

CHELCO NEWS

POWERED *by* YOU

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CHELCO hosts Veteran Appreciation Breakfast, Lieutenant Governor Jay Collins visits



Pictured above: CHELCO Energy Services and Government Accounts Coordinator Tina Rushing, SVP of Engineering and Operations Matthew Avery, Florida Lt. Gov. Jay Collins, VP of Finance Robin Shaw, CEO Steve Rhodes, and VP of Member Services and External Affairs Emily Cowan.

CHELCO was honored to host the Walton Area Chamber of Commerce's Military and Veterans Appreciation Breakfast on Nov. 14 at CHELCO's Headquarters in DeFuniak Springs. CHELCO was excited to be joined by Florida Lt. Gov. Jay Collins, who served as the keynote speaker for the event, which welcomed nearly 100 attendees made up of active duty military, veterans and local and state officials. The event also included local students from the Walton High School AFJROTC and the Rocky Bayou Christian School student choir. CHELCO would like to thank Lt. Gov. Collins and his staff, the Walton Area Chamber of Commerce, Walton High School JROTC, Rocky Bayou Christian School student choir, and most importantly, all veterans and active duty military who serve our country daily.



Lt. Gov. Collins, who served in the U.S. Army from 1995-2018, spoke about his experience in the military and expressed gratitude to all veterans and active duty military personnel.



The Rocky Bayou Christian School student choir performed the national anthem and other patriotic songs at the Military and Veterans Appreciation Breakfast.

CHELCO

A Touchstone Energy®
Cooperative



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Important Dates

Holidays & Office Closures

All CHELCO offices will be closed the following dates in December and January.

Dec. 11 - Employee Training

Dec. 24 and 25 - Christmas

Jan. 1 - New Year's Day

Jan. 19 - MLK Day

Closed Fridays

12/5, 12/19, 1/2, 1/16, 1/30

For more info, visit:

chelco.com/chelco-offices-hours.

Youth Tour

Applications are due Dec. 19, 2025.

For more info visit

chelco.com/youth-tour.



CEO Insights: Reflecting on a Year of Service, Reliability, and Value

As each new year begins, we look ahead to the goals and projects that will enhance reliability, improve service, and keep electricity affordable. Yet, the months seem to pass quickly. As 2025 comes to a close, I'm proud of our staff's dedication—meeting deadlines and expectations, working tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure uninterrupted, dependable service for our members.

Supporting Our Military In All Kinds of Weather

In January of this year, our commitment to serving our military partners at Eglin AFB went beyond the ongoing responsibilities of our 50-year Utility Privatization (UP) contract. One key project involved replacing a switch on the 115kV system that powers the McKinley Climatic Laboratory. This facility features chambers that simulate any climatic environment in the world, including sun, wind, rain, dust, salt, fog, and altitude.



2025 Winter Storm

On January 21, 2025, a historic snowstorm transformed the northern Gulf Coast into a winter wonderland, breaking nearly 130-year-old snowfall records. While the storm tested our system, CHELCO's team worked diligently to keep power flowing. Some areas experienced brief outages; however, the system performed well overall. Areas most impacted were identified for

upgrades—some already underway, with more planned in our 2026 Construction Work Plan—ensuring our system remains resilient and prepared for future extreme weather events.



Powered By Safety

This year, we enhanced our public safety efforts by introducing a new and improved Live Line Safety Demonstration Trailer at our 2025 Annual Meeting. The upgraded trailer features life-like equipment that enables our team to simulate real-life scenarios and teach safe practices related to electricity. Since the trailer went into service, we've more than doubled the number of demonstrations from the previous year, completing 35 presentations for approximately 1,500 individuals. These sessions reached first responders, municipal public works departments, heavy equipment operators, and students of all ages, providing audiences with hands-on education about the dangers of electricity and how to stay safe.



Charitable CHELCO

Concern for Community remains a valued cooperative principle.

Through Operation Round Up, members' generosity has allowed the cooperative to award nearly 250 grants totaling more than half a million dollars since 2019, helping local organizations and families in need. In addition, the Drebing Fund, established in 2024 following a member's bequest, has distributed \$189,000 to 20 unique charities, further extending CHELCO's impact. These programs reflect our commitment to giving back and demonstrate how the cooperative and its members work together to make a meaningful difference across the region. To learn more about our team's charitable efforts, visit chelco.com/charitable-chelco.

Capital Credits

Another testament to the strength and stability of your cooperative is capital credits. Just last month, CHELCO's Board of Trustees approved a retirement of approximately \$3.3 million in capital credits to cooperative members from 2004/2005, which will be disbursed this month to more than 30,000 current and former members. You can find more information on this topic on page 4 of this newsletter or on our website at chelco.com/capital-credits.

As we wrap up 2025, I want to sincerely thank our members for your continued support and trust. Looking ahead, 2026 promises to be another year of growth, innovation, and service, and our team is ready to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead.

From all of us at CHELCO, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Steve Rhodes,
Chief Executive Officer

Walton Member Appreciation event wraps up a year of success and service



L to R: Rolan Hernandez, Tyler Wood, Board Vice President Brady Bearden, Mike Kane, Toya Brixey, Vonshell Vann, Kisha Brinson, Jason Price, and Jordan Dobie, along with photographer Nathan Hobbs, represented CHELCO at the Walton Member Appreciation Event.

CHELCO recently hosted its second Member Appreciation event of the year, rounding out a successful 2025 with another opportunity to connect with the community we serve. Held in partnership with Walton High School during the Braves' Senior Night football game, the event offered a fun and casual way for members to engage with their cooperative while celebrating local students and families.

This event is just one example of how CHELCO strives to meet our members where they are—whether at community gatherings, school career fairs, or by sponsoring local programs and events through Operation Round Up.

We recognize that many people don't often think about the organization that provides their power. But for the employees of CHELCO, it's a point of

pride. Every day, our team works to deliver reliable, affordable electricity and quality service to more than 70,000 accounts across our service territory.

"Events like these are such valuable opportunities for us to connect directly with our members and the community we serve," said Emily Cowan, Vice President of Member Services and External Affairs. "They allow us to put a face to the cooperative, share our mission, and simply say 'thank you' to the people who make our work possible."

CHELCO News Anytime, Anywhere—Follow Us Online

To stay informed about future events, community programs, and the latest cooperative news, follow [@mychelco](#) on Facebook, X, YouTube, and Instagram, or visit [www.chelco.com](#) for regular updates.



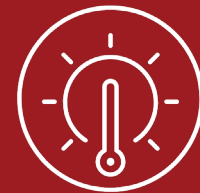
Thank you for hosting us, Braves!

Energy Saving Tips

During prolonged periods of extremely cold temps, home energy use spikes, leading to higher bills and increased demand on the grid. But, with a few simple actions, you can save money and reduce demand during these colder months. Here are a few energy tips to get you through the Winter.

LOWER YOUR THERMOSTAT.

Even a difference of a few degrees can help.



DELAY USING LARGE APPLIANCES.

Run them during the evenings or midday when demand is lower.



LOWER YOUR WATER HEATER TEMP.

The Department of Energy recommends a setting of 120 degrees.



UNPLUG UNNECESSARY DEVICES.

Electronics and lighting add up. Unplug any unused items.



CHELCO Board Approves Retirement of \$3.3M in Capital Credits to 2004/2005 Membership

You have a bill credit!

PAY TO THE ORDER OF Valued Member
See Your Bill for Amount!



Bill Credit



Your membership in 2004/2005 has earned a credit!

Capital Credits - Another example of the Cooperative Difference

CHELCO's Board of Trustees has approved a retirement of \$3.3 million in capital credits to be returned to approximately 30,000 current and former members from 2004/2005.

As a member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative, CHELCO exists to provide safe, reliable and affordable service to its members. If CHELCO collects more money than it costs to operate, these additional margins are returned to the members. These margins are called capital credits.

Each year, the Board of Trustees determines if CHELCO's financial condition will allow the retirement of a portion of the capital credits. CHELCO retires capital credits and returns them to members on a 20-year cycle, meaning that those who were CHELCO members in 2004/2005 will receive a capital credit check based on how much business the member did with CHELCO that year.

Visit CHELCO.com to learn more about capital credit allocations and retirements.

Capital Credit FAQ

- **How do I find my unclaimed capital credits?** Visit chelco.com/capital-credits.
- **How will I receive my capital credit refund?** The Board of Trustees determines the threshold for whether capital credit retirements are disbursed as bill credits or checks.
- **What happens to my capital credits if I move?** Your capital credits remain on our books in your name until they are retired. Because capital credit retirements are made a number of years after the credits are earned and allocated to your account, you should always keep the cooperative informed of your current mailing address.

Please call **(850) 892-2111** or email memberbills@chelco.com with your capital credit questions.

Youth Tour offers expense-free trip to local high school Juniors



Each year, CHELCO selects 2 high school juniors from each area school for an all-expenses paid trip to Tallahassee. All participants will then compete for a week-long trip to Washington, D.C.

What are the entry requirements?

Students must be high school juniors, and their parent/guardian must be a CHELCO member.

How does a student apply?

Contact your guidance counselor or find the application at chelco.com/youth-tour.

Important Dates to Remember

Dec. 19, 2025: Deadline to apply.
Feb. 4-5, 2026: Tallahassee trip

Merry
Christmas
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR



\$25 BILL CREDIT

If the account number below matches yours, call (850) 892-2111 to redeem a \$25 bill credit on your next power bill!

#9000142130 - MCCORMICK

For unclaimed capital credits, visit CHELCO.com/capital-credits.