

SEPTEMBER 2026

PENNLINES

The Guardians of Flight 93

For 25 Years, Locals
Have Kept Memories
of 9/11 Heroes Alive

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PHOTO BY JEFF FETZER

The Flight 93 National Memorial in Somerset County, once the site of a strip mine, pays tribute to the brave actions of 40 men and women, now remembered as the heroes of 9/11.



ON THE COVER

Before a national memorial took shape in Somerset County, residents kept watch over the field where United Airlines Flight 93 crashed on 9/11. Twenty-five years later, the ambassadors remain, greeting visitors from around the world who come to pay their respects.

PHOTO BY JEFF FETZER

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A Field, a Community and a Promise

What 'Concern for Community' Actually Looks Like



STEVE BRAME

THERE ARE DAYS THAT BEGIN like any other and end as something the world will never forget.

Sept. 11, 2001, is one of them.

Like so many others, I remember where I was when the first reports came in, and the disbelief as the scope of the attacks became clear. I also remember learning that one of the four hijacked flights had crashed in Pennsylvania, in a field in Somerset County, an area served by one of our own electric cooperatives.

That is when the day stopped being a distant disaster and became something that hit much closer to home.

At the time I was working in and around two worlds that were suddenly connected to the same tragedy: Pennsylvania's electric cooperative community, and the Ridge Administration, my previous employer, which was managing the aftermath at the state level.

What has stayed with me, though, isn't the scale of the attacks. It's the way people responded.

In those first hours, there was no playbook for what had happened in Somerset County. There was simply work to be done.

When the plane crashed, it took out power for a group of Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) members, but with the site under federal control, normal restoration procedures were impossible. Co-op lineworkers — pros at troubleshooting — found another way to get the lights back on within hours, rather than weeks, by working with a private utility that had lines nearby.

Elsewhere, first responders needed support, so locals brought food and drinks. Grieving families and investigators arrived in Shanksville, and the community opened its arms and doors to them.

Weeks later, visitors started finding their way to the makeshift memorial overlooking the crash site, many of them carrying grief, confusion and questions. A group of residents, since known as Flight 93's "ambassadors," began arriving in shifts to help out-of-towners understand what they were seeing and to listen to the stories strangers needed to tell.

They kept showing up, and 25 years later, many still do. (This month's feature highlights them.)

We talk about "concern for community" as one of the seven cooperative principles, and rightly so. But a principle only means something if it shows up in what people actually do. In Somerset County, it did. In lineworkers finding a way to restore service when the usual path was closed. In neighbors looking after the families of the flight's heroes. In residents who understood that a terrible event had put an unexpected duty on their community, and they chose to embrace it.

Many of those ambassadors are Somerset REC members, and over the years they became the tragedy's story-bearers. Bearing a story is more than repeating it. It means taking responsibility for keeping it alive, for making sure the next generation understands that the people aboard Flight 93 are not merely names on a memorial. They were ordinary people who, in a moment none of them chose, decided to act for someone other than themselves.

None of the residents knew on Sept. 11 that they were starting a journey that would extend for decades. They only understood that something had happened in their community and they had a part in what came next.

That is what concern for community looks like. Most of the time it is just people seeing what needs to be done and doing it.

On Sept. 11, 2001, history came to Somerset County. The people there have been caring for it ever since. 📺

STEVE BRAME

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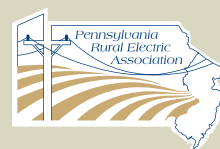
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FORT MASSACHUSETTS ★ SHIP ISLAND, MS

Fort Massachusetts is a historic brick fort located on West Ship Island, Mississippi. It was built by the U.S. government in the mid-1800s as part of a coastal defense system following the War of 1812.



SEAPLANE ADVENTURE TO DRY TORTUGAS SHORE EXCURSION ★ KEY WEST, FL

Seventy miles west of Key West, Florida lies one of North America's most inaccessible National Parks—Dry Tortugas. The park is renowned for its marine life, pirate legends, and sheer unspoiled beauty.

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Blue Spring State Park

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LOOKING UP TO JIM

I looked up to Jim Krut long before I got to know him. He was a tall man, so it was easy to do. But I soon learned his stature went well beyond his height.

James "Jim" Krut passed away this past August at the age of 80 (see page 7). For much of the 1980s, he was the editor of *Penn Lines*, setting a standard for reporting we still try to live up to today. He later led the communications team at Adams Electric Cooperative in Gettysburg, Pa., where he worked until his retirement in 2009.

Long after he retired, I enjoyed seeing Jim at an annual meeting or for the occasional lunch. Always encouraging and always with a smile, Jim was a fan of *Penn Lines* till the end. Most recently, he was excited to join our podcast to talk about the magazine's 60th anniversary, but his health issues prevented that from happening.



I got to know Jim while he was at Adams Electric, often while presenting him and his team awards for their impressive communications work year after year.

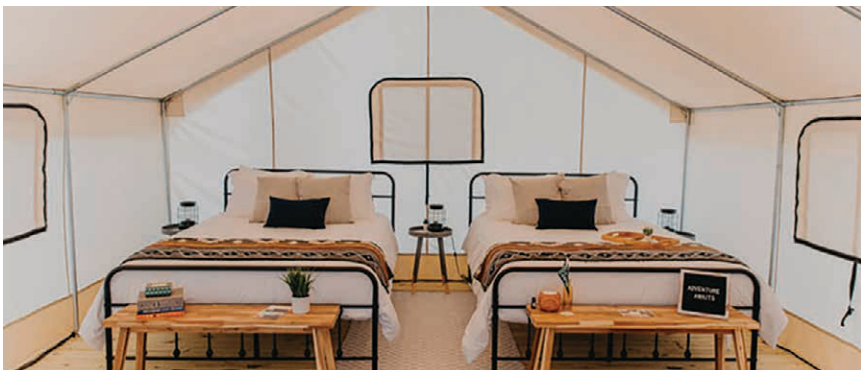
I once joked with him that we should lower the standard so others could win an award now and then. He answered seriously: "No, don't do that. Let people rise to the standard. They'll get there." He meant it, because he believed the best in people.

What impressed me most was the way Jim approached life. He was a decorated combat medic in Vietnam, an experience that undoubtedly shaped him but never hardened him. If anything, it deepened his appreciation for people. He asked questions and listened carefully because he genuinely wanted to know your story. That curiosity and generosity of spirit made him a good storyteller, a craft he brought to one of his great passions: acting.

Jim is most famous for his role in the 1978 cult classic "Dawn of the Dead," where his character has an unfortunate run-in with a helicopter. The scene earned him international recognition as the "Helicopter Zombie" among his many fans.

Jim's professional legacy is easy to measure; it's all there to see. But his greatest legacy was personal – in the family he loved, the people he encouraged and the heights he inspired others to reach. Here's looking up to you, Jim.

PETER A. FITZGERALD
EXECUTIVE EDITOR



FRENCHCREEKTLGLAMPING.COM

GET YOUR GLAMP ON: Camping – with beds and air conditioning? Yes, it's a thing, and you can give "glamping" a try at several state parks in Pennsylvania thanks to a partnership between the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Timberline Glamping. Nightly fees range from \$149 to \$199.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF CAMPING

DCNR touts success of first glamping program

"Glamping" is in.

The state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) reports that the demand for glamorous camping sites has been high this year — the first year the state has offered outdoor, safari-style tents with modern comforts at a handful of parks.

Sites can be reserved at the following locations: Codorus State Park, York County; French Creek State Park, Chester County; Hickory Run State Park, Carbon County; Hills Creek State Park, Tioga County; Laurel Hill State Park, Somerset County; Promised Land State Park, Pike County; and Pymatuning State Park, Crawford County.

The accommodations feature beds, electricity, air conditioning and heat, fire pits, and even coffeemakers.

DCNR has a five-year agreement with Timberline Glamping, which operates the sites. The state also invested \$400,000 to improve the campgrounds, which included upgrading restrooms and adding utilities.

The glamping program is expected to expand to additional state parks in 2027. Rates range from \$149 to \$199 per night before taxes and fees. To reserve a site, visit timberlineglamping.com/locations#Pennsylvania.

HEADING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Lyme disease cases in Pennsylvania down over previous years

Lyme disease cases are decreasing in Pennsylvania.

As of late July, the number of cases were down, dropping from 11,044 in July 2025 to 8,540 this summer. State officials noted that surveillance found fewer ticks this year, which most likely led to the decrease in reported cases.

Allegheny County led the state through the end of July this year with 1,044 cases, while Westmoreland County was next with 623. To the east, Chester County had 549 cases followed by Montgomery County with 384, Bucks County with 376 and Berks County with 365. In south-central Pennsylvania, York County had the most cases with 285, followed by Lancaster County (257), Cumberland County (142), Dauphin County (130), Lebanon County (84), Adams County (67) and Perry County (52).

SAY CHEESE!

Game Commission's Elk Cam is live until October

Since August, the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Elk Cam has been thrilling wildlife enthusiasts with the sights and sounds of bugling bulls and an array of other animals.

The camera, online until Oct. 3, is located in the heart of the Commonwealth's elk range, an area totaling more than 220,000 acres, including State Game Lands 311 and Elk State Forest. To watch the livestream, go to pa.gov/agencies/pgc/wildlife/wildlife-viewing/wildlife-cams.

In addition to elk, viewers can expect to see turkey, deer and other wildlife. The elk, however, take center stage, the commission says, noting they ramp up their mating activities in late summer and early fall. They can be seen mostly in the mornings and evenings.

IN MEMORIAM

Former Penn Lines editor passes away

Former *Penn Lines* editor James "Jim" Krut of Gettysburg passed away Sunday, Aug. 2. He was 80.

Following his tenure at the magazine, Krut established and led the communi-

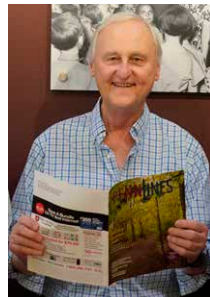
cations department at Adams Electric Cooperative in Adams County until his retirement in 2009. A U.S. Army veteran, he also gained fame as the "Helicopter Zombie" in the 1978 horror classic, "Dawn of the Dead."

"Jim was an outstanding editor, but he was an even better human being," says Pete Fitzgerald, *Penn Lines* executive editor. "Jim helped shape *Penn Lines* into the magazine it is today, believing that the stories of Pennsylvania's co-ops and their members are worth telling — and telling well. It's a legacy we continue to hold onto today."

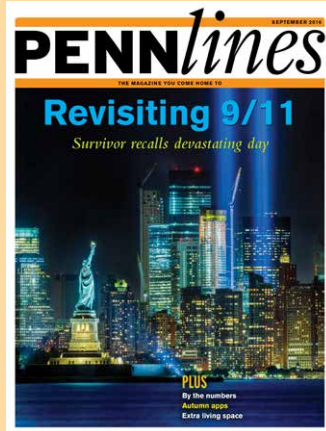
In a 2024 *Penn Lines* article, Krut

said that while editor, he was especially proud of the magazine's reporting on the emergence of Lyme disease and radon poisoning. "As part of the co-op family," he said in the article, "we worked to solve rural problems, and we did much of that through *Penn Lines*."

A funeral service was held in August. 🕊



TIME LINES



SEPTEMBER 2016

A decade ago, *Penn Lines* commemorated the 15-year anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks by telling the story of Reynoldsdale resident David Dovala, a member of Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative. Visiting New York City on vacation, Dovala had plans to tour the World Trade Center that day but ended up visiting the Statue of Liberty instead — a decision that saved his life. "There's not a day that goes by," he said at the time, "that I don't thank the dear Lord that I survived. I never see a low-flying plane that I don't think about what happened."

SEPTEMBER



GASSED UP

The Drake Well Museum and Park will be the setting for the 42nd Fall Gas Up on Sept. 12 in Titusville, Crawford County. Antique engines, farm and oil field equipment, tractors, models, and more will be displayed. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for senior citizens and \$5 for children ages 3 to 11. Learn more at drakewell.org.

GET WEIRD!

A pawpaw festival, something called "Weird Fish, Fishing Weirs and Live Eels!," a guided nature hike and more will be part of the 2026 Wild & Uncommon Weekend, slated Sept. 17 to 20 across York County's Lower Susquehanna Riverlands. The full schedule is available at hornfarmcenter.org.



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GATHERING ALL BOWHUNTERS

Thousands of bowhunters and archery enthusiasts will be on hand in Forksville, Sullivan County, for the Pennsylvania Bowhunters Festival, the largest gathering of its kind in the world. Set Sept. 18 to 20 at the Sullivan County Fairgrounds along Route 154, the event will include entertainment, food, and, of course, shooting areas. Learn more at pabowhunters.com.

FALLING FOR AUTUMN

Celebrate a new season Oct. 3 as the Bedford Fall Foliage Festival kicks off in downtown Bedford, Bedford County. Arts, crafts and culture will be on display, and the free event is open to all ages. For more, visit bedfordfallfoliagefestival.com.



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NEVER FORGOTTEN: Today, Adam Shaffer is chief of interpretation and education for the Flight 93 National Memorial in Somerset County. In 2001, however, the Shanksville native was among the original ambassadors to greet visitors at the crash site and share the stories of the flight's heroes. (Photos by Jeff Fetzer)

The Guardians OF FLIGHT 93

For 25 Years, Locals Have Kept
Memories of 9/11 Heroes Alive

JEFF FETZER

Penn Lines Contributor

LIKE MILLIONS OF AMERICANS, Roxanne Sullivan watched in disbelief as hijacked airliners struck New York City's World Trade Center and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

Later that morning — Sept. 11, 2001 — while she was running errands with a friend in Latrobe, another bulletin came over the radio: An airplane had crashed on the edge of a strip mine in Somerset County, close to the tiny borough of Shanksville.

Roxanne's mind was racing. Her house, near Shanksville, also bordered a reclaimed strip mine, and her father-in-law lived next door.

She asked a store manager if she could use the telephone to make an emergency call to him.

"I dialed the number," she says, "and it said it was no longer in service."

She pauses, recalling her thought at the time: "I'm in trouble."

Hoping and praying

The pair rushed home and as Roxanne got closer, she was stopped by an emergency responder who asked where she was headed.

"I told him I live on Skyline," she says. "He said, 'That's where the jetliner fell.'"

Stopped from going farther, Roxanne turned her car around and took another route to her property, passing emergency vehicles and personnel at every road leading to the strip mine.

"There were cars on both sides of the road and people looking [toward the crash site], and then the smell hit me — the burnt diesel smell," she says.

Roxanne parked and began running through a field toward her house, praying it and her father-in-law's home were still standing.

Continued on page 10

"I said a prayer for their souls and vowed, 'I will take care of you until the day I die.'"

— Roxanne Sullivan

Continued from page 9

They were — but they weren't untouched.

Pictures that had adorned the walls were scattered on the floor, jarred from their hangers by the impact of a Boeing 757 — United Airlines Flight 93 — which had plunged into the ground less than a mile away.

"I had no electricity, no phone," the Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) member says, noting the plane had taken out the lines as it crashed. "I went back to the bedroom and laid on the bed and cried."

After regaining her composure, Roxanne ventured to her father-in-law's home. She found him unharmed, sitting in his recliner. He told Roxanne he was watching the "Today Show" when he heard the plane hurtling toward Earth.

"He said it sounded like a freight train," she recalls. "It got louder and louder and screechier. He got up from his recliner to look out the kitchen window. When it hit, it stepped him back."

'I will take care of you'

Seeing a massive cloud of smoke from the explosion, her father-in-law picked up the phone to report the crash, but the line was already dead. He went back to his recliner; there was nothing else he could do.

"I cried for three days straight," Roxanne says. "How do you handle a jetliner falling in your backyard? You don't."

Thirteen days after terrorists hijacked Flight 93 and crashed the plane into the Stonycreek Township strip mine, officials told Roxanne she could visit the site. Their ground investigation was done.

The next morning, in the pouring rain, she paid her respects. "I said a prayer for their souls and vowed, 'I will take care of you until the day I die.'"

Twenty-five years later, she has kept that promise, greeting visitors at the Flight 93 National Memorial near Shanksville as one of its longest-serving volunteer ambassadors.

But Roxanne Sullivan wasn't the only community member who made a personal pledge to "never forget" the crew and passengers of Flight 93.

Within months of the crash, she and nearly 40 other Somerset County residents formed a volunteer team. Their mission was — and still is — to provide accurate information to the parade of visitors who travel to the crash site to remember the heroes of Flight 93.

Where it all began

United Airlines Flight 93 was one of four commercial airliners hijacked by al-Qaida terrorists on that life-changing September day. After learning about the attacks on New York and the Pentagon earlier that morning, the passengers and crew fought to retake the aircraft as it flew toward Washington, D.C. As the struggle ensued, the plane took a nose-dive near Shanksville.

The seven crew members and 33 passengers aboard perished, but their brave actions prevented the four hijackers from reaching their intended target, the U.S. Capitol. Today, their heroism is commemorated at the Flight 93 National Memorial.

Operated by the National Park Service, the site draws more than 350,000 visitors a year from around the globe. While there, visitors can hike the half-mile Trail of Remembrance to access the site where the first memorial — a temporary one — stood. This is where the story of the Flight 93 ambassadors began.

The temporary memorial, which opened Oct. 31, 2001, was little more than a pull-off spot on a dirt road. The gravel parking area overlooked the wide expanse of reclaimed mining land. A pair of abandoned drag lines, a handful of outbuildings, piles of scrap metal and several ponds were visible from the site, but little else was. There were no amenities — no shelter, no restrooms, no electricity or lighting, no informational displays, and no signs pointing to the impact site, which was 500 yards away and barely



A PROMISE KEPT: Ambassador Roxanne Sullivan, who lives less than a mile from the Flight 93 crash site in Somerset County, made a vow 25 years ago to keep the victims' memories alive. She is one of two original ambassadors who continue to volunteer today.



ONE OF THE STORY-BEARERS: Every Wednesday afternoon during the summer, Flight 93 Ambassador Roseanne Croyle gives a half-hour presentation about the flight's heroes. Here, she holds a photo of Flight Attendant CeeCee Ross Lyles, who called her husband before boarding the flight, telling him she anticipated an "easy day."

noticeable. There was, however, a 40-foot-long chain-link fence that held a 4-by-8-foot piece of plywood, painted white, where visitors could write messages and leave tributes to the Flight 93 victims.

"When the temporary memorial opened, the flood-gates of emotion opened," recalls Somerset REC member Donna Glessner, who helped spearhead the ambassador program. "There were people from all over the country, all over the world, the media, coming to Shanksville."

About 3 miles from the crash site, Shanksville is a borough of about 200 residents in a scenic, rural area of the Laurel Highlands. The village is home to a handful of businesses: a corner market, an automotive repair shop, and a hardware store owned by Donna's husband, Karl. There are no gas stations, no restaurants, no grocery stores, no lodging facilities.

"It was surreal to think that something of international importance happened in a place like Shanksville," Donna says. "But it made us all realize that there is no place so remote that it can't be affected by terrorism."

Donna, whose home is also near the crash site, jumped into action following the disaster, packaging and delivering food and drinks to emergency responders. She didn't return to the site again until a few months later when she decided to visit the temporary memorial for the first time.

"I hear people talking, and they are very confused," Donna recalls. "They wondered where the plane crashed."

She watched as several people took videos and photographs of the metal scrap yard that was visible from the memorial site, mistakenly thinking it was wreckage from

the plane.

"I went home feeling sick," she says. "I didn't want people taking the incorrect story back home with them."

Tears and tissues

A Shanksville native with a passion for local history and volunteerism, Donna decided to see if she could recruit members of the community to staff the temporary memorial site. That group has served as greeters at the Flight 93 memorial site ever since.

"We decided to call ourselves ambassadors," Donna explains, "because we wanted to, as a community, put our best foot forward and welcome visitors to this place."

By February 2002, about 40 volunteers had committed to staffing the temporary memorial site daily, year-round. Initially, the ambassadors worked hour-and-a-half to two-hour shifts, sometimes in pairs, sometimes alone, with no shelter from the weather and scant details about the Flight 93 crash.

"We didn't know a lot about the event at first," Donna says. "That unfolded over years. But we could show people where the plane crashed. We could tell them where they could find a gas station."

Mostly, though, they offered visitors a sympathetic ear.

"People wanted to tell us what they thought about 9/11 and where they were," she says. "We just listened a lot, and we handed out a lot of tissues."

Despite the heightened emotions, or maybe because of them, Roxanne Sullivan recalls those early shifts with fondness. "In the beginning, everyone was so united after

9/11," she says. "So many people were coming here, and they hadn't forgotten. It helped heal me."

Chuck Wagner, another original ambassador and Somerset REC member, remembers the somber mood at the temporary memorial. "It was quiet," he says. "It was like you stepped on holy ground."

Following the crash, Chuck volunteered to operate a skid steer loader to help with the recovery. That, accompanied by a heightened sense of patriotism, fueled his desire to do more.

For the next 22 years, he and his wife, Jayne, would work as ambassadors every Sunday afternoon. He stepped away from those duties three years ago for health reasons but hopes to return.

"It gives you a sense of fulfillment," Chuck says. "We were helping to fulfill the human need there at the site."

'We vowed never to forget'

As more information about the brave actions of the Flight 93 passengers and crew members became known, the ambassadors began telling those stories, which continue to be shared with visitors today. Every Wednesday afternoon during the summer, ambassador Roseanne Croyle gives a half-hour presentation at the Memorial Plaza about the flight's heroes.

On a recent bluebird day in June in front of dozens of visitors, Roseanne held up a photo of CeeCee Ross Lyles, 33, a mom and former police officer who began working as a United Airlines flight attendant in January 2001.

"When CeeCee was out, away from home, working, she would call her husband a number of times during the day just to check in and see how things were going," Roseanne told the group. "On that morning of Sept. 11, she had already talked to him twice before she ever even got to the airport.

"When she got there and got her assignment, she called him again and said, 'I'll be on Flight 93, but it's a light load. I've got an easy day.'"

Roseanne paused for a moment and then held up a photo of passenger Thomas Burnett. A 38-year-old married father of three, he was the chief operating officer of a company that makes heart pumps for those awaiting transplants.

"He had booked a later flight," she said, "but when he got to the airport early that morning, they said, 'We have lots of extra room on this earlier flight. If you want, you can board Flight 93, and you'll get home to your family an hour earlier.'"

According to the National Park Service website, Burnett made four calls to his wife while onboard Flight 93. Those



ALWAYS AN AMBASSADOR: One of two remaining original Flight 93 ambassadors, Sally Ware helps educate new generations of visitors at the memorial site in Somerset County. She's spoken to people from near and far, and from all walks of life. Here, she holds a note and a gift from a five-star general, a visitor to the site who thanked her for her "selfless service."

calls provided important details to the passengers and crew about the other hijackings that had taken place that morning. They also revealed that the people onboard were planning to take back the plane from the hijackers, which some consider the first battle in the War on Terror.

"The 40 heroes only had about 30 minutes," Roseanne says. "In that time, they gathered information, they took a vote, they formulated a plan, they called their loved ones, and then they attacked the cockpit in an attempt to take control of the plane. And because they took action, they no doubt saved an untold number of lives in Washington, D.C."

Roseanne, 82, joined the ambassador team in 2010 after retiring as a home health nurse. Fifteen years later, she says she plans to continue serving as an ambassador as long as she is able. "It's the most rewarding thing I have done in my life," she says. "It's such an honor to be allowed to work here.



"We've got to keep their memory alive. Everybody needs to know what happened here."

– Sally Ware

When you think of these 40 people and what they did, this is such a minor little thing that I do — not to repay them, but to honor them. We vowed never to forget."

Forever connected

Like Roseanne, Somerset REC member Connie Stevanus became an ambassador after retiring. In fact, she says, her late husband, Sam, encouraged her to retire early so she could join him as a volunteer. That was in 2006.

Connie, who has lived at Indian Lake — about three miles from the crash site — for 38 years, says that on 9/11, she came home from work to find her husband holding a bag and picking up pieces of charred debris from the crash that had settled in their yard.

That forever connected the couple to the tragedy.

Connie and Sam visited the crash site less than a week after the on-site investigation ended. They noticed the impact site had been backfilled with soil, but little else pointed to the fact that an international tragedy had happened there.

"There was nobody here," she recalls. "There was no flag, no people talking. All I remember is the sound of the birds and the rustling of the high grass. It will be etched in my mind forever."

When Connie begins her weekly shift at the Memorial Plaza, she's often reminded of that day.

"When I start here at 9 o'clock, there is usually nobody here," she says. "I just stand here and hear the birds and the wind blowing through the trees, and I just think, 'What a beautiful place to have been laid to rest.'"

Of the thousands of interactions she has had while greeting visitors over the past two decades, Stevanus says one in particular stands out. A man approached her, saying he was a college roommate and lifelong friend of passenger Joseph DeLuca, who was on his way to Napa Valley with his girlfriend, Linda Gronlund.

"He told me that Joe was the best man in his wedding, and that Joe had told him he was going to propose to Linda on this trip and had the diamond ring with him," Connie says. "I don't know if the ring was ever recovered."

The story-bearers

Adam Shaffer, chief of interpretation and education for the Flight 93 National Memorial, says the buildings, exhibits and monuments at the site tell the story of Flight 93; the ambassadors, however, give that story a human voice.

And he would know. The Shanksville native has been involved with the Flight 93 memorial from Day 1. In addition to being one of the original ambassadors, he interned at the National Memorial while in college and was a park ranger and volunteer coordinator there for 14 years. Today, he oversees visitor services at the site.

"The volunteer ambassadors are absolutely integral to the visitor experience here," Adam says, noting many share their personal memories of 9/11 and the Flight 93 crash, the impacts on the community, and how the memorial site has evolved from a roadside pull-off to a 2,200-acre national park.

"The ambassadors have been witness to the transformation of the site from the very beginning," he adds. "They are intertwined with the site's history forever. They truly have been the story-bearers for 25 years."

Today, only two of the original volunteers remain on the schedule: Roxanne Sullivan and Sally Ware.

Like many of her fellow volunteers, Sally says the events of the day hit close to home. Her daughter, a flight attendant for American Airlines, was scheduled to fly out of Washington, D.C., at 1:30 p.m. on 9/11.

"Thank God she was safe," Sally says. "She lost her job for a year, but she's still working as a flight attendant today."

Sally says she never imagined that the commitment she made in 2002 would still be part of her life nearly a quarter-century later.

"I was 57 then. Now, I'm 82, and I can't walk. It's still a wonderful experience. I love talking to people. I love meeting people."

Every Wednesday afternoon, she rolls her wheelchair into position so she can greet another generation of visitors at the Memorial Plaza.

"It's become part of my life," Sally says. "When you're here, you forget your problems. You forget your aches and pains when you think of those 40 people and what they went through."

She smiles: "We've got to keep their memory alive. Everybody needs to know what happened here." 🗣️

MICHAEL T. CRAWFORD, SENIOR TECHNICAL EDITOR

Until recently, electricity demand had flat-lined, with most investments going toward efficiency upgrades, infrastructure improvements and storm resilience, among other things. Now, however, hyperscale data centers that power artificial intelligence (AI) have increased demand beyond what current resources can handle. In response, experts are calling for more dispatchable generation before a lack of capacity drives electricity prices even higher.

Data centers resemble warehouses containing rows upon rows of computer processors, powering everything from email to video streaming. Facilities powering AI can consume as much electricity as millions of homes and often

Demand refers to the amount of electricity needed at any given moment. Demand (or load) must be matched, not exceeded, by generation sources, such as nuclear or hydroelectric plants, to avoid brownouts or blackouts.

Generation resources are the natural materials, fuels, and energy flows that produce electricity, primarily categorized into fossil fuels (natural gas, coal, petroleum), nuclear energy, and renewable energy (wind, solar, hydroelectric, geothermal).

Baseload generation refers to electricity that can be produced around the clock and is traditionally supplied by large, steady sources, such as nuclear, natural gas and coal-fired plants, and some hydroelectric plants. They support the grid by producing a reliable flow of energy.

Intermittent generation refers to electricity that can't be produced on demand, such as solar or wind energy. Their output changes based on the weather.

Want to know more about where your electricity comes from? Visit alleghenyelectriccoop.com to learn how Allegheny provides electricity at the lowest cost possible for consumer-members through a mix of resources. 

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Local Lore

Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative

Untouchable

Who would have ever predicted that Coudersport in Potter County, served by Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative, could be the home of one of the most well-known special agents of the 20th century?

Eliot Ness became famous for leading *The Untouchables*, a small team of federal investigators in Chicago who were picked for their ability to thwart corruption. Ness and his colleagues ultimately brought down notorious gangster Al Capone for tax evasion in 1931.

While that history is widely known due to the success of Ness's book, "The Untouchables" — as well as films and TV series of the same



CALLING COUDERSPORT HOME: Eliot Ness, a famous crimefighter and member of *The Untouchables*, spent the final months of his life in Coudersport, Potter County.

name — what might be forgotten is that he spent his final months in Coudersport. Indeed, at the age of 54 — and shortly after approving the

final draft of his book — Ness died there of a heart attack in May 1957.

Proud of its connection to Ness, the borough is home to the Eliot Ness Museum, and last month, the community celebrated Eliot Ness Day in honor of the 100th anniversary of his first day on the job with the U.S. Treasury Department.

This is all to say, despite his brief time in Coudersport, Ness and his legacy continue to live on in this small Pennsylvania borough. 📍



Main Office: Mansfield, Pa.
Consumer-members served: 19,684
Website: tri-countyrec.com



Bearing witness

This month's artwork comes from McKenzie Burgon, 10, granddaughter of Rodney and Debra Wahl, who are members of Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative. McKenzie drew a bear because she loves to go to her Pop and Grammie's house, where she sees many of them. One afternoon, she says, she watched as a mama bear scooted her baby up a tree. Thank you, McKenzie, for sharing your artwork with us!

McKenzie Burgon, age 10, Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative

CALLING ALL KIDS, ages 5 to 17: Show off your artistic skills!

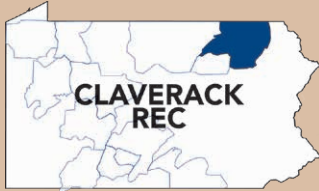
Each month, we'll feature the artwork of our young readers (or our readers' youngsters), inspired by something they've seen on their travels or read in *Penn Lines*. Paints, pencils, crayons, clay, sand — any physical medium is OK! You may send digital photos of the creation to CommunityCorner@prea.com, but please: no digital artwork.

Please include the artist's name, age and electric cooperative, plus a 25- to 50-word description of the art.



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Casey M. Wood, VP, Communications
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ENTERPRISES, INC.

C&T Enterprises, Inc. is a jointly owned subsidiary of Claverack (Wysox, Pa) and Tri-County (Mansfield, Pa) Rural Electric Cooperatives. C&T provides shared management and support services for the two parent electric cooperatives, the cooperatives' telecom affiliates of Revolution Broadband and Tri-Co Connections, and C&T's subsidiary utilities of Wellsboro Electric Co. (Wellsboro, Pa), Citizens' Electric Co. (Lewisburg, Pa), and Valley Energy (Sayre, Pa), a natural gas distribution company.

Guest Column

Stewardship in Action: Claverack Reviews a Year of Service to Members



CASEY WOOD

CLAVERRACK RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (REC) held its 2026 Annual Meeting on July 22 and provided members with an opportunity to learn about their cooperative's accomplishments, financial performance, future initiatives, and governance activities.

The meeting highlighted the cooperative's long-standing commitment to serving rural communities and focused on the theme of stewardship. The live meeting was broadcast online, and a recording is available to view on claverack.com.

Through reports from the board of directors and management team, members received updates on the cooperative's financial performance, investments in reliability, community support efforts, broadband expansion, and the challenges shaping today's electric utility industry. Throughout the meeting, one message remained clear: Claverack REC's commitment to serving its members and communities remains as strong as ever.

Board Chairman Timothy Tewksbury opened the meeting by reflecting on the cooperative principles that have guided Claverack REC since its founding.

"Electric service has always been about more than poles and wires," Tewksbury said. "It is about neighbors helping neighbors, families looking out for one another, and a community working together to do what none of us could accomplish alone."

The cooperative's accomplishments throughout 2025 reflected those values.

Strong financial results benefit members

Claverack REC finished 2025 in a strong financial position, generating more than \$2.8 million in operating margins while continuing to invest in the electric system and member programs. The cooperative also returned more than \$900,000 in capital credits to members during the year, bringing total capital credits retirements to more than \$15 million throughout the past decade.

As a member-owned cooperative, Claverack REC operates differently from investor-owned utilities. Margins are allocated to members and returned over time, reinforcing the cooperative principle that those who use the service also share in its success.

Secretary/Treasurer Danise Fairchild reported on the results of the cooperative's independent audit, conducted by Buffamante Whipple Buttafaro, P.C. (BWB), which found the cooperative's 2025 financial records to be satisfactory.

Investing in communities

At the meeting, members learned how Claverack REC continues to support local communities and neighbors in need.

Through the Community Support Program (see chart on Page 16C), more than \$60,000 was awarded to 88 charitable and community organizations throughout the cooperative's service territory. The funding comes from unclaimed capital credits that in the past would have been turned over to the state.

In addition, nearly \$60,000 in H.O.P.E. assistance helped more than 130 members

Continued on page 16B



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From placing orders to managing credit card payments, reliable internet is critical to keeping Sherri Ann Fenton's business running smoothly. Since signing up with Revolution Broadband, **"I never have to worry about my internet connection anymore,"** she says. **"The speed of fiber internet is awesome – and it's always on!"**

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GUEST COLUMN

Continued from page 16A

facing financial hardship, while energy-efficiency rebate programs returned more than \$11,000 to members who installed qualifying EnergyStar® appliances and heat pumps.

Preparing for the future

Claverack REC President & CEO Steve Allabaugh discussed the increasingly complex environment facing electric utilities nationwide, including growing electricity demand, rising costs and evolving reliability concerns. Despite those challenges, Claverack continues to make strategic investments in electric reliability, fiber broadband expansion, member communications and technology improvements.

Safety also remained a top priority during 2025. Claverack successfully completed the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program review process and achieved another year without a serious employee accident or injury.

Cooperative democracy at work

As part of the annual business meeting, members received the report of the Credentials & Elections Committee. Because no nominations were submitted by petition, the cooperative's director elections for Zones 1, 2 and 3 were uncontested. Danise Fairchild, Robert Faux and

**Claverack REC offices
will be closed
Monday, Sept. 7, in
observance of
Labor Day.**

Angela Joines were re-elected to new three-year terms on the board, effective July 22, 2026.

The cooperative also recognized its 2026 Youth Tour delegates: Anthony Pousen and Daniel Barrett, Northeast Bradford Junior/Senior High School; Aiden Hollister, Montrose Area Junior/Senior High School; Eli Wait, Susquehanna County Career and Technology Center; and Dimitri

Yasnovitch, Mountain View Junior/Senior High School, who represented Claverack as a finalist for the Youth Leadership Council, a program offered through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Looking ahead

As Claverack approaches its 90th year of service, cooperative leaders reaffirmed their commitment to

responsible stewardship of the electric system, co-op finances and the communities they serve.

“Claverack was built by and for the communities we serve,” Allabaugh said, “and that remains just as true today as it was 90 years ago.” 📍

CASEY M. WOOD
VICE PRESIDENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

FISCAL YEAR 2025

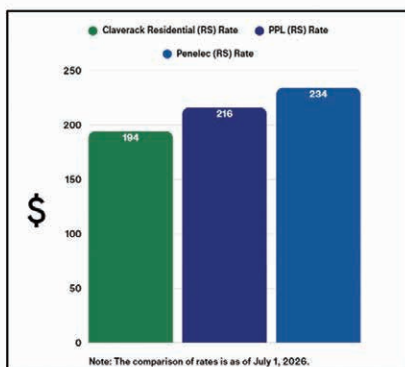
PATRONAGE CAPITAL ALLOCATED
\$2,042,709
(earned in 2024 - allocated in 2025)
\$3,580,743
(earned in 2025 - allocated in 2026)
CAPITAL CREDITS RETURNED
\$908,146
Capital Credits Returned to Members/Former Members
UNCLAIMED FUNDS DIRECTED
\$63,585
Unclaimed Funds directed to 88 local organizations
H.O.P.E. FUNDS APPLIED
\$59,483
H.O.P.E. funds assisted 130 members
ENERGY EFFICIENT REBATES ISSUED
\$10,900
Energy Efficiency Rebates issued to Members

BY THE NUMBERS: Top chart, the Community Support Program contributes to more than 80 charitable and community organizations throughout Claverack Rural Electric Cooperative's (REC) service territory. The funding comes from unclaimed capital credits that in the past would have been turned over to the state.

Bottom chart, Claverack REC's rates continue to compare favorably with those of nearby investor-owned utilities.

RATE COMPARISON

AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL MEMBER USING 960 KWH



WATCH & LEARN MORE

Did you miss the annual business meeting?

Watch the full recording of Claverack Rural Electric Cooperative's 89th Annual Business Meeting and browse the 2025 Annual Report online.

Visit: claverack.com/annual-meeting.

Summer 2026 Pollinator Project Update

BRIAN ZEIDNER, DIRECTOR OF MEMBER SERVICES

AS I WRITE THIS UPDATE in mid-July, I am happy to report the pollinator plots are green, several native plant species are growing, and the whole area is teeming with pollinators!

Walking through the plots recently, I've seen birds, butterflies, moths, dragonflies, honeybees, flies and a variety of other insects. The native plants are most certainly attracting pollinators.

Patience, engagement and education

One of the things that was a bit disappointing was the color this spring. I have seen some yellow and white flowers, and I've also seen a lot of green from the plants. However, I was hoping to see more colors.

Last year, we knew we wouldn't see much variety, so I also planted annual flowers to boost the color in the summer and fall. We did not see those flowers again this year as they have died off.

Given our selected perennial seed mix, we'll see more color from late summer through late fall, although some of the native plants will take several years to germinate and grow. I guess I just need to be patient!

The plots will increase in beauty each year as plants like mountain mint, marsh blazing star, aromatic aster, anise hyssop, purple coneflower and various species of milkweed mature.

As we developed our pollinator plot project, one of our end goals was to have a beneficial public project that engaged and educated our communities. I'm excited to report that all of that is happening.

We recently had visits from members, the public and community groups. The Penn State Master Gardeners did a service project at the site and helped us plant native flowers in our landscaped beds under the signs.

A group of young people from Serve, Inc. in Towanda stopped by to check out the pollinators. Members have also expressed interest in expanding our program onto the rights of way we maintain on their properties.

When you're driving by our office in Wysox, stop for a visit. Designed with our members and the community in mind, this project invites everyone to learn, connect and enjoy. More information on Claverack's native pollinator habitat project can be found by clicking on the QR code to the right or by visiting claverack.com/native-pollinator-habitat-project.



A PROJECT OF POLLINATION: The Penn State Master Gardeners recently helped Claverack Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) staff plant native flowers in the cooperative's pollinator plots. Shown, from left, are Lloyd Overfield, maintenance contractor; Brian Zeidner, Claverack REC director of member services; Rebecca Allen, Claverack REC member service supervisor; Randy Cavazza, a Master Gardener trainee; and Rich Gulyas, park ranger at Mount Pisgah State Park and Master Gardener.

Below, Claverack REC's pollinator plots are thriving and attracting birds, butterflies, honeybees and other insects. The public is invited to visit the site at the co-op's Wysox office and learn more.



CHECK THE WEATHER

BEFORE YOU GO

From 2006 through 2024, 492 people were struck and killed by lightning in the U.S. Nearly two-thirds of the deaths happened while people were enjoying outdoor leisure activities such as fishing, camping and running.

June, July and August are the peak months for lightning across the U.S. More than 72% of lightning deaths occurred in these months, with Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays having slightly more deaths than any other day of the week.

Lightning often strikes away from heavy rain; it can happen up to 10 miles away from rainfall. To prevent lightning-related tragedies, when thunder roars, go indoors.

Source: National Lightning Safety Council

**More Than 72% of Lightning
Fatalities Occur From June
Through August**



Safely Install Efficient Recessed Light Fixtures in Insulated Ceilings

JAMES DULLEY

DEAR JIM: I like recessed lights, but I hear they are leaky and inefficient. Are there new types that are more efficient? How do I install one properly in an insulated ceiling?
— *Drew H.*

DEAR DREW: Recessed lights have been popular for decades and are still the lighting fixture of choice for overhead lighting. As with any

product, some recessed fixtures are more energy efficient than others. Some similar looking efficient ones can use 80% less electricity than inefficient ones.

From a conservation standpoint, air leakage is not an issue when installed in the first-floor ceiling of a two-story house. However, if they are installed in an insulated ceiling under an attic, a hole is created from the living area to the attic.

There are newer designs of energy-efficient recessed light fixtures that meet EnergyStar® standards. These fixtures are airtight and use LED light sources to reduce electricity consumption. The inside surface of the new fixtures is more reflective to reduce the amount of light energy that gets trapped inside the fixture, avoiding light loss and heat buildup.

There are two types of recessed light fixtures — insulation-contact-rated (ICR) and non-ICR. ICR fixtures are typically a can-within-a-can design that seals against the ceiling. Insulation can be placed against the ICR fixture without creating excessive heat buildup and a potential fire hazard. As a safety note, if you have non-ICR recessed lighting fixtures under an attic, the best option is to find airtight, ICR replacements.

It is not difficult to install recessed light fixtures yourself. The key to an attractive, efficient installation is to cut the mounting holes to the exact size as recommended by the manufacturer. This makes it much easier to create a good seal between the fixture and the ceiling. Before cutting holes, make sure the fixture layout clears all floor joists.

First, determine your lighting goals. To brighten an entire room, downlighting is effective. Typical 6-inch-diameter vertical fixtures work well for this. In a normal-height ceiling, spacing the fixtures 4 feet apart provides an even lighting pattern at floor level.

Approximately 20 lumens per square foot provides adequate ambient brightness for most rooms. If not listed on the packaging, the recessed floodlight beam angle for a typical parabolic aluminized reflector-type bulb is about 45 degrees and a bulged reflector (BR)-type is about 55 degrees. For a 10-by-15-foot room, using BR-type bulbs requires three less fixtures for even room lighting.

For task lighting, a single vertical fixture directly over the work area is effective. Wall-wash recessed lighting can be used to accent a painting or some other wall hanging. An eyeball recessed light works well because the light path can be adjusted. For a sloped cathedral ceiling, install an angular, recessed ICR fixture.

An integrated, LED-recessed fixture is ideal for task lighting and easy to install. One should last decades at three hours/day. The light quality options range from warm (2,700 K) to white daylight (5,000 K). Smaller 3- or 4-inch-diameter fixtures, which use a replaceable LED bulb with a two-prong GU10 base, just snap into the hole in the ceiling. 🛠️



ACUITY BRANDS

EFFICIENT FIXTURES: Angular, recessed lights fit a sloped ceiling for downlighting to highlight a home's architectural design features.

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Found Something Weird, Thought of You

MITCHELL KYD

WHEN I LAST VISITED WOODCARVER Gay Foltz, a little pile of sticks and broken branches lay within her reach, not blocks of pine or beautiful butternut. She was busy at her workbench, adding finishing touches to her latest project: the sawed-off stump of last year's Christmas tree. Nearby, a semi-circle of tree fungus was beginning to reveal what she saw in it — the masked faces of a mama raccoon and her baby.

When I asked if she did her own foraging for materials, she grinned. "Friends bring me things all the time," she said. "Usually, it's like: 'I found something weird and thought of you.'"

We all know people who have that special vision to see beyond "something weird" and recognize what it can become. My son is like that, but he's not an artist. He's a pragmatist and has earned a storied reputation for creative problem-solving and making do with the materials at hand.

One of his favorite stories about maneuvers in the California desert was the day his sergeant brought him a scavenged two-by-four. As the legend goes, Sarge said something like: "Mitchell! Found this. Don't know where it came from but figured you could use it." With a few nails pulled from a skid and a little assembly magic my son calls "FITHO" (Figure It the Heck Out), he constructed a weapons rack big enough for the whole platoon, making it easier to comply with Army regulations about securing weapons.

Worn out horseshoes and discarded plumbing parts become lamps and coat racks in the hands of people who are delighted by the weird things friends bring them. Antique, people-powered lawn mowers become perches for rustic birdhouses. Broken pottery and glassware get smashed into smaller shards to be reassembled as a mosaic walkway.

Gears from broken watches, old costume jewelry, and even unused catheter tubing are all idea generators for Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative member, artist, and businessman James Barefoot. The unexpected is integral for his designs as he overlays an interpretative twist — and a little bling — on the masterpieces nature has already

created. His resin butterflies and dragonflies are labeled and exhibited in specimen cases as the real thing, but look closer. You might find a wee, metal smiley face or colored pencil hidden in the construction.

The shift to repurposing found things became a hallmark for a young woman I hired to paint a scene on my daughter's bedroom wall years ago. As her true talent emerged, her art has earned top honors from the National Wild Turkey Federation. She is best known now for her exquisite depictions of wild turkeys, painted in meticulous detail on turkey feathers.

Designers at a family-owned jewelry store turned a drywall screw into wearable art, only one of many unusual pieces they've transformed at customers' requests. The customer who commissioned it had fought a long and hard battle to remove the screw after others had failed. Not exactly a sword-in-the-stone story, but it's certainly a reminder for her of one of life's little victories and the power of overcoming a challenge.

All sorts of extraordinary reimaginings will be on display soon as September launches the annual string of harvest arts and crafts shows and jumpstarts holiday shopping. Shows and bazaars hosted by churches, fire companies and service organizations will be dotting calendars everywhere. They not only support the work of our local artists, friends, and neighbors, but they also funnel proceeds back into

our small towns and communities.

As you're thinking about your gift-giving lists in the weeks ahead, be sure to keep these events on your radar. You'll find beautiful, handcrafted items that chain stores and online retailers don't offer while reinvesting more of your dollars in services for our local communities. You might even discover a gift that comes complete with a story — a weird thing found and reinvented by a visionary. 🍷

YVONNE BUTTS-MITCHELL celebrates the joys and poignant moments of rural living under the pen name Mitchell Kyd. Her stories from the Path Valley Hotel were hatched by encounters with contractors, critters and creepy crawlies while rehabbing the family cabin after its 17-year stint as a giant closet.

MITCHELL KYD



MECHANIX PULCHRA: A paintbrush becomes a butterfly thanks to Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative member James Barefoot and his ability to see something wonderful in something weird.



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Giving Blood in the Adirondacks

STEVE PIATT

PAULA AND I PADDLED OUR WAY into the St. Regis Canoe Area of the Adirondacks more than 30 years ago, launching a lifetime of wilderness adventures that took us into many more remote areas, some of them well above the Arctic Circle.

We were looking for solitude on this maiden voyage but had plenty of company on that paddle-and-portage outing: millions of blackflies, those biting insects of Northwoods fame.

We should have known to expect them based on the mid-June timing of our trip. But this was before our eventual move to the 'Dacks, where we would become well accustomed to the annual bloodletting arrival of the swarm of tiny insects.

But back then, our singular focus was plunging into the wilderness so Paula could count loons and their chicks for the Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation. It didn't seem like wilderness at all, initially, as we drove through the Saranac Inn golf course en route to our launching point on Hoel Pond. We'd paddle through Hoel and into Turtle, Slang, and Long ponds, with only short walks between each.

The blackflies accompanied us every step of the way.

For all the route planning, gear selection, meal prep and paddling practice, we were not prepared — beyond the standard insect repellent — for the Adirondacks' version of the Welcome Wagon.

We raced between waters as best we could. I shouldered our lightweight-Kevlar canoe while Paula toted a backpack, and we then hustled back for a second load, blinking and choking our way through the swarm that seemed to block the sunlight.



BLOODLETTING: *Prosimulium hirtipes* – a common variety of blackfly widespread in eastern North America – have a nasty habit of biting so hard they draw blood, but it's a small price to pay for a trip through the Adirondacks.

Our only escape was getting back on the water, where a light breeze eased the assault. Once settled back into the paddling, we enjoyed encounters with loons on each pond, including one that escorted us to our next portage, gliding under our canoe in the crystal-clear water. I took time out to make a few casts, landing some scrappy smallmouth bass while Paula recorded loon sightings and nest locations.

Back at our campsites each evening, blackflies became a condiment as we downed our dinners in haste and retreated to our tent. A campfire was out of the question.

As darkness approached, however, we noticed the blackfly invasion would subside. Instead, mosquitoes would report for duty. It was a shift change of sorts: the blackflies punching out and the mosquitoes clocking in for the night. We hunkered down in the tent, swatting what blackflies had entered while listening to the humming of the mosquitoes outside.

We rationed our insect repellent over the three-day outing and sought refuge from the attacks with refreshing dips in the ponds as we grew more at home. The blackflies, once overwhelming, just became

part of the overall experience. It was the mosquitoes that left more of a mark: itching that lasted for weeks compared with simple blood loss from the blackflies.

The memories, though, lasted longer than the blackflies' onslaught. I recall my tan-colored flannel shirt turning a distinct gray, covered with the insects as we ended our day on the water and prepared a quick meal. We laughed as we scooped them out of our morning coffee and spit, snorted, and blinked our way through each portage.

In the many trips that followed — to Ontario's Algonquin and Quetico provincial parks, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area of northern Minnesota, and northern Ontario's Temagami wilderness — we were prepared, mentally and physically, for the blackflies.

We found solitude, and so much more, even though we were often surrounded by millions of creatures. Moose. Bears. Wolves. Bass. Trout.

It was worth forfeiting a little blood. 🩸

STEVE PIATT is a veteran newspaper editor and outdoor writer who along with his wife, Paula, has hunted and fished across North America. He is most at home on the water and in the fields of the Keystone State. He lives in Bradford County.

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What's for Breakfast?

ANNE M. KIRCHNER

PHOTOS BY ANNE M. KIRCHNER



IN THE EARLY 1950s, the Cereal Institute established September as “Better Breakfast Month.” The Chicago-based trade association wanted to increase cereal sales and promote healthier eating. Indeed, breakfast is the most important meal of the day. A well-balanced breakfast boosts metabolism, which increases energy and concentration levels.

What's your daily breakfast routine? Granola made with rolled oats, maple syrup and dried fruit is a great start. Serve this crunchy treat with milk or Greek yogurt. If you're preparing breakfast for a large group, try a sausage and gravy breakfast casserole. On relaxed days, serve pancakes made with shredded apple and apple cider. 🍎

ANNE M. KIRCHNER focuses her writing on human connections, travel and culinary arts, researching food origins, exploring cooking techniques, and creating new recipes.

DRIED FRUIT & NUT GRANOLA

- 4 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1 cup pumpkin seeds
- ½ cup sunflower seeds
- 1 cup almonds, slivered, or hazelnuts, chopped
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ½ cup maple syrup
- 2 cups dried fruit medley

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large mixing bowl, combine oats, seeds and nuts. Stir in olive oil and maple syrup. Spread mixture on a parchment-lined cookie sheet. Bake for 15 minutes. Stir the granola and bake for an additional 15 minutes or until oats are lightly golden. Cool granola completely, then add dried fruit medley. Store granola in an airtight container for up to two weeks. *Makes 6 to 8 servings.*



SAUSAGE & GRAVY BREAKFAST CASSEROLE

- 1 pound ground pork sausage
- 2 green onions, finely sliced
- ¼ cup butter
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cups whole milk
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 (8-count) container refrigerated biscuit dough
- 6 large eggs
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese, divided

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a skillet over medium heat, brown sausage. Add green onions; cook until tender. Remove from heat, drain grease and set aside. In a saucepan over medium heat, melt butter. Add flour and whisk until a paste forms. Add milk and pepper and whisk slowly. Simmer until gravy thickens, whisking often. Stir in 1 cup sausage and reduce heat to low. Cut biscuits into quarters. In a greased 9-by-13-inch pan, place biscuits in a single layer. Top biscuits with remaining sausage and 1 cup cheese. In a separate bowl, whisk eggs and cream. Pour egg mixture over pan ingredients. Top with gravy and 1 cup cheese. Bake for 30 minutes. *Makes 6 to 8 servings.*



APPLE CIDER PANCAKES

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup whole wheat flour
- 4 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon cardamom
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 medium apple, shredded
- ½ cup pecans, chopped
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup buttermilk
- ¾ cup apple cider
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

In a large mixing bowl, combine flours, sugar, cardamom, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Add apple and pecans to flour mixture; toss to coat then set aside. In a separate bowl, whisk together eggs, buttermilk, apple cider, olive oil and vanilla. Add mixture to dry ingredients and whisk together until lumpy batter forms. Using a ¼-cup scoop, pour batter onto hot griddle and cook until bubbles appear on pancake's surface. Flip pancakes and cook until bottoms brown. *Makes 6 to 8 servings.*

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Check out **Inside the Lines**, a monthly podcast from the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association that spotlights issues facing rural electric cooperatives in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Look for policy updates, plus insights from cooperative leaders and the people who make our rural communities special. Listen on Apple Music, Spotify or wherever you get your podcasts! Subscribe today at prea.com/podcast.



LISTEN NOW





A Sweet Start



Recipe Column Serves Up Six Decades of Reader Favorites

KATHY HACKLEMAN

Penn Lines Contributor

A WELL-KNOWN AND WELL-LOVED PENNSYLVANIA ingredient — Hershey's Chocolate — has the honor of being featured in the first recipe column in *Penn Lines* history.

The magazine's first issue — way back in October 1966 — didn't feature any recipes, but the second issue a month later included some from the iconic company founded by Pennsylvanian Milton S. Hershey. That started a tradition that continues today.

Lots of cooks in the kitchen

Throughout its 60-year history, *Penn Lines* has worked to stay relevant to its readers. That means some things have changed dramatically, while others have retained similarities to their original look. A trip through the archives reveals "Cooperative Kitchen," the magazine's monthly recipe column, falls somewhere in the middle.

Early columns were often provided by Penn State Extension or state Department of Agriculture sources, and many recipes focused on the specific interests of rural readers, such as the best ways to cook wild game. There were recipes of general interest, too, including ones to create tasty, homemade Christmas gifts.

In 1972, "Recipes" began to be listed in the *Penn Lines*' table of contents, signaling they were going to be a regular monthly feature moving forward. In 1975 and for several years afterward, recipes were included in a section known as "Woman to Woman." In possible recognition that

men also cooked, the name was eventually changed to "Country Kitchen" (sometimes spelled Kountry Kitchen). When the magazine was redesigned in 2022, the name changed to "Cooperative Kitchen."

In the mid-1980s, recipes were reprinted from cookbooks published by the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association (PREA), the statewide advocate for cooperatives. Anita Leitzel Stambaugh, now retired from PREA, was one of the earliest staffers to coordinate the column, selecting recipes and writing the accompanying text. She still finds humor in those responsibilities, she says, because she's the last person who would claim to be a "cook." The duties then shifted to staff members David Scardena and John Drexler, who wrote the column throughout most of the 1990s.

In a move away from staff-driven recipe columnists, the magazine started bringing on a series of long-term contributors, including the late Linda Allison-Lewis, a restaurant critic and author of several cookbooks; Kitty Halke-Staley, who billed herself as a "cooking professional"; and Janette Hess, a freelance writer and Master Food Volunteer who led food classes and judged fair entries through the cooperative extension.

Hess continued to contribute her original recipes to *Penn Lines* before retiring in 2020. "I never met a recipe I didn't mess with," she says.

Today, Anne Kirchner whips up the "Cooperative Kitchen" column for *Penn Lines* by leaning into her two

professional interests: cooking and writing. She wrote a cookbook, owned a restaurant, managed a demonstration kitchen and taught cooking classes before becoming a *Penn Lines* contributor.

Kirchner enjoys experimenting with flavors and considers cooking to be an art that extends to how it's plated. She finds inspiration in old family recipes and cookbooks and is open to reader suggestions, which can be emailed to editor@prea.com.

Winning the popularity contest

Still a regular reader of "Cooperative Kitchen," Leitzel Stambaugh says she has noticed a greater focus on nutrition and healthy cooking.

"Early recipes would often use lard, which you seldom see anymore," she says. "More of the earlier recipes also used wild game, such as venison, and we had some that used bear meat and even had one for squirrel potpie."

One thing that has not changed is reader interest in the column. *Penn Lines* Editor Jill Ercolino says that in reader surveys, the column has traditionally been — and continues to be — one of the most-read sections of the magazine.

"Readers may skip the feature story," she says, "but nobody skips dessert."

As proof of that, here are two of the Hershey's Chocolate recipes that appeared in the November 1966 issue of *Penn Lines*.

CHOCOLATE MEDALLION CAKE

- ¼ cup butter or margarine
- ¼ cup vegetable shortening
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 eggs, unbeaten
- 2 cups cake flour, sifted
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup Hershey's Cocoa
- ¾ cup boiling water
- 1½ teaspoons baking soda
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Grease and flour either two 9-inch layer cake pans or one 13-by-9-by-2-inch pan.

Cream butter or margarine and shortening together, then add sugar gradually, creaming until light and fluffy.

Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.

Sift flour and salt together; set aside.

Make a smooth paste of the cocoa and boiling water; cool slightly.

Stir baking soda into buttermilk and add,

alternately, with the sifted flour mixture to the creamed mixture, beginning and ending with the flour mixture.

Add cocoa mixture and blend thoroughly. Blend in vanilla.

Pour batter into prepared pans or pan.

Bake about 40 minutes for a 13-by-9-inch pan and about 35 minutes for layer pans.

Cool then frost with Fluffy Cocoa Frosting.

FLUFFY COCOA FROSTING

- ¾ cup Hershey's Cocoa
- 4 cups confectioners' sugar
- ½ cup butter or margarine
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup evaporated milk, divided

Mix cocoa and sugar together. Cream part of the cocoa-sugar mixture with the butter or margarine. Blend in vanilla and half the milk.

Add the remaining cocoa-sugar mixture and blend well. Add remaining milk and beat to desired spreading consistency; additional milk may be added if required.

Yield: Frosting for two 9-inch layers. 🍫



ISSUE MONTH AD DEADLINE

November

September 14

December

October 14

January

November 16

Please note ads and **corresponding payment** must be received by the ad deadline to be included in requested issue month; ads received after the deadline will run in next issue. Written notice of changes/cancellations must be received 30 days prior to issue month.

No ads accepted by phone/email. For more information, please call 717-233-5704.

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\$5 for co-op members, \$10 for non-members. The **special heading fee** applies to any heading not listed under "COMPLIMENTARY HEADINGS," even if the special 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 (members) or \$10 (non-members) for all consecutive insertions.

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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 complimentary heading options.

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| ☐ Around the House | ☐ Motor Vehicles & Boats |
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| ☐ Employment Opportunities | ☐ Real Estate |
| ☐ Events | ☐ Recipes & Food |
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- Inexperienced, fatigued or distracted operators are more likely to come in contact with a power line or pole.
- Sources of electricity include power lines, electrical boxes, and damaged (non-grounded) guy wires.

If your equipment does hit a power line, pole, or guy wire, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 9-1-1, warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.



Safe Electricity.org

Fix Bayonets

JOHN KASUN

ALTHOUGH I SPENT THREE YEARS of my early life in the U.S. Army and followed many different orders, I was very fortunate to never hear the phrase “fix bayonets.” That command would indicate an imminent hand-to-hand, life-or-death battle, which is guaranteed to be much worse than passing a kidney stone.

However, as a married civilian, I get that order about once a year at my house, and it happened just the other day.

My wife and I live on a couple of acres, surrounded by small wood lots and fields. These spaces are home to birds, squirrels and rabbits with whom we are on a first name basis. We see deer and turkey regularly and an occasional fox. Although not common, even bears have periodically wandered through.

We once had a bear on our patio standing up to full height looking through the sliding glass doors of our family room. With both of its front paws firmly planted on the glass while we were seated inside, I told my wife the bear was checking to see if we were watching the Outdoor Channel on TV. She thought that was funny. Perhaps, then, you’ll be just as perplexed as I was by the creature that set off the recent, dreaded alarm.

I was trimming shrubs in the back of the house when I heard her shout my name. I suspected it was “fix-bayonet” time. Suddenly, my wife appeared with a shovel raised overhead declaring, “There is a snake in my flowers, and I want you to kill it!”

This woman is a successful gun and bow hunter and breaks clay birds with a shotgun with ease. She was a state muzzleloading champion, national archery champion,

and has thrown knives and tomahawks in competition. Honestly, if our home is ever broken into, my plan is to follow closely behind, carrying her extra ammunition.

She is fearless in most situations, and even once had a serious face-to-face disagreement with a bear that

attempted to climb up the tree where she was bow hunting. Neither she nor the bear were harmed, except possibly the bear’s feelings as he backed down the tree. But when it comes to snakes, she draws the line. I don’t think she is afraid of snakes; she just does not like them. (Thank goodness she still likes me. I think.)

I stepped carefully through the flowers searching for the elusive intruder, all the while hoping I would not find it. My wife was following close behind, shovel raised. I was not sure what she intended to do: protect me or hit me if I stepped on one of her flowers.

Owing to my detailed and purposely slow search, the snake had enough time to escape unseen — thank goodness. I imagine it rushed off to warn other snakes about a crazy woman with a shovel. Since we have lived at this location, I’ve only ever seen simple, harmless garter snakes, but my wife remains unmoved by that explanation, always

replying, “I don’t like snakes!”

In any event, I think it is safe to put my bayonet back in its sheath until my wife sounds the next alarm. 🐍



JOHN KASUN, a lifelong Pennsylvanian with more than 30 years of writing experience, looks for the humor in everyday life and then tells a story from that perspective. He is a member of Huntingdon-based Valley Rural Electric Cooperative.

Leaf-ing Summer Behind

September marks the end of summer, leaving behind memories of warmth, the outdoors and perhaps some quality time munching on a leaf or two. With the arrival of autumn, it won't be long before the leaves change color and find their way from tree branches to the ground, setting the stage for a brand-new set of scenes ready to close out the year.

Have some scenes you'd like to share? Submit your photos to our Rural Reflections contest. The best photos in each of five categories (animal, artistic, human, landscape and editor's choice) will be featured in the January 2027 issue and receive a \$75 cash prize. Runners-up will appear in the February 2027 issue and receive \$25. 🍂



VALARIE HUNTSINGER • VALLEY REC



KARIN GUELLY • CLAVERRACK REC



LINDA SOUDER • TRI-COUNTY REC



AMY SMITH • WARREN ELECTRIC

How to enter

TO SUBMIT ENTRIES, email your photos (no more than five digital images per person, per year) to photos@prea.com or send prints to Penn Lines Photos, P.O. Box 1266, Harrisburg, PA, 17108-1266. With your entries, be sure to include your name, address, daytime phone number and the name of the rural electric cooperative that serves your residence, business or seasonal home.

Remember, our publication deadlines require that we work ahead, so send your seasonal photos to us early. *Please note:* Hard-copy, physical photos mailed to our office will not be returned. Therefore, if you mail a photo, please make sure it's a print, not an original.

ADDRESS CHANGES:

For change of address, please contact your local electric cooperative. For cooperative contact information, please visit www.prea.com/member-cooperatives



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