



**Choptank Electric
Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy[®]
Cooperative 

Members First. Every day.

March-April 2021



By Elizabeth Hallett
Manager of Marketing & Communications

You're Invited to the 83rd Annual Meeting!

**The meeting is scheduled for Thursday,
April 29, 2021.**

Members are invited to join Choptank Electric Cooperative for the 83rd Annual Meeting on Thursday, April 29, 2021, at the Wicomico Youth and Civic Center, located at 500 Glen Ave., Salisbury, MD 21804. Currently, we are planning a "live" meeting, but depending on COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines in April, the Annual Meeting may need to be conducted virtually. Choptank Electric Cooperative will keep members informed via social media and email as additional plans are made.

If we are able to hold the event in person, the business portion of the 2021 Annual Meeting will begin at 6 p.m.

As the Cooperative learns more, we may require members interested in attending the meeting to RSVP in advance. If you would like Annual Meeting updates and do not follow us on social media or are not subscribed to our e-news, please call our Member Service Center and we will make sure to keep you informed. You can RSVP in a variety of ways:

- Call our Member Service Center at 1-877-892-0001
- Email annualmeeting2021@choptankelectric.coop

Have your name, account number, and name and number of guests ready when you contact us so that we can ensure you are registered appropriately. RSVP no later than Thursday, April 15, 2021.

In addition to the business meeting, there will be ten \$1,000 Luck of the Draw scholarships awarded at the end of the Annual Meeting. For details about this scholarship, qualifications, and applications, please visit our website at www.choptankelectric.coop.

The business meeting will begin with President and CEO Mike Malandro reporting on Co-op business during 2020. At the meeting's conclusion, the Luck of the Draw scholarships and door prizes will be awarded. Three Board members will be standing for reelection during the 2021 Annual Meeting.

- Doug Scott, Secretary-Treasurer and Dorchester County representative
- Olin Davis, III, Kent County representative
- Robert Arnold, Queen Anne's County representative

Further information about each Director candidate is posted at Choptank Electric headquarters in Denton and is available at www.choptankelectric.coop. Their petitions have been approved by the Credentials and Elections Committee. Because there is only one approved Director candidate for each district, the Committee has invoked Bylaws section 4.06(b). This section states that in the event of an uncontested election, Choptank Electric may forgo the balloting process. This saves the Cooperative and its members thousands of dollars in printing and mailing the ballots, along with the costs of other voting services.

Because the Director election is uncontested and there are no proposed changes to the bylaws, no ballots will be mailed for the 2021 Annual Meeting.

As details become available, the information will be posted on our website, www.choptankelectric.coop or call our Member Service Center at 1-877-892-0001.

See Page 20 for Director Bios.



P.O. Box 430 | Denton MD | 21629

Toll-Free: 1-877-892-0001
Outage Reporting: 1-800-410-4790
Automated Member Service: 1-866-999-4574



Robert E. Arnold
Queen Anne's County

Robert E. Arnold was appointed to the Choptank Electric Board of Directors in November of 2011. Arnold serves on the Board as the representative of Queen Anne's County.

Arnold is the owner of Arnold Farms, LLC, a vegetable growing business, and has been a Choptank Electric member since 1988. Arnold represents Choptank Electric on the board of the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives and sits on the board of Aero Energy.

As a Director, Arnold recognizes the vital role that Choptank plays in the communities it serves and strives to represent all its members fairly and equitably.



Olin S. Davis, III
Kent County

Olin S. Davis III was appointed to the Choptank Electric Board of Directors in November of 1989. Davis serves on the Board as the representative of Kent County and has previously served as Chairman of the Board.

Davis has lived on Choptank Electric lines for over 50 years and his family has been involved with the Co-op since its early days. Davis has completed the NRECA Director's training, the Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate Program, as well as achieving the Board Leadership Certification.

Davis, along with his brother, Allen, own and operate Rich Levels Grain, Inc., and Rich Levels Poultry LLC, producing grain and poultry on the family farm near the village of Sassafras.



Douglas D. Scott
Dorchester County

Douglas D. Scott began his tenure on the Choptank Electric Board of Directors in January of 2013. Scott serves on the Board as the representative of Dorchester County and is the Secretary-Treasurer of the Board. Scott is the owner and President of Walnut Hill Farms, Inc., a family-owned farm consisting of 1,600 acres located near Hurlock in Dorchester County, Maryland.

Scott chairs the Finance, Budget & Audit Committee at Choptank. He also serves on the board and executive committee of Mid-Atlantic Cooperative Solutions, a partially owned subsidiary of Choptank Electric.

**Our offices will be closed on Friday,
April 2, 2021, to observe Good Friday.**



Legislative Update

Learn where you can find our latest legislative news and information.

As the legislative season continues to unfold, Choptank Electric is scrutinizing every bill to ensure that we are protecting our members' interests. Please visit the General Assembly's website at <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite> for information on bills of interest this year.

For more information about Choptank Electric Cooperative's efforts in Annapolis, please contact Valerie Connelly, Vice President of Government Affairs and Public Relations, or Matthew Teffeau, Manager of Government Relations.



Valerie Connelly
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To learn more about Choptank Electric Cooperative's legislative efforts, please visit <https://choptankelectric.coop/legislative-news> or scan the QR code.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME REMINDER

Don't forget to spring forward on March 14!
Set your clocks forward by one hour.



Rites of Passage: From Apprentice to Journeyman

Lineman Appreciation Day is a celebration of the lineman journey.



By Elizabeth Hallett

Manager of Marketing & Communications

Linemen are a major part of the workforce in the electric industry, but in the Co-op world, linemen are truly the heroes. They are our neighbors and friends. You see them cheering at baseball games, coaching little ones at soccer practice, making that last-minute grocery trip, and dining at the local deli on the corner. They understand, just like any other member of our community, what it is like to live, work, and play here on the Eastern Shore.

While there are many different rites of passage and positions in the linemen field, one of the most significant accomplishments is when an apprentice lineman graduates to a journeyman.

Apprentice linemen train for four years before they can become a journeyman. They are taught skills by our Safety, Training, and Compliance Department, they learn the ropes from our chief linemen and servicemen, and they are led by their Manager of District Operations.

There were four apprentice linemen who graduated to Journeymen in the last year, and they all had different degrees of experience when they joined Choptank Electric: Andrew Benson, Matt Breeding, Thomas Iseman, and Ethan Wallace.

One thing they all seemed to agree on, is that even though they like climbing through the ranks (pun intended!), their focus remains on serving our members, helping their co-workers, and contributing to their communities.

Being a lineman can be a thankless job, but to the members who witness their skill and dedication in a moment of need, it means so much.

During this past Christmas Eve, in typical 2020 fashion, a storm blew through the Eastern Shore and created many outages for our members. Instead of being at home with their families, many of

our linemen were out at the height of the storm, wind blowing and rain coming down, restoring power to our members.

“I have nothing but gratitude for

the guys who came out and restored my power,” said Dan Hart, a member located in Snow Hill. “One grandson was staying the night and the other was coming early the next day ... The storm was raging. The wind picked up, it was raining ... and our power was out.

“My Dad was an ironworker, and growing up I always wanted to be just like him. He took a lot of pride in what he did. When presented the opportunity to become a lineman at Choptank, I thought it was a perfect fit for me. Being a lineman allows me to be able to work hard, provide for my family, and have a job I can take pride in.”



Matt Breeding

I wasn't sure we would even get our power back on until after the storm was over. But they showed up only 10 minutes after the fire trucks did and assured me I would have power on Christmas morning.”

“It takes a certain amount of selflessness to be a lineman,” said Thomas Iseman. “I don't have kids personally, but many of the guys who were out there that night did, and they were missing their Christmas to restore power.”

“I live in these communities that were without power,” said Andrew Benson, “and to be the reason they woke up on Christmas morn-

“I was in school to be a paramedic when I was hired as a lineman. I love serving my community and I am still doing that here – just in a different capacity.”



Andrew Benson

“Being a journeyman instead of an apprentice means that I am making my own decisions – and I like being able to make decisions, but I also like getting advice from the more experienced guys here – they are so insightful and know their stuff.”



Thomas Iseman



“Going out there in the weather and getting the lights back on for our members, there is nothing like that feeling of accomplishment.”



ing to their power being restored, and to make sure they didn't go without on their holiday, not only for themselves but their kids, it's a great feeling.”

Mr. Hart was so impressed that they restored power within a few hours, and it meant the world to him and his family, especially on Christmas. “I have nothing but the best to say about those guys. To the two little 5-year-olds who were looking forward to celebrating Christmas, they were heroes.”



Ethan Wallace

We are honored to have up-standing employees representing Choptank Electric Cooperative.

Thank you to all of our linemen who work hard for our members not just in April, but every day of the year.

Lineman Appreciation Day is Monday, April 12, 2021.

A Big Thank You!

In December, Choptank Electric Cooperative started the Holiday Helpers campaign to help members who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. We would like to thank our community for their ongoing support of this program.

We have raised \$58,000 so far, and these funds will go a long way to helping those who have had financial strain during the last few months.



The 2021 NRECA Youth Tour has been canceled to protect the well-being of all the students and chaperones who would have attended. Nonetheless, Choptank Electric Cooperative will be working closely with each of our selected recipients as they advance their academic careers.

Are You Ready for Spring? Play It Safe!

Your Co-op's vegetation management best practices.

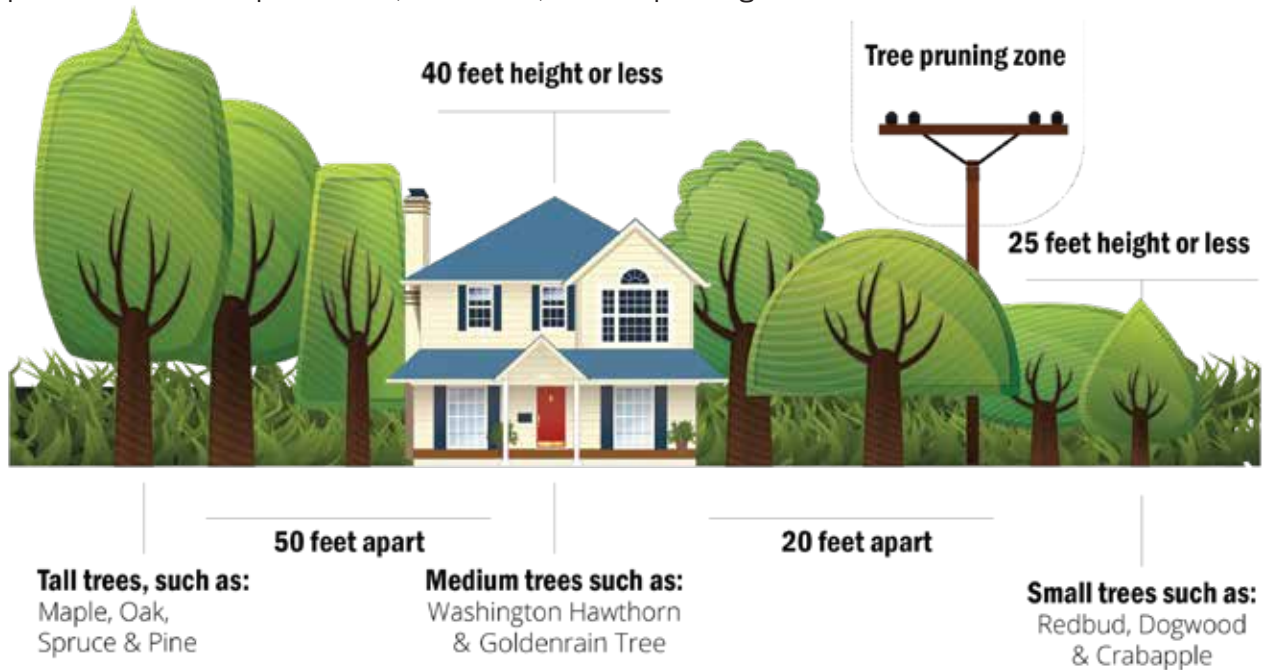
As your electric cooperative, it's our responsibility to provide safe, affordable, and reliable electricity to all of our members. Part of our strategy is to conduct proven vegetation management activities such as tree trimming, tree removal, mowing, and herbicide application. These practices conserve and enhance the vast natural resources of the Delmarva Peninsula that are touched by the Cooperative's maintained utility lines, while also providing your much-needed electricity.

Since May of 2003, all of Choptank Electric's tree-trimming and mowing operations have been performed by Asplundh Tree Experts of Willow Grove, Pennsylvania. Through the years, Asplundh has provided a mix of resources at a reasonable rate to assist the Cooperative in its effort to maintain vegetation and minimize its impacts on our infrastructure.

But what can our members do to help us maintain these rights-of-way?

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 Before You Dig

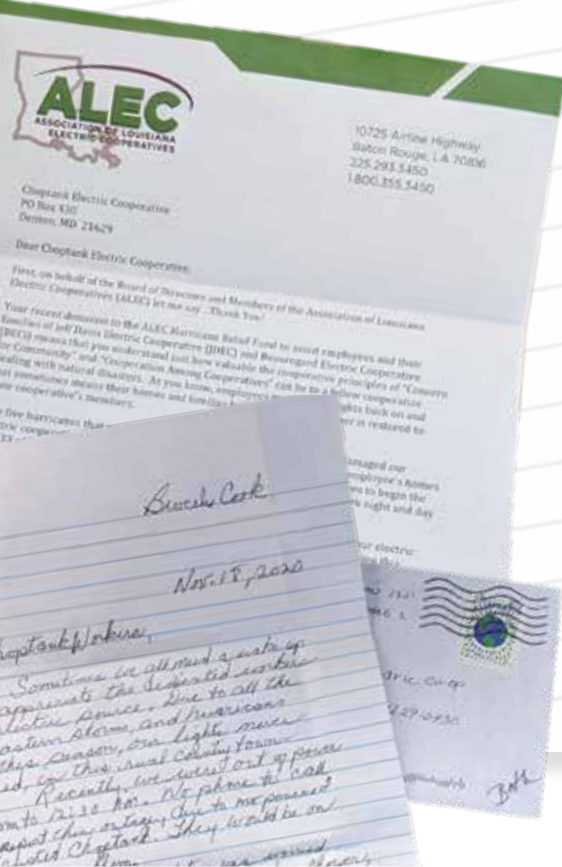
Protect your property and your life by "calling before you dig" on any project this spring. Before you dig a new spot for your mailbox or install that new fence, call 811, which is a free service that marks out underground utility lines, pipes, and cables. This way, you aren't causing damage to any utility 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.

Know The Color Code!

							
Proposed Excavation	Temp. Survey Markings	Electric	Gas, Oil, & other Gases	TV, Cable, Alarm, etc.	Potable Water	Reclaimed Water & Irrigation	Sewer & Drain

Member Notes

Our members are the reason Choptank Electric Cooperative exists. Without their support, it would be hard for us to move forward with current or new initiatives. Whether on social media, on the phone, or via old-fashioned letters sent along with their paper bills, our members love to let us know when their Co-op is doing a good job!



The Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives said of our assistance during the hurricane season last year: *“On behalf of our Board of Directors and members [...] May the blessings that you have bestowed upon our Louisiana co-ops’ families be returned to you two-fold during this holiday season and in the New Year.”*

Beverly C. of Parsonsburg said of our company: *“Sometimes we all need a wake-up call to appreciate the dedicated workers of our electric source ... Over forty years I have been a member of Choptank, and have been so pleased with their service and dedication.”*

Choptank Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Choptank Electric, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, is a not-for-profit, member-owned, electric distribution Co-op serving approximately 54,000 residential, commercial, and industrial members in all nine counties on Maryland’s Eastern Shore.

President and CEO

Micheal E. Malandro

Board of Directors

Jeffrey D. Rathell Sr.
Chairman, Talbot Co.

John J. Burke Jr.
Vice Chairman, Cecil Co.

Douglas D. Scott
Secretary-Treasurer, Dorchester Co.

Robert E. Arnold
Queen Anne’s Co.

Amy I. Brandt
Caroline Co.

Olin S. Davis, III
Kent Co.

Matthew R. Holloway
Wicomico Co.

Robert B. Thompson
Ocean Pines District

Donna R. West
Worcester Co.

Craig N. Mathies Sr.
Somerset Co.

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.

January

- Choptank Holiday Helpers - \$13,200 (contribution)
- Salem United Methodist Church - \$3,000 (repairs to church)
- Critchlow Adkins Children’s Center - \$2,500 (desktop & laptop computers)
- Humane Society of Somerset County - \$500 (website design)
- Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry - \$1,000 (deer processing)
- Aaron’s Place Inc. - \$3,500 (bathroom repairs)
- Harrisville/Malone Cemetery Maintenance Fund - \$3,000 (rebuild steeple)

The total of approved applications was \$39,758.82, which included \$13,058.82 for individual home and medical expenses.

