

CHELCO NEWS

POWERED *by* YOU

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CHELCO Youth Tour students visit Tallahassee



On Feb. 15 and 16, 15 local students participated in CHELCO's Annual Youth Tour program, visiting the state capitol in Tallahassee, learning more about electric co-ops and most importantly, making lifelong friends and memories.

Each year, CHELCO sends Youth Tour applications to all local high schools, and each school may nominate up to two representatives for their school. The only requirements are that the winners from each school must be juniors and the dependents of CHELCO members. This year, students from Baker, Crestview, Freeport, Laurel Hill, Niceville, Paxton, Rocky Bayou and Walton participated in the trip.

Youth Tour has been around since 1957 and is a program that hundreds of electric cooperatives participate in each year. While the program started out small, it has grown to welcome thousands of high school juniors each year, sharing the cooperative difference and giving students a firsthand look at the governance of their home states.

In addition to visiting Tallahassee, each Youth Tour participant is eligible to compete for a weeklong trip to Washington, D.C., in June. Four winners from CHELCO are selected each year by three judges not affiliated with CHELCO. Winners are selected in early March and will be announced in a future edition of CHELCO News.



A Touchstone Energy[®]
Cooperative 

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Annual Meeting Sponsorships Available

This year, CHELCO is offering various levels of sponsorship for the Annual Meeting, which will be held at Freeport High School on April 15. To see what sponsorships are available, visit [CHELCO.com/Annual-Meeting](https://chelco.com/Annual-Meeting). If your business is interested in sponsoring, please reach out to communications@chelco.com or call (850) 307-1121.

**SAVE THE DATE: ANNUAL MEETING
APRIL 15 at FREEPORT HIGH SCHOOL**



CEO Insights: Get involved - Join us at the Annual Meeting

One of my favorite events of the year is coming up on April 15, when CHELCO will host our annual meeting for you, the members we proudly serve. I always look forward to this event, because it's a great opportunity to share our progress, provide updates on our future plans and most importantly, to see and interact with hundreds of members.

I hope you'll join us for the annual meeting and festivities, which will take place at Freeport High School starting at 9 a.m. For those who are unable to attend in person, we will record and publish a video of the annual meeting shortly thereafter. Whether you attend in person or view the meeting at a later time, I would like to thank you in advance for getting involved, because your participation means a lot to the co-op.

During the annual meeting, we will share a few brief business updates on the construction taking place at our Headquarters campus, our

financial report, recently completed and upcoming future projects and more.

Prior to the start of the business meeting, we're going to have lots of fun, too. We'll have activities for the kids, including a bounce house, bucket truck rides and even a kids-only prize drawing. If you're a fan of top-notch coffee, you'll want to stop by the Coastal Coffee Bar, which will be serving up complimentary beverages. Plus, we'll be serving a free breakfast to everyone in attendance.

Spending time with you and hearing your input on our community's energy future is a critical aspect of what it means to be an electric cooperative. Everything we do is shaped by the members of our community. As I'm sure you know, there are many changes happening in the energy industry, and consumer needs and changing technology impact nearly every aspect of how we manage and deliver energy to local homes, schools and businesses.

We Value Your Input

You may be wondering if your thoughts and ideas are actually taken into consideration, and the answer is, absolutely. Gaining guidance and perspective from our members and board of trustees helps set priorities for the co-op and guide our future decisions. At our annual meeting, plenty of employees and board members will be available to answer your questions about the cooperative. Every year, we enjoy these discussions with you, whether they're about CHELCO, the community or anything else in life.

The annual meeting is also where we announce the results of the board of trustees elections, an important task that ensures our members are choosing who represents them on the board.

We hope you'll exercise the benefits of your cooperative membership by joining us for the annual meeting on April 15. I hope to see you there!

Steve Rhodes,
Chief Executive Officer



CELEBRATE

the Power Behind Your Power



Lineworker Appreciation Day

April 10

Operation Round Up grant helps provide addiction recovery at Project Hope



Pictured Above: CHELCO Communications Specialist Tyler Wood (right) presents an Operation Round Up grant to Ian Whitcomb of Project Hope.

CHELCO's generous members have once again helped make an impact in our community.

Through the member-funded Operation Round Up program, CHELCO recently awarded a \$3,750 grant to Project Hope Recovery Center, an organization focused on helping men overcome addiction, alcoholism and other self-destructive habits.

Unlike a conventional rehabilitation facility, Project Hope encompasses every aspect of life, guiding people to become mentally sound, emotionally balanced, socially adjusted and physically well. Additionally, part of the recovery journey for many participants is an opportunity to work at Project Hope.

"The men who staff the homes of Project Hope are graduates themselves," said Ian Whitcomb, Project Hope donor relations

coordinator. "We offer our year-long program free of rent, health insurance or government funding. Our residents also learn the craft of woodworking, and the sale of handmade woodcrafts is the only source of funding aside from community donations."

Whitcomb said the grant will help hundreds of individuals become free from addiction.

"This generous grant will help us make a huge step in sponsoring our semi-annual event, Spiritual Emphasis," Whitcomb said. "It is an energizing event that graduates always refer back to as one of the best experiences in their recovery walk."

To learn more about Project Hope, visit ProjectHopeRC.com. To opt in to our Operation Round Up program, visit CHELCO.com.

Avoid attaching signs to electric poles

While electric poles can be a convenient location to post notices about yard sales, lost pets, events or other announcements, attaching things on our poles may create a hazard for lineworkers.

While many of our electric poles may be serviced by bucket truck, some poles require our linemen to climb them. When this is the case, nails, tacks and staples can create a dangerous obstacle.

As a rule, we ask that you please refrain from nailing, stapling or attaching signs to our poles. Thank you for your cooperation.

Recipe of the Month



Blueberry Cobbler

Just five ingredients and a half-hour is all it takes for an excellent dessert! Learn this recipe and more at CHELCO.com/recipes.

CHELCO is governed by a nine-member board of trustees: Lee Perry, District 1; Terry Pilcher, District 2; Reese Harrison, District 3; Brady Bearden, Vice President, District 4; Ronald Jones, District 5; Gerald Edmondson, President, District 6; Bert Prutzman, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer, District 7; Gayle Hughes, Secretary/Treasurer, District 8; Dwayne Davis, District 9.

Don't burn your money on hot water



Water heating is the second largest consumer of electricity in most homes, making up approximately 20% of your total energy consumption. If you have a pool that requires heating, that percentage increases even more.

To save energy (and money) on water heating, repair any leaky faucets, install low-flow fixtures and insulate hot water lines and the water heater. When it's time to purchase a new washing machine or dishwasher, look for models that are ENERGY STAR-certified.

Installing a timer on your water heater is another way to help reduce your water heating usage and make your home more efficient. The timer allows you to turn off power to the water heater during times you know you will not be using it. The insulated tank helps keep the water temperature from dropping too much while the tank is off. You may

also consider adjusting the thermostats of the water heater down.

To maximize the life and efficiency of your water heater, make sure to periodically flush out the sediment.

Another way to save money on your water heating is to install a heat pump water heater, which uses the same process as your heat pump HVAC system. The heat pump water heater uses heat from the ambient air where the tank is located and transfers it to refrigerant lines that are wrapped around the water tank. This then transfers the heat to the water in the tank. Heat pump water heaters use less energy than traditional electric water heaters.

For more information or questions about water heating or energy efficiency, please reach out to our Energy Services Department at (850) 307-1122.

Charity Golf Tournament is May 19

Mark your calendar and get ready to hit the links for a good cause at the annual CHELCO Charity Golf Tournament.

The tournament will be held Friday, May 19, at Blackstone Golf Course in Mossy Head. All proceeds raised will benefit the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association and the Emerald Coast Autism Center.

Visit [CHELCO.com/golf](https://www.chelco.com/golf) for the team registration and corporate sponsorship forms. All teams must be registered by May 6.

If you have any questions, email communications@chelco.com. We look forward to teeing it up with you!



IS \$25 YOURS?

If the account number below matches yours, call us at (850) 892-2111 or stop by any CHELCO office to claim a \$25 credit on your next bill! This month's winner is:

Holley-Bray - 9000099177

For unclaimed capital credits, visit [CHELCO.com/capital-credits](https://www.chelco.com/capital-credits).