK, a nationally syndicated radio personality — can be heard on the following radio stations that cover electric cooperative service territories in Pennsylvania: WANB-FM 103.1 Pittsburgh; WARM-AM 590 Wilkes-Barre/Scranton; WIOO-AM 1000 Carlisle; WEEO-AM 1480 Shippensburg; WMTZ-FM 96.5 Johnstown; WQBR-FM 99.9/92.7 McElhattan; WLMI-FM 103.9 Kane; and WVNW-FM 96.7 Burnham-Lewistown. You can also find him at [earlpittsamerican.com](http://earlpittsamerican.com).

## Congratulations to the 2019 winners

Hundreds of *Penn Lines* readers submitted photos for the 2019 Rural Reflections contest, and a panel of independent judges selected the year's winning entries. Each winner in the categories of most artistic, best landscape, best human subject, best animal subject and editor's choice will receive a \$75 prize, but all of the readers who submitted photos during the past year deserve our appreciation.

In February, *Penn Lines* will publish the judges' other favorite photos. Runner-up winners will each receive \$25. In March, we will begin publishing 2020 photos.

To be eligible for the 2020 contest prizes, send your snapshots (no professional photos, please) to: *Penn Lines* Photos, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108-1266. Include your name, address, phone number and the name of the electric cooperative that serves your residence, business or seasonal home.

Remember, our publication deadlines require that we work ahead, so send your seasonal photos in early. We need spring photos before mid-February; summer photos before mid-May; fall photos before mid-July and winter photos before mid-September. Please note: 2019 photos that were accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelopes will be returned in early February. 📧



Allison Goodlin  
REA Energy



James Scott  
Northwestern REC



Bryan & Linda  
Claverack REC



Rena Carr  
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Laura Wallace  
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