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ON THE COVER

Vodka distilled by Michael Cocho, a Valley Rural Electric Cooperative member and secretary/treasurer of Moonshine Mine Distillery, sits on a floor-to-ceiling shelf alongside rum, tequila liquor, whiskey and moonshine, to name a few.

Photo by Michael T. Crawford.



News from across the Commonwealth

10-digit area code dialing to become mandatory soon

Voluntary 10-digit dialing for local calling in the 814 area code began in early October, marking the next major step toward the arrival of a new 582 “overlay” area code, which will eventually serve side-by-side with the current 814 area code. The 582 area code will be assigned to new telephone numbers once the available supply of numbers in the current 814 area code is exhausted.

The use of an overlay area code preserves existing phone numbers for residents and businesses in the region, while also ensuring that a supply of new numbers will be available after 814 number combinations are no longer available.

The biggest adjustment for residents and businesses across the region is



the switch to 10-digit dialing, where callers will be required to dial the area code plus the seven-digit telephone number for

all calls. Mandatory 10-digit dialing will begin in the spring of 2021. It is important to double-check devices such as medical alert systems, alarms and any other systems that automatically make calls to be certain they are set up for 10-digit dialing.

If you have questions about the compatibility or programming of a device, contact your equipment or service provider.

Pennsylvania safeguards 2,224 acres on 25 farms statewide

With an investment of \$5,655,426 in early October through the state’s



Farmland Preservation Program, Pennsylvania safeguarded 2,224 acres on 25 farms in 17 counties. These preserved farms are protected from future residential, commercial or industrial development. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, they represent targeted investments in the future of farming and food security in Pennsylvania.

“Pennsylvania farmers have faced tremendous pressure to sell their land for more lucrative ventures,” Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding said. “These farmers have not only resisted that pressure and beat odds that were stacked against them to keep food on our tables, they have guaranteed that their farms will continue to be there to feed us in the future. This investment supports their generosity and dedication to a food-secure future for all of us.”

The 25 farms preserved are in Adams, Berks, Blair, Bucks, Butler, Cambria, Chester, Dauphin, Cum-

berland, Fayette, Lancaster, Lehigh, Northampton, Perry, Potter, Union and York counties. These farms include crop, livestock, nursery, equine, dairy and poultry operations.

Since the program began in 1988, federal, state, county and local governments have purchased permanent easements on 5,781 Pennsylvania farms totaling 589,109 acres.

Virtual 2021 Farm Show events announced

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding is previewing some of the Farm Show favorites and new events to be featured in January.

“Many Pennsylvanians look forward to exhibiting in the Pennsylvania Farm Show all year long,” Redding said. “Although this year’s competitive events look different, what remains is a showcase of the quality and breadth

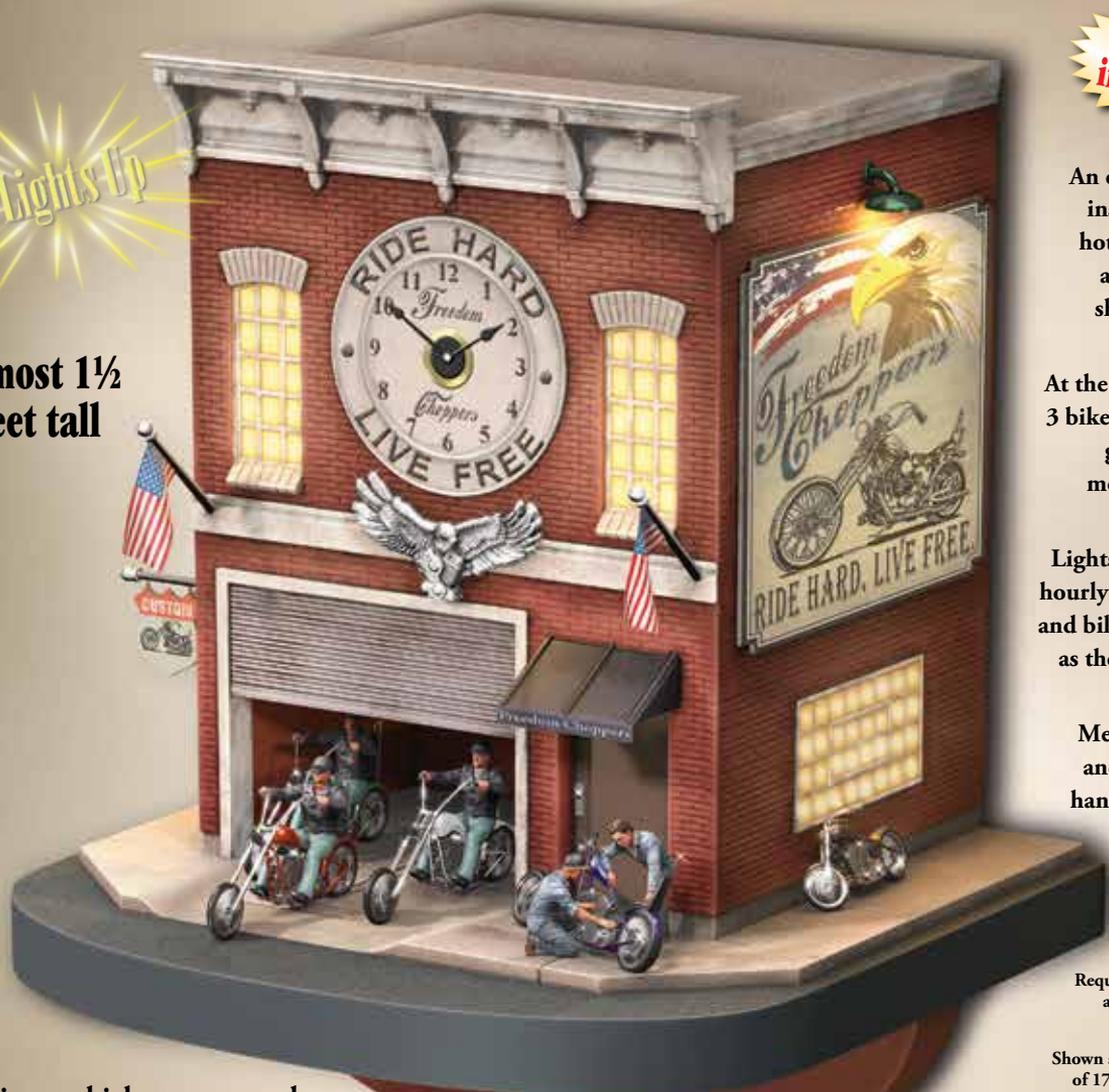
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How to breathe easy about your home's air quality

By Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen

Sealing air leaks is one of the best ways to make your home more energy efficient, and there are steps you can take to ensure your home has an adequate amount of healthy, fresh air.

The average home loses about half its air volume every hour, so it can be sealed considerably (often at a low cost) and still have more than enough healthy air.

Pollutants are the main cause of poor indoor air quality, and the most dangerous pollutant is carbon monoxide (CO). It can come from furnaces, water heaters or stoves that burn natural gas, propane, or wood and usually occurs in devices that are old, in need of repair, or installed or operated in a manner that prevents clear, unobstructed supply and exhaust of combustion air.

Excessive moisture in the air can also be considered an indoor pollutant because mold and dust mites thrive when relative humidity is above 60%. One sign your home is sealed too well is window condensation, which can happen if moist air doesn't exit the home at an adequate rate.

Pollutants can cause coughing or sneezing, but carbon monoxide can cause headaches, dizziness, nausea, shortness of breath, confusion, blurred vision, or loss of consciousness.

To ensure healthy indoor air as you increase energy efficiency, the first strategy, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), is to eliminate or reduce the source of pollution. And the first pollutant to eliminate is CO. If you have a combustion furnace, it should be inspected and serviced regularly by a professional. If you have any combustion appliances, it is critical that CO detectors are



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installed and replaced every five to seven years.

If you live in an area with radon (which you can determine by checking out EPA's radon map at epa.gov), keep it out of your home because it is the second leading cause of lung cancer. Radon tests are not expensive, and your local health authorities can provide more information. If radon levels are too high, you'll need to hire a professional to install a system that will divert radon gas to the outside of your home.

You can also reduce pollutants by never smoking inside, running exhaust fans in your bathrooms and kitchen, storing cleaning and painting products outside and not idling a vehicle in an attached garage.

The second strategy is ventilation. Your home probably has more than enough natural ventilation from outside air leaking into the home. If you suspect this isn't adequate, the best way to know for sure is to hire an energy auditor to do a blower door test.

Many experts recommend sealing the home as tight as possible and using mechanical ventilation to ensure a consistent supply of outside air. The most energy-efficient ventilation system is a heat recovery ventilator, which pulls in fresh air from outside and captures heat from indoor air before it is exhausted to the outside.

The third and final strategy is to clean the air. Change your furnace filter at least once every three months and keep your furnace supply and return air registers free of obstructions. If any rooms do not have an air return, keep the doors open. There are several home air cleaning systems available — some are effective, and some are not.

We hope these suggestions help as you seal air leaks in your home and enjoy fresh, healthy air. 🌞

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on how to breathe easier in your home, visit collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.

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

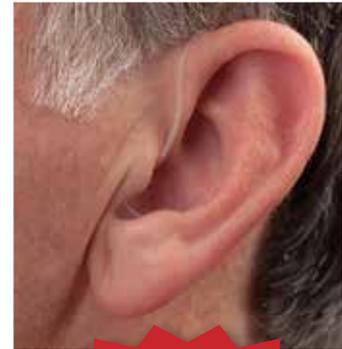
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Raising spirits

Craft distilleries boost Commonwealth economy

By Michael T. Crawford
Associate Editor



CHICK IT OUT: One of Chicken Hill Distillery's best-selling moonshine flavors, "Chicken 'n' Flip Flops," sits on display at the Kersey, Pa., location. The distillery is one of four locations, including one served by United Electric Cooperative in Cook Forest.

Vodka, gin, rum, tequila, whiskey — the list goes on. Some swear by them, some swear because of them, some just swear at them, but whatever your poison, spirits — and the craft distilleries that produce them — bring big bucks to the Commonwealth.

The Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board (PLCB) says wine and spirits drew more than \$2.66 billion in liquor and sales taxes in the 2018-2019 fiscal year, adding more than \$726 million to the state treasury after operating expenses, as well as contributing about \$3.82 million to state Department of Health drug and alcohol programs. The funds diverted to the Department of Health — 2% of the PLCB's net profits from liquor sales — contribute to treatment and rehabilitation of Pennsylvanians with alcohol addiction as well as education, prevention, and intervention efforts to eliminate substance abuse.

According to the Craft Spirits Data Project, led by the American Craft Spirits Association and the International Wine and Spirits Research, Pennsylvania was home to 89 distilleries in 2019, ranking sixth in the nation for most distilleries.

And business is still booming for today's "moonshiners."

"Within the first year, we opened up our first satellite distillery," says Nicole Meyer, part owner of Chicken Hill Distillery in Kersey, Pa., which has a satellite distillery in Cook Forest that is served by DuBois-based United Electric Cooperative. "In two years, we opened another satellite and an outlet store. Being that we're in a rural area, people are traveling more to rural areas now than cities, so that's helped out the 'shine business."

Moonshine — also known as hooch, white lightning, homebrew or mash liquor, among other colorful sobriquets — was originally a slang term for high-proof distilled spirits produced illicitly. Historically, it was made from corn mash in secret, or by the "light of the moon." Modern distilleries and

updated laws have brought moonshine out of the woods and into the light, making it more widely available — and legal. While it harkens back to that backwoods tradition, the term "moonshine" today is more of a catch-all phrase distillers use for unaged white whiskeys.

Local flavor

Nicole's husband, Dan, opened the distillery with co-owner Chris Kline in June 2018 after getting out of the



PHOTO BY NICOLE MEYER

restaurant business. The owners had an empty building, knowledge of distilling and, fortunately, an area full of local sources of ingredients.

"We try to use as much as we can from local people if it's available," says Dan Meyer, who also owns a construction company. "Our ingredients are all natural. We use local honey from a person that actually has a bee farm right around here. Our sugar maple is from maple syrup from a guy that produces in St. Marys — we actually sell a lot of his other products here, too."

Chicken Hill Distillery features nearly 30 flavors of moonshine — ranging from staple flavors like blackberry or apple pie to some of their more artistic creations such as "Tea Time" or "Chicken 'n' Flip Flops" (a mango-pineapple-berry blend) — but during the early days of the COVID-19

SATELLITE DISTILLERY: The Chicken Hill Distillery in Cook Forest, Pa., served by United Electric Cooperative, is one of four locations throughout Elk County.

pandemic's spread through Pennsylvania, Chicken Hill Distillery were blending more than just spirits.

"I can't even tell you how much hand sanitizer we made," Nicole says, recalling the initial run on hand sanitizer that left shelves across the state empty. "It's now dropping off, but in March and April when COVID first hit, we were down there running 18 hours a day bottling sanitizer on top of continuing to distill moonshine."

As COVID-19 cases began rising statewide, state-run Wine and Spirits stores shut down throughout the Commonwealth. But when life hands you lemons, why not make moonshine?

"Our sales increased like crazy," recalls Nicole, who had obtained a waiver from the state to stay open during the height of the pandemic. "We truly lucked out ... as much as I hate to say that, but with the liquor stores closing, that was a huge boost to us. Most of our customers are out-of-towners, tourists, so it really got the locals to come into our place because they weren't able to access what they typically do at the state stores."

Removing the state stores from the

PROOF POSITIVE: Michael Cocho tests the alcohol content of a recently distilled bottle of vodka at Moonshine Mine Distillery in Nanty Glo, Pa.

equation, Dan argues, has led to a lot of repeat business.

"I think it opened a lot of people up to the fact that there are a lot of good wineries and good distilleries in this state, and you don't have to go to a liquor store to get your alcohol," Dan says. "We've definitely noticed repeat business come back a lot more now, and I think people are just more apt to [visit] small town businesses — we're not overcrowded, we're nothing major — and they can come in and feel comfortable for a minute."

Family tradition

That's the goal for Michael Cocho, a member of Huntingdon-based Valley Rural Electric Cooperative and part owner of Moonshine Mine Distillery in Nanty Glo, Pa. Cocho entered the industry with a desire to rekindle a family tradition in 2017 with his son, Michael Cocho II, who serves as president of the distillery.

Moonshine Mine's story dates back more than 120 years when Cocho's grandmother brewed moonshine from a small still.

"My grandmother wasn't a bootlegger," adds Cocho, secretary/treasurer of the distillery. "She made it, and it was something that I'm sure everyone made in 1910 before Prohibition, because they were allowed to make it."



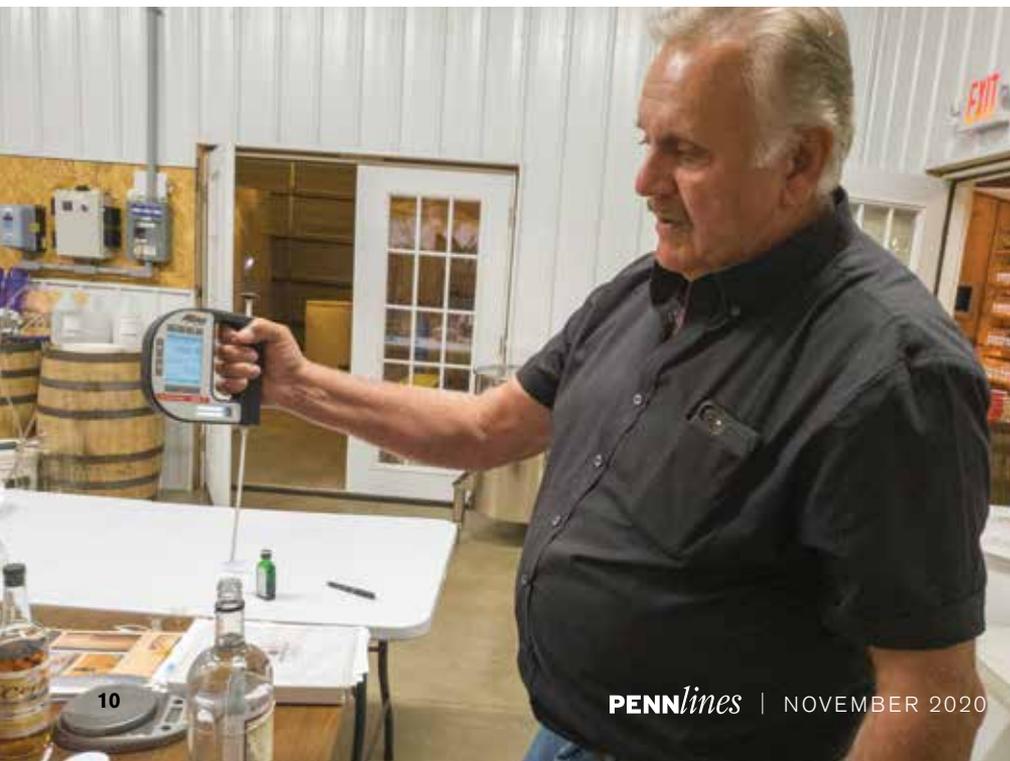
BARRELING BOURBON: Michael Cocho, a Valley Rural Electric Cooperative member and secretary/treasurer of Moonshine Mine Distillery, explains the barreling and aging process of bourbon during a tour of the distillery.

To this day, the still rests comfortably atop the distillery's floor-to-ceiling shelves of liquor. While just a conversation starter now, the still symbolizes a family affair that survived Prohibition.

"I remember seeing it in a shed when I was a kid — like, 5 years old — and I didn't even give it any thought to what it was until 15 years later when I started getting interested in making moonshine and wine," recalls Cocho. "To my surprise, she [his mother] dug it out. My mom and my uncle told me how to make it, what to use and what kind of recipes to do."

Cocho and his son brainstorm recipes — everything from bourbon to vodka, rum to tequila — while Cocho's grandchildren help design and affix the labels. All of Cocho's concoctions start as moonshine, he explains, then he lowers the proof based on what he's trying to make. Like the Meyers, the Cochos commit to sourcing their ingredients locally as much as their recipes will allow.

"We buy our corn from Huntingdon County and our rye from the Northern Cambria area," Cocho says. "Our water comes from a spring dug into the side of the hill, and we have it purified to the point where I had the guy from the DEP [Department of Environmental Protection] say it was some of the finest water he's ever seen, so we're not



dealing with chlorine or anything like that.”

Since entering the industry, Cocho has learned that distilling isn't always as simple as just mixing the right ingredients.

“Kind of like champagne, you can only call something rum or tequila if the ingredients come from a certain area,” explains Cocho, who had to rebrand his “Tequila Z” to a tequila liqueur after learning his blue agave needed to come from Mexico. “If you're making rum, you have to get the cane sugar from the Caribbean. If we bought, say, 500 pounds of sugar or molasses from the Caribbean, we'd have to report we bought 500 pounds of sugar and then report how many gallons we made out of it.”

Every gallon of spirit distilled — no matter where it comes from — is subject to a federal excise tax. Distilled spirits generally are taxed at \$13.50 per proof gallon (one liquid gallon that is 50% alcohol), although a lower rate of \$13.34 applies through the end of 2020. According to the Tax Policy Center, alcoholic beverages generated \$10 billion in federal tax revenue in 2019.



ANOTHER ROUND: Sharon Stenta, general manager at Chicken Hill Distillery in Kersey, Pa., pours a sample of apple pie-flavored moonshine. The distillery is one of four locations, including one served by United Electric Cooperative in Cook Forest.

Attention to detail

While the red tape can be tedious, that level of attention to detail is what drives Cocho's distillery.

“It's not something generic and thrown together,” he says. “We want to make our own product, not duplicate what other people do, and we do it all

by hand. We want to do our best to give the public the best they can buy.”

And soon, he hopes, in the best saloon the public can find with the finest local alcohol they can buy.

“We can sell beer, too, but it's got to be stuff that's made in Pennsylvania,” Cocho insists. “We're going to try to buy from local breweries — like the Iron Pint Brewery in Altoona or Coal Country Brewing [in Ebensburg]. And we're going to try and contact Oak Spring Winery [in Altoona] and see about selling their wine here.”

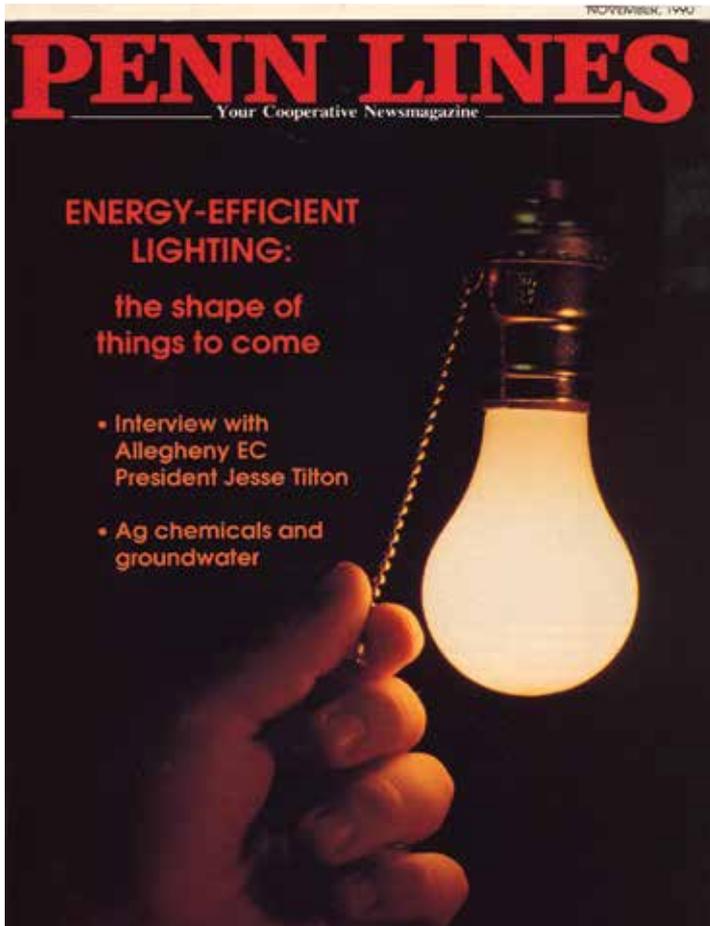
If a time traveler from 1900 winds up in Cocho's saloon — which he hopes to open after he installs some handrails for safety purposes — they would be right at home, finding wormy chestnut tabletops crafted by a local artisan using lumber taken from farms built in that era, and resting upon barrels once used to age the very Pennsylvania straight bourbon made in the next room.

“It gives it an authentic look of something that would have been there back 120 years,” he says. “I want to feel good about having people here, and I want people feeling good about being here. Hopefully, it's something I can pass on to my grandchildren.” 🍷

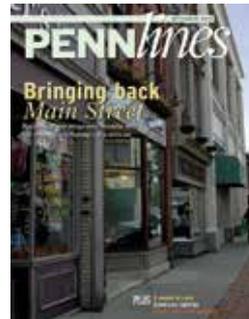


TASTING TIME: The tasting area of Chicken Hill Distillery in Kersey, Pa., waits for customers to sample some of the distillery's nearly 30 flavors of moonshine. Before being converted into a distillery in June 2018, the building was once a restaurant.

Your Newsmagazine Through the Years

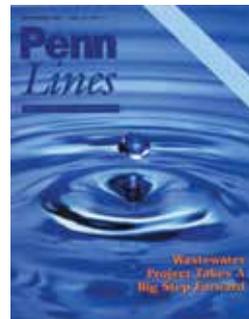


1990



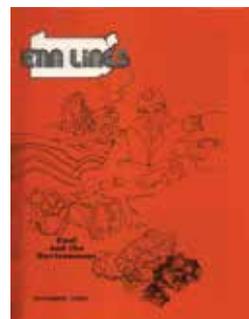
2010

Indiana and Youngsville stand as representatives of revitalization programs as local residents fix sidewalks, build up infrastructure and generate new interest in their “Main Street” communities.



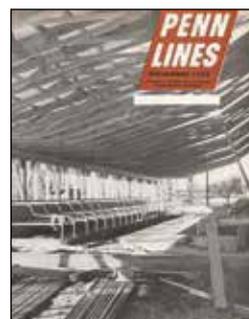
2000

Electric cooperatives address Pennsylvania’s rural wastewater crisis because of their long-standing commitment to protecting the interests of rural residents and the environment.



1980

Focusing on the role of coal, this is the first of a series of articles examining the conflict between the environment and the need to supply energy demands while relying less on foreign oil.



1970

A pole barn under construction at the Evan Wilcox Farm near Lander demonstrates a modern, free-stall installation, the latest innovation in the automatic operation of dairy barns.

A new type of energy-efficient lighting becoming more popular in 1990, called compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs), is advertised as having the ability to cut your electric bill \$30 to \$35 during the life of the bulb. CFLs combine the versatility of regular incandescent bulbs with the low-energy consumption of fluorescent lights.

In addition, CFLs eliminate many of the annoying characteristics associated with fluorescent lights: the hum, flicker and harsh, unnatural color.

Better yet, CFLs provide tremendous environmental benefits. Since CFLs don’t generate much heat, they last nine times longer (up to 8,000 hours) and use up to 75% less electricity than incandescent bulbs. As a result, one CFL lightbulb over its lifetime can prevent the emission of approximately 500 pounds of air pollutants from coal-fired electric generation facilities.

Today, LED bulbs have taken energy efficiency even further since they cost less, use less energy and last up to 25,000 hours. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, if CFLs offered 25-35% energy savings over traditional bulbs, LEDs cut energy use by 75%. They estimate that by 2027, LED bulbs could save about 348 terawatt-hours of electricity — the annual output of 44 1,000-megawatt electric power plants — which would save more than \$30 billion.

Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

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Jeff Fetzer, *Local Pages Editor*

Guest Column



Help available for those struggling to keep up with energy costs

By Lori Lowe, *Manager of Customer Service and Billing Support*

THE COVID-19 pandemic has caused financial hardship for a lot of our cooperative members, and we want to let them know that we hear you and are here to help!

If you are struggling to keep up with energy costs, the first thing you should do is contact our office to find out about available programs that offer help.

There are plans and options that will provide assistance if you need it. As an example, we offer payment plans to help you manage your energy bills. With our leveled billing program, you are charged a fixed amount each month so you can better budget your electric bill costs. We also offer payment agreement plans that allow you to catch up on your past due bill over a specific period of time.

If you are looking to reduce your energy costs, we offer free home energy audits. These audits will help identify areas of your home that could be improved or updated in order to help reduce energy use.

Tri-County also maintains the Family-In-Need Fund to provide assistance to members struggling to pay their electric bills. Family-In-Need is funded by direct donations from co-op members who voluntarily round up their electric bills to the next whole dollar amount each month. For example, if a member's bill totals \$99.56, 44 cents would be added to the bill, bringing the total to \$100. The excess (44 cents in this case) is placed in the fund, which is made available to low income and in-need Tri-County members.

The Salvation Army administers the Family-In-Need Fund. Members who

qualify for Family-In-Need assistance receive a credit on their electric bill. No actual money will go to the member. Money from the fund is available only for basic charges. Late fees, reconnect fees and other non-basic charges are ineligible.

Members can also receive emergency financial assistance to help keep their lights on through programs and organizations such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Salvation Army and local churches. LIHEAP, funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides two basic types of services. Eligible low-income persons can receive financial assistance to offset the costs of heating and/or cooling dwellings, as well as for heating emergencies, and/or have their dwellings weatherized to make them more energy efficient. This fund is processed through your local assistance office.

The Agency on Aging is another great assistance source for our elderly members. The Area Agency on Aging is a nonprofit entity that serves as a resource for all seniors and their families in Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna and Tioga counties. The agency provides information and connections to services to help senior citizens remain as independent as possible for as long as possible.

If you are a member interested in "rounding up" your electric bills through the Family-In-Need program, please fill out the form found in this issue of *Penn Lines*, sign up through your SmartHub account or call our office at 1-800-343-2559. 

Seniors 2 Seniors program achieves national recognition

By Jeff Fetzer

TRI-COUNTY'S broadband internet subsidiary, Tri-Co Connections, received national recognition this month for efforts to bridge the digital divide through its innovative Seniors 2 Seniors program.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) named Tri-Co Connections as one of 22 honorees nationwide of the inaugural Digital Opportunity Equity Recognition (DOER) Program during a virtual reception on Oct. 1.

Tri-Co Connections was recognized for its role in creating the Seniors 2 Seniors program, a training course that introduces senior citizens to computing and the benefits of high-speed internet through teacher-led instruction, hands-on practice and one-on-one support provided by local high school students.

The DOER Program was created to acknowledge efforts of Americans working to close the digital divide in communities without access to affordable, reliable broadband.

DOER awardees were recognized in three categories: Individual, Organization and Corporation. Tri-Co Connections was among 11 honorees to receive the award in the Corporation category and the only Pennsylvania entity to receive the distinction in any category. It was also the only electric cooperative-based entity to receive the award.

"It is clear that our long-standing digital divide has morphed into a monstrous new COVID-19 divide," said FCC Commissioner Geoffrey Starks in announcing 2020 DOER award winners. "From the start of the COVID-19 pandemic through now, I have heard stories about the innovative and rapid ways individuals, nonprofit organizations and companies are responding to the connectivity needs of people across this country who are seeking access to medical professionals via telehealth services, education and safe ways to communicate with family and friends."

In response to those efforts, Starks put out an open call to identify those who have stepped up in their com-

munities to ensure that no one gets left behind due to lack of broadband connectivity.

Starks said the FCC received more than 60 applications for the national recognition program and selected those that "rose to the top because of the scope of their accomplishments and the impact they made."

"From rural areas to urban corridors, students to seniors, to say this year's DOER honorees are a stellar group is an understatement," he said.

Tri-Co Connections, in partnership with the Potter County Education Council, developed the Seniors 2 Seniors Program in 2019 as a way to teach basic computing and internet skills to senior citizens. Participants attend classes held once a week at senior citizens centers in Potter County.

The eight-week course is taught by technology instructor Brent Bryant of the Seneca Highlands Career and Technical Center (CTC) and utilizes local senior high school students to assist class participants with hands-on learning activities.

The free course provides instruction on a wide range of topics, including basic computing skills, conducting internet searches, setting up an email account and sending email, saving and storing documents and files, using social networking such as Skype and FaceTime, and handling and sharing photos. There are also sessions dealing with online banking and shopping, cybersecurity, telemedicine and online government resources.

Tri-Co Connections' senior vice president of business development, Bill Gerski, came up with the idea for the program as a means of encouraging senior citizens to utilize the many benefits of high-speed internet that are becoming available to Tri-County members through Tri-Co Connections, the cooperative's broadband internet service.

"The FCC has made great strides in helping bridge the digital divide in rural areas, and to be recognized and receive this award from them is a real honor,"



SENIOR CLASS: Tri-Co Connections Senior Vice President of Business Development Bill Gerski assists Tri-County member Ernaline Hall of Coudersport during a Seniors 2 Seniors technology class at Coudersport Senior Center last December. Behind them, Seneca Highlands CTC instructor Brent Bryant talks with Coudersport High School senior Reed Powers, one of the students who assisted the senior citizens with hands-on learning activities during the 8-week course.

said Tri-County President & CEO Craig Eccher. "Kudos to our team at Tri-Co Connections and our partners at the Potter County Education Council, Seneca Highlights CTC, the Potter County Human Services Area Agency of Aging and Potter County school districts. We appreciate their efforts to develop and coordinate the Seniors 2 Seniors program in order to help familiarize our elderly population with computers and the many ways high-speed internet can enhance their lives."

About 40 senior citizens participated in the program before it was interrupted by the pandemic in the spring. Seniors 2 Seniors resumed, with social distancing measures in place, at the Galetton Senior Center in September and concluded at the end of October.

Tri-Co Connections is in the first year of a five- to six-year project to make fiber-optic broadband internet service available to all co-op members across Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative's 5,000-square-mile service territory in north-central Pennsylvania. 🌐

Tri-County, TCC raise \$20,000 for wounded veterans programs

By Jeff Fetzer

TRI-COUNTY REC and Tri-Co Connections teamed up to host a charity golf outing in September that raised \$20,000 for two Potter County organizations dedicated to providing outdoor experiences to disabled military veterans.

At the conclusion of the inaugural Tri-County REC & Tri-Co Connections Charity Golf Tournament, held Monday, Sept. 21, at Tyoga Country Club in Wellsboro, Tri-County President & CEO Craig Eccher presented checks of \$10,000 each to LEEK Hunting and Mountain Preserve, and Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing/God's Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

"We are pleased that so many of our vendors, business associates and electric cooperatives from across the state joined us for a day of fun and networking on the golf course while also raising a substantial amount of funds for some truly great local organizations," said Craig Eccher, Tri-County president and chief executive officer. "As a cooperative, one of our core principles is 'Concern for community,' and these donations allow us to honor the wounded warriors who have sacrificed so much in their service to our country."

In addition to raising funds for two worthy causes, the event was organized as a means of showing appreciation and providing networking opportunities to the many vendors and other partners who have helped the cooperative get the Tri-Co Connections fiber broadband project off to a great start, said Bill Gerski, senior vice president of business development for the co-op's high-speed internet subsidiary.

Twenty-four teams competed in the four-person scramble tournament, which was highlighted by the participation of former 1989 Heisman Trophy finalist Blair Thomas, a running back for Penn State University who went on to play for six years in the National Football League.

Taking first place in the tournament was the team of Lagrew Printing Co.



FUNDS RAISED: Tri-County President & CEO Craig Eccher and Tri-Co Connections Senior Vice President for Business Development Bill Gerski present checks for \$10,000 to two Potter County organizations that host events for wounded veterans. The funds, raised during the inaugural Tri-County REC & Tri-Co Connections Charity Golf Tournament held at Tyoga Country Club in Wellsboro in September, were awarded to Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing/God's Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited (TU) and LEEK Hunting and Mountain Preserve. Pictured in the top photo are, from left: God's Country Chapter TU President David Saulter, Eccher, TU chapter members Jesse Hyde and Cork Sauve, Gerski, and TU Treasurer Dr. Pete Ryan. Below, from left, are: LEEK representatives Brett Rogers and Jeff West, Eccher, LEEK representative Jordan Leete, and Gerski.



of Coudersport with a 16-under-par score of 55. The team of First Citizens Community Bank, Mansfield, finished second at 14 under par.

LEEK Hunting and Mountain Preserve, located in Oswayo, offers disabled veterans opportunities to participate in a variety of hunting, fishing and shooting sports activities in an

accessible and supportive environment during events hosted at the 278-acre preserve throughout the year.

Staffed entirely by volunteers, LEEK is a nonprofit organization that has provided outdoor opportunities to hundreds of wounded warriors from across the country since holding its
(continues on page 12d)

Wounded veterans programs

(continued from page 12c)

first hunting event for disabled veterans in 2008. The preserve is owned by LEEK founder and Tri-County member Ed Fisher of Lewisberry, a military veteran who decided to open up his Potter County property to wounded veterans as a way of giving back to the men and women whose military service resulted in physical injuries or post-traumatic stress disorder.

The God's Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited coordinates an annual three-day summer event for wounded veterans through the Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing program at Big Moore's Run Fish and Game Preserve near Austin.

The mission of the national Project Healing Waters program is to assist in the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled active-duty military personnel and veterans through fly-fishing and fly-tying education and outings.

Tri-County member Roy Magarigal, a founding member of the God's Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited, began donating use of his 540-acre fishing preserve for Project Healing Waters outings in 2008. Magarigal's daughter and son-in-law, Maureen and Tom McDonald, assumed ownership of the preserve in 2015 and continue the tradition of hosting the Project Healing Waters event on the property at no charge. 🌿



Family-In-Need Fund
It's common cents

Financial hardships created by the COVID-19 pandemic have caused many cooperative families to struggle keeping 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: _____

BE PREPARED FOR A POWER OUTAGE

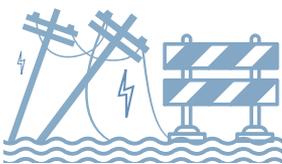
Extended power outages may impact the whole community and the economy.



FEMA

FEMA V-1008/May 2018

A power outage is when the electrical power goes out unexpectedly.



May disrupt communications, water, transportation



May close retail businesses, grocery stores, gas stations, ATMs, banks, and other services



Can cause food spoilage, water contamination



Can prevent use of medical devices

PROTECT YOURSELF DURING A POWER OUTAGE

Keep freezers and refrigerators closed.



Disconnect appliances and electronics to avoid damage from electrical surges.

Only use generators outdoors and away from windows.



Use alternate plans for refrigerating medicines or power-dependent medical devices.

Do not use a gas stove to heat your home.



If safe, go to an alternate location for heat or cooling.



Check on neighbors.

Is a heat pump right for my home?

By Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen

If you're thinking about installing a new heat pump in your home, there are a few things you may want to consider.

The two most common types of heat pumps — a ductless fan system in lieu of baseboard heaters, and a system that blows through furnace vents — are often good options for your home.

Replacing your electric baseboard heaters with a ductless mini-split heat pump is a good solution because older baseboard heaters are typically inefficient. The mini-split system has a compressor outside that is connected with refrigerant lines to the blowers inside. A ductless system can serve up to four zones, so it can heat a small home or can be used in combination with another heating system in a larger home. The ductless mini-split system is a great option for a home that does not have a duct system, or if the existing duct system is inefficient or poorly designed.

Replacing your central heating and air conditioning (HVAC) system with a central system air-source heat pump puts the system's compressor outside and connects to the home's duct system to distribute cold or warm air through the existing vents. The central system heat pump can be an efficient option if your existing duct system is in good shape.

A less common type of heat pump is a ground-source, or geothermal, system that taps into heat that's naturally underground year-round. Geothermal systems are typically an expensive investment, but they are quite efficient.

Heat pumps are typically much more efficient than electric resistance



MARCELA GARA, RESOURCE MEDIA

INSTALLATION: Heat pumps are efficient options in most climates, even for new construction.

systems and can be a solid solution in a wide variety of circumstances. They can be the right choice in a manufactured home, a construction addition or as a replacement for a broken or inefficient HVAC system. They're also becoming more popular for central heating in new construction.

Here's how heat pumps work: During winter, they pull warmth from the outside air into the home; during summer, the process is reversed and warmth from inside the home is exhausted outside. It may seem odd that warmth can be found in outdoor winter air, but heat pumps are amazing inventions. They've become much more efficient in recent years to the point that they can be effective year-

(continues on page 15)



PETER STEVENS

OUTDOOR OPTION: An air-source heat pump compressor located outside the house can distribute hot and cold air through your existing duct system.

TECH TRENDS

(continued from page 14)

round in most cold winter climates.

The efficiency of a heat pump is measured in two ways: The HSPF (Heating Season Performance Factor) rating measures heating efficiency, and the SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio) rating measures cooling efficiency. The minimum ratings for a heat pump are HSPF 8.2 and SEER 14. Heat pumps with the Energy Star® rating are significantly more efficient than the minimum standard.

Here's how to know if you should consider a heat pump for your home:

Want to save money? If you are currently heating your home with electric resistance or propane or heating oil, and you seal air leaks and install additional insulation, installing an efficient heat pump could reduce your heating costs by up to 75%. And if you are currently cooling your home with an old A/C system or window A/C units, you could also cut your cooling costs.

Want heating and cooling flexibility? A ductless mini-split heat pump can serve up to four individual zones or rooms, and each room's temperature can be controlled separately.

Want safer heat? Heat pumps eliminate the need to burn fuels inside your home and exhaust combustion gases. There's no risk of carbon monoxide or gas leaks that can come from flaws in a system that runs on natural gas, propane, fuel oil or wood.

Before you consider installing any new heating and cooling system in your home, I strongly suggest you conduct an energy audit. Your electric co-op may provide energy audits or be able to recommend a local professional.

As with any major home improvements or installations, be sure to get a few quotes and references *before* committing or making any payments. 🌱

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on heat pumps, please visit collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.

KEEPING CURRENT

(continued from page 4)

of Pennsylvania's agriculture industry and those who make it thrive."

The virtual 2021 Pennsylvania Farm Show is scheduled to take place from Jan. 9-16, 2021, and will be presented through a variety of live and prerecorded events, as well as an online resource library. The show will include, but not be limited to:

- ▶ A traditional 1,000-pound butter sculpture;
- ▶ Live duckling and beehive cams available 24/7;
- ▶ PA Preferred® Culinary Connection cooking and beverage-pairing demonstrations (with ingredients provided in advance so Pennsylvanians can cook along with chefs);
- ▶ Daily, live-action demonstrations, from Angora-Palooza to tractor pulls, for family fun entertainment; and
- ▶ Evening bedtime stories for young, aspiring agriculturalists.

The virtual Farm Show will also hold the following competitive events:

- ▶ Agriculture education
- ▶ Apiary
- ▶ Beer
- ▶ Christmas trees
- ▶ Corn and small grains
- ▶ Family living
- ▶ Junior market cattle
- ▶ Maple syrup
- ▶ Mushrooms
- ▶ Potatoes
- ▶ Vegetables
- ▶ Wine
- ▶ Wool

In addition to these Farm Show staples, new opportunities will include a coloring contest, educational video contest, public speaking contest and additional Skill-a-thon contests.

Every competition will have modified rules and regulations to effectively protect against COVID-19. Competitors are encouraged to review the rules and regulations prior to entering, as they feature changes to classes, registration requirements, entry deadlines, and method of getting items to the Farm Show Complex.



PGC partnering with deer hunters

The Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) is offering a chronic wasting disease (CWD) hotline where hunters with questions about where CWD is, what special rules apply in those places, how to handle deer they harvest in Disease Management Areas (DMAs) and more can quickly and easily get information. The commission can be contacted at 1-833-INFOCWD (1-833-463-6293) or infocwd@pa.gov.

Hunters who harvest a deer within a DMA can drop its head in one of many collection bins. PGC officials will test it for CWD free of charge.

In addition to the hotline and email, there's a free Pennsylvania Game Commission app (downloadable from the Apple app store or Google Play). Those without the app can access the same information from the commission's CWD site online at pgcdatacollection.pa.gov/CWDResultsLookup. 🌱

Monitoring the Line for Reliability

Electric co-ops use a variety of monitoring and automation technologies that improve power reliability, shorten outage times and reduce labor time for crews. Here are four technologies we use to improve reliability.



Drones

Drones may be used to inspect the power lines we maintain. Drones can provide infrared evaluation to locate hot spots on power lines and vegetation assessment to locate trees and other vegetation that can cause outages.

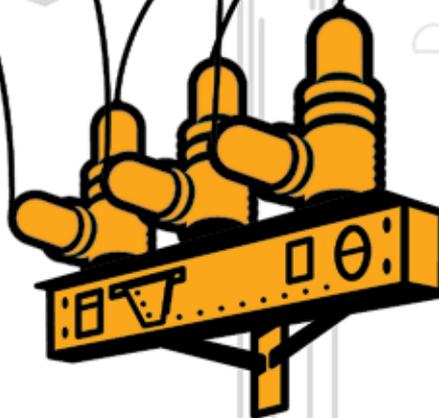
Power Sensors

Power sensors typically clamp on or connect to the power line and provide near real-time reporting on power, voltage, current and more - all of which helps to provide more reliable energy to consumer-members.



AMI

Advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) provides real-time data to the co-op. In addition to meter reading, this data helps us detect faults and other potential problems on the electrical system, resulting in increased power reliability for consumer-members.



Reclosers

A recloser acts like a circuit breaker for power lines. When a problem occurs, the recloser temporarily shuts off power. If the problem is temporary, the recloser restores power. (This is why you sometimes see the power blink.) If the problem persists, the recloser will shut off power until a crew can make repairs. The recloser's antenna provides wireless, real-time data back to the co-op.



All hail the ‘roast beast’

By Mitchell Kyd

“News from the Path Valley Hotel”

It’s “roast beast” season again! Home-cured ham, freshly dressed turkey and venison roast could all be on the menu with the promise of another family favorite — leftovers! For a lot of us, our holiday spread will come directly from farm or woods to table, no Styrofoam required.

It’s another beautiful thing about rural living; we know where our food originates. Even if we are a few generations removed from our hunter and gatherer pasts, we’re not too far gone to understand and appreciate the source of our abundance.

Out here, we know chocolate milk does not come from brown cows, and unlike my college roommate, we’ve always known white milk is not vanilla. We understand that you can’t say you don’t eat pork and then ask for bacon on your sandwich, or question why you can’t plant pickles and skip the cukes.

We’re also blessed with an abundance of great cooks. That usually starts with a strategist who knows exactly how to cut and trim the makings of a feast to best advantage. Then the alchemist steps in. Whether gifted at birth or a faithful student of tradition, the alchemist knows exactly what potions to blend and magic to conjure to coax out every last trickle of flavor. Add the artist’s flair for a glaze and garnish and watch a platter of protein transformed into legend.

Sadly, not every cook succeeds at every meal, and I clearly remember my first solo turkey. It’s a complicated thing, right? A lot of ways to get it wrong? It’s not that hard to overlook



a little giblet packet tucked inside the bird before it all gets roasted.

Even my mom, cook extraordinaire, fessed up to an occasional glitch across her lifetime, like the little hiccup with dessert. In a young bride’s quest to delight her hubby, she tackled a home-made raisin pie. I’m sure her crust was flaky, fluted and browned to perfection. It always was. But she had somehow missed the step where you must plump the raisins before baking. As the story goes, Dad enjoyed the whole pie, probably swimming in milk. In pursuit of a long and happy marriage, he let months go by before admitting it was a lot like eating buckshot.

There are times when even the greatest cooks must surely face challenges. I remember wondering how you would cook badger when I found it in my fridge, as one example. My brother-in-law had been house-sitting while we honeymooned, and I came home to the usual remnants of a bachelor’s occupation: pizza boxes, empty cans and a few dirty plates under the sofa. I also found a wad of butcher paper balled up in the fridge with the words “Badger Meatloaf” scrawled across it.

Some time had passed before I discovered it, and by then the chunk inside was sprouting green fuzzies. I lobbed it into the woods as possum fodder, but not before asking my husband if badgers were native to Pennsylvania. Apparently, he hadn’t found that question worth noting because the topic never came up again. For years.

It wasn’t until we had kids and were gathered in his dad’s kitchen that I guaranteed badger meatloaf would become one of those remember-the-time-when stories. Conversation came around to PawPaw’s generous neighbors and their frequent gifts of home-cooked meals and breads. I must have blurted out my big “ah-ha!” the instant I made the connection. The mystery meatloaf had come from those great neighbors — Tom and Helen Badger. The moral of this story? You endear yourself to in-laws when they laugh with you at your expense.

Thanksgiving is almost here, so laugh a little, and create some family stories. No matter what you’re serving — ham, wild game or TurDuckEn from the fryer — take a moment to honor the roast beast. Then thank a farmer, a feed mill, a butcher and the cook. It’s always good to be reminded of the many founders of our feasts. 🍗



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.

The great soup debate

By Janette Hess

Some soup aficionados crave the hot, deeply flavored treat year-round. Others confine their consumption to cold-weather months. Either way, everyone can agree that now is the perfect time to make soup.

A bit more hearty than traditional Italian minestrone, Winter Minestrone gets its flavor boost from bacon, roasted garlic and fire-roasted tomatoes. The addition of a parmesan cheese rind to the cooking pot gives this minestrone unparalleled richness.

Savory and just a bit spicy, Tex-Mex Soup features a traditional combination of pork, potatoes, black beans, and corn. Green enchilada sauce ties it all together. Simple Smokey Chili relies on fire-roasted tomatoes and smoked paprika for its distinctive taste. Canned pumpkin functions as a surprising thickener — and gives a nod to the season. ☀



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.

Winter Minestrone

- 4 strips thick bacon, cut into small pieces
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 stalks celery, thinly sliced
- 2 teaspoons roasted garlic (from a jar)
- 1 28-ounce can diced fire-roasted tomatoes
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 1 cup water
- 3 carrots, diced
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon each dried thyme, oregano and basil
- 1 8-ounce wedge parmesan cheese
- 1 can dark red kidney beans
- 1/2 cup ditalini pasta or other small pasta
- Salt (up to 1/2 teaspoon) and freshly ground pepper to taste

In large, heavy soup pot, cook bacon until crisp. Leave bacon and 1 tablespoon drippings in pot. Add onion and celery; simmer for 10 minutes. Add garlic during last minute. Add tomatoes, broth, water, carrots and seasonings. Cut rind from parmesan wedge and add to pot. Cover and simmer until carrots are soft. Add water. Bring mixture to a boil and add beans and pasta. Reduce heat to medium and cook until pasta is soft, about 10 minutes. Discard parmesan rind and bay leaves. Serve with freshly grated parmesan cheese. Makes 12 generous cups.

Tex-Mex Soup

- 1 pound trimmed pork loin or roast, cut into small cubes (about 2 cups)
- 2 tablespoons taco seasoning mix, divided
- 4 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 10-ounce can green enchilada sauce
- 1 10-ounce can diced mild tomatoes with green chilies
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 3 medium russet potatoes
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 15-ounce can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 cups frozen corn
- Salt to taste
- Chopped fresh cilantro and grated cheese for garnish

Using spatula or clean fingertips, work taco seasoning into pork; let rest for 15 minutes. Heat oil over medium heat in large, heavy soup pot. Brown pork cubes in hot oil for 8 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add onion and bell pepper. Sauté for 5 minutes, adding garlic during last minute of cooking. Add enchilada sauce, tomatoes and broth. Bring mixture to boil, reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes. Peel potatoes. Cut 2 1/2 potatoes into small cubes; grate remaining potato with fine grater. Add all potatoes to pot. Simmer over low heat for 45 to 55 minutes or until pork and potatoes are tender. Add beans and corn. Simmer an additional 10 minutes and add salt, if needed. Makes 12 generous cups.

Simple Smokey Chili

- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 28-ounce can fire-roasted diced tomatoes
- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- 3 cups water
- 2 beef bouillon cubes
- 2 generous tablespoons smoked paprika
- 1 1/2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 can kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can black beans, rinsed and drained

Brown ground beef in heavy soup pot. Drain if needed. Add onion. Continue to cook and stir until onion softens. Add tomatoes, pumpkin, water, bouillon cubes and spices. Bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer until bouillon is dissolved. Add beans. Simmer on very low heat until flavors have blended. Add up to 1 cup more water as needed to achieve desired thickness. Makes approximately 10 cups.



How to select a bathroom vent fan

By James Dulley

Dear Jim: My old bathroom vent fan sounds like a low-flying jet, and it does not draw well. I need a new quiet one that is also efficient. What features are best for a new bathroom fan? — *Paul J.*

Dear Paul: Some inexpensive bathroom vent fans are noisy right out of the box. If your old fan was quiet years ago, you may be able to repair it. Remove the cover and unplug it. Clean out all the dust and tighten all the screws. Just a loose screw or two can create an annoying, loud sound.

Bathroom fan rebuilding kits are available for many of the economy fans that builders often install. A kit costs less than \$50 and takes only about 15 minutes to install. It includes a new quiet-design motor, multiple motor plates to adapt to many models, and an updated grille. The fan can be as much as 50% quieter.

If you decide you really need a new bathroom fan, there are some ultra-quiet ones available. Most of these fans have all the newest features for both convenience and energy conservation. You can expect to pay up to several hundred dollars for this type of fan.

Before you start looking at new bathroom fans, it is important to select the proper cfm (cubic feet per minute of air flow) size. A fan with a lower cfm rating is generally quieter than a larger one with the same design and features. The sound level should be listed somewhere on the packaging. Ones with a 6-inch duct, instead of a standard 4-inch one, are usually quieter.

If you select a bathroom fan that is too small, it may not be able to vent the excess moisture or odors fast enough, if at all. If one is too large, it will be noisier, waste electricity and draw out



excessive conditioned room air.

A general guideline by Home Ventilating Institute (hvi.org) is 1.1 cfm of air flow capacity is needed for each square foot of bathroom floor area. When comparing vent fan efficiencies, Energy Star (energystar.gov) recommends a small fan should remove a minimum of 1.4 cfm/watt and a larger fan (90 cfm and larger) must remove twice that much per watt.

You also have to decide what basic design of bathroom fan you need: fan only, fan/light, fan/light/heater, or fan/light/night light. Each has its advantages, and the prices vary significantly. You will also find various fan controls, such as a simple on/off wall switch and motion- or humidity-sensing.

Bathroom vent fans that use humidity-sensing controls are effective and efficient. These come on automatically at a high humidity level — after showering, for example — and shut off automatically. This is ideal for a child's bathroom because they tend to forget to turn it off. These models also include

manual controls so you can switch them on and off at will.

For the most convenience and efficiency, select one with a multispeed fan motor, a built-in LED light, and a motion/humidity sensor. If the moisture level is not excessively high, the motion sensor will start the fan when you enter the bathroom and stop it when you leave. The shutoff delay time after you leave the room is adjustable, but it may stay on longer if the humidity sensor tells it to stay on.

The quietest option is an efficient in-line vent fan motor that is located in the attic and vents outdoors. Ducts from the powerful fan can run to two separate inlet grilles, such as one over the sink and one over the bathtub. It is compatible with any type of sensor and control. ☀



Have a question for Jim? Send inquiries to **James Dulley**, Penn Lines, 6906 Royalgreen Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45244 or visit www.dulley.com.

Classified Advertisements

ISSUE MONTH	AD DEADLINE
January 2021	November 16
February 2021	December 17
March 2021	January 18

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.

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- 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.

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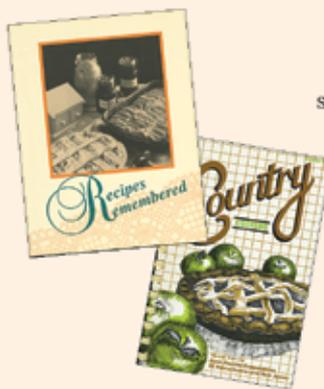
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How can napping be dangerous if it's just 'accidentally falling asleep?'

By Earl Pitts, American

You know what makes me sick? You know what makes me so mad I just wanna throw sand in the Sandman's eyes ... and then when he's incapacitated, throw him off a bridge?

It's this here new researchin' story they got out there about takin' a nap. These pointdexter science dweebs say takin' a nap longer than two hours is dangerous to your health. Yeah, sleepin' is good. Too much napttime is bad. That don't make no sense, does it? Isn't nappin' the same as sleepin'? In handy, convenient lengths?

My better half Pearl was tellin' me about this nappin' story last night, and I go, "I don't know why you're tellin' me this, woman. I have never took a nap in my whole life."

Well, she rolled her eyes into the back of her head so hard, I thought she was goin' full *Children of the Corn* on me. She says, "Please, Earl ... you fall asleep in your recliner in the middle of *Wheel of Fortune*. You sleep in the car when I'm drivin' — like a little baby in a car seat. You've nodded off at the kitchen table."

And I says, "Exactly my point, Pearl. I have never took a nap in my life. I 'accidentally fall asleep' all the time."

Oh yeah, there is a difference between takin' a nap and accidentally fallin' asleep. First off, most people who take a nap will lay down in their beds. You can accidentally fall asleep anywhere. In your recliner, in your better half's car. In church. At work. A kid's ball game. Junior Meeker accidentally fell asleep bass fishin' one time. Rolled right off his boat into

Mudd Lake. Which — thankfully — woke him up.

Plus, when people take a nap, they prepare to take a nap. They actually say to themselves, "I'm gonna take a nap." Might take the wallet out of their jeans. Make sure they go to the bathroom. Get comfortable. When you accidentally fall asleep, you have no idea it's comin'. You think you're just gonna rest your eyes, and the next thing you know ... it's 45 minutes later, and you got drool on your shirt. What happened?

Wake up, America! I don't know ... Pearl might have continued the conversation, but I can't be sure. I kind of dozed off. I'm Earl Pitts, American.

Yeah, I don't know if you heard this, but they've gone and canceled the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade. No doubt this is devastatin' news to young children, simple-minded adults and Al Roker fans everywhere.

I'm beginnin' to think this pandemic is finally throwin' out a few favors. On account of — let me flat out tell you — I hate parades.

I mean, there are several things about this year I miss. The Duck Inn. The county fair. Baseball games. And plenty others, too.

The one thing I do not miss: parades. And I don't mind people gettin' together to march down Main Street. I ain't no marchin' band Scrooge. It's just in the little one-horse, po-dunk town where we live, they got too dang many of them. I mean, these people will throw a parade at the drop of a hat.

And a small-town parade must look the same in every small town you go to. There's the store manager of the local grocery store sittin' on a hay bale in the back of a Ford pickup. "Hey, Phil, over here! Wow, I haven't seen Phil since ... well, this mornin' when I went to get milk."

And you got to go to a small-town parade if you got kids — they're gonna be in it! Your kids will be in the town parade from the first year they can walk 'til the time they move out. In fact, the reason most kids leave little towns is they're tired of bein' in parades. My kids was in the parade for Cub Scouts, soccer, Little League, science club, marchin' band, 4-H, you name it. My little girl Sandra Dee was in the parade three times ... at the back ... where they put all the kids that weren't in anything else. "Look, there's Sandra Dee!" "Where?"

Wake up, America! Yeah, so I ain't gonna miss the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. That's just a bigger small-town parade. With balloon animals and one of the judges from *The Voice*. Thanks Macy's, but it was gonna be a hard pass anyway. 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;

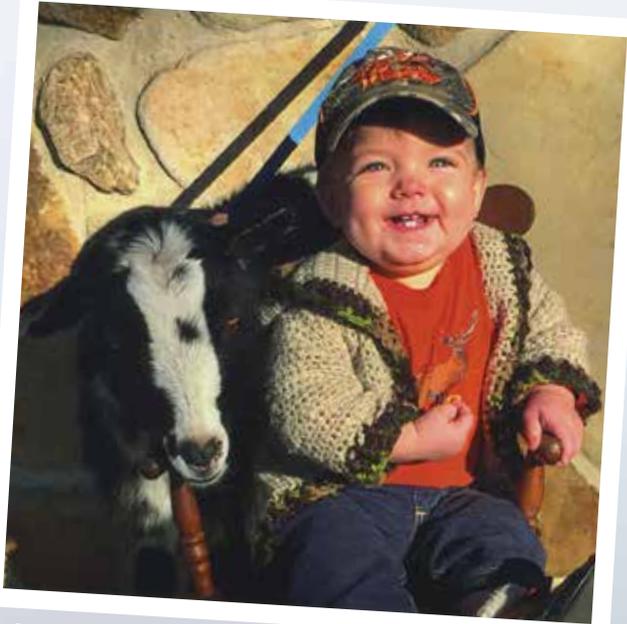
WARM-AM 590 Wilkes-Barre/Scranton; WIOO-AM 1000 Carlisle; WEEO-AM 1480 Shippensburg; WMTZ-FM 96.5 Johnstown; WQBR-FM 99.9/92.7 McElhattan; WLMF-FM 103.9 Kane; and WVNW-FM 96.7 Burnham-Lewistown. You can also find him at earlpittsamerican.com.

Thank you

We want to thank all of the amateur photographers who submitted photos for the 2020 “Rural Reflections” contest, which is now closed. Winners, chosen by an independent panel of judges, will be printed in the January and February issues of *Penn Lines*.

We are now accepting photos for the 2021 contest. If your photo wins top honors, you could receive a \$75 prize in one of five categories: artistic, landscape, human subject, animal and editor’s choice. Runners-up in each category will receive a \$25 prize.

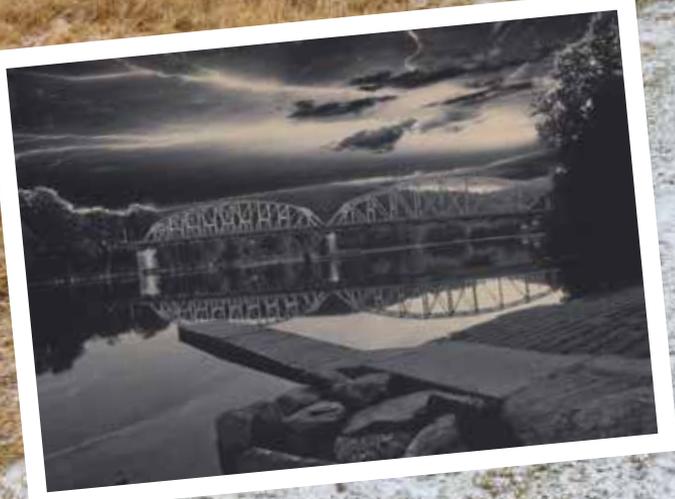
Send photos (no digital files, please) to: *Penn Lines* Photos, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA 17108-1266. Include your name, address, phone number, and the name of the electric cooperative serving your home, business, or seasonal residence. Our publication deadlines require us to work ahead, so send your photos in early. Photos will be returned if a self-addressed, stamped envelope is included. 📧



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Mention code Card100 when you order TV only. Mention code Card200 when you order both TV and internet services. Courtesy of GoDISH.com with activation, certain conditions apply. Free \$200 VISA Gift Card when you order a qualifying service (premium customer qualification only).

\$59⁹⁹ month for TV

2-YEAR TV PRICE LOCK!

It's All Included!

- ✓ Includes 190 Channels with Locals
- ✓ Includes Hopper Smart HD DVR
- ✓ Includes HD Programming
- ✓ Includes One TV, Add More for \$5/ea.
- ✓ Includes Voice Remote Requires internet connected Hopper.



FREE Premium Channels After 3 mos. you will be billed \$30/mo unless you call to cancel.

NETFLIX | **- Fully Integrated -**
 Just Change The Channel And Watch!
Netflix subscription required.

Add Internet!

Blazing-Fast + Internet

~~\$59⁹⁹ month for Internet~~ **\$40** per month for Internet

- Speeds from 25Mbps-1 Gbps
- No Matter Where You Live
- Now with Unlimited Data!

Save up to \$20/month!*

*\$ off discount offers vary by service address. TV service not required for Internet. Speeds and prices vary by provider. Call for details or visit godish.com/internet/hughesnet.

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1-866-290-7151
Mon-Fri: 7am-10pm • Sat: 7am-9pm • Sun: 10am-7pm Central Time

dish
 Authorized Retailer

Offer for new and qualifying former customers only. Important Terms and Conditions:
 Qualification: Advertised price requires credit qualification and 24-month commitment. Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. Offer ends 1/13/21. 2-Year Commitment: Early termination fee of \$20/mo. remaining applies if you cancel early. Included in 2-year price guarantee at \$59.99 advertised price: America's Top 120 programming package, local channels, HD service fees, and Hopper Duo Smart DVR for 1 TV. Included in 2-year price guarantee for additional cost: Programming package upgrades (\$74.99 for AT120+, \$84.99 for AT200, \$94.99 for AT250), monthly fees for upgraded or additional receivers (\$5-\$7 per additional TV, receivers with additional functionality may be \$10-\$15). Regional Sports: RSN Surcharge up to \$3/mo. applies to AT120+ and higher packages and varies based on location. NOT included in 2-year price guarantee or advertised price (and subject to change): Taxes & surcharges, add-on programming (including premium channels), DISH Protect, and transactional fees. Premium Channels: 3 Mos. Free: After 3 mos., you will be billed \$30/mo. for Showtime, Starz, and DISH Movie Pack unless you call or go online to cancel. Remote: The DISH Voice Remote with the Google Assistant requires internet-connected Hopper, Joey, or Wally device. Customer must press Voice Remote button to activate feature. The Google Assistant Smart Home features require Google account and compatible devices. Google is a trademark of Google LLC. Other: Netflix streaming membership required. All packages, programming, features, and functionality and all prices and fees not included in price lock are subject to change without notice. After 6 mos., if selected, you will be billed \$9.99/mo. for DISH Protect Silver unless you call to cancel. After 2 years, then-current everyday prices for all services apply. For business customers, additional monthly fees may apply. Free standard professional installation only. Indiana C.P.D Reg. No. - 19-08615. ©2020 GoDISH.com. All rights reserved. Internet speeds, prices, and providers vary by customer address. \$40 price refers to widely available plan from multiple providers. Restrictions apply. Nationwide availability of 25 Mbps plan is subject to change without notice. The application of "Unlimited Data with no Hard Data Limits" varies by provider, but commonly mean that your access to the internet will not be stopped by going over a data limit, but that speeds may be lowered. Call for details. Internet not provided by DISH and will be billed separately.