

JULY 2020

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**EDITOR**

Peter A. Fitzgerald

**SENIOR EDITOR/WRITER**

Katherine Hackleman

**ASSOCIATE EDITOR**

Michael T. Crawford

**LAYOUT & DESIGN**

W. Douglas Shirk

**PRODUCTION COORDINATOR**

Michelle M. Smith

**CONTRIBUTING COLUMNISTS**

James Dullej

Janette Hess

Yvonne Butts-Mitchell

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### ON THE COVER

Patience Groomes, program founder and executive director of Reins of Rhythm Riding and Horsemanship Program, Shippensburg, Pa., leads her son, Colton, as he rides Glisten, one of the program's 13 horses. *Photo courtesy of Patience Groomes*



## News from across the Commonwealth

### What are Commonwealth attitudes?

Penn State University researchers have released the results of an attitudinal survey of rural and urban Pennsylvanians on a variety of issues. The results of the study, conducted in 2019 with a grant from the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, indicates most respondents in both rural and urban areas have similar thoughts about their local communities, communities across the state, and the performance of government.

The following attitudes were most common among both rural and urban residents:

- ▶ Rated their local community as “somewhat desirable.”
- ▶ Felt that most local community infrastructure issues, local community family and human services issues, issues concerning protection, and effective use of natural resources should receive the “same priority” or “higher priority” in the future.
- ▶ Had “some” trust and confidence in the state legislature, the courts, the governor, local and municipal officials, and local school district officials.
- ▶ Rated their local government as “fair” or “good” on most characteristics.

One key difference was that rural respondents identified the availability of jobs as the most important issue, while urban respondents identified maintenance of roads and bridges as the most important issue. Rural and urban residents also disagreed on how to best address the opioid crisis with rural respondents supporting stricter enforcement of criminal penalties, while urban respondents supported in-

creased funding for programs to treat and prevent addiction.

### New area code coming to Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission recently announced that

the number 582 will be the new overlay area code for the current 814 area code, which covers all or parts of 27 counties across Central and Northwestern Pennsylvania.

The 582 area code number will be assigned to new telephone numbers

### READER RESPONSE

*Dear Editor,*

*I am very interested in the article in the June 2020 edition of Penn Lines on “Powerful Pollinators.” While your article presents a good argument for promoting the value of pollinators, I found it disappointing. You have motivated me, a man with land that could be used to support bees in an area surrounded by farms, to do something. I wish I could have been given more direct information on how to start and sustain an environment that supports bees.*

*My intent when moving here in 2014 was to provide such an environment, but I have found help on the specifics lacking. I believe that the task of starting such an environment is daunting, and I would appreciate any guidance I might get from experts on the “how to” make this happen.*

*Richard Arthur – Northwestern REC*



*(Editor’s Note: Following a request for information on how to encourage pollinators in rural areas, here are some additional tips.)*

According to the Center for Pollinator Research at Penn State, variety is the spice of pollinator life. A varied garden not only attracts more species of pollinators but provides them with a well-balanced diet. Carolyn Mahan, professor of biology and environmental studies at Penn State University, suggests homeowners can take a page from right-of-way vegetation management to support their pollinator plot: stop mowing, see what grows naturally and selectively apply low-volume herbicides to root out non-native species.

Those preferring to take a more active hand in what grows in their gardens should find native plant species that bloom in different seasons to coincide with when different pollinators emerge. Dandelions, for example, are good for early-season bees. Other native plant species that will attract pollinators include golden rod, jewel weed, purple coneflower or buttercups. Avoid modern hybrids, as these can actually produce significantly less pollen and nectar. Local Penn State Extension offices can help identify native species, and a list of plant species native to the Commonwealth can be found at [paflora.org](http://paflora.org).

Even those without land to spare can provide a safe space for pollinators. Take a wooden block, drill holes into the sides, find a sunny, but sheltered spot for it to rest (the closer to flowers the better) and – voila – you’ve created a bee motel.

Additional resources for attracting and protecting pollinators can be found at [extension.psu.edu/insects-pests-and-diseases/pollinators/habitat-and-landscape](http://extension.psu.edu/insects-pests-and-diseases/pollinators/habitat-and-landscape). Find more information on native plant species at [panativeplantsociety.org](http://panativeplantsociety.org).

once the available supply of numbers in the current 814 area code is exhausted.

The biggest adjustment for residents and businesses across the 814 area code will be the eventual switch to 10-digit dialing, where callers will be required to dial the area code plus the seven-digit telephone number for all calls.

Important dates related to the switch include:

- ▶ Oct. 3, 2020 – Residents and businesses are encouraged to voluntarily start 10-digit dialing for calls in the 814 area code.
- ▶ April 3, 2021 – 10-digit dialing will be required for all calls in the 814 area code.
- ▶ May 1, 2021 – The new overlay area code will be placed into service.

The 814 area code, established in 1947, is one of four original area codes in Pennsylvania. It is the largest area code in the state and the final one to undergo changes due to the existing numbers being exhausted.

## A true 'fish story' about a record flathead catfish

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) has certified a new state record flathead catfish weighing more than 56 pounds. On May 24, 2020, angler Jonathan Pierce, of Philadelphia, was fishing from the bank of the Schuylkill River at East Falls, Pa.



He baited a brown trout head onto an 8/0 circle hook and cast his heavy duty, 10-foot, 6-inch surf rod lined with 50-pound braided fishing line and 20-foot, 60-pound test monofilament leader into approximately 12 feet of water at approximately 8:30 p.m.

"The best way to describe it is like a torpedo," Pierce reported. "In all the years I've been fishing for flatheads, the fish did something I had never seen. It surfaced, and then ran away from me into a pile of rocks and just stuck there. It was panic mode."

After roughly three minutes of being unable to move the fish from the rockpile, Pierce eased tension on his rod and released several feet of slack from his line, hoping the fish would believe it had been freed.

It worked and after a five-minute fight, Pierce landed the catfish. After some initial measurements, Pierce suspected the catfish could be a contender for the state record, which had been set in April 2019, when an angler caught a 50-pound, 7-ounce flathead catfish in the Susquehanna River in Lancaster County.

Unable to immediately locate an operational certified scale, Pierce kept the catfish alive in a 40-gallon aerated container inside his home until the following day. On May 25, Pierce took the fish to Blue Marsh Outdoors in Berks County, where it was officially recorded as weighing 56 pounds, 3 ounces. While the fish measured 50 inches long with a girth of 28.875 inches, Pennsylvania state record fish are judged only by weight, and must exceed the previous record by at least two ounces.

As is required for state record consideration, Pierce contacted PFBC law enforce-

ment officials and arranged for an in-person identification and examination of the fish, during which the weight was verified.

Pierce returned the flathead catfish alive to the Schuylkill River.

## American Battlefield Protection Program grant announced

Federal government officials recently announced the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission was awarded \$573,000 in an American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) grant. Funds will be used to acquire



two tracts of land adjacent to the Gettysburg National Military Park with their nonprofit partner, the American Battlefield Trust.

"ABPP grants create partnerships among state and local governments and nonprofit organizations to act quickly and proactively to preserve and protect nationally significant battlefields, such as Gettysburg," said National Park Service Deputy Director David Vela.

Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt, in making the grant announcement, said, "Battlefields such as Gettysburg are sacred sites where Americans gave the last full measure of devotion. These grants enable us to partner with communities and organizations to preserve these places and connect visitors with their historical importance." 🌞

# Five home energy hogs

By Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen

In an effort to reduce monthly expenses, people sometimes compare their electric bills with those of neighbors and friends. Sometimes, they are surprised to find out one person's energy costs are significantly lower than the other's, even though their homes are similar in size and built around the same time. Then they begin to wonder what is causing the difference in energy costs.

People are certainly not alone in these trying times as they search for ways to cut costs, and everyone's energy use might provide some potential opportunities for savings. Even though people note the similarities between homes, you may have a hidden energy hog causing your bills to be higher than your neighbor's. Here are five energy hogs that may be increasing your energy use.

## 1. Old fridge or freezer in the garage

That second fridge or freezer may be costing more than you think. If the model was produced prior to 1990, it's likely using twice as much energy (or more!) than a newer, Energy Star®-rated model. If it's located in the garage, it may run constantly in the summer, which could lead to higher electric bills.

## 2. Cooling or heating an uninsulated area

Cooling or heating an uninsulated workshop or garage can be expensive. To give you an example, during a past energy audit I conducted, I found that the homeowner heated an uninsulated shed to keep several half-empty buckets of paint from freezing. So, he was paying more to keep his paint warm than the paint was worth. Pet owners have been known to heat and cool an uninsulated garage to keep pets comfortable, not



ANDREW HOLMES

**OPERATING COSTS:** Before buying a hot tub, make sure you're ready to pay to operate it. The average annual energy cost for a hot tub is \$250 a year.

realizing that this might be costing more than heating their actual home. If you really want to heat or cool these types of spaces, they need to be well insulated and heated/cooled efficiently, perhaps with a ductless mini-split system.

## 3. Hot tub

The average operating cost of a hot tub is \$250 per year. But that amount may be higher if your hot tub is an older, less-efficient model, or if you live in a colder climate. A smaller hot tub with better insulation, a cover and a pump that runs on a lower voltage will use less energy than other models. In the end, getting a "good deal" on a used hot tub may cost more in energy bills in the long run.

## 4. Swimming pool

If you have a swimming pool, consider installing a smaller, more efficient pump and reducing how often it runs. You can also look at installing a larger filter and maximizing the flow of water through the pipes by making them larger and reducing how sharply the corners turn. These measures could cut your electric use for the pool pump by as much as

75%. Consult with a pool installation specialist to find the most efficient setup that will still keep your pool clean.

## 5. Pumps

If you live on acreage or on a farm, you probably have several pumps, including irrigation, well, septic, and sump. If you're like most of us, you use those pumps until they break down. Consider replacing the oldest and most-used pumps over time with new, more efficient ones that are sized correctly for their task. Also, make sure you're eliminating leaks in the water lines, which make your pumps work harder and longer.

If one of these five energy hogs doesn't explain the difference in energy use between your home and your neighbor's, there are many other possibilities. I recommend conducting an energy audit, which should give you the answers you seek. ☀

*This article was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on surprise energy hogs, please visit: [collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips](http://collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips).*

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# Helpful horses

*Exploring the multiple benefits of Pennsylvania's equine industry*

**H**orses have been part of human civilization for as long as we can remember — if not longer — and while they usually aren't our first choice for pulling a plow these days, Pennsylvanians and their economy still benefit from horsepower.

Horses come in all shapes, sizes and uses. Those uses contribute \$50 billion to the U.S. economy and \$3.3 billion to Pennsylvania's economy annually, according to the American Horse Council Foundation's 2017 National Equine Economic Impact Study. The top five uses — from a dollars-and-cents perspective — are recreational, pulling in \$1.01 billion annually; competitive, \$870 million; endurance, \$860 million;

By Michael T. Crawford  
*Associate Editor*

therapy, \$15 million; and rescue, \$2 million.

"That's direct and indirect economic impact, which would include things like land management and transportation — tractors and horse trailers — and insurance, for examples," explains Skip Seifert, director of the Pennsylvania Equine Council. "The direct impacts would be veterinarians, farriers and trainers — those hands-on types of roles. Using myself as an example ... we use an equine dentist. There are some people who use chiropractors or massage therapists, almost the same as you'd do for a human."

**GENTLE GIANT:** A horse waits in its stall at the 2020 Pennsylvania Farm Show. Numerous equine events are part of the annual show held each January in Harrisburg, Pa.

## **Hands-on**

Kaysha Hockenberry, a certified equine massage therapist and member of Indiana-based REA Energy Cooperative, has been treating horses for five years, collaborating with a chiropractor just as a massage therapist would when treating a human.

"It goes hand in hand," Hockenberry explains. "If the muscles are tight and they're pulling on the bone, a chiropractor is going to have to come out and adjust the bones, whereas if I can get the muscles loosened and relaxed, they're not going to pull the bones out

of alignment. Likewise, if the bones are in (the proper) place, it makes the massage go a lot easier.”

Like with people, the reason for a massage — and the kind of massage — depends on the horse. While Hockenberry sees a lot of racing horses or trail horses in need of deep tissue work, horse owners come to her seeking light, relaxation massages for their stressed horses.

“It just really depends on what the horse likes,” she says. “Just like with a person going to get a massage ... it helps reduce any inflammation or muscle strain. Horses hold a lot of stress that they can’t release like a human would. ... The poll between the ears holds a lot of tension that gives headaches ... and if that is sore or tight, it puts a lot of tension on the rest of the body.”

Much like a veterinarian or any other job working with horses, Hockenberry has learned to interpret horses’ cues to determine the best course of treatment.

“I’ll hit a couple pressure points throughout the body to see what is sore,” she says. “A good indicator to see if a horse doesn’t like it — or they are sore there — is they’ll pin their ears back or they’ll turn around and try to bite or kick you.”

She adds, “Whenever they do decide to relax and let you work on that area, their ears will go forward. I like to pay attention to their eyes, their face — they’ll say a lot.”

Many with horses in their life often remark on the human-like qualities they see in their four-legged friends, noting personalities as distinct and varied as humans. While Seifert doesn’t personally assign them human-like qualities, different horses’ personalities, he says, are better suited for different aspects of the equine industry.

“You will see more quarter horses and draft horses in the recreational side, the therapeutic side and the rescue side,” Seifert notes. “They’re what we call ‘cold blooded’ — quiet demeanors, not affected by the environment. They’re not easily spooked or scared by things. They’re more laid back than some of the hotter-blooded horses, like



ALETA SEIFERT

PLEASURE RIDING: Skip Seifert, director of the Pennsylvania Equine Council, stops to admire the Susquehannock State Forest while taking a ride on his quarter horse, Chic — also known by her registered name, She’s Hanginon Dreams.

thoroughbreds. You wouldn’t want to take a horse off the race track and put him in a therapeutic program.”

The recreational sector includes trail riders and pleasure riders — basically riding for its own sake, not for competition, therapy, work, or rescue.

### Long tradition

Dean Brant, a member of Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) and owner of Willshire Farms in Rock-

wood, Pa., has been raising Percheron draft horses — a French breed brought to the United States in the early 19th century — to sell and ride for 20 years. His family’s connection to the breed, however, goes back generations.

“I’m actually the eighth generation of Brants to be farmers here in Somerset County,” Brant says. “My dad and grandfather farmed with Percherons up until 1950. Before that, my grandfather and his father — clear back into the



DEAN BRANT

WAGON RIDE: Horses Joe, left, and Mark take friends and family of Dean Brant for their annual Christmas wagon ride on Brant's farm in Rockwood, Pa.

1800s — they always kept Percherons on the farm. ... But, after World War II, everyone started dumping their horses for trucks and tractors. If it wasn't for the Amish keeping the bloodline alive, they might have dropped off entirely."

Today, Brant, who sells the colts born on the farm, usually keeps between 15 and 20 horses on the farm at any given time. Visitors may come by appointment to pet and feed any of his horses.

"On the farm, we have a sled and give wagon rides," he says. "We give rides at festivals. Year-round, we have the horses used for something."

Appointments to visit the Willshire Farm, as well as wedding or funeral services, can be scheduled with Brant or his wife by calling 814-443-4134.

Often described as intelligent animals by their owners, horses display that intelligence at shows — the primary driver of the competitive sector — where horses captivate audiences with jumps, tricks and other performances. And sometimes, in the case of miniature horses, hyper-precise grooming.

"They have to be totally body clipped," explains Debbie Sample, owner of Sample's Majestic Miniatures and member of Cambridge Springs-based Northwestern REC. "With a quarter horse or any other stock horse, you just clip up their bridle path and around their hooves so they look nice, but with a miniature, it requires between five and 10 different blades depending on how you clip them. It's an art form."

Sample, whose husband, Mike Sample, serves on the board of directors for Northwestern REC, has been breeding and raising miniatures since 2007, when she switched from quarter horses.

"I thought my children would enjoy it more — they were slightly intimidated by my quarter horses," Sample recalls. "My daughter ended up showing horses with me — we went all over. Some people have compared it to showing dogs — which I've done in the past — but (showing miniatures) is like showing regular horses."

Sample left shows behind when her daughter grew out of it, but her miniature horses still go on to win competitions across the country. For her, though, it isn't about the prestige or the money.

"I'm not saying I haven't sold any for decent money, but that's never the goal," Sample says. "I'm only interested in whatever I produce having a very good home, and it doesn't get bounced around a lot."

### Horse family

Jean Hovan, a member of Wysox-based Claverack REC, seeks a different kind of competition. Despite the name, the competitive sector excludes racing; that falls within the endurance sector. For nearly 20 years now, Hovan has raised paint stock horses to compete in barrel races.

"It's just the most enjoyable sport I've ever done," Hovan explains. "You race against the clock and everybody races on the same pattern, one at a time. We have three barrels set up in a



KAYSHA HOCKENBERRY

EQUINE MASSAGE: Kaysha Hockenberry, an equine massage therapist and member of Indiana-based REA Energy Cooperative, gives a massage to a barrel racing horse with strained shoulder and pectoral muscles in Dayton, Pa.



PENNSYLVANIA FARM SHOW

**SHOWMANSHIP:** Carlee Hunsicker rides a horse from Bee Tree Trail LLC of Berks County in the Adult English Riding Class at the 2020 Pennsylvania Farm Show.

cloverleaf fashion and you race around them without knocking any over. ... The last show I was at had \$5,000 added money, and the winner took home close to \$1,000.”

Hovan, 65, has been barrel racing since she was 14, but never tracked the money she made.

“It just wasn’t that important to me,” Hovan says. “Our ‘horse family’ — all the other contestants — we cheer each other on. It’s the greatest family in the whole world.”

The first horse she ever rode was a paint horse — those with white and dark spotting patterns — and so when she had the chance to breed and raise her own, she chomped at the bit.

“I’ve loved horses ever since I knew what one was when I was a couple of years old,” Hovan says. “I came full circle with them — I had a mare and I wanted to breed her to a specific stallion. ... A friend came to me and said there was a son of the stallion in Oklahoma. ... The mare (Howie Nightmare, 29) and stallion (M.H. Primetime, 25) that I started out with in 2000 are still here with me.”

The equine industry has, like many industries, hit a wall in recent months. COVID-19, the global pandemic that required quarantine measures to slow

its spread, had completely shut down the equine industry in the Commonwealth.

“They’ve had to cancel a lot of races right up until this last couple weeks,” Hovan says. “Nothing has been happening, either in New York or Pennsylvania.”

Across the board, those tied to the horse industry have felt the effects of the stay-at-home orders.

“It definitely put a clamp on me horsing around with other people,” Brant says. “I had things scheduled and with the virus basically no one comes around. We had to cancel everything for a couple of months.”

### Human connection

But, as many horse owners can attest, there’s more to a horse than just the money it can make. Beyond carrying a sizable chunk of the Commonwealth’s economy on their backs, hors-

es have shown to be able to bear the weight of humans’ personal struggles. According to the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship, working with horses can have significant physical, mental, and emotional impacts on people with a wide variety of disabilities and health issues, such as autism, traumatic brain injuries, or cerebral palsy, to name a few.

In Shippensburg, Pa., Reins of Rhythm Riding and Horsemanship Program, seeks to bring the benefits of horse therapy to children.

Patience Groomes, program founder and executive director, first realized the benefits of horse therapy by accident when she was babysitting a 5-year-old foster child as a teenager.

“She was very sullen, and would refuse to talk to anybody,” recalls Groomes, who founded Reins of Rhythm in 2009 after achieving three

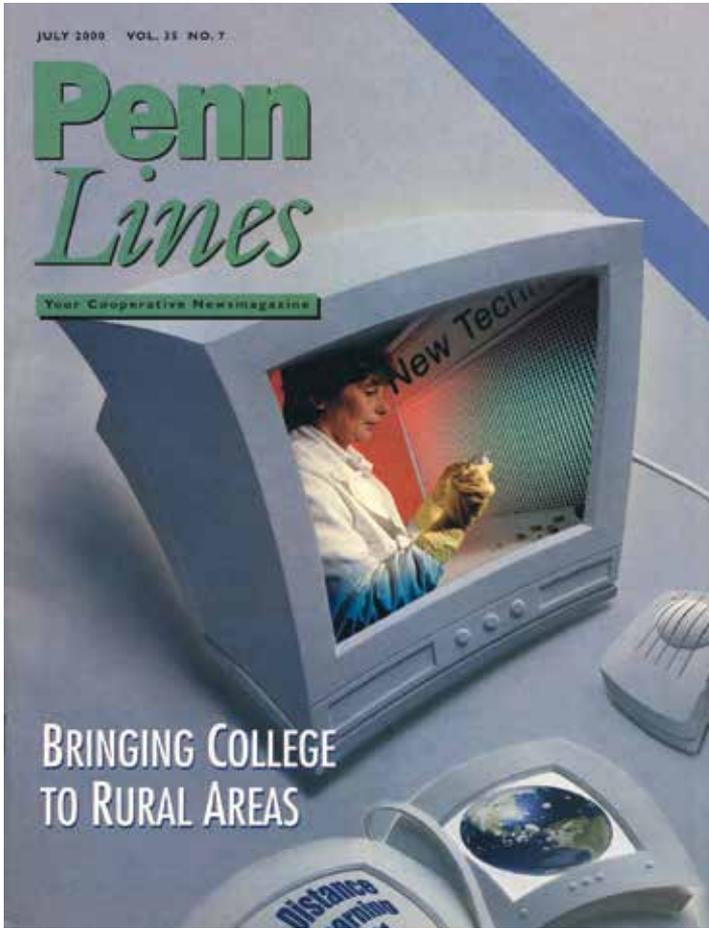
*(continues on page 17)*



KELLY ROE

**CUTE CHAMPION:** Inspiration, a miniature horse bred by Sample’s Majestic Miniatures, stands trimmed and ready to show. Miniature horses from Debbie and Mike Sample’s farm near Corry, Pa., have won horse shows nationwide. Inspiration is about 29 inches tall.

Your Newsmagazine Through the Years



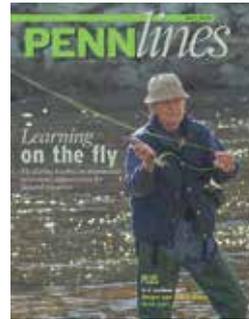
By cutting down or eliminating commuting hassles, internet- and interactive-based education encouraged many rural residents — especially adults — to earn college credits.

The latest technology at the time allowed students to type messages to each other on university-provided online chat rooms, post questions and assignments to a virtual classroom, read lectures on screen, surf the web to research papers, and ask questions of their instructors via email.

College students weren't the only ones who were benefitting 20 years ago from distance education. Using two-way television, high school students in rural areas across Pennsylvania were able to participate in classes in advanced science, math, language and history that were previously unavailable at their own high schools because there were too few students enrolled in them. Meanwhile, their elementary school counterparts began taking "field trips" to educational and historic spots throughout the nation through distance learning — all without leaving their classrooms.

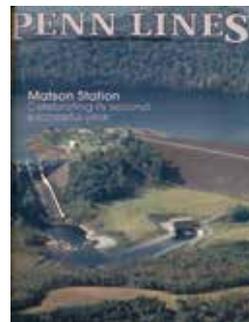
Today, distance learning is offered by most colleges and universities across the country. In fact, due to the coronavirus pandemic this spring, most U.S. schools from elementary grade levels through universities finished out the spring semester relying totally on online technology.

2000



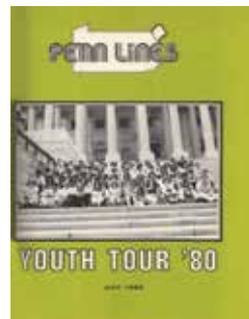
2010

Bill Amspacher, a member of Adams Electric Cooperative, fishes for trout in Pine Grove Furnace State Park. The economic impact from sport fishing in Pennsylvania remains significant today.



1990

The 2-year-old Raystown Hydroelectric Project adds safe, environmentally sound and affordable energy production to the recreational and flood control benefits of the lake.



1980

Meeting with President Jimmy Carter is the highlight of the Youth Tour. President Carter told the 900 tour participants that his family was served by a rural electric co-op in Georgia.



1970

Swimming is just one of many activities available at Laurel Hill State Park in Somerset County. The recreational development is served by Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative.

**TRI-COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**  
**ANNUAL MEETING**  
**July 23, 2019 – Troy, PA**

**MINUTES**

**CHAIRMAN MATTHEW WHITING** called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM. Chairman Whiting welcomed the members to the 83rd Annual Meeting of Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative.

**DIRECTOR NICHOLAS REITTER** gave the invocation and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CHAIRMAN WHITING** then advised that the purpose of the annual meeting is to conduct the director elections, announce the results of the election of directors, present annual reports and transact other business submitted following the proper procedure.

**CHAIRMAN WHITING** announced that the director election ballot box will close at 1:15 PM and directed the members as to the location of the ballot box.

**CHAIRMAN WHITING** introduced the Board of Directors.

**PRESIDENT & CEO CRAIG ECCHER** introduced and thanked special guests – first and foremost the Tri-County employees for organizing and working the annual meeting, Jeff Fetzer, C&T Enterprises Corporate Communicator, Pete Yastishock, C&T Enterprises Director of Safety & Compliance, Cheryl LaBlanc, C&T Enterprises Vice President of Human Resources, Brian Zeidner, Claveracks' Director of Member Services, Karen Evangelisti, Claveracks' Member Service Quality Specialist and Stephanie Okuniewski, PREA Director of Communications & Member Services.

**SECRETARY/TREASURER ALSTON TEETER** presented the Proof of Mailing of the Official Notice, a copy of which is filed with the official minutes. Members received a complete copy of the 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes in their registration packets. Secretary Teeter asked for a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes and asked that the motion include the approval of the 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes as circulated. ***A motion was duly made and seconded to waive the reading and approve the 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes as circulated; motion carried.***

**SECRETARY/TREASURER TEETER** gave the Secretary/Treasurer's Report. Secretary Teeter reported that Tri-County continues to operate in a sound financial condition.

**CHAIRMAN WHITING** recognized the Tri-County participants in the 2019 NRECA Youth Tour.

**CHAIRMAN WHITING** provided the Chairman's Report. Chairman Whiting touched on the English Center Substation. This was energized in 2019 and it will support the Liberty and Morris feeders. Tri County had over 3,600 poles inspected. In 2018, Tri-County Electric constructed 4 miles of overhead and underground distribution line. Chairman Whiting touched on the GIS Mapping project. When this is completed, it will allow even more capable monitoring and circuit switching automation to further enhance resilience. Chairman Whiting discussed Tri-Co Connections being our biggest step to date. Its an estimate of \$77 million-dollar cost and will take about 5-6 years to complete. Tri County has been aggressively seeking grant and other program funds to help pay for this project, and because of those efforts at this time 65% of the cost is estimated to be paid by grant/program funds.

**CHAIRMAN WHITING** introduced Craig Eccher, President & CEO of Tri-County.

**CEO ECCHER** thanked the fair and sponsors and recognized the youth tour students.

- CEO Eccher touched on our rates and explained we increased our rate by 6% in 2018. This was Tri County's first-rate increase since 2012.
- CEO Eccher explained our Escheats funding. This year, 25 recipients received Escheats funding, totaling \$40,000. Larger grants included 4H, libraries, LEEK, the Salvation Army & Mill Cove.
- Tri County has a few maintenance programs right now. One being inspection of poles, vegetation management and line inspections.

- Explained the weather and storms have been challenging this year. Tri County is getting more aggressive in taking down ash trees in the Right of Way. Vegetation management continues to be a growing budget item each year.
- CEO Eccher also touched on Tri-Co Connections fiber to the home project. This journey was started 3 years ago, and with the help of grant/program funding, we were able to make this project happen. This will be about a 5-6 year build out and phase 1 is starting in Coudersport and building about 500 miles. Out of 100 Cooperatives' in Pennsylvania, Tri-County is the first Cooperative in PA to run fiber. Tri-Co Connections has partnered with Corning for our fiber project.

**CEO Eccher** introduced Attorney Terra Koernig.

**ATTORNEY TERRA KOERNIG** reviewed the election process and introduced the Election and Credentials Committee. Attorney Koernig asked the Election & Credentials Committee Chairman Milton Shatto to come to the podium.

**E & C COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MILTON SHATTO** addressed the membership and presented the committee report stating that the election was fairly and impartially conducted and that the results were as follows:

<b>District 2</b>	- Valery J. Robbins	192
<b>District 6</b>	- Alfred G. Calkins	217
<b>District 8</b>	- Gerald A. Kriner	290

Therefore, the elected directors for three-year terms are District 2, Valery J. Robbins; District 6, Alfred G. Calkins; and District 8, Gerald A. Kriner. ***A motion was made by Mr. Shatto that the ballots be destroyed after the passing of three working days, given that no protests are received during that interval; motion was seconded and carried.***

**CHAIRMAN WHITING** recognized the Member Advisory Committee and asked that if anyone was interested in becoming a committee member, they should contact their director.

**CHAIRMAN WHITING** called for questions/comments from the membership for CEO Eccher.

- Members asked questions regarding where the fiber will go after the first 100 miles in Potter County. CEO Eccher responded with it will depend on multiple factors as to where we will go next. CEO Eccher explained some of those factors.
- Members asked questions regarding the broadband fees. CEO Eccher provided more information on the prospective costs.
- A member praised our lineman on their quick service to their camp.

**THERE BEING** no further business to come before the meeting, ***a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 2:10 PM.***

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

---

Secretary

---

Date

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- **Nine percent of fatal crashes** in 2017 were reported as distraction-affected crashes.
- In 2017, there were **3,166 people killed** in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers.
- **Six percent** of all drivers involved in fatal crashes were reported as distracted at the time of the crashes.
- **Drivers age 15 to 19** have the largest proportion of drivers who were distracted at the time of the fatal crashes.
- In 2017, there were **599 pedestrians, bicyclists, and others killed** in distraction-affected crashes.

 **Safe  
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# Alexa, can you help me save energy?

By Paul Wesslund

Before this year's virus protection measures turned business meetings and even family gatherings into smartphone conference calls and video conferences, your electric appliances jumped on the bandwagon of internet-connected energy.

That makes your gadgets and gizmos sound almost human. Well, in some ways that's exactly what's happening. Talking to a computer isn't just for Captain Kirk on Star Trek anymore — surveys show about one in four American adults owns a smart speaker or technology like the Amazon Echo, Google Home or Apple HomePod. Now we can just ask Alexa or Siri to tell us the weather or how to save money on our electric bill.

Appliances you control from your phone aren't just luxury items anymore, says Brian Sloboda, director of consumer solutions with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

"Two years ago, when you would buy a smart appliance, you were really buying a high-end product; now they're in the middle," he says. "More and more appliances are smart, and they have come down in price. It's everything from lightbulbs you screw into your table lamps, to your microwave, to your washing machine, to your thermostat that you can control through a voice assistant or apps on the phone."

Sloboda says that all those internet-connected devices can not only make you more energy efficient, but can help you take advantage of your electric service in ways you never even thought of. But if your machines are acting more like people, you'll also want to take precautions to protect your security and privacy — smart speakers are on and



THE FUTURE IS HERE: About one in four American adults owns a smart speaker or internet-connected device that they can ask for today's weather forecast or how to save on our monthly energy bills.

listening in all the time, after all. Sloboda advises that you might want to get in the habit of reading the fine print that comes with instructions and app downloads, so you know how your personal information is being used.

Sloboda keeps up with appliance developments as his full-time job, but he also recently brought one of those humanoid into his home.

"My washing machine sends me an email every month telling me how much electricity it has used," he says. "It gives me tips on how to save energy. It suggests I could wash the clothes in cold water to save energy. It will gently tell you that rather than washing a small load, it's more efficient to let the clothes accumulate."

If all that sounds a little creepy, smart speaker manufacturers and marketers understand. They try to encourage customers to get more familiar with their devices. They want you to ask your smart speaker to tell you a joke or play music. Sloboda says that in electric co-op studies of how people might use

voice-activated devices to manage their energy use, owners like making those personalized connections.

"Consumers in these focus groups refer to Alexa as their friend," he says. "They start to give them human attributes. They really do refer to Alexa as 'she' rather than 'it.'"

While apps and speakers can help you use energy more efficiently by alerting you to lights on in rooms you're not using or suggesting you clean the filter in your washing machine, Sloboda says smart thermostats offer some of the biggest potential energy savings. Heating and cooling are among a home's top energy users, and high-tech thermostats are getting easier to use and more innovative. These days, they not only can change temperatures set for daytime or nighttime, but can track your phone as you leave the house or move from room to room, figuring out your habits and making adjustments based on your lifestyle.

Before buying a smart thermostat, Sloboda advises learning about it to

make sure it's compatible with your heating and cooling system.

Sloboda sees the future of smart technology getting even smarter. He says electric co-ops and other utility groups are involved in studies where people describe their values to their apps and speakers. If saving money is the most important thing to you, your lights might dim in a part of the room you're not using. If comfort is your top priority, the temperature will stay within a certain range. For those especially concerned about the environment, the dishwasher might delay its start until renewable power is available because the sun is shining or the wind is blowing.

Along with all those mind-blowing benefits comes the need for precautions. Anything connected to the internet can be hacked — that could be a home security system, a baby monitor or a TV.

The first safety step Sloboda advises is to change the password on any of those devices. Check regularly for software updates and install them — they often add protections from the latest cyberthreats.

In addition to security, also pay attention to privacy. Many interactions with the internet will collect information on you. A smart speaker is listening to everything that goes on in your home all the time. Reading all those tiny-type agreements before you click “accept” might seem like an unrealistic pain, but they generally will tell you what kind of protections are in place to keep your personal information private.

Sloboda also recommends getting involved in online communities about your internet devices, so you can know more about privacy, security and how to make the best use out of your smart technology. 🌞

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.



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### ■ TOOLS

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### ■ FIRST AID KIT AND PRESCRIPTIONS

First aid supplies, hand sanitizer and at least one week's supply of prescriptions and medications for the family.



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Source: American Red Cross, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

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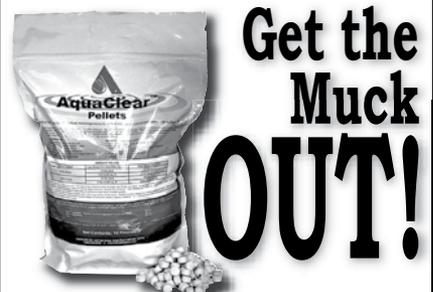
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# Proper landscaping can lower cooling costs, improve comfort, save energy

By James Dulley

**D**ear Jim: We are designing our new house. We want to have many trees. What tree types are best and where should we locate them for efficiency? — *Katy W.*

**Dear Katy:** You are wise to consider your landscaping plan while you are still in the planning stages for the house itself. The best location for windows, outdoor living areas, garages, etc. will be impacted by the type of new trees you select and the position of existing trees.

When planning your landscaping with efficiency in mind, the type and location of trees have the greatest effect on heating and cooling costs. Particularly during summer, proper landscaping can make your outdoor living areas much more comfortable and provide habitat for wildlife.

People often only think about shading windows from the intense summer sun, but it is also important to shade the house walls. This is particularly true with brick, stone or stucco walls. These materials have high thermal mass and absorb the sun's heat.

You may have noticed it feels even cooler in the woods than in the shade from a building or umbrella. This is because plants are natural air conditioners. Plants absorb water from the ground and release it as water vapor from the leaves.

For most temperate climates, the goal is to use trees to provide summer shade while allowing the winter sun to shine through. Plant deciduous (drop leaves during winter) trees on the east, south and west sides.

Leave a gap to the southwest if you plan to open windows for natural ventilation. Summer breezes typically come from the southwest direction. Planting



evergreen trees to the north is acceptable if you want privacy. If they are reasonably close to your house, they can provide a windbreak to block cold northern winter winds.

The same basic landscape planning also works well in warmer, humid climates except the trees should be planted further from the house. This reduces the humidity level close to the house. With high humidity, the cooling effect from leaf transpiration is minimal.

When selecting the particular tree, consider the mature tree height and shape — round (box elder, Norway maple, chestnut); pyramidal (European beech, tulip tree, pin oak); oval (English elm, balsam fir, aspen); conical (eastern cedar, hemlock silver fir); and columnar (dawn redwood, persimmon, eastern larch). This allows you to determine how many to plant and how far to locate them from your house. Growth rates and winter hardiness are also important selection criteria.

Keep in mind some of the fastest-growing trees (white ash, catalpa, American linden, crabapple) are also short-lived. Avoid planting these close

to your house or you may have a future expensive tree removal job. For the most efficient use of trees, plan on doing quite a bit of pruning to maintain the proper ratio of shading and openness for winter solar heating.

To complete your landscaping, plant low-water-demand groundcover plants near your house on the south and west sides. These reflect more of the sun's heat and do not store it as gravel or stone does.

When building a house on a lot that already has some trees, discuss the paths for the heavy excavation equipment with the contractor. Repeated traffic of heavy equipment over the ground near some trees with shallow root systems (maples, black locust, etc.) can compact the soil and severely harm the tree. The trees may not show the results for a couple of years. ☀



Have a question for Jim? Send inquiries to **James Dulley**, Penn Lines, 6906 Royalgreen Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45244 or visit [www.dulley.com](http://www.dulley.com).

## HELPFUL HORSES

(continued from page 11)

separate equine degrees related to therapeutic riding. “When she was with the horses, she always had a smile. She was happy, she was willing to follow directions, and that was something that we saw transfer over ... to other places in life as well. And that’s something we see every day with our youth in the program.”

Reins of Rhythm, sponsored by Gettysburg-based Adams Electric Cooperative (EC) through the program’s Adopt a Horse fundraiser, offers therapeutic activities for families and special-needs learners, as well as regular riding lessons.

“We have sponsored other activities for the organization in the past, but it’s our first time as ‘adopted parents,’” notes

**HEAVY LIFTERS:** Five teams prepare to pull 3,050-pound loads at the Farm Class Horse Pulling event held at the 2020 Pennsylvania Farm Show.

Kami Noel, communications and member relations coordinator for Adams EC. “We’re a silver sponsor; we get letters from the kids, pictures of the horse, Malibu, and can attend activities if we would want to.”

The volunteer-run program has 13 horses, a full-time trainer and roughly 50 participants every year, welcoming children ages 4-18. The program reaches hundreds more children each year through summer camps, field trips and other events throughout the year. Those interested in volunteering, participating or attending events can check for information at the Reins of Rhythm website, [reinsofrhythm.org](http://reinsofrhythm.org).

As stay-at-home restrictions slowly lift, those who work with horses almost unanimously agree they will bounce back.

“Two weeks ago, the Keystone Horse



JEAN HOVAN

**BARRELING DOWN:** Jean Hovan, a member of Wysox-based Claverack REC, rounds a turn during a barrel race on her paint horse.

Center in Bloomsburg got into the yellow phase and we had a big barrel race there — almost 350 entries,” Hovan notes. “Last year, at the same venue, we were right around 200.”

After all, horses hold more than a profitable niche in the Commonwealth’s economy — they hold a special place in the hearts of Pennsylvanians. 🌟



PENNSYLVANIA FARM SHOW

# Getting out of the kitchen

By Janette Hess

No matter where it's situated — the patio, porch, driveway, or balcony — your outdoor grill is the means to get you, your guests, and the heat out of the kitchen.

After a bit of indoor prep, this month's featured entrées cook quickly on a preheated grill. Citrus Marinated Chicken is best prepared with metal skewers, because metal skewers transfer heat into the chicken cubes for more even cooking. The recipe's citrus theme is repeated in Lime Chimichurri Sauce, making this sauce the perfect pairing for the chicken.

Louisiana-Style Grilled Shrimp is a wonderfully hands-on dish that unquestionably should be cooked as well as eaten outdoors. Why not keep the mess out of the kitchen, too? Just be sure to provide plenty of napkins. ☀️



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.

## Citrus Marinated Chicken

- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice (juice of 1 lime)
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (juice of 1 lemon)
- 2 tablespoons orange juice (bottled is fine)
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 3/4- to 1-inch cubes
- 1/3 cup finely crumbled feta cheese

In medium bowl, whisk together all ingredients except chicken and feta cheese. Add chicken to marinade in bowl and stir to coat. Refrigerate for 30 minutes. Slide marinated chicken onto metal skewers. Discard used marinade. Cook chicken 9 to 10 minutes on pre-heated grill, turning skewers as needed to ensure even cooking. Grilling time may vary depending on type and temperature of grill. Before removing chicken from grill, cut one cube open to test for doneness. To serve, transfer chicken cubes onto serving dish and sprinkle with feta cheese. Serve with Lime Chimichurri Sauce, if desired. Makes 3 to 4 servings.

## Lime Chimichurri Sauce

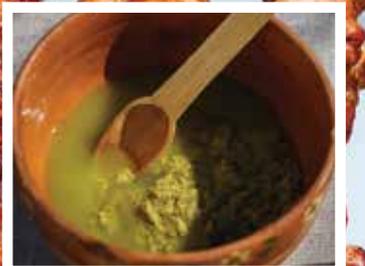
- 1/2 cup finely chopped parsley, large stems removed
- 1/4 cup finely chopped cilantro, large stems removed
- 1/4 cup minced onion
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano OR 1 to 2 teaspoons minced fresh oregano
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 teaspoon lime zest
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes

Lightly blend all ingredients except red pepper flakes in food processor. Do not puree. Stir in red pepper flakes. Makes approximately 1/2 cup sauce. Store leftover sauce in refrigerator.

## Louisiana-Style Grilled Shrimp

- 1 pound raw, extra-large, easy-peel shrimp
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic salt
- 1/2 teaspoon hot pepper sauce
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 fresh baguette, cut into slices

If using frozen shrimp, thaw in refrigerator according to package instructions; drain well. Preheat grill on high. Place unpeeled shrimp in single layer on large, grill-proof pan. (A disposable foil casserole pan works well.) Melt butter in small saucepan or microwavable dish. Whisk in Worcestershire sauce, garlic salt and pepper sauce. When grill is hot, pour butter mixture over shrimp and sprinkle generously with pepper. Place pan on grill. Cook 3 minutes before stirring to turn shrimp. Cook 3 to 4 minutes longer, stirring occasionally, just until shrimp turn pink and opaque. Grilling time may vary depending on type and temperature of grill. Remove shrimp from grill and serve immediately. Peel shrimp with hands and use baguette slices to sop up pan juices. Makes 3 servings, but recipe easily may be doubled.



# The power of a letter

By Mitchell Kyd

“News from the Path Valley Hotel”

I choose to think that writing is among the gifts I was given and was meant to share. But my actual handwriting? Shouldn't be shared. I've raced to capture a few quadrillion thoughts in my lifetime as the muse plops down to chat but she whispers so fast there's never enough time to write it all neatly. That hasn't stopped me from assailing strangers with my frustrating tangle of cursive and printed characters, especially during quarantine. I spent some of my time on a United Way request for thanks to essential workers and hellos to seniors locked in at home. It felt like what a writer could contribute.

Sometimes I think I'd like to pop in 100 years from now to see what our great-great-grandkids will really know about us, authentically, straight from our souls, when paper letters, printed photos and over-stuffed journals are truly antiquities. They'll no doubt need cryptographers to decipher any type of handwriting by then, like interpreting hieroglyphics. Without handwritten notes, how will our families of the future ever be delighted, amused and chagrined by our colorful or mundane moments, the real truths we'd never post on social media?

A friend recently unearthed a letter dated April 7, 1888. Short, not-so-sweet but written with grand flourish it read: *Dear Mother - I am now Mrs. Jewell. I know this will not meet with your approval but be that as it may, I have done what I considered my Duty as well as my pleasure to do.*

And to make sure the message wasn't too subtle for Mother to inter-



pret, the writer underlined *Duty* and *my pleasure*, twice, before closing it *Very Respectfully* and signing her name. Those 40 words have traveled across the centuries and survived the trip. That's a tale I'd like to chase.

A 1926 letter from my family's past found its way to me as a gift from a cousin several years ago. She thought she was giving me a note my grandmother had written to her grandmother. The writer had signed it simply as Mrs. M. Hull, no first name. The letter was a newsy exchange between two high school friends who had moved into the era of young wives. The writer reported she had gotten her hair shingled and asked her friend how she liked being a mother.

It was the news about her sister's death that stopped me cold. The writer wasn't my grandmother; it was my grandfather's first wife, a young woman who died within days of losing their newborn and only seven months after sending the letter. I had always known

her name but little more. The genealogy clues in her girl-talk led to building a bridge in my past where only a gap had existed.

Last summer, a member of my extended family read a letter from his grandfather at our annual picnic. It was dated August 21, 1929. Nearly 100 years later, those handwritten words tell more about the man than all the facts on the family tree. Written from his hospital bed before he died, he must have felt compelled to distill the wisdom of his lifetime for his family.

He wrote in part: *Just a few thoughts which God has asked me to leave for my dear family to think over. Or anyone else who happens to see them ... Get all the knowledge you can. Get all the enjoyment and happiness out of life you can ... Help every good cause in every way you can. Be good to the poor. Always try to be happy and cheerful. Have a smile for everybody. Make friends wherever you can. Be kind and polite. Always be kind and loving to one another.* His final advice: *Please take good care of these few lines. Read them often and practice them.*

That seems like wise guidance for this lifetime, too. Three generations of his family have found it important enough to preserve it. Here's to the power of a letter. 🌞



**YVONNE BUTTS-MITCHELL** writes and blogs (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.

# Classified Advertisements

<b>ISSUE MONTH</b>	<b>AD DEADLINE</b>
September 2020	July 17
October 2020	August 17
November 2020	September 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:

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\$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.

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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.

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## GIFT & CRAFT IDEAS

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# Classified Advertisements

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LAND, BIG & SMALL tracts for sale. Farms, camps, rural homes, hunting camp and land for lease. Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices, The Preferred Realty, Punxsutawney, Pa. office. 814-938-3031.

LOG CABIN for sale in Potter County within one mile of State Game Lands. Two bedrooms, loft area, front and back porches, full block basement, septic, well, ready to move in. Furniture negotiable. Picturesque setting. If interested, call 814-698-2431.

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DO YOU HAVE PROPERTY IN BEDFORD COUNTY that you want to sell? Maybe you are looking to buy? Call Howard Hanna Bardell Real Estate and ask for Colleen Fix. Local full-time agent with 20+ years' experience - also familiar with family properties and estates. colleenfix@hotmail.com. Let's work together! Call Colleen Fix. 814-977-2075.

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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.

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# Rules for sending men to shop during pandemic

By Earl Pitts, American

Y'all keep hearin' this crazy talk they got out there about somethin' they're callin' — "the new normal." That's how this bug blow-out is supposed to change America. They say we may never get back to the old normal, or what they call the "normal normal." They say we'll have to learn to live with the new normal — or as I like to call it — the ab-normal.

Here's a good example of the ab-normal we're looking at here. A mayor somewhere said he wants only men to do the grocery shoppin' 'til we get this virus completely under control. That's on account of women take too long and cause over-crowdin' in the store. Men shop fast. We get in, and we get out.

Man, I'll tell you what, if Pearl, my better half, wants me to stop and pick up food on the way home, I'm like a NASCAR pit crew in there. Over the wall and back in 14 seconds.

Anyway — OK. If the new normal is men are doin' groceries, there has got to be a few rules. First, you better give us a list. A man in a grocery store without a list is like a crocodile in that river where the wildebeests cross. We're just gonna grab whatever's closest.

So, give us a list. Even though the number of bags and flavors of potato chips will always be left to our discretion.

Next, no coupons. No man wants to get to the cash register and look like some tight-wad wimp. But even more important, we always forget to pull them out anyway. I can't tell you how

many times I found coupons in my pocket the next day. I hate coupons.

Also, don't ask us to buy nothin' embarrassin'. You can mostly use your imagination about what that list includes, but let me tell you, it also includes any "milk" that comes from somethin' that ain't a cow.

And finally, don't even worry about puttin' meat on the list. We're men. We got the meat thing down. Tellin' a man what meat to buy is like tellin' Kyle Busch how to drive faster. It's just not necessary.

Wake up, America! I'm Earl Pitts, American.

The other day when I didn't have nothin' else to do (and I spend a lot of time these days doin' nothin'), I seen this list on my little boy's computer of "meat alternatives." Now, the idea here is that it looks like we might be gonna have a meat shortage 'cause some meat-packin' plants have had to shut down on account of the pandemic. Or is it a dampanic? Whatever. They say we might not have no meat on the grocery shelves before it's all over. So they come up with a list of food that comes packed with protein — which is what you're missin' when you can't eat meat.

OK — eggs. I don't mind eatin' eggs. Beans. I love me some beans. Then they got hummus. Uh huh. Greek yogurt. Edamame. Like I said, I don't mind eatin' eggs and beans.

I also have come up with a list of alternatives when you can't find pork chops at your grocery store. Huntin'

Fishin'. Trappin'. Farmin'. And if things get real bad, I will include road-kill.

Remember that crazy lady who put chickens in her backyard in the middle of your neighborhood? Everybody thought that old woman had a screw loose. Yeah, but who's the crazy one now?

And this would be a great time to go huntin', too. I seen this story the other day on television where with everybody stuck at home that the wildlife is takin' over. Deer and elk are turnin' up downtown. Bears are wanderin' the streets of tourist towns. The state parks and local woodlands right now are explodin' with four-legged protein. The Good Lord's creatures are gettin' bold and reckless durin' these challengin' times.

Which should make them a whole lot easier to kill. Just sayin'.

Wake up, America! Look at it this way, that ain't a cute little thievin' squirrel stealin' the seed out of your birdfeeder. That's Sunday dinner fattenin' up. Go get'em, Annie Oakley. 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; WLMF-FM 103.9 Kane; and WVNW-FM 96.7 Burnham- Lewistown. You can also find him at [earlpittsamerican.com](http://earlpittsamerican.com).

## Enjoy yourselves!

It's a sure bet that no matter where you are, there is beauty outside your window, meaning it's a perfect time to get outside and take some seasonal photos.

Amateur photographers are encouraged to send their photos to *Penn Lines Photos*, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108-1266. Include name, address, phone number and the name of your electric cooperative. 2020 winners in each of five categories — artistic, landscape, human, animal and editor's choice — will receive \$75, and runners-up will receive \$25.

We work ahead, so please send fall photos by mid-July and winter photos by mid-September (hint: save your spring and summer photos to submit next year). 2020 photos will be returned in early 2021 if you include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. 📧



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