

# CHELCO NEWS

POWERED *by* YOU

FEBRUARY 2021 | VOL. 26 NO. 2

**CHELCO**



A Touchstone Energy®  
Cooperative 

## Annual Meeting to be held virtually April 17



**Board President Gerald Edmondson speaks at the 2020 Annual Meeting.**

In an abundance of caution as COVID-19 is still affecting our communities, CHELCO's 2021 Annual Meeting will be held virtually with no members in attendance. The Annual Meeting is scheduled for April 17 and will be streamed live on CHELCO.com starting at 10 a.m.

One of the seven cooperative principles is "Democratic Member Control." This means our members democratically elect their representatives on the Board of Trustees. Each year at CHELCO's

Annual Meeting, we announce the results of our Board of Trustees Election. This year, Districts 1, 7 and 9 are up for election. You will receive a ballot packet in the mail with instructions on how to vote and make sure your voice is heard. Members who vote will be entered into a drawing, so don't miss out on the chance to win some great prizes!

For more information about the Annual Meeting and board elections, visit CHELCO.com or follow us on social media.

## CHELCO Scholarships open through March 25

CHELCO member dependents who plan to attend college or trade school in the 2021-22 school year are eligible to apply for the CHELCO Scholarship. Applicants must have a GPA of at least 2.5 and be in good academic standing with their school. The deadline to apply is March 25. For more information, visit CHELCO.com or talk with your guidance counselor. Winners will be announced at the virtual Annual Meeting.

## Inside

### Page 2

CEO Insights: Powering your way to savings

### Page 3

Board Trustees honored for years of service

### Page 4

Save time and energy with small appliances

## Announcements

### Holiday Closure

CHELCO's offices will be closed Monday, Feb. 15, in observance of Presidents Day.

### Save the Date

Annual Meeting is April 17 and will be streamed live on CHELCO.com at 10 a.m.



## CEO Insights: Powering your way to savings

Over the years, you've heard me discuss CHELCO's dedication to running our co-op at peak efficiency while delivering safe and reliable electricity. Through the efforts of our members and employees, 2020 was another excellent year, especially in energy efficiency.

CHELCO utilizes several energy efficiency and demand-side management programs to help our members save energy, and more importantly, money. Here are just a few of our programs designed with your wallet in mind.

**Energy Audits** are a service we offer to help members identify home improvements they can make to reduce energy usage, as well as aspects of their home which may be causing unnecessarily high energy bills. Using infrared thermography infiltration tests and other state of the art technologies, our energy advisors can point you in the right direction for energy savings. While in-home visits are still suspended due to COVID-19, you can give our energy advisors a call at (850) 307-1122 or email them at [energyservices@chelco.com](mailto:energyservices@chelco.com) for tips on how you can make your home more energy efficient.

For our members who live in or are considering purchasing a manufactured home, we offer significant **Heat Pump Rebates** for installing energy efficient heat pump systems. Homeowners, professional manufactured home dealers and even air conditioning contractors can receive rebates of up to \$400 per system ton. These systems will keep you and your family warm all winter, and they run much more efficiently to save you big on your energy bill while helping us control the demand for energy during critical periods.

Our **Beat the Peak** program is a team effort among our employees, members and our power supplier, PowerSouth, to help us control the cost of electricity during high demand periods. During the coldest of winter mornings, we request your assistance in curtailing the use of some of your larger appliances while we also work in conjunction with PowerSouth to activate load control on water heater switches. You may recall receiving an automated phone call asking you to reduce energy usage during certain hours.

The other crucial step in "beating the peak" is our **Switch to Save** program.

A switch is connected to the member's electric water heater, allowing us to send a signal to turn off the water heater's power during peak hours when electricity is most expensive. Even with the brief interruption, your tank will keep the water hot for hours. As a reward for joining the program, members receive a \$75 bill credit when the switch is installed and a \$3 bill credit in each of our peak months - December, January, February, June, July and August.

Thanks to the many members who participated in these efforts in 2020, **CHELCO avoided \$1.33 million in wholesale power costs.** That's real money in members' pockets - \$22 for each member in fact.

I'm confident we can maintain and even improve on our energy savings in the future. With your participation in our energy efficiency programs, we'll continue to run our co-op as efficiently as possible, putting your hard-earned money back into your pockets.

**Steve Rhodes,**  
Chief Executive Officer

## Prutzman earns NRECA Director Gold Certification



Bert Prutzman

As part of the National Rural Electric Cooperatives Association, CHELCO's Board of Trustees participate in various trainings to continue learning new ways to ensure the cooperative is successful in the mission of delivering safe and reliable electricity to its members.

Recently, District 7 Trustee Bert Prutzman earned the NRECA Director Gold Credential, which is the highest certification co-op trustees can earn. The Gold Credential recognizes co-op directors dedicated to furthering their knowledge and performing their fiduciary duty to the best of their ability.

## Board Trustees honored for years of service



**L to R:** Board President and District 6 Trustee Gerald Edmondson (25 years), District 2 Trustee Terry Pilcher (10 years) and District 7 Trustee Bert Prutzman (5 years) were honored by CEO Steve Rhodes (right) for their years of service to CHELCO's Board of Trustees.

Recently, CHELCO's Board Members were recognized for their years of service representing CHELCO's members on the Board of Trustees.

Gerald Edmondson, District 6 Trustee and President of the Board, was recognized for 25 years of service.

Terry Pilcher, District 2, was recognized for 10 years of service.

Bert Prutzman, District 7, was recognized for five years of service.

We would like to thank each of our trustees for serving our co-op and members faithfully in their time on CHELCO's Board of Trustees. We look forward to their continued guidance and leadership in the years to come.

## Stay safe with these winter tips

It's no surprise that winter months bring increased potential for fire risks and electrical safety hazards. During the coldest months, consumers are using additional electrical devices, like space heaters and electric blankets. As we near the end of winter, safeguard your home with these safety tips.

- 1.** Don't overload outlets. Use power strips and extension cords sparingly.
- 2.** Never leave space heaters unattended, and keep them at least three feet from any flammable items.
- 3.** Inspect heating pads and electric blankets, making sure the electrical cords aren't damaged or frayed.

## CHELCO offers many ways to pay

### Office Payments

7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., M-F  
(Masks currently requested)

### Phone Payments

Call (850) 892-2111  
Toll-Free: (800) 342-0990

### Kiosk Payments

Available at DeFuniak Springs, Auburn, Bluewater, Freeport and Santa Rosa offices

### Drop Box Payments

Available at all CHELCO offices

### Prepay

Add funds to your account at your convenience and receive daily balance notifications

### Bank Draft

Ensure your payments are never late and have payments drafted on the due date

### Mail-In Payments

Make checks out to CHELCO, Dept. 3049, P.O. Box 11407, Birmingham, AL 35246

### Online Portal

Visit CHELCO.com and click "Online Account" for easy online payments

### CHELCO Connect App

Download the Connect app to any smart phone or tablet for payments at your fingertips

CHELCO is governed by a nine-member board of trustees: Lee Perry, District 1; Terry Pilcher, District 2; OPEN, 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; Burt Cosson, District 9.

## Save time and energy with small appliances



Whether your oven and stove top are powered by gas or electricity, it's no secret that they consume more energy than smaller countertop appliances, like slow cookers and toaster ovens. In addition to efficiency, smaller kitchen appliances can provide faster cooking times and less hassle with cleanup.

If you're looking for convenient cooking methods with the added bonus of energy efficiency, here are three electrifying appliances for your kitchen:

**Air fryers** are becoming increasingly popular, and consumers have a lot of good things to say about these handy little appliances. Air fryers use convection to circulate hot air and cook the food - this means little to no oil is required, resulting in healthier meals than those from traditional fryers. Air fryers are available in a variety of sizes, and prices range from \$40 to \$200+.

**Electric griddles** have certainly been around for a while, and they offer several benefits for any home chef. Griddles are convenient because you can cook everything at once--like a

"one-pan" meal, and the possibilities are endless. From fajitas to sandwiches to French toast, griddles can help satisfy any taste buds. They consume small amounts of energy and provide quick cooking times, so your energy bill will thank you. Prices and sizes for griddles vary, but you can typically find one for about \$30 at your local retail stores.

Pizza brings people together, so why not consider a **pizza maker** for your kitchen? These compact, countertop machines are an inexpensive alternative to a costly brick oven, and they use less energy than your traditional oven. Choose your own fresh ingredients to whip up a faster, healthier pizza at home. You can purchase a pizza maker for about \$30 to \$150+ online or at your local retailer.

These are just a few electrifying appliance options for your kitchen. Not only are these smaller appliances less expensive to purchase, but they can also save you hundreds of dollars a year on energy costs. To learn about additional ways to save energy at home, visit [CHELCO.com](http://CHELCO.com).

## Connections Corner

The Co-op Connections discount program is another benefit of being a CHELCO member. Local businesses, participating pharmacies and thousands nationally offer discounts to co-op members. Don't forget to download the Co-op Connections app!

This month, we highlight and thank the following businesses:

### **Emerald Coast Energy Solutions**

(850) 588-2870

55 Gustaf Dr., Santa Rosa Beach  
Free energy inspections; \$75 off radiant barrier installation; \$50 off blown-in insulation

### **Genesis Automotive**

(850) 892-9145

20 Shoemaker Drive, DeFuniak  
Free detail with vehicle purchase

### **Joyce's Puppy Love**

(850) 267-1643

4942 Hwy. 98, Santa Rosa Beach  
10% off self-serve dog wash

For more information, visit [CHELCO.com](http://CHELCO.com), email [energyservices@chelco.com](mailto:energyservices@chelco.com) or call CHELCO's Energy Services department at (850) 307-1122.

## IS \$25 YOURS?

If the account number below matches yours, sign this page and mail it with your bill to CHELCO or drop it off at any office. You'll win a \$25 credit on your next bill.

**Cassidy - 990036287**