

Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

Bedford REC

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Bedford, PA 15522
814-623-5101

Email: support@bedfordrec.com

Website: www.bedfordrec.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President & Allegheny Director

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Colerain, Snake Spring and
South Woodbury Twps.

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Attorney

John J. Dirienzo Jr.

Office Hours

Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

From the General Manager



What you are missing at the annual meeting

By Brooks Shoemaker

BEDFORD Rural Electric, like every other cooperative, is required to have an annual meeting of the membership. We get together on the second Wednesday in April, and hold elections for the board of directors, report on the financial state of your cooperative, share important industry-related information, conduct other necessary business and, of course, give away some door prizes!

Our annual meeting is a community gathering where neighbors meet new neighbors and catch up with old acquaintances. Our lives are busy, full of errands and obligations. Since more of our interactions with others seem to be online through social media, it is nice to renew good, old-fashioned, face-to-face communication. We take pride in being one of only a few organizations that are uniquely positioned to bring together the members of our community.

While rural Americans probably do a better job than our urban counterparts of staying connected to our neighbors, it is not something we should take for granted. The simple act of smiling, saying hello and shaking someone's hand truly lifts the spirits both parties.

Our country and community face many challenges. Our economy feels like it has been stagnant for years. Rural Bedford County, as always, is fighting to attract and maintain good, family-sustaining jobs. On a related front, we work to reverse the trend of our educated young minds being forced to relocate to more urban areas for jobs.

Overcoming these challenges will only happen if we come together and work for the common good.

The cooperative's annual meeting is designed to take care of the important business of your co-op and the equally important business of building a real sense of community. All cooperatives serve both an economic and social purpose. While safe, reliable and affordable electric power is crucial to our mission, improving the quality of life for all members is at the core of what we do every day.

If you have not attended the annual meeting in the past or if it has been a few years, we urge you to take the time to be with your fellow co-op members.

When was the last time you attended our annual meeting? Has it been a while, or maybe never? We get out of life what we put into it. Why not take a couple of hours out of your year and join your fellow members? Co-op members are connected by more than just power lines. We are your neighbors, and we look forward to seeing you at your annual meeting on April 12, 2017. It is held at Crossroads Bible Church in Cessna. The doors open at 12:30 p.m. and the meeting begins at 1:30. I'll see you there.

Energy efficiency tip of the month

Your heat pump can use 10 to 25 percent more energy if it's not properly
(continues on page 14d)

Whispering Hollow provides tranquil setting for special events

By Linda Williams

IF YOU build a better mousetrap, they will come.

This is the philosophy of Kevin Leonardis and Whispering Hollow Estate, located near the tiny community of Ryot.

A combat photographer in the U.S. Army, Kevin is originally from Windber. He always loved the scenic hills of Bedford County, and in 2004, he and his wife, Melissa, purchased a 40-acre farm to raise beef cattle.

Kevin's photography skills led him to all types of photography, but he specializes in weddings.

"I have taken more than 500 weddings," he explains. "But, I was not impressed with the venues offered in Bedford County."

He made a list of what was wrong with each wedding venue and planned how he could make it right.

He found a lot of city brides wanted to have country weddings.

"They would find barns or backyards, but then they didn't have comfortable surroundings for their guests," he says.

Barns are hot in the summer and cold in the fall. They are also difficult



to get clean.

Church basements and grange or community halls are popular wedding reception venues, but they require a lot of decorating to make them look festive.

With their 40-acre scenic property located against the hills of Bedford County, Kevin thought he could do a lot better. A man of many skills, he

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS: A pond complete with waterfall provides lovely sounds during a wedding, as well as a beautiful setting.

designed a hall for wedding receptions, corporate parties or retreats, baby showers, wedding showers, and birthday or anniversary parties.

Weddings are performed outside on a platform set against the hills. Always considering the wedding guests, Kevin knows the exact time a wedding should occur in order to keep the friends and family of the nuptial couple in the shade. It varies by about an hour from May through autumn.

Once the wedding is over, guests walk across the covered bridge that spans a bubbling creek and down to the air conditioned/heated reception hall. The hall is complete with a dance floor and well-kept, decorated restrooms.

Kevin did not want to deal with the food preparations for parties, but he did provide a kitchen area for caterers, or Kevin has a friend with a food truck that will cook onsite.

Brides need not worry about wrinkled gowns or smudged makeup on the way to the wedding as there is a special



READY FOR BUSINESS: The lodge is open and ready for business. Even on a winter day, it looks inviting.



BEAUTIFUL SETTING: A covered bridge adds an air of quaintness for the wedding party and guests.

area where there are mirrors and anything the bride might need where she and her wedding party can dress.

There is also a gentlemen's lounge for the groom and his friends.

Should the couple wish to spend their first night at this spectacular location, there is a log cabin with a kitchenette and comfortable furnishings. The cabin is also the site of skeet shooting often enjoyed by the male population of the wedding party prior to the big event.

"This is quite popular," Kevin says. "I think it has a calming effect for the guys."

The wedding party and guests are transported to the site in golf carts driven by neighbors the Leonardises hire for their events.

"Neighbors help to set up, take down, drive the golf cart, park cars, whatever," Kevin explains.

Both of his children, Madeline, 11, and Noah, 7, also help in any way they can.

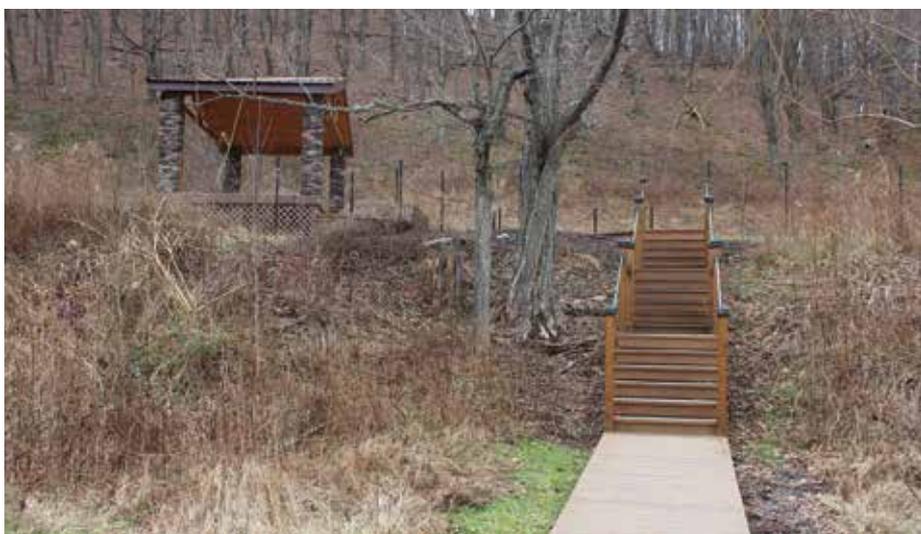
Kevin conducts all pre-event necessities from his spacious farm house.



ROOM FOR GUESTS: The guest area will accommodate 285 guests.



OUTDOOR SETTING: The bubbling creek provides a relaxing sound. The lodge is in the background.



SCENIC SPOT: Wedding couples will tie the knot at this scenic spot.

"It is the original 115-year-old farmhouse," he says. "But we had it moved by Earl Miller, and then I completely renovated it inside and out."

It took only six months to finish the Whispering Hollow lodge. Kevin acted as the general contractor and began work Jan. 15, 2016. Several carpenter neighbors helped, and they worked seven days a week, 18 hours a day.

To date, they have had wedding parties from Connecticut, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and a few local folks. One Denver, Colo., bride will say, "I do" this summer.

While it may seem like a remote

location, Whispering Hollow is only 20 minutes from the Pennsylvania Turnpike exchange, where guests can find an assortment of hotels.

Weddings are the prime reason for the venue, but many other parties can be accommodated.

"We even hope to have things like a craft beer or 'Wine in the Hollow' events," Kevin says.

Kevin keeps the price for a wedding as low as possible: usually in the \$5,500 to \$6,000 range.

To contact Kevin, call 839-2424 or look for Whispering Hollow on the web. 🌟

From the General Manager

(continued from page 14a)

maintained, which includes regularly checking and replacing the air filter when it's dirty to keep parts from working too hard or even becoming damaged. Keep brush and plants tidy around the outdoor unit, and dust the return registers inside. For more details on heat pump maintenance, visit www.energy.gov.

Interesting tidbit

Bedford Rural Electric has over 825 sister cooperatives across the United States. Together, we maintain 2.6 million miles, or 42 percent, of the nation's electric distribution lines — that covers 75 percent of the nation's landmass. We serve 42 million people, and 13 percent of the electric meters in the country. For every mile of distribution line we maintain, we serve 7.5 members, and collect about \$16,000 in revenue. Investor-owned utilities, like Penelec, serve 34 members per mile of line and collect \$75,000 in revenue. In other words, we maintain more miles of line per consumer and collect much less revenue per mile than investor-owned utilities. Yet we defy the odds with lower rates and more dependable electric service to our members — that's the cooperative difference! ☀



Food drive winners

Congratulations to the winner of this year's drawing of our members who contributed to the Bedford REC Food Drive. Grey Will of Berlin will receive a \$25 credit on his electric bill.

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

Bedford Rural Electric Cooperative will be awarding four scholarships of \$1,000 each to seniors whose parents' or guardians' primary residence is served by Bedford Rural Electric.

For an application, go to our website at www.bedfordrec.com and click on **scholarship information**. Applications are also available at the office.

All applications and required information must be received no later than March 1, 2017.

**Mail application to:
Bedford Rural Electric
Cooperative
P. O. Box 335
Bedford, PA 15522**

EMERGENCY POWER NEEDS

As a service to our members, Bedford Rural Electric needs to be aware of situations where special needs exist. Please provide the following details: (Please print clearly)

Account: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cellphone: _____

Email Address: _____

Special Needs: Medical

Farming/Livestock

Other _____

Each year, our goal is to provide service with no outages. Unfortunately, that is not a realistic expectation. Outages do occur and during severe storms, service restoration may take several days or longer. Therefore, we strongly recommend our members with special needs install standby backup generation equipment. Please contact our office for more information on this type of equipment.

TROUBLE CALL SCHEDULE

In case of trouble...

1 Check your fuses or circuit breakers.

2 Check with your neighbors, if convenient, to see if they have been affected by the power failure.

3 Call the 24-hour number, 623-7568, OR call 800-808-2732* during office hours.

**(Please help us save money – only use this number if toll charges apply.)*

Please give the person receiving the call your name as it appears on your bill, your telephone number and your map number if known. Any specific information about the outage will also be helpful in pinpointing the problem.

Alternate numbers ...

Gary Lafferty..... 842-9925 (Week of January 30)
Troy Mock..... 276-9759 (Week of February 6)
Greg Miller..... 839-0037 (Week of February 13)
Al Hileman..... 766-9971 (Week of February 20)
Richard Mills..... 623-7568 (Week of February 27)

In case you cannot reach any of the above, call:

Jim Seymour..... 839-2848 (New Paris)
James Clark..... 652-9791 (Everett)
Mark Rowan..... 623-7890 (Bedford)

During widespread power outages, many members are calling to report power failures. You may receive a busy signal, or in certain cases your call may go unanswered. This occurs in after-hours outages when the office is not fully staffed. Please be patient, and try again in a few minutes.