## COOPERATIVE NEWS



#### DO WE OWE YOU MONEY?

#### List of Unclaimed Capital Credits

When the Cooperative has margins at the end of the year, those margins are allocated to active members based on their electric usage during that year.

Annually, the board of directors determines if the cooperative is in a financial position to distribute any margins or capital credits back to members. Capital credits are then retired and given to the members in the form of a bill credit, and in the case of an inactive member, a check.

We have many former members that have checks awaiting them, but are unable to mail those checks because we no longer have a valid address on file. If you think you are one of those members, please go to anec.com and search "Unclaimed Capital Credits."



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Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

President & CEO Butch Williamson

## Local Pages Editor Jay Diem

A&N Electric Cooperative is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.



# Focused on **YOU**.

Electric cooperatives were created to serve their members. Because we're a co-op, we're able to adapt to our community's unique needs. That's the power of co-op membership.

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH

## Celebrating Membership: October is National Co-op Month

all is a busy time, and October is a particularly eventful month with school, community and sports activities in full swing. It's also when all cooperatives celebrate National Co-op Month.

Our core business purpose is to serve as your electricity provider, but the larger mission of the co-op is to help make our corner of the world a better place. Concern for Community is one of seven guiding principles that all co-ops share.

Similar to how our wires run through our service territory, our concern for community flows through all of our decisions — because being a co-op means being a responsible partner and good neighbor.

A&N Electric Cooperative works to help our community thrive through initiatives led by our employees and local board that's comprised of neighbors who live right here in our community. Because we're local, we understand our community's unique needs and strive to help meet them.

We're proud to support local youth through our Youth Tour and scholarship programs. With your help, we offer Members Helping Members to provide assistance to our community's most vulnerable. We partner with and support area foodbanks and other charitable organizations.

The word "cooperative" is close to "cooperation," meaning people working together toward a common goal — mutually benefitting one another and the larger community. That's the essence of the cooperative spirit. Our employees and member-elected board members are invested in the community in which we live and serve.

Above all, as a co-op we put our members' priorities first. As your trusted energy partner, we know that saving energy and money is important to you. That's why we have numerous programs in place to help, including our in-home energy audit program.

We want to empower you to manage energy use at home. If you haven't already, please take a moment and download our app, SmartHub. Conveniently monitor and manage your energy use. We're here to help, so give us a call if you have questions about your energy bills.

A&N Electric Cooperative is continuously examining ways to operate more efficiently while continuing to provide the highest level of friendly, reliable service you expect and deserve. After all, we're your local co-op. We were built by the members we serve.



&N Electric Cooperative members elected two of their peers to serve on the cooperative's Board of Directors, during its 82nd Annual Meeting, held on Aug. 25.

More than 1,600 cooperative members participated in this year's election of directors through designated proxy. The election process was overseen and certified by the cooperative's Credentials and Elections Committee, which is independent of the board.

- In District 1, Mark A. Hickman was elected. This district covers the northern areas of Accomack County from Parksley's northern border to the Virginia/Maryland state line and includes Tangier and Smith islands.
- In District 3, Addison W. Nottingham Jr. was reelected. This district covers the area just north of Nassawadox in the south to just above Melfa in the north.

Both Hickman and Nottingham were unopposed in their elections to the board. Board members serve three-year terms.

The cooperative held its Annual Meeting at Eastern Shore Community College's Workforce Development Center. The meeting was broadcast live on WESR for co-op members who were not able to attend in person.

In addition to the election of directors, the cooperative provided its members reports on its end-of-year financial status, updates on the cooperative continued to response to COVID-19 and what's ahead for the future of the co-op.

The cooperative announced at the meeting that it was seeking candidates in District 1 to fill the unexpired term of

the late Robert L. Nock. The deadline to submit the required paperwork was Sept. 30.

#### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Nottingham, chairman of A&N Electric Cooperative's board, gave a report on the cooperative's ongoing member satisfaction surveys that help drive the company's community focus.

"We appreciate all the members who take part in the survey, and I want to assure you we are listening to your valuable feedback," Nottingham said. "I'm happy to report our satisfaction scores continue to rise. This is a direct reflection of the comments we receive from members and the cooperative's active response to those issues."

Nottingham reminded members that the board recently voted to return \$2.79 million in capital credits to the membership. Nearly all members receive capital credits in the form of a bill credit, which was applied in June.

The cooperative has retired more than \$31 million in capital credits to the membership since 1981.

Nottingham, who also serves on the Members Helping Members Board, reported the nonprofit raised more than \$56,000 in funds and was able to assist 210 cooperative members with paying their electric service bills in 2021.

"On behalf of the Members Helping Members Board, I'd like to thank all the members who continue to support this valuable program," he said.

On the topic of safety, Nottingham was pleased to report that

in the past four years, the cooperative has experienced only one lost-time incident, and attributing the feat to employees' "unwavering commitment to safety."

Nottingham took the opportunity to highlight the work of the cooperative's employee nonprofit organization, Lighting the Way, which logged more than 225 volunteer hours, donated more than \$2,900 to local causes, and partnered with the American Red Cross to host two successful blood drives at the cooperatives Tasley headquarters.

#### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A&N Electric Cooperative CEO Butch Williamson reminded members of the ongoing challenges presented by COVID and the cooperative's response to assist members. The cooperative was able to assist more than 2,000 of its members through special billing arrangements and relief funds.

More than \$652,000 was applied to applicable members' bills through CARES Act funding and Members Helping Members during the pandemic.

The cooperative continues to assist the USDA 504 Loan/Grant program, which helps low-income and elderly members with much-needed repairs and improvements to homes.

Williamson addressed the cooperative's relatively new prepaid metering program, which allows members who sign on, the ability make account payments for their future energy use. The program eliminates deposits and late fees. More information on the program and other services can be found at anec.com or by contacting a member services representative at the cooperative. The cooperative also offers free home and basic commercial energy audits for members who would like a detailed assessment of their home's energy use.

Williamson also alerted the membership of industry-wide supply chain issues, which is affecting specialized and traditional equipment. Lead times are increasing and costs are rising for these

"I tell you this not to scare you, but to let you know that we are working to make sure we minimize any potential impacts," Williamson said.

In regard to renewable energy options, Williamson informed members that several options are available through the cooperative and that largescale industrial solar initiatives continue to grow around the region. Currently, A&N has more than 165 residential. commercial and government accounts that have installed solar or subscribed to Cooperative SunShare.

The cooperative is currently evaluating an electric vehicle charging station network across the Eastern Shore. In addition, Williamson announced a pilot EV rate offered by the cooperative. EV owners are encouraged to contact the cooperative to learn more.

Williamson also addressed the rising cost of energy generation and methods the cooperative's power supplier is using to mitigate those impacts.

"With the volatility in the markets,

power supply costs at other utilities around the country have seen increases as high as 50% or higher, Williamson said. "As a member of Old Dominion Electric Cooperative and because of its hedging strategies, A&N's members



**Edward Parks** 

have seen an average of a 15-30% increase in electric supply costs. The open energy market has seen increases two to three times this."

#### **SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS**

Nottingham later presented resolutions to three longtime board representatives. Resolutions were presented to Yvonne Nock, widow of the late Robert L. Nock, who served as director of District 1 for 17 years. Nock recently served as the board's secretary-treasurer.

Nottingham also presented a resolution to Edward Parks for his 18 years of service



Addison Nottingham Jr., Director

to the cooperative and its board. Parks announced earlier in the year that he would be stepping down as a director in District 1. Nottingham thanked Parks for his dedication to the cooperative's membership and for his work on the Members Helping Members board.

Cooperative attorney Henry Custis Jr. was also presented a resolution for his 15 years of service as the cooperative's council. Custis will step down from his post later this year.



Robert Nock



**Henry Custis** 

"We will miss Henry's wisdom and guidance," Nottingham said.

The cooperative board then opened the floor to member questions and comments.

Immediately following the annual meeting, the board held officer elections, reelecting Nottingham as its chairman, Christopher Bott as its vice chairman, and Ralph Dodd as the board's secretary-

More information on the programs and initiatives highlighted at the Annual Meeting can be found at anec.com.



Co-op Responds
Quickly to
Island Tornado Damage





&N Electric Cooperative crews and personnel responded quickly to extensive damage caused by a tornado that crossed Smith Island, Md.

In early August, a waterspout came ashore, damaging homes and breaking several electric utility poles.

Cooperative personnel on nearby Tangier Island were able to respond within an hour, isolate the damage and restore power to the majority of the island with a generator located there.

By the next morning, about 60 island residents remained without power due to the damage. In addition to the line crews, other cooperative personnel traveled to Smith Island to assist residents as they begin to clean up the storm damage.

Cooperative equipment was barged to the island to help speed up restoration efforts.

Cooperative personnel were able to fully restore power within 48 hours of the initial damage.

While the restoration was relatively swift, the extent of the damage and the location of the damaged power lines led to a longer restoration effort for the last 60 members.

"Some of the power line damage is located out in the marsh, making its accessibility more difficult for our guys to make repairs," Joe Cataldo, A&N Electric Cooperative vice president of construction and operations said at the time. "While working to restore power, we're taking the opportunity to shift those lines closer to the nearby road, which will make them easier to access and help any outage restorations in the future."







he annual essay contests to determine A&N Electric Cooperative's Youth Tour and VICE Conference participants begins this month. A student can submit an essay for each, but will only be chosen for one trip if they meet the individual qualifications.

#### COOPERATIVE YOUTH TOUR

Each year, the cooperative sponsors local students to attend the annual National Electric Co-op Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. The students tour Capitol Hill and also visit historical and cultural sites around the nation's capital, including the African American History Museum, Arlington National Cemetery and the Pentagon. Other activities include an evening cruise on the Potomac River and a theatrical performance at the Kennedy Center.

The Youth Tour Essay Contest is open to all high school and home-schooled juniors living within the cooperative's service territory.

The student who submits the top essay from each local high school will be eligible to attend Youth Tour in June 2023. Students can select one of two essay topics: "Electricity's Importance to the Eastern Shore" or "What Would Life Be Like Without Access to Electricity?"

Essays can be submitted directly to the cooperative by logging on to anec.com and selecting "Youth Tour" under the "Community" tab.

#### YOUTH TOUR QUALIFICATIONS

- Current high school junior
- Complete and submit the Youth Tour Application and Essay Form by Dec. 2
  - Live full-time within the cooperative's service territory

#### **VICE CONFERENCE**

Each spring, the Virginia Cooperative Council sponsors the Virginia Institute on Cooperative Education, a youth leadership conference for up to 64 Virginia high school students. Local high



school and home-schooled students from A&N Electric Cooperative's service area are eligible to attend.

The objective of the conference is to educate youth about the unique cooperative business model. The top performers during the conference have the opportunity to receive up to \$2,000 in education scholarships.

Up to four local students will be selected to attend VICE.

#### VICE CONFERENCE QUALIFICATIONS

- VICE attendees must be 16-19 years old as of July 1, 2023
- Complete and submit the VICE Conference Application and Essay Form before Dec. 2
- Live full-time within the cooperative's service territory Essays can be submitted directly to the cooperative by logging onto anec.com and selecting "VICE Conference" under the "Community" tab.

Both conferences are at no cost to selected students. The cooperative also provides transportation to both events.

For more information about the Youth Tour program and VICE Conference, visit anec.com. Essay guidelines will be sent to the guidance offices at each high school this month and will be posted on the cooperative's website.

To learn more about how you can participate in these programs, contact Cooperative Youth Tour Coordinator Jay Diem at jdiem@anec.com.

## Tips for a Safe Harvest

by Abby Berry



Agriculture is the backbone of our country, and our livelihood greatly depends on the crops provided by American farmers. In addition to being one of the most labor-intensive professions, farming is also considered one of the most dangerous jobs in the U.S.

The hard work and exhaustive labor are tough but rushing the job to save time can be extremely dangerous — even deadly — when farming near electrical equipment.

Every year, we see collisions where tractors and other farming equipment accidentally collide with utility poles or power lines, causing injuries and power outages. These dangerous accidents can be avoided by looking up and around your surroundings when operating large farm machinery. If you're preparing for harvest season, please keep the following safety tips in mind:

Maintain a 10-foot clearance around all utility equipment in all directions. Use a spotter and deployed flags to maintain safe distances from power lines and other electrical equipment when working in the field.

If your equipment makes contact with an energized or downed power line, contact 911 immediately and remain inside the vehicle until the power line is de-energized. In case of smoke or fire, exit the cab by making a solid jump out of the cab (without touching it), and hop away to safety.

Consider equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle. Lumber, hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipes and even bulk materials can conduct electricity, so keep them out of contact with electrical equipment.

We hope you never find yourself in a situation where farming equipment contacts power lines or poles, but if you do, we hope you'll remember these safety tips.

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing electric cooperatives in Virginia, Maryland and Delaware, and across the country.

### Non-Summer Rates Effective Oct. 1

The cooperative's non-summer rates go into effect on Oct. 1 and will run through the end of May 2023.

These rates are lower than the summer rates co-op members experience June through September. Summer electricity use drives the wholesale cost of electricity.

Recently for A&N Electric Cooperative, the highest peak demands for electricity during the summer have helped determine the cost of electricity year-round. Cooperative members pay more for the electricity they use in the four summer months (June through September), while a lower rate has been established in the eight non-summer months (October through May).

The cooperative's seasonal rates were approved by the Virginia State Corporation Commission in the autumn of 2018.

The seasonal rate change does not affect the most recent power cost adjustment increase, which took effect in July. That increase covers the cost of fuel for energy generation facilities, which drastically increased earlier this year.

## Energy-Efficiency TIP OF THE MONTH

#### SEAL AIR LEAKS AROUND WINDOWS

With winter weather on the way, now is the time to seal drafty windows. If you can see daylight around a window frame or if you can rattle a window (movement means possible leaks), the window likely needs to be sealed.

Most window leaks can be sealed with caulk or weather stripping, which come in a variety of compounds and materials.

Visit energy.gov/energysaver to learn how and where to seal air leaks.

Source: energy.gov

## Co-op Vehicle Auctions Switch to JJ Kane Auctions



The cooperative will begin auctioning lighter vehicles through JJ Kane Auctions. The cooperative has utilized the service to sell heavier equipment in the past. F-150s, F-250s, vans and some other vehicles will be included.

The cooperative was previously using GovDeals to sell these vehicles prior to the change.

The sale of office equipment, furniture and other materials will continue to be placed on GovDeals.

Anyone interested in placing bids on used cooperative vehicles should go to jjkane.com for more information on setting up an account and viewing a vehicle auction

### Ag Fair is Oct. 8

The cooperative will participate in the upcoming Eastern Shore Agricultural Fair on Saturday, Oct. 8.

The event will take place behind the former Northampton Middle School in Machipongo from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

A&N Electric Cooperative will host a climbing demonstration during the event. The cooperative will have employees on hand to answer questions, show off some of our climbing and safety gear, and will have free giveaways. Solar Sam and LED Lucy will also be on hand to greet fairgoers.

In addition, the fair will offer farming education for all ages, and local vendors will be selling their local goods. The event is organized by the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce and Virginia Cooperative Extension.

