

June 6, 2019

## Co-op Annual Meetings

### Golden Anniversary, 'Family Reunion' Mark Craig-Botetourt Annual Meeting

If the 2019 **Craig-Botetourt Electric Cooperative** annual meeting represented “a family reunion,” as **CEO Shawn Hildebrand** said, then there is little question about the family’s patriarch.

That would be **Clell “Sam” R. Clemons Jr.** One of the longest-tenured directors in the co-op family, Sam was honored for his half-century of service to CBEC at the **June 1 annual meeting**, the same night he won re-election to another term.

“His length of time and breadth of service stands him at a rarefied elevation on the mountaintop of the nation’s more than 900 electric co-ops,” according to a plaque of commendation that **Board Chairman Jasper B. Persinger Jr.** and **Shawn** presented to the **District 1 director**. “His contributions over many decades have enabled CBEC to solidify its reputation as a reliable, affordable, innovative utility providing electric service in a very rural area of very challenging terrain.”



**CBEC CEO Shawn Hildebrand reports on operational highlights during the co-op's annual meeting on June 1.**



**Board President Jasper B. Persinger Jr. (r) presents District 1 Director Clell “Sam” R. Clemons Jr. with a plaque honoring Sam’s 50 years of service to the co-op.**

For his part, Sam accepted the recognition with characteristic good humor. “I sincerely know that I’ve met some of the finest people I’ve ever known in my life as a result of being on the board of this co-op,” he told a crowd of about 80 gathered at co-op headquarters in New Castle. “It’s been a great honor.”

The **golden anniversary of Sam’s tenure** was one of the highlights of the co-op’s **83<sup>rd</sup> annual meeting**. “I look forward to this meeting every year. I get to see people that I don’t see enough,” Shawn said. “It’s like a family reunion, to be perfectly honest with you. I consider all of our members part of my family.”

Three high school seniors who earned co-op-related college scholarships were recognized at the start of the meeting for their academic achievements.

**Caleb Todd** of **Craig County High School** and **Hannah Slusser** of **James River High School** received \$1,000 scholarships from the **Education Scholarship Fund of the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives**. **Emma Butler** received the **\$1,500 C. D Hypes Memorial Scholarship**, named for a local educator and former member of the CBEC board. Caleb and Emma were valedictorians at their respective high schools.

In addition to Sam Clemons, **District 2 Director Frank Garman Jr.** won a new term on the six-member board. In brief remarks, Frank thanked members for supporting him and said he was available for questions from anyone at any time. “Don’t hesitate to get in touch with me,” he said. Tongue in cheek, and drawing a laugh from the audience, Sam followed, joking, “If you have any problems or concerns, regardless of where you live, then don’t feel at all concerned about calling ... Frank.”



**Donna Carper of CBEC watches as VMDAEC Board Chairman Herbert R. Patrick’s granddaughter Skylar draws the name of a prize winner.**

**-Report by Steven Johnson, VMD Association Director of Member & Public Relations.**

REC Names Gary Durdock Director of System Planning and Engineering Design



*Gary Durdock, REC director of system planning and engineering design.*

**Gary Durdock** was recently promoted to **director of system planning and engineering design** for **Rappahannock Electric Cooperative (REC)**. REC’s engineering department is responsible for the planning and coordination of the cooperative’s entire electrical system.

Gary has extensive experience in all phases of **electric utility transmission, substation and distribution work**, including 16 years of direct involvement with system planning. Prior to REC, Gary worked at **Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative, Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative** and **Florida Power and Light Company**.

He earned a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering from the University of Miami, where he later completed his graduate studies in biomedical engineering.

**Congratulations to Gary!**

*-Report by Casey Hollins, Director of Communications and Public Relations, Rappahannock Electric Cooperative.*

Bonus Feature

More Scenes from 2019’s Gaff-n-Go Lineman’s Rodeo

The VMD Rodeo Committee, chaired by Mecklenburg Electric (MEC) CEO **John Lee**, and the Rodeo Working Group, co-chaired by retired Central Virginia Electric employee **C.T. Bryant** and **Clint Card** of MEC, are already working with Association staff on plans for **next year’s Gaff-n-Go Lineman’s Rodeo**, which is again set for **Meadow Event Park** on **May 15-16, 2020**. But before we close the keepsake book on the 2019 event, we wanted to share with you **a few more images** from this year’s rodeo, which had the highest number of **participants, vendors, grillers** and **awards banquet attendees** in the event’s **17-year history**.



*The gang’s all here from Delaware Electric — team members, family members and staffers support the DEC squad capturing the Jimmy Gardner Award as the top co-op team in the rodeo.*



*Steve Harmon, CEO of Community Electric Cooperative, shows off his co-op’s entry in the ever-popular T-shirt contest.*



*Will Reid of BARC Electric was the top apprentice in the rodeo, flanked by C.T. Bryant (left) and master judge Clint Card.*



*Delegate Lamont Bagby (right) called the rodeo “a great event” during the ceremonial kickoff. He presented a proclamation from Gov. Ralph Northam declaring May 11 as Electric Utility Line Worker Day. He’s shown with Ron White of Southside Electric.*





**Joey Gay (left) and Richard McLendon (Bama Boys BBQ) of Northern Neck Electric Cooperative won second place for ribs in the Gaff-n-Grill contest.**



**George Floyd of A&N Electric Cooperative is seen in action during the hurt-man rescue event.**



**Feeding time: Somebody's hungry and that means a bottle from one of the littlest NOVEC team members to one of the littlest critters at the petting zoo.**



**(L-R) T.R. Eubank of Central Virginia Electric Cooperative takes a break with apprentice line workers Blaine Cunningham and Billy Cascio.**



**Southside Electric Cooperative President and CEO Jeff Edwards cheers his teams on during the rodeo.**



**Patrick Chaplin of BARC Electric Cooperative works around a pole during the rodeo.**



**Renee Chapline and Kyle Holcomb of Prince George Electric Cooperative show off the work of PGEC's grilling team.**



**Heave ho! In addition to proudly watching their dads compete in the challenging rodeo events, the large number of future line workers took part in kids' activities such as ball tosses and moon bounces.**



**Will Southworth of Southside Electric directs his attention skyward as he works with teammates Blake Poindexter and Ashley Tuck.**



**Jimmy Wilmoth of Central Virginia Electric Cooperative tightens a bolt during the rodeo competition.**





*Wascally Wabbit: A young rodeo fan enjoys the petting zoo on Saturday, May 11.*



*This year's rodeo included two U.S. Army "Prime Power" teams from the 249th Engineer Battalion at Fort Belvoir, Va.*



*Thanks always to TEREX for sponsoring the rodeo in partnership with NESCO Specialty Rentals!*



*Delaware Electric's winning journeyman team included Philip Collison, Dave Morgan and Michael Layton. They pose proudly with their support crew and a variety of awards won by DEC, including the Jimmy Gardner Award, presented annually to the top co-op team in the rodeo.*



*Several pole-top competitors are seen in action during one of the many tests of skill and safety at this year's rodeo.*



*T.W. Parks of Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative placed second overall in the apprentice category and is seen celebrating with his young son.*

**Coming Events**

**Join Us in Williamsburg to Celebrate the VMD Association's 75th Anniversary!**

**Seventy-five years** is just a few weeks away. No, that's not a misreading of the calendar; it just means that we are nearing the gala 75th anniversary of the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives.

If you haven't already registered, you'll want to do so as **soon as possible** so you can be a part of the annual meeting celebration, set for **July 28-30** at the **Williamsburg (Va.) Lodge**.

"This is a terrific opportunity to celebrate our collective past and prepare for our future," said **Richard G. Johnstone Jr.**, president and CEO of the VMD association. "We'll be honoring the accomplishments of some people who are near and dear to the cooperative movement and doing so in an atmosphere that we think will be both rewarding and entertaining."

The **meeting kicks off on Sunday, July 28**, with a golf tournament at 11 a.m. sponsored by **Altec, Pike and Lee Electrical**

**Construction. Proceeds will benefit the VMDAEC Education Scholarship Foundation.** Registration starts at 5:15 p.m., with a **hospitality event at 5:30 p.m.**

The **business part of the annual meeting** is set for 8:15 a.m. on **Monday, July 29.** The Association’s **annual members and board meetings** are open to all.

Next on tap that morning will be **Mike Schlappi**, this year’s **keynote presenter.** A powerful **motivational speaker,** Schlappi will talk about **overcoming challenges and empowering yourself** under even the most trying circumstances, based on his experience as a wheelchair athlete.



*Be sure to put on your black tie, best dress and dancing shoes, as the world-famous Glenn Miller Orchestra performs on July 29 to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the VMDAEC.*

Then a panel moderated by **Andrew Vehorn**, the Association’s **director of governmental affairs,** will examine ways organizations **work together** to create, sustain and expand **cooperative success.**

At the annual **awards luncheon,** two long-time cooperative leaders will be honored.

Then, that afternoon, meeting participants will have **free time** to tour Williamsburg before returning to the Williamsburg Lodge for a **black tie-optional celebration banquet** and performance by the world-famous **Glenn Miller Orchestra.** The 18-member ensemble is the **most popular and sought-after big band in the world today** for concert and swing dance engagements, arranged and performed in the **Miller style.** This private performance for VMD members and guests is being made possible courtesy of **Asplundh Tree Expert, LLC,** and **Utility Lines Construction Services, Inc.**

Then, on **Tuesday morning, July 30,** the three-day event will conclude as **ODEC** holds its **annual members and board meetings,** followed by the **RHI members and board meetings.**

The Association is urging member co-ops to **confirm staff and director attendance** so we can be sure to provide the hotel with an accurate head count. For additional information, please contact **Robin Byrd Wilfong** at [rwilfong@vmdaec.com](mailto:rwilfong@vmdaec.com).

*-Report by Steven Johnson, VMD Association Director of Member & Public Relations.*

**Personals**

**News About Members of the VMD Cooperative Family**

-**Craig-Botetourt** Electric Cooperative Board Vice President **J.C. Winstead** is recovering at home from recent surgery. **Get-well wishes and notes of encouragement** may be sent to him at **150 Big Mountain Road, New Castle, VA 24127.**

**Help Us Keep You Informed!**



If you have story ideas, news or information of interest and benefit to other members of the electric cooperative community in our three-state area, please contact:

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**Phyllis Long** at [plong@vmdaec.com](mailto:plong@vmdaec.com) (804) 297-3161

**June 6 Marks the 75th Anniversary of D-Day.**  
**Let's Never Forget the Sacrifices of The Greatest Generation.**



*General Dwight D. Eisenhower gives the order of the day, "Full victory — nothing else" to paratroopers somewhere in England, just before they board their airplanes to participate in the first assault in the invasion of the continent of Europe on June 6, 1944. Courtesy of The Library of Congress.*