



**Choptank Electric
Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy[®]
Cooperative



**Choptank
Fiber**

April 2022

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THANK YOU LINEMEN!

**MONDAY, APRIL 11 IS NATIONAL
LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY**



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Another Legislative Session in the Books

By Valerie Connelly, VP Government Affairs and Public Relations

The Maryland General Assembly closed out the 90-day session mid-April after having considered over 3000 bills. Legislators debated climate change, renewable energy, energy distribution planning, consumer privacy, criminal justice reform and legalization of recreational marijuana. With a rare budget surplus as the session got underway, decisions to support local building projects and tax cuts were easier to make in 2022.

Funding to help Maryland families is always important, but never more so than in an election year. The 10-year census resulted in redrawn election maps that were approved and then challenged in Court. The primary election in June and the general election in November are expected to bring a significant number of new Delegates and Senators to the next

meeting of the state legislature in 2023. And a new Governor will be installed as Governor Larry Hogan completes his very successful, term-limited, 8-year run.

The 2022 General Assembly session was marked by continued COVID restrictions, brought on by the Omicron variant, which kept committee work virtual for much of the session. Fewer advocates participated in-person and less opportunity existed for a discussion of issues. While health and safety must be the driving force, the hope is COVID can be managed going forward and the consideration of new laws returns to a more normal format in the years ahead.



Throughout the 90-day session, the Choptank Electric Cooperative staff and Board worked with the Eastern Shore Delegation and our team at The Cornerstone Group to evaluate all bills. We effectively lobbied to protect affordable, reliable electric service and broadband infrastructure investment for our 55,000+ members. To learn more about the Maryland General Assembly session, log onto <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/>

Rural Life with Broadband Internet, A Reality in 2022



Our broadband high speed internet service allows our customers the ability to enjoy all of the beauty and perks of rural life AND all of the advantages of having the highest internet speeds in the world. We have now offered service to nearly 1,000 homes in 6 counties in our first year of deployment and we are moving fast. The economic and social advantages of high speed internet in rural areas benefits everyone, and this is why we are bringing our service to you. Exactly the same reason we provide our members with electricity. So, whether your family has online schooling or telehealth, or a business to run or you just want to stream online videos without any buffering, Choptank Fiber has the broadband package for you and your family.

Make sure to sign up and register on www.choptankfiber.com so we can notify you when service is available in your area.



Presenting the Hotline demonstration were Andrew Benson and TJ Clark, Servicemen out of the Berlin District.

Hotline Safety Demonstration Hosted at Local School

Last fall, we had the pleasure of presenting our Hotline Demonstration to two different classes at the Berlin Intermediate School. This presentation includes information on electricity basics, safety, and then depending on the grade level or group of people, details about electrical circuits, substations, how power outages occur, how they are restored, and additional safety tips.




**CHOPTANK ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
ANNUAL MEETING**

Wicomico Youth & Civic Center
500 Glen Ave, Salisbury, MD
Thursday, April 28, 2022, doors open at 4:30pm
Business meeting begins at 6pm
Meal and goodies for members who attend
Open to all members, please RSVP by April 14th



City of Crisfield in her prime. Turnbaugh painting.



Three Generations of Daniels Family (L to R) Rev. Bob Jr., Stan, Eddie, Jonathan, Captain Art, Lee and Rev. Bob Sr.



Built in 1949, The City of Crisfield began a full restoration in early 2021



Part of the restoration team

Sail-a-brating the Past

The Choptank Electric Trust donates to the Skipjack Heritage Museum

By Elizabeth Hallett, Manager of Marketing & Communications



The Skipjack Heritage Museum is nestled in Chance, MD just before the bridge to Deal Island. While it's off the beaten path, it's well worth the drive with its rich history of the greater Deal Island area which includes little towns like Oriole, Chance, and Dames Quarter.

"This museum was established in 2007 to demonstrate and preserve the waterman's way of life," said Bob Shores, Treasurer of the Skipjack Heritage Museum board. "From 1800's until modern day, it tells the story of how people made a living off crabs, oysters, and fishing. Everything that makes the Eastern Shore what it is today."

On display are many artifacts donated by locals over the years. "We have been blessed with many good gifts," said Shores. Their largest donation to date seems to be one of their newest editions, a skipjack named the "City of Crisfield" in need of restoration.

This skipjack was donated to the museum by Bob Daniels, the only remaining son of Capt. Art Daniels who was a well-known Captain in the Chesapeake Bay area. This is their very first restoration project at the museum and they are excited to complete this project.

"They don't build skipjacks anymore, and most of these boats were built back in the late 1800s, early 1900s. This particular boat was made in 1949 which is fairly young. With only 25 or so remaining in the world, the skipjack is a precious piece of history that we must save," Shores

said. Shores also mentioned that only 10-12 are still used to dredge oysters. The others are either in museums or privately owned for personal use. Skipjacks, originally known as bateaus, were almost exclusively built on the Delmarva peninsula. These boats typically were 40-60 feet long with a single mast, a main sail and a jib (a small sail attached to the front) and had a captain with a four-to-five-person crew. The skipjack is the last sail powered vessel used commercially to harvest oysters in the United States, which makes saving this boat vital.

The "City of Crisfield" restoration project began over a year ago with hopes it will be completed by September 2022. "We would love for it to be mostly complete by Labor Day weekend which is when the Annual Skipjack race is held," said Shores. "Once it's complete, we would either like to get Coast Guard approval and give tours of the Tangier Sound and Island or allow it to be used commercially to dredge oysters so that we can maintain the boat and the costs it will incur."

While the costs to maintain it are being worked out, funds are needed to complete the restoration process. The Board of Directors for the museum were happy about the possibility of receiving a grant from the Choptank Electric

Trust. "The restoration of an historical artifact as rare as a skipjack is the type of worthy cause we want to support," said Debbie Barnes, representative for Somerset County and the Vice Chairman on the Choptank Electric Trust Board. "The Trust is centered around supporting the local life here on the Eastern Shore. Helping to save part of the past so that the future generations can understand it and enjoy it seems like a win-win for the community."

"We are so thankful for the Trust and their support of our project," said Shores. "Without their funds, we would never be able to finish this project on time. While it doesn't cover all of the costs, it's a huge benefit to have their support to help pay for materials the boat needs."

Shores spoke of the educational aspects of the museum. "We are planning to add educational tours for elementary school kids and educate them on the history of the area, artifacts, and boats. We don't want the kids to forget the history of this area."

Admission to the Skipjack Heritage Museum is free, but they do allow for donations to be made during the visit. If members want to learn more about the Skipjack Heritage Museum you can visit their website at www.skipjackheritage.com. If members would like to donate to their historical conservation, they can send donations to Skipjack Heritage, Inc., 23529 Deal Island Road, Chance, MD 21821.

To learn more about the Choptank Electric Trust and how you can apply for your community efforts, visit the website at www.choptankelectric.coop under Member Benefits, Operation Round Up.

Restoration efforts of the City of Crisfield skipjack as of February 2022

Serving Members with Integrity

Sue Phippin retires after 19 years of service



Sue Phippin
Operation Technician I

Hired in 2003, Phippin started her career at Choptank Electric as a Meter Reader. Becoming a Line Locator in 2006, she is retiring from the Co-op as an Operation Technician I. Read more as she recalls her favorite moments in her career.

"I most enjoyed working with members in the field while collecting bills. This gave me the opportunity to talk to them and get to know them. I respect the elderly greatly and would go out of my way to do anything for them. When I applied to Choptank Electric, I was attracted to working outdoors and meeting new people in the community. My proud moments are whenever I could help anyone with a problem. My coworkers are good to work with and they can give you a big insight on your daily job and how it relates to the Co-op as a whole. The up-and-coming young employees are extremely blessed to be working for a company like Choptank Electric Cooperative."

"As for after my retirement, I enjoy the outdoors, so I hope to venture into more horseback riding opportunities, enjoy the pool, and maybe move on to another part-time career. Family is important so just being able to enjoy their company while here is a great asset. I'm looking forward to sleeping in a little, no set schedule, keeping my father busy and just 'living the life!' The past 19 years have been an experience and hope to keep good and bad memories alive!"

Congratulations Sue and thank you for your many years of service.

Call Before You Dig, Think Before You Plant

What members can do to be safe this spring



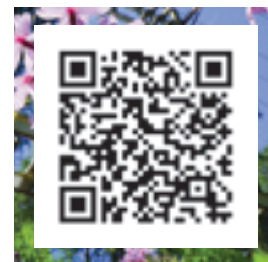
Think Before You Plant

One of the simplest things our members can do is to "think before you plant." When you are looking at planting bushes, shrubs, or trees, look up and see if there are any power lines above, or near that spot. Some trees could grow up and interfere with power lines, so instead, think of planting shorter bushes or shrubs near those areas.

Call 811 Before You Dig

Protect your property and your life by calling before you dig on any project this spring. Before you dig a new spot for your mailbox or install that new fence, call 811 which is a free service that marks out underground utility lines, pipes, and cables. This way, you aren't causing damage to any utility lines, which can disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, harm diggers, and potentially result in fines and repair costs or potentially, your life. 811 will coordinate with local utility and service providers to mark underground lines based on a color code for easy interpretation.

Scan for more guidance on [Vegetation Management](#) >



A Successful Career Serving Members

In his own words, Kevin Wright reflects on his 33 year career with Choptank



Kevin C. Wright
Senior Regional Member
Service Manager

"In the fall of 1988, I was contacted by a friend, Lance Lockerman, who worked at Choptank Electric Cooperative and said a job as a Communications Clerk was available and I should apply for the position. I applied and by the "Grace of God" I was awarded the position. So my career as a Choptank Electric employee began on November 7, 1988.

On February 27, 1989, I transitioned to Storeroom Attendant's Helper. In this position I acquired my CDL's to help manage the company's material inventory, storing, pulling, and transporting to the outlying district offices.

On June 11, 1990, I moved to the position of Apprentice Lineman, even though I stated I would never become a lineman. The next two and a half years were spent in the apprenticeship program. I became journeyman lineman on February 19, 1993. As a lineman, I began to learn about the Cooperative model of business. Traveling to assist sister cooperatives with the restoration of power after storm situations, was always a gratifying experience. Being a lineman was truly a rewarding experience.

Then on June 7, 2004, I began my new and present position of Regional Customer Service Manager, Northern Region. The title was later changed to Regional Member Service Manager, Northern Region. On May 13, 2017, I was promoted to Sr. Regional Member Service Manager.

Two of my fondest memories are portraying the character "The Phantom of the Load" and representing the Cooperative at the NRECA-sponsored Youth Tour. I enjoyed being cast in "The Phantom of the Load" commercial with WBOC. This was an effort to educate our membership about phantom load as it contributes to one's electric usage. Choptank Electric was recognized in "Spotlight on Excellence" award for the "Phantom of the Load" commercial at the Connect 2012 Conference. I also assisted with the selection process for the NRECA Youth Tour delegates for Choptank Electric and I chaperoned from 2009 until 2019.

Upon my retirement, I plan to travel, explore the natural treasures of Maryland, garden, and spend more time with my three grandsons, (Jaydin, Joshua, and Jourdan). When taking into consideration that I have worked much of my life, relaxation sounds like a wonderful thing to do. My wife (Tina) and family are genuinely happy for me and supportive with my decision to retire.

I have enjoyed working at Choptank Electric Cooperative. The experience here has helped me grow in many areas of my life and I am truly blessed, thankful, and grateful to have been given the opportunity. I will miss working with the Member Services department, as well as all the Choptank employees. Being employed by Choptank Electric Cooperative has been a part of my life for the past thirty-three (plus) years. My career voyage began November 7, 1988 and will dock on February 28, 2022.

"If you put forth the work and the time, success will be the finished product." - Kevin C. Wright

HAPPY EASTER TO OUR MEMBERS!

Our offices will be closed in observance of Good Friday, on April 15, 2022.



Member Notes

Our members are the reason Choptank Electric Cooperative exists. Whether on social media, phone, or hand written letters, we want to say thank you to our members who let us know when we are doing a good job. Thank you Elaine for sending us this very sweet card. We're here for you!

Choptank Electric Trust Awards

The Choptank Electric Trust is a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation funded by Operation Round Up donations from members of Choptank Electric. Funds from the Trust are distributed in all nine counties of Maryland's Eastern Shore.

February 2022

- Burrsville Ruritan Club - \$2,000
- Community Civic League - \$1,750
- Eldorado Brookview VFC - \$6,393
- Positive Strides - \$3,900
- Snow Hill Christian Nursery School - \$ 5,339

The total of approved applications was \$27,396.40 which included \$8,014.40 for individual home and medical expenses.



Choptank Electric Cooperative

Choptank Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Choptank Electric, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, is a not-for-profit, member-owned, electric distribution Co-op serving approximately 55,000 residential, commercial, and industrial members in all nine counties on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

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Somerset Co.



Choptank Fiber, LLC

Choptank Fiber, LLC is a wholly-owned broadband subsidiary of Choptank Electric Cooperative. Choptank Fiber's goal is to install true Gigabit broadband with no data caps one community at a time until we serve all our members on the Eastern Shore.