

CHELCO NEWS

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A Touchstone Energy®
Cooperative 

CHELCO Donates Radios to Holmes County Sheriff's



(L to R): Operations Supervisor Chance Pitts, Manager of Energy Control Matt Rushing, Holmes County Lieutenant Clint Smith, SVP of Engineering and Operations Matthew Avery and Holmes County Sheriff John Tate.

After recently upgrading the two-way radios in its company vehicles, Choctawhatchee Electric Cooperative (CHELCO) donated 30 of its used Motorola radios to Holmes County to use in Sheriff's vehicles, EMS and the county jail.

For CHELCO, its new radios will provide more efficient communications, as it will allow us to connect with the system of PowerSouth, our wholesale power provider, as well as other neighboring cooperatives.

CHELCO Operations Supervisor Chance Pitts, who also serves as a Volunteer Fire Chief in Holmes County, suggested donating the old radios to the Sheriff's Department. Senior Vice President of Engineering and Operations Matthew Avery applauded the idea, and on June 29,

the radios were delivered to the Sheriff's Department in Bonifay.

"This donation will not only serve the needs of the Sheriff's Office, emergency services and the jail, but it also frees up the fire departments' budget for their radios," Pitts said.

The radios will help the Holmes County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) with communication in patrols, response times and protecting the community.

Holmes County Sheriff's Office is a state accredited public safety agency in Holmes County, Florida. HCSO provides full-time law enforcement services to all five enforcement districts in Holmes County and protection for the Holmes County Jail, and Holmes County grade schools through their School Resource Deputies.

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Did You Know...

Many of CHELCO's power poles support more than just our electric lines. They often also carry telecom wires and fiber-optic cable that bring services like television, telephone and internet to members' homes. Cable and phone lines are lower on the pole and usually attach directly without insulators. These lines operate at much lower voltages, and can continue to function even if trees are growing into them or if they're on the ground.



CEO Insights: At CHELCO, we are 'Powered by Education'

As the summer break draws to a close and our area's students return to school, I'm reminded of just how important education is.

I grew up the son of a teacher. My mother taught fifth and sixth grade for 35 years, working tirelessly to impact her students' lives. As any teacher knows, the work goes far beyond just the hours spent teaching in the classroom. Mom cared about her students and never hesitated to go above and beyond on their behalf. Her dedication to education and its importance in children's lives is still evident in the thousands of students that passed through her classes and now have children and grandchildren of their own. I'm proud of her and the positive influence she had on my life and the lives of her students.

At CHELCO, we understand the importance of education. Whether supporting students, educators and local schools or providing ongoing training and education for our employees, I'm reminded of a fitting expression: Develop a passion for learning. If you do, you will never cease to grow.

Community Educational Support

Each year, we support our local schools through \$3,000 grants to the Okaloosa and Walton County

School District Foundations. This helps provide essential classroom materials for teachers, such as pencils, paper, books and more.

In addition to financial support for our area's classrooms, we sponsor a group of area teachers to attend the Empower Energy Education Workshop hosted by PowerSouth, our wholesale power provider. At the workshop, the National Energy Education Development (NEED) staff trains teachers on energy topics they can bring back to their classrooms, such as the science of energy, energy sources, efficiency and much more.

In support of those seeking higher education, CHELCO offers six scholarships each year to members or member dependents. The only qualifications are that the applicant must be a CHELCO member, have a GPA of at least 2.5 and plan to attend college or trade school as an undergraduate student in the upcoming school year. These six scholarships are awarded by random drawing at our Annual Meeting each year in April. For more info on these programs, visit CHELCO.com.

Furthering Employee Education

Our emphasis on education also extends to our employees, who train throughout the year on topics

essential to perform their duties well. This includes courses in management, safety, leadership, customer service and more. Additionally, we offer an in-depth trainer program that creates "Experienced" and "Master" trainers upon completion. We also encourage employees to do "ride-alongs" with other departments to get a more well-rounded view of the cooperative as a whole.

For more specialized education, many employees pursue certifications, associate's, bachelor's or graduate degrees while employed at CHELCO. In those cases, we support their education journey through tuition reimbursement, because we recognize the value of our employees furthering their education to serve our members.

I want to thank our educators and school support staff for making a difference in their students' lives. I remember seeing how much my mom cared about her students, and it makes me proud to know that she is one of millions willing to make an impact. I hope all teachers and students have enjoyed their summer, and I wish each of you a successful school year!

Steve Rhodes,
Chief Executive Officer



CHELCO's 2023 Empower Energy Education Workshop teacher group.

Operation Round Up Helps Local Organizations



Pictured above: CHELCO Communications and Community Affairs Supervisor Chelsea Blaich (far right) presents a \$400 grant to YouShine 30A Tiny Libraries.

CHELCO's member-funded Operation Round Up program continues to impact our communities. Recently, CHELCO presented grants to two local organizations: YouShine 30A Tiny Libraries and Flying Needles Quilt Guild.

YouShine 30A Tiny Libraries

YouShine, a non-profit organization based in Santa Rosa Beach, constructs and places "tiny libraries" along the Emerald Coast. Recently a \$400 Operation Round Up contribution allowed the organization to construct a new tiny library at the Seagrove public beach access on Highway 30A.

These tiny libraries are typically the size of a large mailbox and can hold a small assortment of books. The program's goal is to promote and spread the love of reading.

Flying Needles Quilt Guild

The Flying Needles Quilt Guild is a

non-profit with a primary mission of supporting the community through the group's talent for sewing, quilting and crafting other items.

CHELCO's \$1,500 Operation Round Up grant will be used to purchase materials needed to make quilts, blankets, pillowcases, bags and Christmas stockings to provide to children who have been removed from their homes for their safety and well-being.

To learn more about Operation Round Up, visit CHELCO.com.



Above: Communications Specialist Tyler Wood (middle) visited the Flying Needles Quilt Guild to present a \$1,500 Operation Round Up grant.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Ceiling fans can make a room feel 4 degrees cooler. To save energy through ceiling fan use, raise your thermostat a few degrees while fans are turned on.

Ceiling fans can help improve comfort year-round. In the summer, operate ceiling fans in a counterclockwise direction. Reverse the direction to clockwise during winter months and set fans on a low speed so warm air can circulate from the ceiling to the lower levels of the room.

Remember, ceiling fans cool people, not spaces. Be sure to turn them off when you leave the room.

Recipe of the Month



Italian Cream Cake

Satisfy your sweet tooth and enjoy a guilty pleasure with this delicious Italian Cream Cake. 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.

Charity Golf Tournament Raises \$10,000+



The Walton County Sheriff's Office team took home the win at Blackstone! Congratulations to Mark Wendel, Robert Gray, Tim Turner and Clint Holland.

The CHELCO Charity Golf Tournament, hosted at Blackstone Golf Course on May 19, raised more than \$10,000 to benefit the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association and Emerald Coast Autism Center.

The four-person scramble featured 18 teams and nearly 30 total sponsors. Altec, Clary-Glenn Funeral Homes, Farm Bureau Insurance, Southland Utility Services and Tri-State Utility Products each sponsored at the \$1,000 Gold Level.

Teams enjoyed refreshments and lunch, grilled by CHELCO, and additional fundraising efforts on the course including a trick shot with an AR-15 sponsored by Horsley Construction Group.

"This event is truly a team effort," said CHELCO Communications Supervisor Chelsea Blaich. "From the CHELCO employees that volunteer to be there, to the generosity of our sponsors and players, it's an event everyone looks forward to. We're proud of the total funds raised."



Stay Away from Downed Power Lines

- Do not attempt to move a downed power line or anything in contact with it.
- To move away from a downed line shuffle with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times.
- If you see someone in direct or indirect contact with a downed line, do not touch the person. Call 911.
- Don't put your feet near water where a downed power line is located.
- Do not drive over downed lines.
- If you are in a vehicle that is in contact with a downed line, stay in the vehicle. Honk your horn for help and tell others to stay away from your vehicle.
- If you must leave your vehicle because it's on fire, jump out of the vehicle with both feet together and avoid making contact with the energized vehicle and the ground at the same time.

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:

Nair - 9000145369

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