



LIVE WIRE

Choptank Electric Cooperative, Inc. Vol. 11, NO. 8

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AUGUST 2006

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 Customer Service Line:
1-800-311-8556, toll free
410-479-4206
(Caroline Co.)

Internet site:
www.choptankelectric.coop

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Choptank's Youth Tour contingent meets U.S. Congressman Wayne Gilchrest (R-1st) at his Capital Hill office. From left: Megan Batchelder; Kristen Chouinard; Rep. Gilchrest; Stephanie Porter; Donna Webb; Cara Cianchetta.

A youthful invasion of the nation's Capital

Five students from the Eastern Shore learned about commitment to community, the federal government and rural electric cooperatives at the annual Rural Electric Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., June 11-15.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and electric cooperatives in 44 states sponsored the event for over 1,400 students. Choptank Electric Cooperative sponsored Stephanie Porter, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Porter, Greensboro, Cara Cianchetta, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Carmine Cianchetta, Denton, Kristen Chouinard, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Chouinard, Ridgely, Megan Batchelder, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Batchelder, Hebron, and Donna Rae Webb, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Donnie Webb, Cambridge.

The students attended activities sponsored by the NRECA and toured landmarks in Washington along

with students from Virginia and Delaware.

A highlight of the Youth Tour was a visit to Capitol Hill, where the young women met with First District Congressman Wayne Gilchrest and Maryland's Senior Senator Paul Sarbanes. The lawmakers discussed current legislation, the war in Iraq and the No Child Left Behind Act.

The group visited Arlington Cemetery, the Drug Enforcement Administration, American Red Cross national headquarters, and the war memorials, including a tour of the World War II Memorial.

Cara Cianchetta was selected as the Youth Leadership Council (YLC) representative from Maryland. Cara attended the YLC conference in Washington in July and will attend the NRECA annual meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, in 2007. She is a senior at North Caroline High School in Denton.

Outage map is newest addition to website

A new outage map on www.choptankelectric.coop is the member's window into real time data from Choptank's outage management system.

A "click" on the light switch on the home page of Choptank's website will take you to the outage map.

Members can learn where outages are located throughout the co-op territory and how many members are affected.

You will be able to view additional information by clicking on the flashing colored dots on the map. The summary information gives the exact street or road name, county and number of members without power.

A county by county outage summary can also be viewed. All data shown is for information purposes

only and is based on the best available current information. The data refreshes every 10 minutes.

A description of how to report an outage is also available on the outage pages. There are links to a number of safety articles related to storms and outages including advice on portable generator safety, a safety check list and the steps Choptank Electric takes to restore power during multiple outages.

If your power is out, of course you won't be able to use your computer, but you might want to call a friend or relative for the information. The system will also be used by county emergency management agencies during weather emergencies and for reporting by MEMA and the Public Service Commission.



David Lewis, right, manager of regional operations, Berlin, points out some of the uses for the new wireless laptop to Tom Aydelotte, manager of regional operations, Pocomoke.

Going wireless has advantages for members, co-op business

The wireless laptop computer is another technical tool recently added to provide faster response to member needs and bring cost savings to the co-op.

"The wireless laptops will help our servicemen and regional operations managers have live outage data in their vehicles at all times and this should help with trouble shooting in the field," said David Lewis, manager of regional operations for the Berlin District.

The managers will be able to look at all outages for the co-op from anywhere they are connected and this will give them the resources to call in more crews if needed. They also have access to all of their email and will be able to respond quickly to member complaints.

"In one case I received an email from the office about a member who had called with some concerns. I opened the email right away and drove to the member's house in about 10 minutes," Lewis said. "This member could not believe how quickly I arrived at his house — this is a good customer service tool."

The operations field helpers will have all of their orders for locates on the laptop. This will save time and fuel because they will not have to go back to the office to print the orders and read them.

"If you have six operations field helpers

and they just save one hour a day in driving time this adds up to a large savings for the company and our members," Lewis added.

Most laptops have Global Positioning (GPS) installed and this will allow any serviceman or operations manager to go where they need to in the shortest amount of time without looking at a map. "For example, we can send a serviceman out of our Denton office to Ocean Pines and he will not have any problem getting there even if they have never been in the 'Pines at all," Lewis said. "This is another great tool to get co-op personnel to the members more quickly and is cost-saving as well."

Yet another use for the wireless laptops would be if the land telephone line to a district office was down. The office could connect to the wireless, set up a laptop on the counter and continue to work like there is nothing wrong.

"This is a pilot program and is a learning experience for all. We hope in time to do a lot more with the wireless and add more programs as we go forward," Lewis said.

**ALL CO-OP OFFICES
WILL BE CLOSED
FOR LABOR DAY,
SEPTEMBER 4. PLEASE
DRIVE CAREFULLY!**

Recent outages on the Choptank Electric system

- Williston, 6/12, 20 min., 45 members, animals/birds
- Westover, 6/19, 50 min., 60 members, accident
- Edgewood, 6/20, 50 min., 325 members, lightning
- Princess Anne, 6/20, 1 hr. 15 min., 178 members, unknown
- IB Corner, 6/21, 38 min., 249 members, equipment fault
- Denton, Hickman, Hobbs, 6/22, 1 hr. 20 min., 3,638 members, power supplier problem
- Princess Anne, 6/23, 1 hr. 38 min., 270 members, wind
- Multiple locations, 6/23, 28 min. – 2 hr. 55 min., 42 members, lightning
- Allen, 6/23, 4 hr. 55 min., 37 members, transformer
- Mount Olive, 6/23, 1 hr. 55 min., 51 members, right of way problem
- Multiple locations, 6/23-24, 1 hr. – 6 hr. 30 min., 453 members, lightning
- Millington, 6/24, 1 hr. 40 min., 60 members, accident
- Allen (Federalsburg), 6/25, 6 hr. 30 min., 1,300 members, power supplier problem
- Allen (Sharptown), 6/25, 9 hr. 50 min., 83 members, underground transformer
- Golden Hill, 6/26, 2 hr. 10 min., 90 members, wind
- Golden Hill, 6/26, 2 hr. 40 min., 90 members, wind
- Kennedyville, 6/25, 1 hr. 40 min., 3 hr., 56 members, right of way problem
- East New Market, 6/26, 2 hr., 253 members, lightning
- Kennedyville, 6/27, 1 hr. 20 min., 37 members, animals/birds
- Tanyard, 6/27, 45 min., 36 members, right of way problem
- Costen, 6/28, 5 hr. 15 min., 208 members, right of way problem
- Ironshire, 6/28, 1 hr., 82 members, right of way problem
- Walston Switch, 6/28, 3 hr. 20 min., 31 members, right of way problem
- Tanyard, 6/28, 1 hr., 37 members, unknown
- Hillsboro, 6/29, 2 hr. 40 min., 396 members, accident
- Multiple locations, 6/29, 1-2 hr., 56 members, lightning
- Multiple locations, 7/2-3, 50 min. - 2 hr., 156 members, lightning
- Mount Olive, 7/2, 2 hr. 25 min., 175 members, equipment fault
- Ocean Pines, 7/2, 3 hr. 15 min., 68 members, overload
- Mount Olive, 7/3, 1 hr. 5 min., 174 members, equipment overload
- Multiple locations, 7/4-5, 1-5 hr., 720 members, lightning/trees on lines
- Kennedyville, 7/7, 1 hr. 30 min., 34 members, unknown

River crossing boosts reliability

What just might be the biggest underground cable bore to lay electric cable in Choptank's history to date is now finished.

The co-op's 903 circuit in Pocomoke that crosses the Pocomoke River behind the Lankford Sysco company needed to be upgraded.

"The current cable goes from overhead to underground and lays on the bottom of the river crossing, then goes back overhead for seven spans through a marshy area which is totally inaccessible," said Tom Aydelotte, manager of regional operations for the Pocomoke District. "If there were any damage to lines in this area, it could be many hours before electric service would be restored."

According to Aydelotte, "Choptank chose

to bore the river with 12-inch pipe and go far enough to pass through the marshy area as to significantly increase service to our members." Spring and Associates from Easton constructed the bore of 2,200 feet with the pipe laid 30 feet deeper than the river bottom.

The new cable will be installed over the next eight months. This circuit has also been upgraded with fiber optic cable to enhance reliability when connected to the co-op's new "Smart Cabinets".

This circuit feeds the areas of Union, Colona, Tull's Corner, Bunting, Sheephouse, Payne and Aydelotte roads.

"This a tremendous upgrade for our members in the Pocomoke area," Aydelotte added.

Trust board awards grants for June

The following Choptank Electric Trust grants were awarded in June by the Trust Board of Directors. All funding for the Trust is through donations to Operation Round Up by cooperative members.

Boys & Girls Club of Cecil County, \$2,500, Power Hour Program

Deaf Independent Living Assn., Inc., Wicomico, \$6,500 for repairs to homes for hearing impaired clients

Oxford Fire Co., Talbot, \$4,150 for 10 section of new hose

Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra Society, Worcester, \$1,016.50 toward laptop

computer

Accessible ramp for disabled person, Talbot, \$1,605

Accessible ramp for disabled person, Wicomico, \$500

New well to enable disabled person to return to home, Caroline, \$2,500

Orthopedic shoes and special eyeglasses for disabled person, Caroline, \$395

Cecil County Classroom Teachers Assn., \$1,000 for materials for new teachers

Somerset County 911, \$5,000, for children's teaching program

Don't forget about reading your meter

Most of Choptank's residential service members are asked to read their own meters. When you receive your bill, take time to go to your meter and record the reading and date. The meter will have either four or five digits; record the numbers exactly as you see them.

There is a place to write your meter reading and the date it was read on the payment stub of your monthly electric bill.

You may include the reading with your payment or record the reading by calling the Automated Customer Service Line, 1-800-311-8556. You may also record it at www.choptankelectric.coop or by calling 1-877-892-0001.

The meter reading you turn in will be used for billing the following month. This means there may be as much as a month's delay between actual use of your service and when you are billed for that use. Reading your meter on the same date each month should ensure a more even spread of use of the monthly billings.

If the co-op does not receive a reading by the payment due date, it will be necessary to send an employee to read your meter. Your account will be charged a \$5.00 fee for this service, except for those residential members with a time of use meter.

Please maintain an unobstructed path to your meter at all times.

Online energy audit backed by Touchstone Energy Cooperatives

In cooperation with Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL), Touchstone Energy Cooperatives like Choptank Electric now offer their members the Home Energy Saver, an online energy audit that helps consumers identify the best ways to manage their home energy consumption.

Consumers can link directly to the online energy audit located on www.choptankelectric.coop "Safety, Energy, Weather."

This resource quickly calculates home energy use based on a detailed description of

a home, its appliances and geographic location. All energy applications (heating, cooling, lighting, etc.) are included in the calculation. Armed with the findings, you should be able to estimate how much energy and money you can save by implementing energy efficiency improvements.

The Home Energy Saver was the first Web-based tool to compute energy use in residential buildings, according to LBNL. The Web resource is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) as part of the

national ENERGY STAR Program for improving energy efficiency in homes.

Using a building simulation program developed by DOE, the Home Energy Saver calculates heating and cooling consumption for numerous climate zones across the country, drawing data from 350 weather stations nationwide. Based on zip code information, the program performs a full annual simulation for a typical weather year after the user assembles the necessary information describing their home.

CHOPTANK SECURITY

Choptank Security offers the very best in wireless, supervised security technology, plus LifeGard, the personal home emergency system.

Yes, I am interested in a no cost home security/life safety analysis at my home. Please call me to set up an appointment:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Best time to call _____

Send me information about Choptank Security's maintenance program.

Send to: Choptank Security Systems, Attn: June Lederer
P.O. Box 310, Denton MD 21629



Watt's the Answer?

Win \$10 credit on your bill in our monthly trivia contest. Readers who send in the correct answer are entered in a drawing. Entries must be postmarked/dated by September 5.

**Watt's the Answer for August:
What is the smallest country in the world?**

Send to: Watt's the Answer? Choptank Electric, P.O. Box 430, Denton MD 21629 or annew@choptankelectric.coop. Please provide account or phone number.

The winner of the June contest is Lila Whittington of Willards who knew cats sleep more than most animals, usually 12-16 hours. Some cats can sleep as much as 20 hours in a 24-hour period.

Pine Steppers Square Dance Club workshop every Wed., 7 p.m., Ocean Pines Community Hall. 410-835-3534 or 208-6777.

Vietnam Vets of America, 1st Thurs., 7 p.m., Easton VFW. 410-943-1374. Lower Shore, 3rd Thurs., VFW 194, Salisbury. 410-651-0904.

Bay Country Chorus (barbershop), every Mon., 7 p.m., Miller Hall, behind Trinity Cathedral, Goldsborough St., Easton. 410-770-8262.

Bingo: Willards VFC, Thurs., 7 p.m., Lions Club Bldg., 410-835-8678; Pittsville VFC, Fri., 7 p.m. 410-835-2323; Federalsburg VFW, Thurs., open 5:30 p.m., games 7:20 p.m. 410-754-5020. Hurlock Legion, Fri., 7:30 p.m., 410-943-8205; Denton Legion, Tues., 6 p.m., 410-479-2708; Redmen Lodge, Fruitland, Mon., 6:30 p.m. 410-742-6859; Willards Lions, Tues., 5 p.m., games 7 p.m. 410-835-2328;

Peninsulaires barbershop chorus, every Tues. 7:30 p.m., Wicomico Civic Ctr., Flanders Rm., Salisbury. 410-641-8927 or 410-543-8628.

Ocean Bay Chorus, Sweet Adelines, every Mon., 7 p.m., Wicomico Civic Center, Flanders Room, Salisbury. 410-749-0991.

Ocean Waves Square Dance Club workshop, every Tues., 7 p.m., Wicomico Civic Ctr., Salisbury. 410-742-2398 or 883-3723.

Delmarva Chorus, Sweet Adelines, every Mon., 7 p.m., Ocean Pines Community Center. 410-641-6876.

Disabled American Veterans Chap. 34, 4th Thurs., 1 p.m., Meuse VFW Post 194, Salisbury. 410-749-4518.

Chesapeake Christian Riders CMA #453, 1st Thurs, Bob Evans Restaurant, Easton, 6 p.m. All welcome. 410-943-8325.

Pinocle Group, every Wed., 9:45 a.m., 410-641-8836, Bridge Club, every Wed., 10 a.m., 410-641-7667, Ocean Pines Yacht Club.

Pepper Steppers Square Dance, 2nd Sat., 8 p.m., First UM Church Hall, Chestertown. 410-758-1454 or 778-4578.

Wellness Community-Delmarva, weekly support groups for cancer patients/families, Talbot, Worcester, Wicomico. 888-806-0756.

Heartland Quilt Guild, 1st Thur., 7-9, Choptank Electric mtg. rm., Denton, 410-482-8131.

Women Supporting Women (breast cancer group), 3rd Wed., 7 p.m., Atlantic Business Ctr., Ste. 213, Berlin, 410-641-2849.

US Submarine Vets, 3rd Sat., Dover. 410-482-6994/302-945-2448.

Eastern Shore Bluegrass Assn., show & jam, 2nd Sun., 1 p.m., Marydel Fire Co. 302-674-3149 or 492-1048.

TOPS weight loss: Tues. 6:30 p.m., 1st Baptist, Marydel, 410-482-6694; Thurs. 7 p.m., Christ UMC, Salisbury, 410-546-4197/543-9039; Church of God, Easton, Thurs. 6 p.m. 410-822-2630/673-2248; Tues. 6 p.m., 418 Dutchman's La., Greensboro; Tues. 6 p.m., Caroline Nsg. Home sun room, 410-482-2658.

Pine'er Craft Shop, Ocean Pines Community Center, 239 Ocean Parkway, open every Sat. & Sun., 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Line dance, Eastside Men's Club, Alexander Ave., Salisbury, every Fri. Beginner's lessons at 6 p.m. 410-749-1981.

National Assn. of Retired Federal Employees, 3rd Thurs., call for mtg. places, 410-749-6635/742-8073; Chap. 2274, 4th Thurs., Hall's Restaurant, Ocean City, 11:30 a.m., 410-641-2755.

Activity Singles Klub, Easton, 2nd Wed., 410-822-7468.

First Saturday Writers Group, Ocean Pines Branch, Worcester Public Library, all welcome. 410-641-5515.

Children's Health Program, for pregnant women & children to age 19. Kent, 410-778-7035, QA, 410-758-0720, Talbot, 410-819-5690.

Eastern Shore Stamp Club, 1st Tues., Wicomico Library, Salisbury, 6:30 p.m. 410-208-2929; Tidewater Stamp Club, 2nd & 4th Tue., 7 p.m., 14 S. Harrison St., 2nd fl., Easton. 410-822-6471.

First Monday, HIV/Aids support group in Salisbury, 1st & 3rd Mon. 5:30 p.m. 410-219-9000 ext. 101, 443-523-1745 or 443-523-1744.

Duplicate bridge: Riverside Homes, Salisbury, Mon., 7p.m. 410-

835-8343; Tred Avon Club, Wed., noon, Talbot Community Ctr., Rt. 50, Easton. 410-226-5126.

Living with Cancer, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Thurs., 4-5:30 p.m., Kent & Queen Anne's Hospital, cafeteria meeting room. 410-778-5550.

Eastern Shore Writers' Assn., 2nd Sat., place TBA. 410-482-6736.

Queen Anne's Chapter, Barbershop Harmony Society, Wed., 7:30 p.m., Centreville UM Church, Rt. 213. 410-827-7993.

All you can eat breakfast, Eldorado-Brookview Firehouse, 3rd Sun., 7:30-10:30 a.m. \$6. 410-943-0216.

Overeaters Anonymous, every Sat., 10 a.m., Christ UM Church, Ed. Bldg., Salisbury. 410-376-0164.

Friends of the Ocean Pines Library, 2nd Mon., 10 a.m., main mtg. room of library. 410-208-2760.

Merry Widows & Widowers Social Club, 3rd Tues., 2:30 p.m., Ocean Pines Country Club. 410-208-6207.

Beach Singles social club for age 45+, last Tues, 6 p.m. For info./mtg. place, 410-208-3974.

Delmarva Singles, ages 50+, 1st Wed., 6 p.m. Info 410-742-8310 or jasuth@intercom.net.

Join 4-H Clubs, open to ages 5-18. Call local extension office, Talbot, 410-822-1244, Caroline, 410-479-4030.

Centreville Farmer's Market, Wed. & Sat., 8-1 at Courthouse. Fresh fruit, vegetables, baked goods, crafts. 410-758-1291.

P.S. duPont High Class of '61 45th reunion, Oct. 21, 6 p.m., Del. Nat'l Country Club, Wilmington. "Butch" McCulley, 410-641-6678.

Wicomico Farm & Home Show, Winter Place Park, Rt. 50 Easton, Salisbury, Aug. 16-19. 410-883-2342.

BBQ chicken, Linkwood-Salem Fire Co., Rt. 50, near Cambridge, Aug. 18-19, 10 a.m. 410-221-0169.

Great Pocomoke Fair, Pocomoke City, Aug. 23-24, 6-10, Aug. 25, 6-11, Aug. 26, 9-11. www.thegreatpocomokefair.org

Labor Day Art & Crafts Show, Sept. 1-3, 10-5, Ocean City Convention Ctr. Ahasdings@go-signs.com

Marian Colbert Golf Invitational, benefits Women Supporting Women, breast cancer support group, Deer Run Golf Club, Berlin, Sept. 2. 410-641-2849

South Dorchester Folk Museum, Sept. 6, 7 p.m., Scott Todd, "Hoopers Straits Light House," Blackwater Refuge Visitors Ctr.

Gospel concert, Holiday Park, Greensboro, Sept. 9, 6 p.m., variety of performers, food sales begin at 5:30 p.m. 410-482-6797

Delmarva Bike Week, Ocean City area, Sept. 14-17, over 150 vendors, Th-Sat., 9-9, Sun., 9-4. www.delmarvabikeweek.com

Assateague Coast Day, national seashore, Sept. 16, 11-4, exhibits, music, food, kite flying, more. 410-213-2297

Chestertown Tercentennial crab feast, Wilmer Park, Sept. 16, 3-8, balloon rides, fireworks, music. \$25. 410-810-1356

Chesapeake College Annual Art Show & Sale, Sept. 28-Oct. 27, 8:30-4:30, weekdays. 410-758-1537, 822-5400, 228-4360 x306

Chester River Hospital Ctr. Auxiliary Christmas Shop, Sept. 29, 9:30-5, Sept. 30, 9:30-4, Rock Hall Fire Hall. 410-778-7668

Sunfest, Ocean City Inlet lot, Sept. 21-23, 10-10, Sept. 24, 10-6, crafts, performers, food. Tickets for headliners, 800-551-7328.

Berlin Fiddlers Convention, Main St., Sept. 23, 7-10, Sept. 24, 12-5, Sept. 25, 9-11. 410-219-3500 or www.berlinmdec.org

SEND EVENTS: Shore Good to Know, Choptank Electric, P.O. Box 430, Denton, MD 21629; or annew@choptankelectric.coop two months prior to event if possible. Include phone number.