

Guest
COLUMN:

An excellent adventure



by Jeff Fetzer
*Manager of
Corporate Communications*

During each of the past two summers, I've had the privilege of serving as a chaperone on an adventure known as the Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.

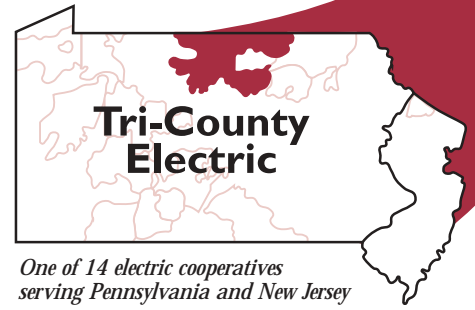
The Youth Tour, coordinated by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association since 1964, draws more than 1,300 high school juniors from 42 states to the nation's capital for one week each June. The gathering provides students an opportunity to explore historic landmarks and attractions of our nation's capital, network with rural teens from all over the country and gain a better understanding of American history, our federal government and electric cooperatives.

Many of the young people who attend count the week in Washington, D.C., among their most memorable and treasured experiences, and numerous lifetime friendships are formed during Youth Tour.

While students selected to take part in this all-expenses-paid trip enjoy the experience of making new friends and seeing famous sights — for the first time, in many cases — your electric co-op benefits as well.

After riding in coaches, waiting in lines, eating meals, viewing landmarks and spending nearly every waking hour for six days with 80-some student delegates from Pennsylvania's electric co-ops, I feel qualified to report that Youth Tour participants tend to be the cream of the crop — motivated, outgoing and bright.

Whether they eventually become titans of industry or teachers, politicians or preachers, these young adults will possess a greater understanding and appreciation of the electric cooperative program as a result of their Youth Tour experience. As society's future movers and shakers, they will become knowledgeable



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

goodwill ambassadors for electric cooperatives for many years to come.

Tri-County Rural Electric places a high priority on educating future generations of electric consumers about the benefits of being a co-op member. That's one reason why your co-op provides funding to enable students to tour Washington, D.C. each year.

Unfortunately, we experienced a slight downturn in the number of students seeking to represent the co-op on last year's tour. We hope to see that trend reversed this year, and you may be able to help. If you are the parent, grandparent or neighbor of high school juniors whose homes are served by Tri-County, please encourage them to consider applying to become a Youth Tour delegate.

Students are not selected based on academic standing; so they don't need to be at the top of their class to win the free trip to the capital. Obviously, students with a strong interest in history, government, politics and sightseeing, as well as those who just enjoy meeting and being with other teens, will get the most enjoyment out of the trip.

Rules for applying, as well as a student participation form, can be found on the following pages of this month's issue of *Penn Lines*. Additional information about Youth Tour can be obtained through guidance offices in all area high schools and on Tri-County's Web site at www.tri-countyrec.com.

Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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For Emergencies call
1-800-343-2559

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Office Hours

7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. (Mon.-Fri.)



Juniors: Win a free trip to Washington

Tri-County Rural Electric will send six teenagers from the co-op's service territory on an all-expense-paid trip to the nation's capital this summer.

If you're a high school junior who enjoys sight-seeing, history, politics or making new friends, then this trip may be for you.

The lucky students will have the opportunity to explore Washington, D.C., with a group of their peers from across the country during the 2004 Rural Electric Youth Tour, a six-day sight-seeing excursion that mixes fun and education.

During Youth Tour, which takes place June 13-18, participants will have the opportunity to explore Washington, D.C., historic sites, visit the Smithsonian Institute, make friends with Youth Tour students from throughout the

United States, meet with federal legislators and learn about electric co-ops and the cooperative movement.

The 40th annual Youth Tour is expected to draw more than 1,300 students to Washington for the week. If you are interested in being one of them, check out Youth Tour Rules below.



ABOVE: Former Tri-County Youth Tour delegates Scott Filer, seated, and Robert Brennan, second from right pose for photos at the Awakening sculpture with friends from Claverack and Valley Rural Electric Cooperatives.



LEFT: An evening boat cruise on the Potomac River brings together hundreds of Youth Tour participants from several states. Pictured are Tri-County's 2003 Youth Tour delegates, from left, Sara Kasper, Ashley Douglass, Katie Mead, Renee Norman, Janell Thompson and Lori Mitstifer preparing to board the Spirit of Washington for an evening of dancing and socializing.

Youth Tour Rules

1. Contest is open to any high school junior (2003-04 school year) whose parents or legal guardians are members of Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative.
2. Submit an essay, not exceeding 300 words, on "Electricity: How it affects my life..."
3. Essay must be typed and double-spaced.
4. Complete the accompanying application and staple it to your essay. Also include a wallet-size photograph of yourself. Mail to: Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative, Attn: Jeff Fetzer, P.O. Box 526, Mansfield, PA 16933.
5. Entries must be received by Friday, March 19, 2004.
6. After reviewing the applications and essays, Tri-County will select six Youth Tour delegates. They will be notified by Friday, April 23, 2004. The Youth Tour delegates will be eligible for special scholarship opportunities, and the top-scoring delegate will compete with other candidates from Pennsylvania's electric co-ops for the chance to represent the state at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's 2005 Annual Meeting in San Diego, Calif.
7. The decision of the judges is final.

For more information about the Youth Tour and agenda, call Tri-County's Mansfield office at 570/662-2175 or 1-800-343-2559, see your high school guidance counselor or browse our Web site at www.tri-countyrec.com.

Generators must be isolated from co-op lines

To ensure the safety of our lineworkers, Tri-County requires that backup power sources such as standby and portable generators be isolated from the cooperative's power lines through the use of a double-throw transfer switch.

A generator that is not properly isolated can "backfeed" electricity into the co-op's distribution system, re-energizing lines thought to be dead and creating a potentially lethal situation for linemen working to restore power.

Properly isolating your generator from the co-op's electric lines requires the installation of a double-throw transfer switch by a professional electrician.

If you have questions about the proper installation of an emergency generator, contact Tri-County's engineering department at 570/662-2175 or 1-800-343-2559. For additional information about generators, visit our Web site at www.tri-countyrec.com or call Tri-County to request a free brochure, "Choosing and Installing Emergency Generators."

Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative's 2004 Rural Electric Youth Tour Contest Application

High school juniors interested in participating in Youth Tour should complete this form and return it to the co-op office, along with their essay and a wallet-size photo by March 19, 2004.

* * Personal Information * *

Student Name _____

Home Address _____
R.R. and Box City State Zip

Phone Number (_____) _____

Tri-County Account Number _____

Parent/Guardian _____

* * School Information * *

High School _____

School District _____

Grade _____

Curriculum _____

Grade Point Average (GPA) _____

Career Goal _____

Post High School Plans _____

* * Extracurricular Activities * *

List extracurricular activities, such as athletics, music, art, drama, church, civic groups, scouts, etc. For each activity, include the organization's name, number of years involved, offices held and significant achievements. If you need more space, print or type additional activities on another sheet of paper and staple it to this form.

Activity	Years	Remarks

* * Short-Answer Question * *

Compose an essay of approximately 300 words on **"Electricity: How it affects my life."** Type your essay on a separate sheet of paper and attach it to the application form.

Let Tri-County light up your nights



Stray voltage workshop reminder

- Time:** 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
- Date:** Thursday, March 4, 2004
- Place:** The Youth Building at the Tioga County Fairgrounds in Whitneyville.
- Highlights:** Stray voltage experts from Penn State University and Penn State Cooperative Extension to discuss stray voltage — its causes, symptoms and remedies, as well as prevention techniques.

Pre-registration required.

For more information about this free, first-time workshop, funded by Tri-County as a service to its farm members, contact Jackie Lawrence, key accounts manager, at 1-800-343-2559.

Safety is important, but home security can become very costly.

Fortunately, there is an inexpensive alternative. Tri-County offers an affordable way to provide security and safety to your home, farm or business through its security lighting program.

Security lighting gives you a safe, smart, convenient and affordable way to protect your family and property. It automatically turns on at dusk and off at dawn, providing light and removing dark-shadowed areas from your property. For just pennies per night, security lighting:

- Gives you extra hours of light at night so you can see to work
- Provides added security. The more light surrounding your home, the less likely you are to be bothered by intruders.
- Offers added safety. You will be able to see your sidewalk or steps when you come home after dark and any visitors will have a lighted path.
- Provides light for play areas for children and adults. Many members have security lights near their swimming pools so they can enjoy a dip in the pool after dark.

Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative will install a security light on your premises at no charge, provided it is located within 125 feet of an existing cooperative facility. We cover the entire cost of installation, including the lighting fixture, wire and pole.

All we ask for is a brief description of the location where you would like the light to be installed. We'll contact you to make arrangements for the installation.

Electricity used to provide this service won't go through your meter. Instead, there is a monthly charge of either \$10 or \$12 for this service. The monthly charge includes electricity to power the security lighting system and all maintenance, including replacing burned-out bulbs.

For more information regarding this service and others offered to members, please call the Tri-County office at 1-800-343-2559. If you are interested in security lighting, please fill out the form below and mail it to Tri-County at 22 N. Main Street, P.O. Box 526, Mansfield, PA 16933.

YES! I want a security light installed.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone # _____

Account # _____

Check one box

\$10 per month for 100-watt light

\$12 per month for 150-watt light

Please describe the location you would like your security light installed:

Meter-testing program ensures billing accuracy

Tri-County tests meters at all residential and seasonal accounts on a 10-year cycle.

Meters are tested to ensure accuracy to within the industry standard of plus or minus 2 percent.

If a meter tests outside the acceptable range, an adjustment is made to the member's bill. It is rare for a meter to test outside the accepted range.

When meters are removed from a member's property for testing, they are replaced with meters that have been recently tested for accuracy. We attempt to notify the member at the time the meters are exchanged for testing.

The cooperative's meter-testing program ensures that your electric bill is accurate. You pay for the kilowatt-hours used as recorded by an accurate, tested meter.