

# CHELCO NEWS

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## G&T leaders talk reliability, opportunity



(L-R): G&T leaders Jeff Bowman, Gary Smith and Lisa Johnson.

Recently, CHELCO's wholesale power provider, PowerSouth Energy Cooperative, hosted the Fall Focus Conference in Sandestin. The conference allows member services and communications staff to discuss current events, key strategies and industry trends.

In a panel about the evolving energy landscape and regulatory challenges, PowerSouth's President and CEO, Gary Smith, highlighted the key priorities for cooperatives: reliability, affordability and capability.

"Affordability gives people a better way of life, but it's about more than just cost," Smith said. "We want reliable, cheap electricity to lead economic development. We are in a position to welcome economic development benefits that come from large-load consumers."

Smith was joined by two fellow Southeastern generation and transmission (G&T) CEOs - Jeff Bowman of Cooperative Energy

(Mississippi) and Lisa Johnson of Seminole Electric Cooperative (Tampa). While these G&Ts have unique characteristics, they share a common shift from coal-fired to natural gas-fired generation. All three leaders agree that shifting to natural gas was the result of resource planning and the need for long-term reliability to address environmental regulations.

Access to reliable generation allows each G&T to add renewables and, more importantly, keep the lights on when it matters most.

Overall, the three stressed the importance of the cooperative business model. As Johnson stated: "The cooperative model is the best plan to serve electricity. We provide something people cannot live without, something that supports economic growth and sustainability, that becomes more essential every day. We must be reliable, affordable and responsible for our current and future consumers."

# CHELCO

A Touchstone Energy<sup>®</sup>  
Cooperative

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## Capital Credits

Capital credits will be distributed beginning on Dec. 1. CHELCO retires capital credits on a 20-year cycle. If you were a member in 2003, you will receive a capital credit in one of two ways based on how much business you did with CHELCO that year.

- Retirements paid to active Members totaling \$30 or more will receive a paper check.
- Retirements paid to active members for \$29.99 or less will see a bill credit labeled "Capital Credit Retirement".



## CEO Insights: Reflecting on another successful year at the co-op

It's hard to believe we're already approaching the end of another year. Reflecting on our collective accomplishments over the past 12 months, I am again "Proud to be CHELCO."

The past year has been a testament to the dedication of the CHELCO team. Together, we've navigated challenges, celebrated successes and continued our mission of powering the communities we serve. While every day is an achievement, let's look at some of our most significant accomplishments of 2023.

### No Lost-Time Incidents

At CHELCO, our top priority is ensuring the safety of our employees, members and the general public. I'm proud to say that at the time I'm writing this, we have managed to make it the full calendar year without any injuries or incidents that forced an employee to miss work. In fact, in January, we are scheduled to eclipse the two-year mark, an accomplishment that

requires careful attention to safety by our entire team. As CEO, my No. 1 task is to send our employees home to their families safely every night, and I'm proud that we have accomplished that in 2023.

### No Distribution Rate Increase

Another accomplishment our members will appreciate is our avoidance of raising local rates. While the Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment (WPCA) is determined by the cost of electricity we purchase from our power supplier, the Distribution Cost Adjustment (DCA), which includes the monthly service charge and energy charge on members' bills, has remained at the same rate for another year. In fact, we've avoided raising our local distribution rates since 2013 and have reduced them twice over that period of time. I'm proud of our continued efforts to reduce controllable costs to keep our rates affordable.

### Supporting Growth

If you've lived in our area for any period of time, it's no secret that our

population is growing rapidly. To date, we have welcomed more than 2,400 new members to our lines this year. As growth continues, especially in the Freeport area, we coordinated with PowerSouth to construct a new substation near the Owls Head community to serve the growing needs of Freeport and surrounding areas.

### Community Involvement & Support

In addition to hosting two member appreciation events in the community, we also were able to grant nearly \$100,000 to local non-profits thanks to the contributions of our members enrolled in Operation Round Up. These grants genuinely make an impact in our local communities.

### Happy Holidays

I hope you and your family have a chance to enjoy one another's company and make lasting memories this Christmas season. From all of us at CHELCO, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

**Steve Rhodes,**  
Chief Executive Officer

## CHELCO Board of Trustees election around the corner

Democratic member control is one of the seven cooperative principles that separate co-ops like CHELCO from investor-owned utilities. Each member has a vote, and members are elected to represent their district on the Board of Trustees.

Each year, three of the nine positions on CHELCO's Board are up for election. This election, members will elect trustees representing Districts 1, 7 and 9 through mail-in balloting. All members may vote for each district regardless of where they live. Results will be announced at the CHELCO Annual Meeting on April 6.

Each trustee represents a geographic area of CHELCO's service territory, and candidates must be in good standing and live in their district for at least one year before running. Trustee election packets will be available beginning in January at any CHELCO office or at CHELCO.com. A nominating committee reviews the applications and selects candidates. Members may also use a petition process, which is described in the bylaws on our website, to become a candidate. Your district number can be found on your bill to see if you are eligible to run in District 1, 7 or 9.

### Important Dates

**Jan. 24:** Applications due to CHELCO by 4 p.m.

**Feb. 5:** Candidates' names posted in offices

**Feb. 15:** Deadline for nominating by petition

**March 1:** Election ballots mailed

**April 1:** Ballots must be returned

**April 6:** Annual Meeting

## Safety Tip of the Month: Clutter on Poles

# Power Pole Clutter

Flyers, satellite dishes, posters, basketball hoops, decorative lights, even hunting stands. You name it, someone has tried to staple, nail or tie it to a power pole. Here's a quick look at the dangers and pitfalls associated with unauthorized pole attachments.

### Illegal

Many state and local laws and the National Electrical Safety Code prohibit any unauthorized items on poles. Utilities can face fines if these attachments aren't removed.



### Pole Damage

Even small holes can allow moisture and insects past the pole sealant, which can shorten the life of the pole or weaken it and cause it to fall in a storm.



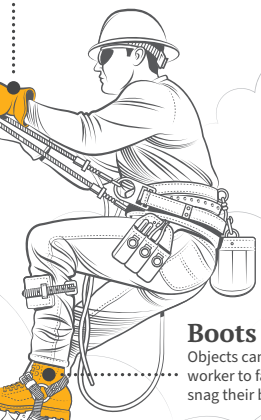
### Hinders Repairs

Posters and flyers can hide identifying markers on poles and slow repair work.



### Gloves

Staples, tacks and nails can puncture a lineworker's insulated rubber gloves and expose them to electric shock.



### Boots

Objects can cause a worker to fall if they snag their boots.

### Climbing Hooks

Nails and tacks can impede climbing hooks from sinking into the wood.



### Dangerous

A person who gets too close to energized lines while attaching an object can be electrocuted.



### Distraction

Some materials posted on poles, like mirrors or holiday decorations, can be a distraction to drivers.

## CHELCO raises \$1,600 for Community Christmas program

At our annual Halloween Happenings event, CHELCO raised money to benefit the Matrix Community Outreach Center's Community Christmas program. Employees from CHELCO and our wholly-owned subsidiary, Southland Utility Services, teamed up to raise a total of \$800 during our soup, chili, dessert and costume contests. Additionally, Southland contributed a matching \$800, bringing our total donation to \$1,600, all of which will be used to purchase Christmas gifts for children in need in our community.

If you would like to contribute to this wonderful program, please visit the Matrix's Facebook page, @MatrixCommunityOutreach.

## Recipe of the Month



### Davy Crockett Bars

A great choice for Christmas parties or any occasion! Learn this recipe and more at [CHELCO.com/recipes](https://CHELCO.com/recipes).

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Energy bills are often highest during the cold winter months, even here in the Sunshine State. To help limit your winter bills, remember to adjust your thermostat before you leave your home for the day. For example, if you normally run your heat on 68 degrees while you are home, bump it down to 65 while you're away. You'll be able to easily re-adjust it once you're back home while saving big on heating costs!

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.

## CHELCO purchases Tesla to learn more on EVs



In an effort to remain a source of trusted information, CHELCO has recently purchased a Tesla Model Y Long Range. The best-selling SUV from the largest EV manufacturer in the world, the Model Y is among Tesla models that have seen price cuts this year as a result of more competition and more options for EVs, according to a Forbes.com article.

The Tesla joins CHELCO's fleet as the second EV, the first a Nissan Leaf purchased in 2019. The Tesla will allow CHELCO's Energy Services department to make real-time comparisons between the two, including range, charging time and financial incentives.

### Range Anxiety

Range anxiety refers to the fear of running out of battery power before reaching your destination. The Tesla Model Y boasts more than double the range of our Nissan Leaf, with estimated ranges of 330 and 149 miles, respectively.

### Charging Infrastructure & Time

One of the most convenient aspects

of EV ownership is charging at home. With that said, there are several important considerations. A standard 110-volt wall outlet (Level 1 charging) adds 2 to 5 miles of range per hour. A Level 2 charger adds about 10 to 60 miles of range per hour of charging time and is a more energy-efficient method of charging, as most EVs have on-board components that require additional electricity the entire time the EV is plugged in.

It's important to note that utilizing in-home outlets for charging may add load to your system.

As we learn more about EVs through our fleet, and to learn about the incentives available to members who are EV owners, we encourage you to call our Energy Services Department at (850) 307-1122 or email [energyservices@chelco.com](mailto:energyservices@chelco.com) if you have any questions about what we have learned or if you are considering making an EV purchase.

For additional information, please visit [chelco.com/electric-vehicles](http://chelco.com/electric-vehicles).

## Fast Facts on the Tesla Model Y Long Range

**MSRP:** \$48,990

**Estimated Range:** 330 miles

**Top Speed:** 135 mph

**0-60 mph:** 4.8 seconds

**Drivetrain:** All-Wheel Drive

**Seating:** 5 seats (7 available)

**MPG Equivalent:** 117-127 MPGe

**Battery Size:** 80 kWh

**Charging Time:** 10.5 hr. (Lvl. 2)

**Tax Incentives:** Up to \$8,500

## Co-op Connections app offers discounts to members

Download the Co-op Connections app today! As a CHELCO member, you have access to discounts at participating restaurants, stores, pharmacies and more. Search for "Co-op Connections" in your smart device's app store to access countless great deals.

## 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:

**Wright - 9000108607**

## CHELCO Holiday Schedule - Offices Closed

**Christmas:** Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 25 & 26

**New Year:** Monday, Jan. 1

**MLK Day:** Monday, Jan. 15



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