

Co-op invites members to Northampton Agriculture Fair Oct. 6

Now in its third year, the annual Northampton Agricultural County Fair continues to grow as a popular fall event on the Eastern Shore.

This family-friendly event is free and open to the public and will take place on Saturday, Oct. 6, behind the former Northampton Middle School in Machipongo from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The County Fair continues the legacy of the Eastern Shore's Agri-Fair, which annually celebrated the Eastern Shore's agricultural industry in the 1970s, '80s and early '90s.

"We wanted to establish an event highlighting something that Northampton County was known for," said Northampton Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Elizabeth Dodd Russell. "The answer was an easy one, agriculture and aquaculture. Our board president at the time, Josh Lattimore, remembered the old Ag Fair, held behind Broadwater Academy, was very popular at the time. We just thought, how can we recreate this?"

The fair has been organized each year by Russell, Kyle Sturgis, who at its inception was president of the Farm Bureau Young Farmers for the Eastern Shore, and Virginia Cooperative Extension's Ursula Tankard Deitch.

Admission for the fair is free, but children can pay \$10 and take part in a number of activities including horse and hay rides, pumpkin painting and face painting, among other activities.

The popular skillet-throwing competition is planned again this year and the Cape Charles Lions Club is sponsoring a Roll-A-Keg contest. The tractor-driving competition also makes its return. The Side Porch Pickers will be on hand entertaining the crowd with bluegrass music. This year's fair is co-hosted by Ducks Unlimited, which is holding its Green Wing Event there.

"The first year we were expecting maybe 100 people and over 700 showed up," Russell said. "We have had nothing but positive feedback because it is just an authentic family-friendly event. The educational booths aren't just for kids, everyone is learning from arts of farming that are new and old."

A&N Electric Cooperative plans to expand its offerings at this year's event, with several scheduled demonstrations planned throughout the day.



© CAILYN HART PHOTOS

Children wear A&N Electric Cooperative hard hats (above) and Richard Dryden, a member of the Peninsula Antique Tractor Organization, looks over an antique Farmall tractor (below) during the second annual Northampton Agricultural County Fair in Machipongo last year.



A contestant prepares to throw in the skillet-throwing competition at last year's Northampton Agricultural County Fair.



Above: A curious goat sticks its head out from a holding pen and children feed a cow during last year's fair.

If You Go:

WHEN: Saturday, Oct. 6, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

WHERE: 7247 Young Street, Machipongo, Virginia

COST: Admission is free. \$10 for children's activities.

INFO: northamptoncountychamber.com or anec.com

“Electric cooperatives were originally established in the ’30s and ’40s to help bring electricity to farms and rural areas,” said Jay Diem, A&N Electric Cooperative communication specialist. “That historical connection makes the Agricultural County Fair a perfect event for A&N to showcase the hard work the cooperative does in the community.”

The cooperative will host scheduled climbing demonstrations and will conduct some equipment demonstrations throughout the day. Equipment will include the popular Marsh Master, a derrick-digger truck and a service-bucket truck. Climbing demonstrations will include a pole-top rescue and an equipment change out.

“This will be a great opportunity for folks to witness some of the climbing skills our crew members use to help maintain our distribution lines safely,” said Jackie Phillips, A&N Electric Cooperative safety director.

The cooperative will also have employees on hand to answer questions, show off some of its climbing and safety gear, and will have free giveaways.

In addition, the fair will offer farming education for all ages and from all different organizations. Local vendors will be selling their local goods.

The event is organized by the Northampton County Chamber of Commerce, Virginia Cooperative Extension and Virginia Farm Bureau Young Farmers Eastern Shore.

MESSAGES FROM YOUR CO-OP

- Visit us at [facebook.com/ANElectricCoop](https://www.facebook.com/ANElectricCoop) and “like” us.
- Visit [anec.com](https://www.anec.com) to sign up to receive Beat the Peak emails or text-message alerts.
- The **Touchstone Energy® Co-op Connections® Card is FREE to all ANEC members.** The card offers discounts at participating local and nationwide businesses, including prescription drug discounts.



Local students get crash course in running a co-op business

Education is important and it is one of the seven principles that guide electric cooperatives. A&N Electric Cooperative is proud to offer educational opportunities for local students.

Each spring, the Virginia Cooperative Council sponsors an Institute on Cooperative Education, a youth leadership conference for up to 64 Virginia high school students.

Local students from A&N Electric Cooperative’s service area are eligible to attend. The cooperative holds an annual essay contest to determine the cooperative’s participants in two educational opportunities, which includes the VICE Conference.

The objective of the conference is to educate youth about the unique cooperative form of business.

“In the beginning, I really didn’t know what a co-op was,” said Justin Willett, a rising senior at Nandua High School and a 2018 VICE conference attendee. “I learned that a co-op is a business that is run by the people it serves. The experience was great and it taught me how to run a co-op and what a co-op really means.”

Through an interactive, educational and entertaining conference, students enhance their teamwork, leadership and communication skills.

The conference features a computer-based business simulation developed by Perdue University called “Who’s Minding the Store.”

Students are divided into teams and teams compete against one another over five rounds of the simulation.

Each team represents a separate co-op business, each attempting to make pricing, inventory, advertising, credit and personnel decisions to increase their co-op’s net worth in a competitive-market setting. Students are first presented with basic business concepts and are then allowed to make their first set of management decisions.

When the results of their decisions are returned, students learn how to interpret the effects and how to adjust their decision-making to yield more desirable outcome. In addition, they learn how to read balance sheets and income statements, and how to use values from the statements to calculate ratios that indicate the financial well-being of the business.

Willett said teams need to work together to make sound decisions about the



JAY DIEM PHOTO

L-R: Kaitlyn Hill, Justin Willett and Caitlin Williams represented A&N Electric Cooperative at the 2018 Virginia Cooperative Council’s Virginia Institute on Cooperative Education (VICE) Conference.

business in the long term or the business will suffer.

“You have to make sure that you make the right choices all the time or later down the road your business is going to go down, a lot,” Willett said.

Throughout the conference team building helps forge new friendships and bonds between students.

“It was a really good experience to meet the kids who were there from all across Virginia and it just taught me to go out of my comfort zone and meet new people,” Willett said. “I didn’t know anybody going in and by the end of it I wasn’t ready to leave. And I met people who I still talk to today.”

The cooperative’s essay contest is open to all high school and home-school juniors living in the cooperative’s service area.

A student from each area high school will be selected to attend the VICE Conference in Syria, Virginia.

Essay guidelines will be sent to the guidance offices at each high school by Oct. 22.

Home-schoolers can request the guidelines from the cooperative’s Tasley office. The deadline for essay entrants is Dec. 10, 2018.

The conference is at no cost to students who are selected through the essay contest.

Co-op rates are expected to change Oct. 1

Earlier this year A&N Electric Cooperative (ANEC) filed an application with the State Corporation Commission (SCC) to adjust its rate structure and increase rates.

The results of the cooperative's rate-adjustment request is expected to take effect on Oct. 1.

Representatives from the cooperative met with the SCC in mid-August to finalize the rate-adjustment proposal. The results of that hearing were not available at the time of printing.

To see the result of the cooperative's rate-adjustment proposal and its details, log onto anec.com/content/rate-case.



L-R: Safety Committee Chair Jeff Edwards presents a Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program certificate to Butch Williamson, CEO of A&N Electric Cooperative.

A&N Electric Cooperative recognized for commitment to safety

A&N Electric Cooperative (ANEC) was recently recognized by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) for its ongoing commitment to safety in the workplace and in providing electric service to its members.

CEO Butch Williamson accepted the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program (RESAP) certificate on Monday, July 23, in Hot Springs, Virginia, at the Annual Meeting of the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives (VMDAEC). Jeff Edwards, the Southside Electric Cooperative CEO and chairman of VMDAEC's safety committee, presented this certificate of recognition.

Edwards noted, "Everyone is aware how dangerous electric utility linework can be, and that a rock-solid commitment to safety

is essential every second these dedicated individuals are working to build or maintain electric lines. This certificate doesn't just recognize a commitment to safety by lineworkers; it recognizes the fact that everyone at ANEC, from board members and managers to line crews, is committed to carrying out their work safely. We applaud their staff for this commitment."

Williamson added, "This recognition is testament to the fact that our employees understand that safety comes first here at our cooperative. I congratulate all of them for earning this achievement. We have great employees, and we want them to return safely home to their families every evening. The safety of our members and the public is paramount as well, and the RESAP achievement recognizes our strong, aggressive effort in that area."

Five Energy-Saving Tips for Fall

As we transition from summer to winter, here are five tips to help cut your energy costs this fall. It's also a good opportunity to start preparing your home for colder weather.

1. When temperatures outdoors start to cool, set your thermostat no higher than 68 degrees. Remember to lower the temperature when you leave the house or go to bed. This will help save you money.
2. Minimize use of electric space heaters, except for limited or temporary spot heating. Turn space heaters off when leaving the room.
3. During the day, open shades and curtains to allow sunlight in. This will help heat your home. Close them at night to keep heat in during cooler months.
4. Ensure the attic-access door closes tightly and is insulated.
5. Remove window air-conditioning units and close and lock the window.

For more tips on how to save this upcoming winter, visit anec.com.

ANEC now offering Community Solar

A&N Electric Cooperative is now offering its members the opportunity to subscribe to more solar energy to cover their energy needs through the Cooperative Sunshare program.

In late July, the State Corporation Commission approved a pilot program that will enable the cooperative to provide additional solar energy to interested members.

Currently, a portion of all power supplied to cooperative members comes from solar. The Cooperative Sunshare program will allow residential members who want a larger percentage of solar power to receive a dedicated, predetermined amount of solar power each month. By doing so, participants can support the development of solar energy in Virginia, while locking in the price paid for the dedicated solar portion of their generation service during the three-year pilot period.

“The cooperative is very excited to begin offering the option of providing more solar energy to our members,” said ANEC Project Manager Leo Radkowski. “Cooperative Sunshare will make solar generation available for members who are limited in their ability to install solar generation on their own property or who don’t want the upfront costs and maintenance of installing solar panels at their home.”

Cooperative Sunshare will allow the cooperative’s residential members to choose solar power to cover all or a portion of their electric usage each month. The additional cost to members of a 50 kWh “solar block” will be \$5.42 per month, a modest increase over the current cost of wholesale power. The program also offers members the opportunity to lock in the cost of their solar power supply for the future.



The solar energy is produced at two solar facilities in Virginia, the 20-megawatt Cherrydale solar facility in Northampton County, and the 10-megawatt Clarke County solar facility in White Post, Virginia. The electricity is provided to co-op members through a power-purchase agreement with Old Dominion Electric Cooperative, of which A&N Electric Cooperative is a member.

For more details about the program, log onto anec.com/content/cooperative-sunshare.

Look for Capital Credit refund on your August billing statement

Being a member of A&N Electric Cooperative means that you are an owner of the company and share in its financial success.

As a non-profit business, the cooperative takes revenue that exceeds expenses and allocates those funds back to you, the member, in the form of capital credits.

For active members, information concerning capital credit allocation is printed annually on your billing statement after the financials for the previous year are completed. Inactive members will be mailed a separate notice.

The amount of capital credits earned in a given year is based on the amount of electricity purchased. Each member receives a credit based on a percentage for each dollar of the electricity they purchased.

Each year, the A&N Electric Cooperative Board of Directors reviews the financial condition of the cooperative to determine if a retirement of capital credits can be made. Capital credits are retired using a percentage method that distributes a portion of the approved retirement amount to all members.

The cooperative works hard to keep costs as low as possible while maintaining electric reliability and safety. That commitment to our members has led to the return of over \$23 million in capital credits since the cooperative was established.

Look for your capital credit refund on your August billing statement.

A&N ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

21275 Cooperative Way
P.O. Box 290
Tasley, VA 23441-0290
757-787-9750 • 800-431-2632

Office Hours: M-F, 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
anec.com

Payments: 1-855-386-9921

President & CEO
Butch Williamson

Local Pages Editor
Jay Diem

A&N Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.