

LIVE WIRE

Celebrating
80
1938 2018
Years of Service



Choptank Electric Cooperative
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative
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Vol. 23, No. 2

FEBRUARY 2018

Live Wire is a monthly newsletter published for members of Choptank Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 430, Denton, MD 21629

Toll Free:
1-877-892-0001

Outage Reporting:
1-800-410-4790,
toll free,
24 hours/day,
7 days/week.

Automated Member Service Line:
1-866-999-4574, toll free

www.choptankelectric.coop

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Queen Anne's Co.

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Worcester Co.

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Wicomico Co.

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Somerset Co.

Douglas D. Scott
Dorchester Co.

Robert B. Thompson
Ocean Pines District



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You're Invited to the 2018 Annual Meeting!



All members are invited to attend Choptank Electric Cooperative's annual meeting on Thursday, April 26, 2018. This year the annual meeting will be held at The Wicomico Youth and Civic Center located at 500 Glen Ave, Salisbury, MD.

The event begins with registration and refreshments at 4:30 p.m., the business meeting will start at 6 p.m. You may also:

- » Check-in for the Luck of the Draw Scholarship
- » Recycle old electronics including PC's, laptops, batteries, TV's, tablets, and cell phones
- » Vote for the board members from Dorchester, Kent, and Queen Anne's Counties
- » Vote for proposed Bylaws Amendments

There will also be various community service and business vendors, and state-of-the-art utility trucks and equipment on display. At 6 p.m. the business meeting will begin with President and CEO Mike Wheatley reporting on all Co-op business during 2017.

During the business meeting, the results of voting for the board of directors and the proposed Bylaws Amendments will be announced and at the meeting's conclusion, the Luck of the Draw scholarships and door prizes will be awarded.

See Annual Meeting
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Straight Talk with your CEO

by Mike Wheatley

Democracy is the co-op way. The more you put in, the more you get out.

Every year Choptank Electric Cooperative has an annual meeting. One of the most important activities we conduct is the election for the board of directors. These are the ten people we entrust to give strategic direction and ensure the co-op has good governance.

In 1844 when the 28 Rochdale pioneers created the modern cooperative movement, they were insistent that all members have the right to vote. Unless we consistently remind ourselves about how precious this right to vote truly is, we can easily take it for granted.

At Choptank Electric Cooperative, we try to make it as convenient as possible for members to participate in the election by the ways folks can vote i.e. in person, by mail, or electronically. As the utility industry is experiencing some of the biggest changes since its founding, electric co-ops need your active participation.

See Straight Talk
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Annual Meeting

Continued from Page 1

During the month of March, members will be receiving a ballot, Bylaws summary of proposed changes, and other additional information, for voting as a separate mailing or for members who receive paperless billing, an email. Members are asked to cast their vote in advance either via mail-in ballot or email. If you are attending the annual meeting, please RSVP your attendance no later than Thursday, April 19, 2018. Members may call in their RSVP at 1.877.892.0001 or email at z_info@choptankelectric.coop.

The annual meeting is an opportunity for you to exercise one of the greatest benefits of being a member of an electric co-op: voting for the upcoming year's board of directors. Unlike investor-owned utilities, Choptank Electric is run by a democratically elected board of directors – a board who is given the privilege to serve because of your vote. A democratic and open election is one of the Seven Cooperative Principles making our electric cooperative stand out from other utilities. We look forward to seeing you at the 79th Annual Meeting!

Changes in Luck of the Draw Scholarship Application

The process for participating in the Luck of the Draw scholarship program has changed. While Choptank Electric will present ten \$1,000 educational scholarships at the close of its annual meeting to be held Thursday, April 26, 2018, **forms for the scholarship program will no longer be completed at the annual meeting.**

An application process **MUST** be completed prior to the annual meeting, and there are other qualifications that applicants must meet. Applicants must check-in at the Luck of the Draw Scholarship table at the Annual Meeting with their active, registered, Choptank Electric member before 6 P.M. to be entered for the drawing.

Applicants **MUST** meet the following qualifications:

- Complete the new Luck of the Draw Packet found on our website at www.choptankelectric.coop under Annual Meeting OR Scholarships. Submission directions can be found on the application and you will receive a confirmation phone call when your packet has been processed.
- Submit this packet to the Co-op by April 25, 2018 at 3pm.
- Be a graduating high school senior OR Co-op member.
- Be enrolled or planning to enroll at an accredited two or four year college, university, or a technical school for the 2018 fall term.
- The parent or legal guardian, who is an **active** Choptank Electric Cooperative member, must accompany the student to the annual meeting
- Both the student and **active** member are pres-



QUALIFICATIONS

To be eligible for this scholarship, the following provisions will govern the acceptance of applicants from Choptank Electric Cooperative members:

1. The applicant must be a graduating high school senior OR a co-op member.
2. The student must be enrolled OR planning to enroll at an accredited two or four year college, university, or a technical school for the fall 2018 term.
3. If a student is applying, the student **must** be a dependent or legal ward of an active Choptank Electric member.
4. Both student & parent(s)/legal guardian **must** be present at the end of the Annual Meeting to win.
5. Winners of prior years' scholarship are not eligible.
6. Employees & immediate family members of Choptank Electric, who are members, are not eligible to participate.
7. The active member must be registered and student must be checked-in by 6 P.M.

www.choptankelectric.coop

Toll-Free: 1-877-892-0001

P.O. Box 430, Denton, MD 21629

Scholarship Application Form

Choptank Electric will award ten \$1,000 scholarships to randomly selected students at the end of the 2018 Annual Meeting. To be eligible for this drawing, you must fill out this entire application and submit to Beth Gertsch at beth@choptankelectric.coop by Wednesday, April 25, 2018 at 3 P.M. Any application received after this date and time will be ineligible. Member and applicant must be registered and checked-in at 6 P.M. for the business meeting.

APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING.

Name of Applicant: _____

I am a dependent of a Choptank Electric Member: YES NO

Post-secondary school you will be attending 2017-2018: _____

Home Address: _____

Choptank Electric Account Number: _____

Current Phone Number: _____

Current Email: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian (qualifying member) name: _____

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ent at the end of the Annual Meeting

- Winners of prior years, employees and dependents of Choptank Electric who are members, and Board of Directors and their dependents are not eligible to participate.

What is an active member?

An active member is the member whose name appears on the electric account. If your name does not appear on the bill, you are not considered an active member and you should consider adding your name to the account so that you can attend the Annual Meeting with the applicant.

*Scholarships must be redeemed by August 31, 2018.

Straight Talk

Continued from Page 1

As a member of a co-op, you have the right (and some may even say the obligation) to help set the direction for the Co-op. This is a critical difference between co-ops and other electricity providers, such as investor-owned utilities (IOUs) or municipally-owned systems.

With IOUs, you are a customer and there is no required ownership. IOU stockholders live far away and have no direct attachment to the organization other than seeking a return on their investment. Communities served by municipally-owned systems may vote for the mayor or city council, but the connection to the electric service is very indirect. The board of directors of a co-op makes important strategic decisions for the organization, while the operations (day-to-day running of the business) is entrusted to the employees. Examples of decisions boards make that impact all the members are:

- the level of involvement in community economic development
- whether to offer renewable types of energy such as solar or wind generated power to the members
- offering other services such as broadband
- approving the budget for the co-op

So during this election for the board, you may want to ask the candidates where they stand on these or other issues. As locally-owned businesses in the community, electric co-ops have the opportunity to introduce neighbors to neighbors and rekindle that spirit of democracy at the grassroots level. We can encourage respectful debate about the role we see our Co-op playing in our community.

We know that democracy is not a perfect form of governing, it just happens to be better than any of the others. Maybe if we can practice doing it well at the local level, it will have a positive impact on our democracy as a whole.

Candidates up for Election in 2018

Dorchester County



Douglas D. Scott is owner and President of Walnut Hill Farms, Inc., a family-owned farm consisting of 1,600 acres located near Hurlock in Dorchester County, MD.

Kent County



Olin S. Davis III currently serves as the chairman of the board and he has lived on the Choptank Electric Co-op lines for over 50 years.

Queen Anne's County

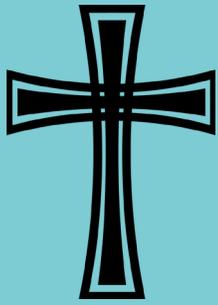


Robert E. Arnold is the owner of Arnold Farms, LLC, a vegetable growing business, and has been a Choptank Electric member since 1988.

For more detailed bios of all the candidates, please visit our website at www.choptankelectric.coop, or call our Member Service Center at 1.877.892.0001. You can also read the full bios when the ballots are mailed or emailed to members.



Coming Soon! Your electric bill will have a new look, effective with the March statement. Easier-to-read features have been added, and next month's Live Wire will have more detailed information for our members.



In observance of Holy Week, our offices will be closed on Good Friday, March 30, 2018.

We hope everyone has a blessed Easter season!



Keep in touch with your Co-op!

Update your information today, including phone numbers and email addresses. Updating contact information will ensure you receive notifications about planned outages and callbacks for when power has been restored during power outages. Call the Member Service Center at 1.877.892.0001 to update your information.

Choptank Electric Trust Scholarships are available for High School Seniors!

High school or home school seniors whose parents or guardians are members or employees of Choptank Electric Cooperative are now eligible to apply for the 2018 educational scholarships to be awarded by the Choptank Electric Trust, a 501-c-3 organization.



Scholarship recipients are selected based on a combination of the following criteria: financial need, academic achievement, extracurricular and community activities, references, and personal essay. Applicants must be entering a post high school educational institution as a freshman in the fall of 2018. The required essay should be limited to two typed, double-spaced pages on the following topic: "Why I have chosen to pursue a higher education degree and how this scholarship will assist me."

Please provide a cover page with your name, address and home telephone. Do not place your name on any other page of the essay. Reference letters

are required. Letters may be from school administrators, teachers, civic leaders, clergy or neighbors. Please limit to three references. Letters may not be submitted from relatives.

The Scholastic Information Form must be completed by your guidance counselor or other appropriate school official. You must submit this form along with your application, financial information form, transcript of grades, and essay to:

Choptank Electric Trust Scholarship
Attn: Laurie Bireley
P.O. Box 426
Denton MD 21629

The application form and all required supporting documents must be postmarked no later than Thursday, March 15, 2018, or hand-delivered to the Denton or Salisbury District offices, by 4:30 p.m. on that date. Applications postmarked after this date will not be eligible for consideration. For additional information and the application, please call Laurie Bireley, 1.877.892.0001, ext. 7733 or visit our website at www.choptankelectric.coop and under Community, click on Scholarships.

December 2017 Trust Awards

- Deep Roots - \$750 vehicle purchase
- St. Martin's Ministries - \$786.18 lighting materials
- Cambridge Police Dept. - \$500 Shop With a Cop program
- Wags and Wishes Animal Rescue - \$320 spay and neuter program
- Caroline County Friends of the Library - \$500 toward event
- North Sassafras Parish - \$1,000 renovations

- Denton Police Dept. - \$1,000 K9 purchase
- Claiborne Assoc - \$750 heating system
- Snow Hill Lions Club - \$1,500 kitchen repair

The total of approved applications for December was \$20,089.18 which included \$12,983.00 for individual home and medical expenses.

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.

