

CHOPTANK ELECTRIC
Cooperative Living

**YOUTH
TOUR 2024**

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For changes of address, please contact Choptank Electric Cooperative.

Local high school students traveled to Washington, D.C. for a week of fun and learning with Choptank Electric!

PHOTO BY MCKAYLA KIERNAN



Choptank crews doing work to strengthen our power grid in Denton earlier in the summer. Improving our grid keeps the lights on and the cost affordable.

Dear Members,

As you continue to relax and enjoy summer activities on the Eastern Shore, I want to give you some good news about your electric bill. Old Dominion Electric Cooperative (ODEC), Choptank Electric Cooperative's wholesale power provider, has experienced lower costs for generating and purchasing power over the past several months. These lower costs are largely the result of less expensive fuel used to generate electricity and lower power prices across our region. ODEC is a not-for-profit electric cooperative just like Choptank, and its mission is to provide us with the most reliable power at the lowest possible cost while meeting our state and national environmental goals.

ODEC and its board of directors have lowered the cost of wholesale power by \$1.50 per megawatt-hour, which allows Choptank to pass the savings on to you, our member-owners. You will see the reduced rates on your electric bill beginning August 1st.

These savings will amount to \$1.50-\$2.00 off the average household's monthly bill – that's \$1.50 per 1,000 kwh, which is the average monthly residential use. This change will be reflected in the Power Cost Adjustment line under the Supplier Charges side of your bill.

At a time when many costs have risen from gas to groceries, your cooperative lowers costs to member-owners wherever possible. I hope you will continue to enjoy your summer and will relax just a little more knowing your electric cooperative has your back.



*Mike Malandro,
President & CEO
Choptank Electric Co-op*



Choptank Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Choptank Fiber

P.O. Box 430 | Denton, MD | 21629

Member Service Center: 1-877-892-0001

Automated Member Service: 1-866-999-4574

Electric Outage Reporting: 1-800-410-4790 and select option 1

Fiber Outage Reporting: 1-800-410-4790 and select option 2

Use SmartHub to Manage Account,
Track Usage and Report Outages →

WWW.CHOPTANKELECTRIC.COOP



GET OUT THERE

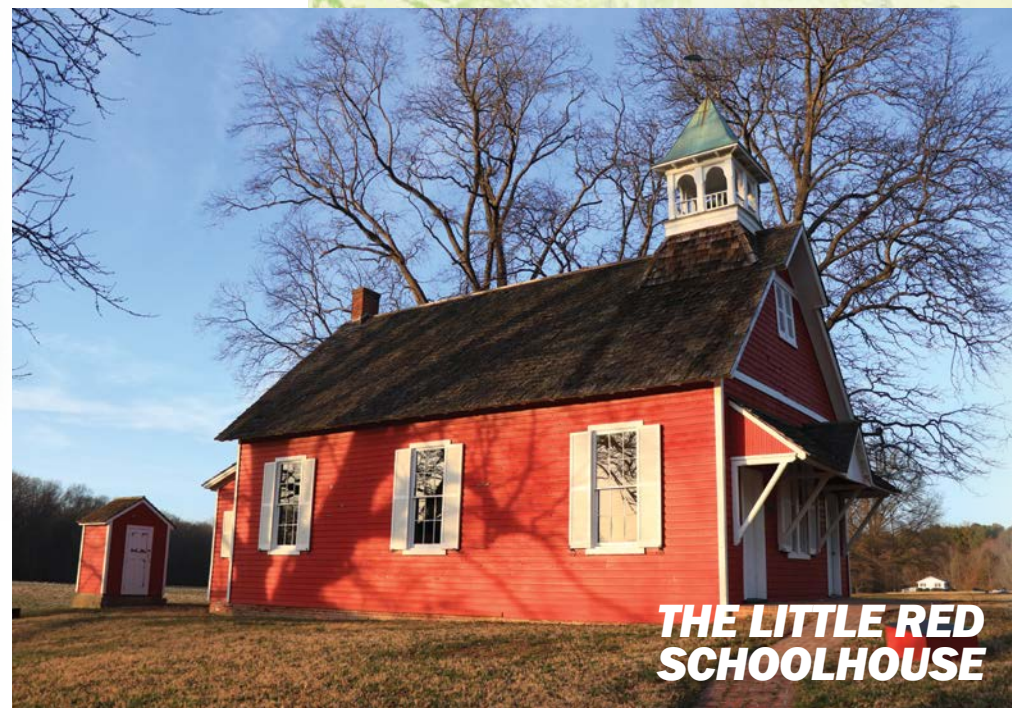
By Bobby Schaller, MultiMedia Manager

There is something about summertime that makes folks want to get out there and explore. Luckily, our service territory is chock-full of natural beauty, fun activities and history unique to the Eastern Shore. These two pages highlight a few of the wonderful places of our homeland for the adventurous at heart.



Built in 1860, this one room schoolhouse, known as the Little Red School House, in Talbot County stands as it did when it was first built. Tours are available upon request.

www.tcfl.org/mdroom/narratives/longwoods.html



THE LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE



POCOMOKE RIVER STATE PARK

It's easy to get out there and find peace and quiet while taking in all that the Pocomoke River State Park has to offer. The Pocomoke River runs south from the Great Cypress Swamp in Delaware for 60 miles until meeting up with the Chesapeake Bay.

www.dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands

ASSATEAGUE NATIONAL SEASHORE



A curious sika fawn checks out camping guests at Assateague National Seashore's state park.

www.nps.gov/asis



Share your adventures!

Share your summer adventures and photos with us, and we'll feature them on our social media channels so all of our members can see. Adventures will be shared in September. Please send photos to: bobbys@choptankelectric.coop.

Have fun out there!



It's not unusual to find yourself up close and personal with a great blue heron or countless other beautiful species of waterfowl at Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge in Dorchester County.

www.fws.gov/refuge/blackwater

BLACKWATER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE



“It’s important for students to learn about the political process and interact with their elected officials. After Youth Tour, these individuals become more engaged community members and have memories and friendships that last a lifetime.”

– Mike Malandro, President & CEO

YOUTH TOUR 2024



By Katie Luckett, Manager of Marketing, Communications and Education



Choptank Electric Cooperative sponsored five local high school students this summer to attend Youth Tour in Washington, D.C.

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour has brought high school students to our nation’s capital for a week in June annually since the late 1950s. This year over 2,000 participants from 44 states joined together to trade state pins and learn about the important roles electric cooperatives play in their communities.

Choptank’s students gained personal understanding of their roles as citizens by meeting with Rep. Andy Harris, Sen. Chris Van Hollen, staff from Sen. Ben Cardin’s office, and Gov. Wes Moore. They traveled with other cooperative

students affiliated with the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives, visiting monuments and museums, a dinner cruise on the Potomac River, a Washington Nationals baseball game and Arlington National Cemetery. A total of 1,500 students all came together for Youth Day, where they met each other in a fun pep-rally format and heard featured speakers.

“It’s important for students to learn about the political process and interact with their elected officials,” said Mike Malandro, President and CEO of Choptank Electric Cooperative. “After Youth Tour, these

individuals become more engaged community members and have memories and friendships that last a lifetime.”

William O’Donnell of Talbot County was selected to represent Maryland as the Youth Leadership Council representative. He will attend the NRECA Annual Meeting next year and work with Choptank Electric on community service projects.

> www.choptankelectric.coop/youth-tour



“This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience that you won’t get every day. Everyone should take advantage of this opportunity and the amazing people you will get to meet.”

Aubrey Linder, Colonel Richardson High School

“I enjoyed seeing a lot of new places, especially the tour inside the Capitol building.”

Cameron Todd, Colonel Richardson High School

“My biggest takeaway from Youth Tour was understanding what Choptank Electric and other co-ops really do for our community.”

Corey Bunce, North Carolina High School

“My favorite part of Youth Tour was trading pins with the other 43 states because I got to meet a lot of new people that way.”

Taryn Brandt, North Carolina High School

“The biggest impact Youth Tour had on me was learning about the need for rural electrification and broadband across the United States.”

William O’Donnell, Easton High School

JAY DIEM PHOTO

Dedicated and Thankful, Jeff Coppage Retires



Jeff Coppage
Serviceman

Jeff Coppage began his career at Choptank Electric Cooperative in August 2001 as a Meter Reader. He began his journey as a lineman when he started his apprenticeship in 2005. After three years as an Apprentice Lineman, Jeff was promoted to Journeyman Lineman in

2008 and held that position for four years. In 2012, Jeff was promoted to Serviceman and has held that position for the last 12 years. In his position as a Serviceman, Jeff was responsible for taking the initial calls for outages in his assigned area, troubleshooting problems, making repairs and calling more crews out for additional help if needed. His favorite part of his career as a lineman for Choptank was working for and helping the people in his community. Jeff states, "We understand the inconvenience outages bring to our members, many who are friends and family. We try our best to restore power in a timely manner, many times under bad conditions." Jeff also enjoyed working and assisting other cooperatives after large storms, particularly Georgia and Alabama in recent years. "By the time you get there, those people have been out for days. It's a great feeling when you can help them get some normalcy back by restoring power," says Jeff.

"Jeff is a leader and a mentor to our Cambridge team and will be missed by all of us. His dedication to his job and our members is second to none. We wish him all the best in his retirement!"

– Curtis Short,
Manager Regional Operations Cambridge District

When asked what he learned or would take away from his career at Choptank Electric, Jeff replied he has made some good friends here, and will miss seeing the guys and the brotherhood that linemen share when things get tough. He would like to thank

everyone at Choptank, from his managers, linemen trainers and all the linemen that he has worked with over the years. "Because of you all, I am walking out of here the same way I walked in, and that is all you can ask for in this line of work. This job was life changing for me and my family, and I am truly grateful for having it," says Jeff.

Jeff's last day with the Cooperative was May 31st. In his retirement, he is looking forward to spending more time with his wife and family, hopefully fishing, crabbing and hunting. He hopes to spend more time with his three grandsons and is looking forward to meeting his first granddaughter, expected to arrive in September.



STAY COOL AND BEAT THE PEAK

>>> www.choptankelectric.coop/beat-peak

By Samantha Casale, Communications Intern

As summer months roll in, we find ourselves cranking the thermostat down to adjust to the outside temperatures. In doing so, it is Choptank Electric Co-op's job to supply a reliable flow of electricity to keep members cool and connected.

During the extreme summer temperatures, we spend more time inside trying to stay cool by bumping the thermostat down to cool off. This increased use of electricity will cause spikes in demand, also known as energy peaks. During peak times, Choptank Electric works closely with Old Dominion Electric Cooperative, our wholesale power provider, to

ensure that a steady supply of electricity is always available to meet our community's energy needs.

When the demand for electricity is higher than usual, power providers must speed up electricity production. In these cases, electric utilities will pay more for electricity produced during the peak. This general increase in electricity use is why you typically see higher bills during the hottest months.

Choptank Electric Cooperative's Beat the Peak is a voluntary program where members are encouraged to conserve or limit energy use during peak times. Peak times are hours of

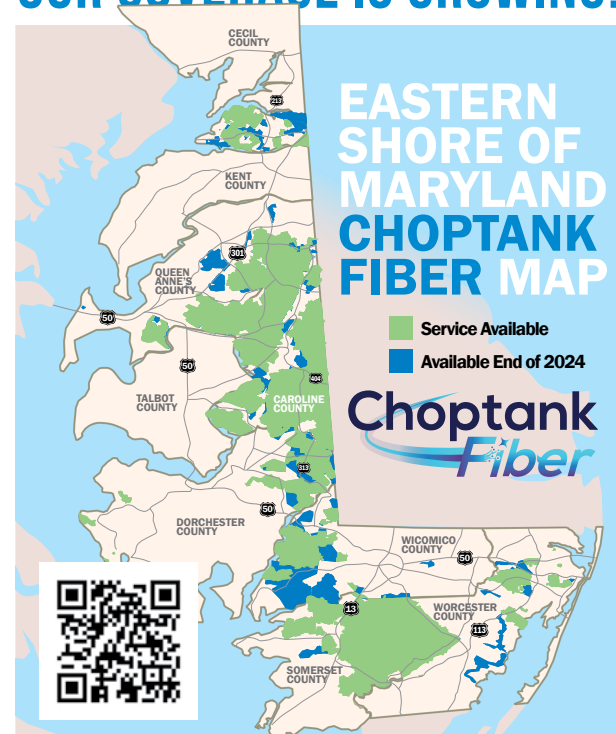
the day that incur the highest energy use, typically in the morning as people start their day and in the evening as people return to their homes. With this voluntary program, members will be notified via email when to turn back their thermostat setting.

This can also go toward reducing the use of appliances and unnecessary lights. The message will provide you with the anticipated day and time of the peak period to remind you of the importance of cutting back on energy consumption. Reducing the peak impacts the power-supply cost to every co-op member. Together we can make a difference conserving energy, one member at a time.

Visit choptankelectric.coop/beat-peak to learn more about peak energy times and to sign up for our Beat the Peak member notifications.



OUR COVERAGE IS GROWING!



> www.choptankfiber.com/service-locations

Choptank Electric Cooperative

BUZZ

CHOPTANK WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEES AND CONGRATULATES PROMOTIONS



Camryn Pepper
Staff Accountant

Experience: Accounting Strategies Group
Hobbies: Going to the beach, reading and boat rides
Looking Forward To: Connecting with the community



Hunter Rodgers
Apprentice Lineman

Experience: Choptank Electric Powerline Worker Pre-Apprenticeship Program
Hobbies: Hunting, fishing, shooting pool and riding four-wheelers
Looking Forward To: Learning as much as possible



Jane Towers
Controller

Experience: Professor at Chesapeake College teaching accounting and tax courses for over 15 years
Hobbies: Reading and walking
Looking Forward To: Learning more about the Cooperative as well as Choptank Fiber

⚡ Congratulations to **Daniela Hernandez** who moved up to Member Service Specialist 4th Class in May.

⚡ Congratulations to **Gabe Dennis** who moved up to Apprentice Lineman 2nd Class in May.

⚡ Congratulations to **Ben Cunningham** and **Hunter Absher** who moved up to Apprentice Lineman 4th Class in June.

⚡ Congratulations to **Ariel Dawson** who moved up to Member Service Specialist 4th Class in June.

NOTES FROM MEMBERS

Our members are the reason Choptank Electric Cooperative exists. Whether on social media, by phone, or through handwritten letters, we appreciate when members let us know that we are doing a good job! **Thank you, all!**



Choptank Electric Cooperative
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

Choptank Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Choptank Electric, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, is a not-for-profit, member-owned, electric distribution co-op serving approximately 56,000 residential, commercial and industrial members in all nine counties on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

President & CEO

Micheal E. Malandro

Board of Directors

Douglas D. Scott
Chairman, Dorchester Co.

Robert E. Arnold
Vice Chairman, Queen Anne's Co.

John J. Burke Jr.
Treasurer, Cecil Co.

Matthew R. Holloway
Secretary, Wicomico Co.

Amy I. Brandt
Caroline Co.

Craig N. Mathies Sr.
Somerset Co.

Kristen E. Nickerson
Kent Co.

Jeffrey D. Rathell Sr.
Talbot Co.

Robert B. Thompson
Ocean Pines District

Donna R. West
Worcester Co.

Choptank Fiber

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 of our unserved members on the Eastern Shore.

Dear Choptank,

We experienced a power outage at approximately 4:15 a.m., Sunday, May 26th. About 45 minutes later we received a phone call from one of your employees to verify that we had no power. He then advised that only our residence was affected and that someone would arrive shortly to correct the problem. A service technician arrived at approximately 6:15 a.m.

He quickly diagnosed the problem as a fused underground line between the transformer and our house. Additional technicians and equipment arrived to assist in the location process. The line fusion was located under a large pine tree. A small backhoe and several men dug a trench, found and repaired the line and re-routed it around the tree. Soils were then re-graded properly.

We write to sincerely thank you for the manner and timeliness in which your organization responded. All your technicians were obviously well trained. We were also thankful that everyone was all so polite, informative, knowledgeable and very efficient. You should be proud of each and every staff member that assisted us in our time of need.

Sincerely,
John & Nancy Masone

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 MD's Eastern Shore.

To apply, or to find out more about this program:

> www.choptankelectric.coop/operation-round-trust-fund.

June 2024

The total of approved applications for June was \$23,404, which included \$11,820 for individual home and medical expenses.

- 4STEPS Therapeutic Riding Program..... \$3,000
- Choices Pregnancy Center \$3,000
- Haven Ministries..... \$2,000
- New Beginnings Youth & Family Services.... \$841
- Somerset County Historical Society \$1,000
- Tides of Grace..... \$1,742