

# NOVEC *Cooperative Living*

Volunteer rescuers  
tow a boat to safety  
in Reedville, Va.

PHOTO COURTESY  
SMITH POINT SEA RESCUE

SEA RESCUE SQUAD  
CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

PAGE 10





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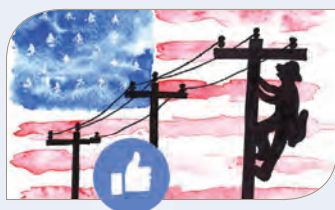
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## VIEWPOINT

# Celebrating Milestones

This is the time of year when students are graduating and celebrating their brief freedom by going on well-deserved vacations or enjoying popular attractions. Fortunately, there are great events happening throughout our readership area, examples of which you can find in this year's Fairs & Festivals Guide.

Here at the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives, we have our Education Scholarship Foundation that has been awarding scholarships to cooperative-member students since 2001 in our three-state area. This year we are celebrating our one millionth dollar given to a deserving student. It's a great feeling to help someone achieve their dreams by furthering their education in college or a trade school like the Power Line Worker Training School at



Southside Virginia Community College.

Our Cooperative Focus feature is about the 50th anniversary of Northern Neck's Smith Point Sea Rescue. Be sure to read about this all-volunteer group that rescues distressed boaters in the Chesapeake Bay and why they are led to participate. In this issue we also recognize National Dairy Month with a look at the dairy industry in Maryland, take you to the EV Grand Prix in Shenandoah Valley, and show you the wild ponies in Chincoteague on Virginia's Eastern Shore.

We just completed hosting our 20th annual Gaff-n-Go Lineworker Rodeo where there were a record number of lineworkers that participated, including a drone event for the first time. Be on the lookout for more details and pictures of this amazing event in our July issue of *Cooperative Living*.

Congratulations to the class of 2024 and we pray you have many more milestones to celebrate in the years ahead. ●

*Brian S. Mosier*

Brian S. Mosier, President & CEO  
Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives

# CooperativeLiving

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PHOTO COURTESY FLYNN GLADDEN, COMMUNITY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## An Elevated Work Ethic

*CEC employees take service to another level*

by Gregg MacDonald, Staff Writer

**AN ELECTRIC UTILITY LINEWORKER'S JOB IS NEVER FINISHED.** In addition to digging holes, using augers and setting utility poles, they also install, maintain, and repair electrical distribution and transmission systems. This includes conduits, cables, wires and equipment, such as transformers, circuit breakers and switches.

In this photo, Eric Galford, top left, a journeyman lineman and apparatus technician apprentice, and Serviceman Tony Duck, both of Community Electric Cooperative, are servicing the Pagan electric substation in Smithfield, Va.

The substation takes its name from the Pagan River, a 12.5-mile-long tributary of the James River located in Isle of Wight County. The Town of Smithfield sits on its banks. The river's name is thought to derive from the Algonquin word for pecan. Many historical accounts claim that in the early 17th century there were abundant pecan trees along the river.

The photo was taken from a drone operated by Engineering Supervisor Flynn Gladden, another CEC employee, who has been flying drones for more than 20 years. "We were doing regulator changeouts," says Galford of the photo. "We were isolating the regulators and heating up the transfer bus. The switches wouldn't operate from the ground so we took buckets up and lubricated them."

For the uninitiated, a transfer bus is generally comprised of induction motors connected to an alternate power source in a power plant or substation and is used when the normal power source fails or needs to be tripped to ensure the continuity of plant operation.

"We were operating the switches and lubricating them so they would work," says Duck, who will celebrate 33 years working for CEC in December. "I generally work fixing security lights and answering trouble calls for outdoor lights, so I was happy to help out on this one."

CEC, located in Windsor, Va., was created in 1938 to provide electrical service in Southeastern Virginia's rural areas. Over the last 15 years, the co-op has recorded a growth rate of roughly 1.5% per year in the number of meters connected. Today, it serves more than 11,000 accounts over its 1,590 miles of distribution line. ●



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Registration for Girl Power is expected to open in early August.



# Girl Power is Growing

*Popular high school career camp expands to the Eastern Shore*

by Jim Robertson, Staff Writer

**W**ith more women taking on roles in field work, attracting them to the responsibilities and teamwork of a line crew remains a challenge. These types of operational roles can and do often lead to a variety of leadership opportunities within an organization. A few years ago, the electric cooperatives of Virginia, Maryland and Delaware introduced a program called Girl Power, a one-day camp where female high school students are afforded hands-on experience with a variety of careers in the power industry.

For the past three years, the camp

has been held at the electric cooperatives' training facility in Palmyra, Va. More than 80 students registered for last year's event.

To better serve the Eastern Shore region, the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives is excited to add a second camp to the calendar this year. On Oct. 3, Girl Power will be offered at the Choptank Electric Cooperative district office in Salisbury, Md., as well as in Palmyra on Oct. 30.

The one-day energy career experience is intended for high school girls interested

or curious about working on a line crew, as an electrical engineer, in a substation, as a drone operator, with advanced metering technology or as a fiber broadband technician. Instructors will lead students through various activities in the classroom and outdoors. Campers can expect to learn about safety on the job, including how to safely climb a utility pole, operate a bucket truck and pilot a drone. ●



► For more information, visit [vmdaec.com/powerfulcareers](http://vmdaec.com/powerfulcareers).



# Ponies & Pontoons

*A magical day with Daisey's Island Cruises*

by Amanda S. Creasey, Outdoors Writer

**A**s my alarm goes off at 6:45 a.m. on a Saturday, I question why I thought the morning tour time was a good idea. I had a 9 a.m. option, an 11 a.m. option and a 2:30 p.m. option. Why did 9 a.m. seem like the best choice? But I resist the temptation to snooze and get up. It's pony time!

Although they're known as the Chincoteague ponies, the 150 or so equines spend most of their time on Assateague, only visiting Chincoteague when they're swum over by saltwater cowboys, like Ayden, a Chincoteague native, known as a "Teaguer." Ayden's family came to the island in the 1680s. He has been working the pony boat tours with Daisey's Island Cruises for nine years, helping out in some capacity or other since the age of 12.

We see our first herd less than 10 minutes into the tour. It consists of a stallion named CLG ToMorrow's Tidewater Twist, his eleven mares and one foal. They graze in front of the lighthouse, which still stands on the same piece of land where it was erected in 1867.

The second group we see consists of two herds: Henry's Hidalgo's herd on

the right and another on the left, three foals between them. In a typical year, between 50 and 80 foals are born on the island. Ayden's brother found a new foal just this morning, the 25th of the season.

Twice, we see the two stallions engage in subtle conflict, quickly resolved after briefly rearing up and whinnying. The mares have names like Two Teague Taco's Chilibeau, Wendy's Carolina Girl, Good Golly Miss Molly and Barbara's Tasi, a horse Ayden himself rescued when she was a foal separated from her mother.

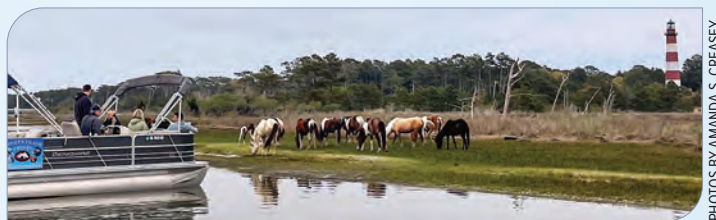
I can't help but inwardly smile at the glee my 11-year-old self would have experienced on a boat ride like this, wild ponies splashing towards us through the water, getting close enough to lick the salt off the front of the pontoon, just inches from where I sit, my dogs on my lap. It would have seemed like pure magic. And then, I realize that even for adult me, being this close to wild ponies is still pure magic.

Before our tour ends, we see not only dozens upon dozens of majestic wild ponies but

A pontoon boat with Daisey's Island Cruises views a herd of wild ponies in front of the lighthouse.

also three bald eagles; two loons; countless cormorants, vultures, seagulls and several small fishing boats catching flounder. The two-hour tour feels like a fraction of that time, and I am slightly envious of Teaguers, who live in such regular and close proximity to the beautiful ponies and enjoy the privilege of acting as their stewards.

As we part ways with Ayden, exchanging the boat slip for our parking spot, we pass several people and their dogs arriving for the 11 a.m. tours. I smile. They, too, are about to experience the magic. ●



PHOTOS BY AMANDA S. CREASEY



Piper (left), a Mickey Mouse marking on her right shoulder, wades through the water as Smooch (right) grazes.



## 2024 Fairs & Festivals GUIDE

Summertime fairs and festivals are often nostalgic events, primarily about fun, food, family and friends.

But they are also a vital thread in the fabric of a community; a place to come together and connect. For non-locals, these events are a snapshot of the area and what makes it unique: its people, culture and traditions. There's no better time than summer to get out and explore the many diverse communities in Virginia by attending one — or more — of these cherished local events!



### RASSAWEK SPRING JUBILEE

Goochland County, Va.

June 1 & 2

Celebrate the 12th anniversary of the Rassawek Spring Jubilee on June 1 and 2 — a celebration of the handmade and the homegrown. Rassawek's annual Wine Tasting Festival offers an experience unlike any other with live artisan demonstrations, including wood turning, glassblowing and blacksmithing. Experience batteau boat and steamboat rides. Enjoy tastings from over 10 local wineries and cideries, live music from various artists, Chesapeake Dock Dogs competitions, and a variety of food vendors and activities for the kids. There is something for everyone. For more information and to get your advance-price tickets now, visit [rassawek.com](http://rassawek.com).



### MADISON COUNTY FAIR

Madison County, Va.

July 17-20

The Madison County Fair promises to be a good time, with something for everyone to enjoy! Fairgoers will be able to enjoy musical performances by Dark Hollow Band, Freedom Worship, Southern Sky, Hurt Hollow Bluegrass Band and Keith Bryant. There will also be performing dogs, livestock shows, exhibits, a bull-riding rodeo, a demolition derby and more! For additional information and to view the fair schedule, visit [madisoncountyfairva.com](http://madisoncountyfairva.com).



### CHINCOTEAGUE ISLAND BLUEBERRY FESTIVAL

Chincoteague Island, Va.

**July 18-20**

The 36th Annual Chincoteague Island Blueberry Festival, the opening act for the world-famous Pony Swim, will happen on July 18-20 at the beautiful Chincoteague Center. Amazing food, nonstop live music, awesome artists and crafters, and blueberries in their many forms. For more information, visit [chincoteagueblueberryfestival.com](http://chincoteagueblueberryfestival.com).



### SHENANDOAH VALLEY MUSIC FESTIVAL

Orkney Springs, Va.

**July 19–20, July 26-27, Aug. 16-17, 30-31, and Sept. 1**

Escape to the foothills of Great North Mountain and enjoy great music under the stars in beautiful Orkney Springs, Va. Concerts feature Marty Stuart, Dionne Warwick, Mavis Staples, Atlanta Rhythm Section & Orleans, The Oak Ridge Boys, Steve Earle and more! Package deals offer discounts on tickets and lodging at historic Shrine Mont. Tickets and more information at [musicfest.org](http://musicfest.org).



### VIRGINIA LAKE FESTIVAL

Clarksville, Va.

**July 19-20**

The 47th annual Virginia Lake Festival will include a multitude of events open to the public at no charge. Activities for all ages (including helicopter rides) and live bands all weekend! There will be music by Justin Cody Fox band on Friday and Earls of Kent on Saturday. At nightfall, boats gather on the lake and festivalgoers gather at the shoreline to see the extravaganza fireworks show. Visit [clarksvilleva.com](http://clarksvilleva.com) for all the details.



### FIELD DAY OF THE PAST

Amelia, Va.

**Sept. 20-22**

Field Day of the Past is held in Amelia County at Redfield Farm, 11404 Circle Drive. This is where you go for all the power pulling action — tractor pulls and truck pulls. And, of course, live music, gold panning, carnival rides, heritage exhibits, animal exhibits, mechanical bull rides, educational exhibits, arts and crafts, and all the food and fun one can handle. For tickets and more information, visit [fielddayofthepast.net](http://fielddayofthepast.net). ●

# How's The Beef?

*Virginia Beef Quality Assurance program inspires confidence*

by Nicole Zema, Virginia Farm Bureau Federation

**A**s beef demand continues to grow, cattle farmers want consumers to expect quality and confidence in product safety, humane practices and sustainability. Farmers can produce the best beef possible by expanding their production knowledge, increasing consumer confidence and strengthening farm profitability through the Virginia Beef Quality Assurance program.

A state division of the nationally coordinated Beef Quality Assurance program, and funded by Beef Checkoffs, Virginia BQA certification is earned at no cost to farmers through live or online training and testing, followed by chute-side instruction. “Getting certified better ensures that beef will always be one of the main protein sources on the table,” says Lisa McCormick, Virginia Beef Center of Excellence coordinator at Virginia Tech, who works with Virginia Cooperative Extension agents

statewide to administer the Virginia BQA program.

## A TEACHING MOMENT

Educating beef producers, including lifelong cattlemen, on the most trusted techniques in herd and resource management is still full of “a-ha” moments. “I never knew how to do that,” is one remark Phil Blevins hears all the time. The Washington County extension agent has been working with farmers on best practices for 25 years. He coordinates regional training sessions for growers seeking Virginia BQA certifications or recertifications.

Level 1 Certification is earned in a classroom or online, with an overview of the BQA manual and guidelines. It focuses on the best management practices certified producers follow — from feedstuffs and preventive health programs to proper injection site locations and recordkeeping.



More than 85% of U.S. beef comes from BQA-certified farmers.



Certification is renewed every three years. Level 2 Certification requires a hands-on, chute-side training and cattle handling session, learning proper vaccine administration, antibiotic use and drug safety.

## KEEP ON TRUCKING

Trucking prices are a major disadvantage for small-scale beef producers. Another BQA certification perk is that it allows farmers access to the Virginia Quality Assurance cattle transportation program. Feeder cattle are graded and grouped into tractor-trailer-size lots from several farms to maximize trailer space, which results in improved trucking rates and a lower carbon footprint, while minimizing cattle stress. “Those without enough cattle to market a load lot can sell groups at the same time in load lots of similar size,” says Brandon Reeves of the Virginia Cattlemen’s Association. “And that brings a premium.”

## CLASS IN SESSION

McCormick invites those wanting to learn more about the sector to Virginia Beef Cattle University July 14-16 at the Virginia Tech Inn.

The event, sponsored in part by the Virginia Cattle Industry Board, will feature trade show vendors, entertainment and education for youth and adults. Topics include herd health, marketing, nutrition and forages, business management, reproduction, and meat science. ●

▶ Visit [vabeefcattleu.com/registration](http://vabeefcattleu.com/registration) to learn more.

Dr. John Haile, secretary-treasurer of the Eastern Virginia Cattlemen’s Association, operates a cow-calf operation at Elton Farm in Essex County.





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# Called to Serve

*Smith Point Sea Rescue celebrates 50 years*

by Audrey T. Hingley, Contributing Columnist

PHOTOS COURTESY SMITH POINT SEA RESCUE



**N**onprofit groups are often borne from need, and Reedville's Smith Point Sea Rescue in Virginia's Northern Neck is no exception.

In 1973, a father and his two young children were cruising the Little Wicomico River on their way toward the Chesapeake Bay when their boat began to leak and then became partially submerged. The family spent a chilly

November night in the Chesapeake Bay near Reedville clinging to the bow, one of the few parts of the craft that was still above the water line, before eventually being rescued.



Robert Gwaltney

"There were no cellphones and not a lot of [boat] radios back then," explains Robert Gwaltney, a duty captain with Smith Point Sea Rescue. Gwaltney says that following the rescue, a local physician, Dr. Robert E. Beatley, called the home of Wendell Haynie where the survivors had been taken, and ordered that a tub be filled with hot water for one of the children, whom he determined was suffering from hypothermia.

The incident led Beatley and his wife, Vera, along with residents Dr. Al Hurt, a dentist, and Haynie, to incorporate Sea Point Sea Rescue as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, all-volunteer organization in 1974. Of the initial group, Julie Pritchard, Smith Point Sea Rescue's first secretary, and Dr. Hurt remain.

This year the organization celebrates its 50th anniversary as the last remaining all-volunteer sea rescue unit on the Chesapeake Bay. Its 39 members are all volunteers who never charge for their services.

## COVERING VIRGINIA AND MARYLAND

The rescue squad, based in Reedville, Va., covers the Bay and its tributaries, including both Virginia and Maryland waters. A fleet of six rescue crafts now boasts the group's newest addition, Rescue III, a custom-built 43-foot all-weather rescue vessel that features state-of-the-art marine electronics.

Deployed just this past April, Rescue III contains an infrared camera and an

PHOTO BY AUDREY T. HINGLEY

50  
YEARS

An average year brings  
about 60 distress calls.

Storms, motors that  
won't start, crab pots  
or pound nets tangled  
in motors can all  
lead to calls for help.

augmented reality system permitting long-range identification of navigational aids and other objects. The group's rescue vessels are staged in Cockrell Creek in Reedville, Smith Point Marina on the Little Wicomico River and Olverson's Marina on the Yeocomico River.

The rescue group receives no regular monetary support from any state or governmental agency, although they say they have received a smattering of grants from a few foundations.

Operating funds primarily come from an annual mail solicitation, donations and fundraising events such as a Spring Oyster Roast each March.

When needed, Reedville's Smith Point Sea Rescue is dispatched through the Northumberland County Sheriff's



Office after distressed boaters initially call 911. Boaters can also contact them directly through VHF Channel 16, or an app called "I am responding" that Northumberland County subscribes to as yet another way to reach available rescue volunteers.

A captain and crew totaling three to four people per rescue vessel are assigned on a weekly calendar basis through a quarterly scheduling system. Volunteers, who must be available at all times during their scheduled time slots, are often self-described boaters, many of whom have been on the water all their lives.

An average year brings about 60 distress calls; in 2023 the rescue handled 69 calls. Storms, motors that won't start, crab pots or pound nets in shallower areas that can tangle motors can all lead to calls for help.

Although most people think of the U.S. Coast Guard as the go-to entity when trouble at sea arises, Gwaltney points out that the nearest Coast Guard station is about 42 land miles away in Hudgins, adjacent to the Gwynn's Island Bridge in Mathews County.

Virginia Marine Police also respond to distress calls. The closest U.S. Coast Guard air chopper rescue stations are in Elizabeth City, N.C., and Ocean City, Md.

### THERE FOR EVERYONE

Smith Point Sea Rescue handles all kinds of rescue scenarios, says Michael "Quentin" Haynie, a former U.S. Navy member who "grew up on the water here," ran tugboats and now works as a carpenter.

Smith Point Sea Rescue  
volunteers in action, assisting  
boaters in distress.

"A father and son brought a sailboat down here," he says, recalling one 2015 rescue incident in which the team had to tow a boat that had run aground. "They sailed onto a sandbar. The Chesapeake Bay looks deep everywhere, but it's not ... it slopes until you get into the shipping channel. You get people who are new, novice boaters and things can go wrong."

But even experienced boaters can fall victim to the Chesapeake Bay. Reedville resident Matt Smith, who owns a northern Virginia advertising agency and collects and uses antique wooden boats, had to call Smith Point Sea Rescue for help in July 2020.

"I know these waters very well," he says, "There's a submerged pile of rocks where the old Great Wicomico Lighthouse was removed a few years ago. The pile of rocks is still underwater and unmarked. I wasn't thinking, was cutting a corner and ran right up on the rocks," he remembers.

Smith was piloting Sweet Pea, his 1968 40-foot wooden trawler built in Reedville by his wife's grandfather. He recalls that rescuers arrived in about twenty minutes.

*(continued on page 12)*



## Called to Serve

(continued from page 11)



“When the sea rescue people showed up, they deployed an interesting technique: because my boat is a trawler tug design, it has a huge area where it can be pulled. They had one boat pulling it back off the rocks, and a smaller boat was circling, creating a wake that made the boat rise and lower — it was brilliant. The boat was in full reverse, the wake was bumping it up and down — and it came free.”

### WHEN EVERY SECOND COUNTS

The organization’s most publicized rescue to date occurred in April 2023 when a call came from the sheriff’s office regarding a 50-foot yacht with eight passengers taking on water near Buoy 62 in the Bay. Quentin Haynie saved the messages on his cellphone, replaying the second call that came only minutes later: “The vessel in distress has sunk. Eight people are in the water.”

Gwaltney says “people in the water” calls are the most dreaded by volunteers. A crew including Gwaltney, Pete Ortiz, Bill Turville and Quentin Haynie sped out of Cockrell Creek “on wide open throttle” on Rescue I, a Sea Rescue 42-foot Provincial rescue craft. The water temperature was 49 degrees in early April, with 2- to 3-foot seas after a morning of strong winds. Life-jacketed people floating in the cold, rough waters were largely hidden by waves, Gwaltney remembers.

Reedville, Va.



PHOTO COURTESY BECKY HAYNIE



Eight people found themselves in dangerously cold water off Virginia’s Northern Neck in 2023 after their 50-foot yacht began taking on water. Right, rescue volunteers keep one of the rescued boaters warm.



Fortunately, one of the passengers had grabbed a handheld radio as the yacht sank. The radio operator was able to guide Rescue I to the group’s location. By this time, they had been in the water for nearly an hour and several were already suffering from hypothermia. The crew administered first aid as Rescue I rushed across the Bay to Ingram Bay Marina, where they were met by three Northumberland County rescue squads and EMS workers.

“That whole thing was like an act of God,” volunteer Dwight Hassler remembers. “There were two licensed Coast Guard captains on board; one was a retired Coast Guard member.”

It was later discovered that the yacht left earlier that morning from Virginia Beach with its new owners on board, en route to what was to be the yacht’s new home in New Jersey. Haynie says, “Seeing those people in the water for the first time ... it can’t really be put into words.”

### GETTING ON BOARD

Having now reached its 50th year in existence, Smith Point Sea Rescue shows no signs of slowing down. Hassler admits the group’s largest challenge remains recruiting new volunteers.

Gwaltney says volunteer criteria are simple: “You must live within 20

minutes of our service area, be available, and be 18 years old or older. Volunteers also must have a Virginia Boater’s Safety Certification and a Boater Safety Education Certificate.” Having EMS training and CPR certification is also an asset.

Current president Pete Ortiz says rescue training includes “practical towing, basic seamanship and boat handling. Everybody should be trained as a backup sea captain.”

Brent Stansbury, one of the team’s newer members who joined in September 2023, says, “I originally came as an observer. It’s like on-the-job training.”

Stansbury says he’s been a part-time member of the Reedville community since his teenage years and moved to the area full-time last year. About 90% of the volunteers are retired or semi-retired and most say that giving back to the community was their motivation for joining Smith Point Sea Rescue. ●

In recognition of the group’s 50th anniversary, writer Ann Eichenmuller is penning a new book, *There When Needed: A History of Smith Point Sea Rescue* (High Tide Publications, 2024).

► For more information, visit [smithpointsearescue.com](http://smithpointsearescue.com).

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Joe Namath, Superbowl III MVP  
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Send submissions to [EnergyTips@odec.com](mailto:EnergyTips@odec.com)



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Publication: Sept. 1, 2024

Space Reservation Deadline: July 25, 2024

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Publication: Nov. 1, 2024

Space Reservation Deadline: Sept. 26, 2024

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Each issue of *Cooperative Living* reaches over 600,000 homes and businesses throughout Virginia and Maryland — that's more than 1.8 million readers and potential visitors to your festival or special event.

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# ONE CUSTOMER, ONE VOTE IS KEY TO CO-OP ELECTIONS



June marks the beginning of election season at NOVEC, when customers like you are empowered each year to help choose the leaders of the Cooperative. The first phase of NOVEC's election process is letting customers know the director positions up for election and how members can submit nominating petitions if they are interested in running for a seat on the board of directors.

In the pages of this month's magazine — and also on our website — you will see more information, details, and deadlines about this nominating petition phase and how you can get involved. The annual election at NOVEC is a powerful and important reminder about one of the key differences between a co-op and other electric utilities: cooperatives are democratically controlled by their customers.

NOVEC has more than 180,000 customers and while only a few may have the time, interest, and knowledge to run for election, I encourage all of you to please take the time to vote. If you cannot cast your ballot in person, you can still participate by assigning your proxy. Being part of our Cooperative means your voice is as important as every other customer's when it comes to choosing the board members who provide leadership and guidance to NOVEC.

The election process culminates on Wednesday, Sept. 18, when NOVEC will hold our annual meeting and announce this year's results. Between now and then, there will be plenty of time to learn who the candidates are and how they hope to help NOVEC in the future.

As we get closer to the election, look here and on NOVEC.com for more information. Be part of a democratic tradition that's been around as long as electric co-ops have existed.

Finally, whether you are driving, swimming, or boating — be aware of the safety practices for your activity and have a great summer!

Best Regards,

Dave Schleicher

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**James Chesley** | District 3  
Vice Chairman

**Michael Ragan** | District 6  
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**Cynthia Gilbride** | District 1  
Treasurer

**Brent George** | District 2

**Mark Bruno** | District 4

**Skip Albrite** | District 7



For updates, tips on safety, energy savings ideas, and career information, find us on social media or go to [novec.com](http://novec.com).

*NOVEC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

## ENERGY TIP OF THE MONTH

LED lightbulbs last up to 25 times longer than incandescent bulbs. Also, the life of an LED bulb is not affected by how often you turn it on and off, so they are better for sensor-operated lights.



## 19 NOVEC Employees Participated in 20th Annual Gaff-n-Go Lineworker Rodeo

By Robin Earl

NOVEC lineworkers logged hundreds of practice hours at the Co-op's Loudoun facility to hone the skills of their trade in preparation for the 2024 Gaff-n-Go Lineworkers Rodeo. The annual competition is sponsored by the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives; it was held May 17 and 18 at Meadow Event Park in Doswell.

Ten apprentices and nine journeymen competed in timed events, earning points for the Co-op and the chance to compete in the International Lineman's Rodeo. Nearly 300 lineworkers from all over the United States competed this year.

*Lineworker Evan Bache gets ready to begin his ascent up an electric pole during a Gaff-n-Go training session in April.*



## 5 WAYS TO SAVE THIS SUMMER

When summer temperatures rise, so do our energy bills. Here are a few ways you can reduce energy use and grow your summer savings.

### 1. **Raise your thermostat.**

The smaller the difference between the indoor and outdoor temperature, the more you'll save.

### 2. **Install window coverings**

like blinds or light-blocking curtains to prevent indoor heat gain during the day.

3. **Seal leaks with caulk and weatherstripping** around windows and exterior doors. Air leaks force your air conditioner to work harder and run longer than necessary.

4. **Run ceiling fans** for additional cooling. Make sure they run counterclockwise, but turn them off when you leave the room.

5. **Lower your water heater thermostat** to 120 degrees to make it run more efficiently.



Source: Dept. of Energy

# Nomination period begins for the NOVEC Board of Directors election

By Robin Earl

**N**OVEC is accepting nominations for candidates to represent Districts 4 and 5 on its Board of Directors. Any Cooperative member in good standing who lives in either district may run for a four-year board term; the Co-op's bylaws require nominees to reside in the district where they are petitioning to serve. You can view the district map at [novec.com/bod](https://novec.com/bod).

The bylaws also state (Article IV, Section 7) nominations must include the signatures of 15 current NOVEC members who live in the district and be received by

the office of the President and CEO "not less than 70 days before the next annual meeting." The 2024 annual meeting is Wednesday, Sept. 18, so nominations must be received by Wednesday, July 10 this year; nominations are not accepted at the annual meeting.

Nominees "may not be employed by or have a financial interest in a competing enterprise of a business selling electric energy to NOVEC" (Article IV, section 5). When a NOVEC membership is held by two people, one, but not both, may be elected for a position on the board.

An independent firm conducts background checks on all candidates and provides results to the NOVEC Board of Directors and the Nominees Evaluation Committee.

Profiles of board candidates will be published in the September edition of *Cooperative Living*. More information about the candidates will also be posted on [novec.com/annualmeeting](https://novec.com/annualmeeting).

## TO SUBMIT A NOMINATION

**To obtain a nomination petition:** Email [annualmeetingLK@novec.com](mailto:annualmeetingLK@novec.com).

**Deadline:** All nomination petitions must be received by 4 p.m., Wednesday, July 10.

### Mail completed petitions to:

President and CEO  
David E. Schleicher  
NOVEC Executive Office  
P.O. Box 2710  
Manassas, VA 20108

### Or hand-deliver petitions to:

NOVEC Lomond Business Center  
Executive Office  
10323 Lomond Drive  
Manassas, VA 20109

(NOVEC offices are open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Offices will be closed Thursday, July 4.)

## SAVE THE DATE:

### NOVEC'S ANNUAL MEETING

**When:** 6 p.m., Wednesday, Sept. 18

**Where:** NOVEC Gainesville Technical Center, 5399 Wellington Branch Drive  
Gainesville, VA 20155



## WHY DID THE LIGHTS GO OUT?

# Critters Are a Frequent Cause of Power Outages

By Robin Earl

Power outages for NOVEC customers are relatively rare, but when they do happen, the cause is not always bad weather or a fallen tree on a power line. Animals that climb, dig, fly, and slither are a common culprit for why the lights go out.

Squirrels frequently cause service interruptions. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) reports that a squirrel's teeth can grow between 6 and 10 inches a year. Unfortunately, they have a tendency to use those teeth to chew just about anything, including the insulating material of electric lines and parts of transformers.

Squirrels devise elaborate routes through their territory, and they will single-mindedly follow these routes. When large populations of squirrels migrate, they ignore every obstacle in their way, including electrical equipment.

Birds are responsible for a significant number of power outages, said Jill Scherzer, system operations manager for NOVEC. When a bird perches on a power line, it isn't a problem, but when they are simultaneously touching two different parts of energized equipment, they can disrupt the flow of electricity.

NRECA reports that nationwide, almost one-quarter of animal-related outages are caused by birds' roosting and flocking behaviors. Adding to the problem, large roosts



*Ospreys nest at the top of an electric pole.*

*Photo by Jamie Stark of Lincoln Electric Cooperative in Eureka, Montana*



*NOVEC needed to replace this pole after a bear did serious damage with its claws.*

can attract predators, which also cause power outages.

Woodpeckers, which strike tree trunks at speeds of up to 15 mph, cause enormous damage to utility poles. Some bird species will nest in just about any opening, including those near energized equipment and grounded surfaces.

And where there are birds and eggs, there will be snakes. Scherzer said snakes will often find their way into underground equipment as they look for a warm place to nest — an unwelcome surprise for lineworkers investigating an outage. Snakes are the second-leading cause of animal-related outages in substations, according to NRECA.

Gophers, raccoons, moles, mice, and bats, as well as large animals like cattle and bears, can also damage utility equipment. Scherzer said NOVEC recently had to replace a utility pole after a bear damaged it with its claws.

## Guarding against animal-related power outages

NOVEC uses physical barriers and protective coverings to minimize damage caused by animals. “Wildlife will climb up, chew, or fly into power lines. It’s not entirely preventable,” said Scherzer.

Barriers block an animal’s access to energized utility equipment. They are typically more successful against large animals like raccoons, cats, and snakes, although perch guards are used to discourage birds as well.

NOVEC uses rubber boots (covers that fit over wires and other equipment on the lines near the transformers). “These attachments keep power flowing and the wildlife going,” said Scherzer.

NOVEC also relies on electronics that produce sonic, ultrasonic, or random noises that repel animals.

## Other causes of outages

Not all outages can be blamed on the animal kingdom. A stray Mylar balloon, for instance, has been known to cause a short circuit. “The metallic coating on the balloons conducts electricity. When it meets a power line, it might not only cause an outage in your neighborhood, it could spark an electrical fire,” Scherzer said. “Do not try to dislodge any object that is stuck in a power line. Extending poles or sticks of any kind toward a power line is very dangerous.”

Drones are a relatively new source of power disruption, said Scherzer. “Pilots should keep drones at least 200 feet away from power lines or other electrical equipment. And never try to get your drone if it crashes near a downed line or substation. Any foreign object coming into contact with an energized power line could cause a loss of power.”



### WHAT CAN CUSTOMERS DO TO HELP?

NOVEC has procedures in place to minimize interactions between wildlife and Co-op infrastructure. Here's how you can help:

- Consider where the electric lines are when choosing where to put food out for animals. For example, bird feeders will attract squirrels, so do not place them near distribution lines or other electric equipment on your property.
- Don't set up feeding stations for horses, cattle, or wild deer near substations or power lines; these animals also can cause damage to NOVEC equipment.

## NOVEC Announces 2024 Youth Tour Participants

By Robin Earl



2023 NOVEC-sponsored Youth Tour delegates toured historical sites in Washington in June 2023. From left, Jordan Asinugo, Bora Yoon, Alexa Zarkauskas, and Grace Kestler.

NOVEC is sponsoring three high school students to participate in the 2024 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Youth Tour in Washington. Students completed an application and submitted references for the opportunity to join the Youth Tour. NOVEC’s 2024 delegates are:

- Angela Goh, a sophomore at Battlefield High School in Haymarket
- Maddie Doefler, a junior at Battlefield High School in Haymarket
- Vaibhav Dwaraka, a sophomore at Acadamies of Loudoun, a magnet school affiliated with John Champe High School in Aldie. (Academies of Loudoun is a magnet school for Loudoun County Public School students interested in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Students split their time between the Academies of Loudoun and their home schools.)

They, along with nearly 1,800 other students from across the nation, will spend a week this month learning about electric cooperatives, visiting historic sites and museums, and seeing the federal government in action.

## Experts Show the Right Way to Get Your Hands Dirty

By Robin Earl

**I**n June, most everyone in Virginia has a green thumb. The rain is plentiful, the sunshine glorious. But as garden pests appear and the vegetables grow beyond their beds, backyard gardeners might need a little help. That's where Master Gardeners come in.

Master Gardener interns undergo at least 50 hours of training from Virginia Cooperative Extension (in a partnership with the Virginia Tech in Blacksburg), and then complete 50 hours of volunteer service. To maintain certification, Master Gardeners volunteer 20 hours annually on community service projects and attend additional training.

Community education is the overriding mandate of a Master Gardener. Each chapter offers in-depth courses and educational events that are available to the public virtually or in-person. Frequent "Ask the Master Gardener" sessions are held at local farmers markets, libraries, garden centers, and "teaching gardens." Frustrated gardeners can call a Master Gardener help desk to get advice.



*Fields of bluebells attracted scores of visitors to the Bluebell Festival at Merrimac Farm and Wildlife Management Area in Nokesville.*



*Sue Weiss and Marta Robinson, with the Master Gardeners of Fauquier and Rappahannock, host a Seed Swap at a library in Fauquier County as planting season begins.*

Chris Flench, a NOVEC member and second-year Master Gardener, took questions at the Prince William Master Gardeners (MGPW) booth for the April Bluebell Festival at Merrimac Farm and Wildlife Management Area in Nokesville. As a former teacher, she spends time developing materials for children who want to get their hands dirty.



---

## Learn about gardening

Valerie Huelsman, Virginia Cooperative Extension natural resources specialist and Master Gardener coordinator for MGPW, said that the chapter's most popular in-person educational programs include courses on container gardening, vegetables, native gardening, lawns, and landscapes.

MGPW is currently offering a vegetable gardening course about planning a garden from seed to harvest (Sustainable Vegetable Garden Series — [mgpw.org](http://mgpw.org)). Gardeners will learn how to use organic and sustainable techniques, develop good soil, deal with wildlife, and get tips for container and indoor vegetable gardens.

Through MGPW's Audubon at Home program, Master Gardeners meet with individual homeowners to discuss how to make their landscapes more wildlife friendly. Fielding questions at the Bluebell Festival, Master Gardener Jan Rice said that residents can also request a "wildlife sanctuary" assessment from a Master Gardener. Certification depends on the percentage of native plants, growing methods, and the types of animals that can be found in the space. Visit [autubonva.org/aah](http://autubonva.org/aah) for more information.

In addition to an active YouTube channel and weekly plant clinics at libraries and farmers markets, the Fairfax Master Gardeners (FCMGA) operates a diagnostic laboratory year-round. This unique service is staffed by Master Gardeners who have years of experience in solving garden-related problems. Residents submit samples of pests, diseases, or unhealthy plants to the lab for identification and recommendations.

Loudoun County Master Gardeners (LCMG) has a team of "garden to table" speakers ready to provide guidance on vegetable gardening basics, how to prepare a spring or fall vegetable garden, garden maintenance, pest control in the vegetable garden, and how to harvest your bounty.

The Garden to Table team can also assist residents who are interested in establishing cooperative gardens that will provide fruits and vegetables for their communities. To arrange for a Garden to Table speaker, email [LCMGSpeaker@gmail.com](mailto:LCMGSpeaker@gmail.com).



*Stephanie Johnson, Master Gardener and owner of Green Steeze conservation landscaping, shows off cabbages grown in the cook's bed at the Teaching Garden in Bristow. Photo courtesy of Kim Zell/MGPW*



*One of the whimsical garden beds at the Teaching Garden in Bristow includes a fairy house.*

# Power Pole Clutter

Flyers, satellite dishes, posters, basketball hoops, decorative lights, even hunting stands. You name it, someone has tried to staple, nail or tie it to a power pole. Here's a quick look at the dangers and pitfalls associated with unauthorized pole attachments.

## Illegal

Many state and local laws and the National Electrical Safety Code prohibit any unauthorized items on poles. Utilities can face fines if these attachments aren't removed.



## Pole Damage

Even small holes can allow moisture and insects past the pole sealant, which can shorten the life of the pole or weaken it and cause it to fall in a storm.



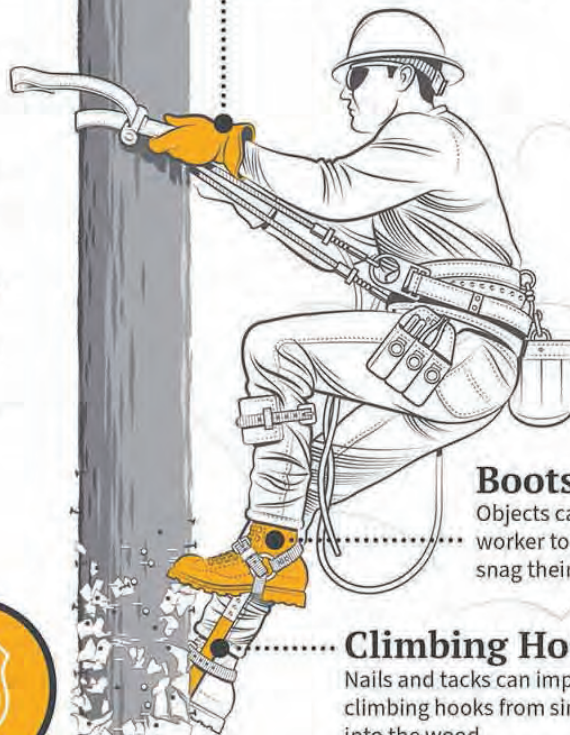
## Hinders Repairs

Posters and flyers can hide identifying markers on poles and slow repair work.



## Gloves

Staples, tacks and nails can puncture a lineworker's insulated rubber gloves and expose them to electric shock.



## Boots

Objects can cause a worker to fall if they snag their boots.

## Climbing Hooks

Nails and tacks can impede climbing hooks from sinking into the wood.



## Dangerous

A person who gets too close to energized lines while attaching an object can be electrocuted.



## Distraction

Some materials posted on poles, like mirrors or holiday decorations, can be a distraction to drivers.

Source: NRECA; Design: Jeff Dionise



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# Maryland is Milkin' It

*June is National Dairy Month*

by Laura Emery, Staff Writer

In a transient and fast-paced world, there's something magical about watching the sun set over tall silos overlooking lush green pasture dotted with grazing cows.

It's a familiar scene in Maryland — the state that declared milk its official drink in 1998.

According to the University of Maryland Extension, Maryland is home to over 40,000 dairy cows spread across 310 farms throughout the state. In 2022, Maryland's dairy industry produced over 876 million pounds of milk and generated over \$157 million in sales.

June is National Dairy Month and the American Dairy Association North East and the Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Association encourage Marylanders to celebrate by enjoying healthy and nutritious dairy products this month and all year long. ●



The Stambaugh family of Pheasant Echos Farm in Westminster, Md.

PHOTO COURTESY MD & VA MILK PRODUCERS COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

## 'MOO' MILK, PLEASE

Here are some "udderly" interesting dairy cow facts courtesy of the Dairy Alliance:

1. Holstein cows, known for their black and white markings, are the most common dairy cattle in the U.S. An average Holstein dairy cow weighs about 1,500 pounds.
2. Cows have four stomachs. Technically, cows only have one stomach, but it has four different distinct compartments. It is very different than a human stomach, so that's why people often say cows have four stomachs.
3. A cow that is milking eats about 100 pounds of feed each day. The feed is typically a combination of grass, grain, and a mixture of other ingredients like citrus pulp, almond hulls and cottonseeds. These items may otherwise be thrown away. We like to think of cows as the ultimate recyclers.
4. A cow that is milking drinks about 30 to 50 gallons of water each day. Water weighs 8.35 pounds per gallon, so a milking dairy cow may consume as much as 420 (or more) pounds of water daily.
5. Cows like it cool. Due to their thick skin, hair and natural insulation, dairy cows prefer temperatures between 40 to 65 degrees Fahrenheit. During the summer, farmers keep their cows cool by turning on their barns' fans and water misters.
6. An average dairy cow produces 7 to 9 gallons of milk a day. That's about 128 glasses of great-tasting, nutrient-packed goodness.



Misty Meadows Farm in Smithsburg, Md.

PHOTO BY JAN KOETSIER/PEXELS.COM

PHOTO COURTESY MD & VA MILK PRODUCERS COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

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# Bird Watching

## DAYS AHEAD

story and artwork by Anne M. Dellinger, Contributing Columnist

**B**irds are a part of every person's life, even if they are only twittering and flittering around in the background.

But once you start paying attention to these amazing creatures, you might wonder, "Why didn't I notice them before?"

Birds come in an incredible variety of colors, shapes and sizes, and are the only animals that have feathers. They travel by flying, swimming, hopping, walking and running. Their communication is by singing, twittering, screeching, squawking and honking ... and hooting, of course!

Unlike much of nature's wildlife that stays quietly hidden and out of sight, most birds are vocal and visible. Being out and about, they are easy to watch and study ... until you start moving in for a closer look!

It is almost impossible to sneak up on birds for a better view because of their excellent vision and exceptional hearing. Some have eyes located on the sides of their heads, giving them a wide field of view for detecting predators. Others, like owls, have eyes on the front of the head, enabling them to use binocular vision to judge distances. And, a barn owl flying over a grassy field can even hear a mouse rustling below. You can understand why birds always know when you are coming their way!

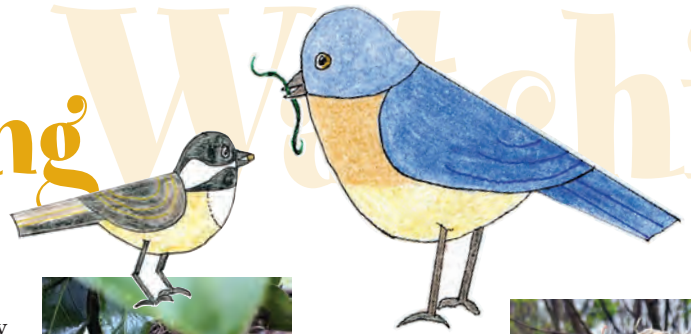
How do you think your sight and sound senses compare to a bird's? A good way to test your awareness is to create a **Sensory Map**. Take a paper and pencil to a comfortable place to sit in nature, such as a yard or park.

Observe your surroundings, but do not focus on any one object; simply look for signs of motion. Next, close your eyes and really listen. Then mark yourself with an "X" in the middle of the paper. Write down what you are seeing and hearing around you.

If your observations fill up your paper, consider yourself an "eagle eye!" Your super alertness means no one will ever creep up on you for a closer look!

## MASTER BUILDERS

All birds need to create a cradle to hold their eggs



and raise their young. They do this by adapting their nests to the materials that are available where they live.

Robins use grasses, twigs, string and paper scraps to build their nests in trees and shrubs.

Killdeer line a depression in the ground with small stones and call it home.

Orioles weave grasses, sticks and string to form a sock-shaped nest that hangs from a tree branch.

When it comes to nest building, there is no one way to do it!

## EAT LIKE A BIRD

If you have been lucky enough to observe birds up close, you know that each one has a unique beak, or bill, specifically designed for its lifestyle. Cardinals — thick beaks for cracking seeds. Herons — daggerlike beaks for spear fishing. Hummingbirds — tubelike beaks for sipping flower nectar.

To better understand how some birds eat their food, try this activity:

Collect some objects to represent "beaks," like chopsticks, a clothespin, drinking straw and tweezers. Then put together these items to serve as the "foods" that different birds would eat:

- Seeds (uncooked rice)
- Fish (cooked macaroni in water)
- Nectar (any fruit juice)

Choose a "beak" and gather up as much "food" as possible in a minute. Then repeat with different beaks. Which method of eating was easiest? Which was most difficult?

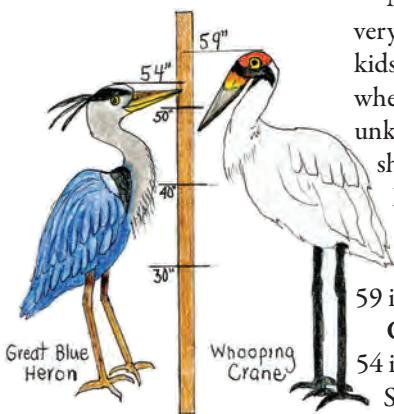
This eating exercise represents a very small sample of the feeding habits of birds. Depending on the bird and the time of year, the diet might include insects,



amphibians, small mammals, garbage, carrion (dead animals), other birds and much more ...

## LITTLE BIRD – BIG BIRD

Birds clearly come in different sizes and are separated into one of three categories — small, medium and large. When trying to identify an unfamiliar bird, it is helpful to reference things you already know about them. For instance, is the bird smaller than a pencil or larger?



North America is home to some very large birds that are the size of kids! The question could be asked, when seeing one of these big, unknown birds ... “Is it taller or shorter than a *middle schooler*?”

How do *you* measure up to these avian wonders?

**A Whooping Crane —**

59 inches tall, wingspan 7-8 feet

**Great Blue Heron —**

54 inches tall, wingspan 75 inches

Standing next to these huge birds could be a little scary, especially if your height is below their beaks!

## AVIAN SCAVENGER HUNT

Kids, like yourself, are natural adventurers. With summer break in full swing, it's exploration time!

No matter where you do your *nosing around*, at home or on vacation, there will be birds nearby.

Why not challenge yourself to look really closely at these feathered creatures? You just might discover:

- a bird with a long, skinny beak
- a multicolored bird
- a bird eating or hunting food
- a soaring bird
- a bird with yellow feathers
- a bird swimming or wading
- a bird with red feathers
- a bird with a long tail
- a bird with blue feathers
- a bird with a short, fat beak

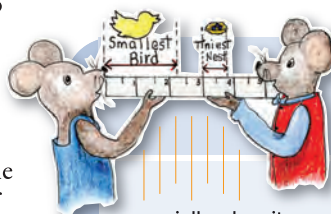
## BECOMING A “BIRDER”

Watching birds can quickly turn into an easy-to-do hobby. No need to go far to make discoveries because they are found on city streets, in yards, parks, gardens and near bodies of water. Better still, put out a feeder and birdbath and birds will come to you!

Binoculars, field guides and bird-call phone apps are useful when trying to identify a mystery bird. But these extra items are not always necessary for a satisfying birding experience. Sometimes just sitting quietly, watching and listening to your feathered friends is enough.

As William Shakespeare and others have been known to say ... “**The earth has music for those who listen.**”

All you have to do is pay attention ... your sense of wonder will do the rest. ●



## CALLING ALL SUPER SLEUTHS

The bird world has many extremes, especially when it comes to size.

At a zoo, you may have seen a 9-foot-tall ostrich, the largest, heaviest bird on earth. Weighing around 300 pounds, it cannot get off the ground to fly, but can run as fast as a race horse at 43 miles per hour!

At the opposite end of the size spectrum is the tiniest bird in the world, only 2 ¼ inches long, weighing less than a dime. Its nest is barely an inch across and eggs are the size of coffee beans.

Hay Seed and City Slicker are pondering what this teeny wonder might look like.

Help them find answers to their questions by doing the following:

- Find the world's tiniest bird in this magazine and give the page number.
- Do some research and identify the bird.
- Where would you have to travel to see this bird?
- Have you seen larger relatives of this little bird at a feeder or in a flower garden?

For a chance to win a **\$25 Amazon email gift card**, enter online at [co-opliving.com/super-sleuth](http://co-opliving.com/super-sleuth) or send answers with name, address and phone number to:

Cooperative Living Super Sleuths  
4201 Dominion Blvd., Suite 101  
Glen Allen, VA 23060

*Kids Korner submissions are for children under the age of 16.*

## APRIL'S SUPER SLEUTH WINNER

The **April Super Sleuths** was about our favorite hot ball of hydrogen and helium gases — the sun. For a chance to win a **\$25 Amazon email gift card**, kids were asked to find an image hidden in the magazine and give the page number, do some research and provide the name of the flashes, as well as to say whether someone in their family has ever seen the flashes.

The correct answers are:

- Page 1
- The northern lights, or aurora borealis
- “Yes! My mom and dad both saw them in northern Michigan.”

**OUR WINNER IS JAY.**

*Congratulations, Jay!*



# Hot off the Grill!

These recipes will have you ruling the grill with a saucy and smokin' attitude!

## Kielbasa and Veggie Kabobs

recipe courtesy of Family Features

### Ingredients:

- 4 wooden skewers
- 1 red onion
- 2 bell peppers
- 2 ears of corn, cut crosswise into 2-inch rounds
- 1 pkg. kielbasa, sliced thick
- 12 whole mushrooms
- 12 cherry tomatoes

**Directions:** Soak skewers in water for 30 minutes to prevent burning. Preheat grill to 300 degrees. Cut red onion, peppers and corn into bite-sized chunks. Alternate placing kielbasa slices, onion, peppers, corn, mushrooms and tomatoes on skewers. Grill, rotating every few minutes until veggies are tender, about 20 minutes. Serves four.

## Hawaiian Huli Huli Chicken

recipe courtesy of Family Features

### Ingredients:

#### Sauce:

- 2 tablespoons ketchup
- 2 tablespoons light soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 teaspoons orange juice
- 1 teaspoon garlic (about 1 clove), minced
- 1 teaspoon ginger, minced

- 12 oz. boneless, skinless chicken breast (about 2 large breasts), cut into 1-inch cubes (about 24 cubes)
- 1 cup fresh pineapple, diced (about 24 pieces)
- 8 wooden skewers (6 inches each), soaked in water

### Directions:

**To make sauce:** Combine ketchup, soy sauce, honey, orange juice, garlic and ginger; mix well. Separate into two bowls and set aside.

Preheat grill to medium-high heat. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Alternately thread three chicken cubes and three pineapple chunks on each skewer. Grill skewers 3-5 minutes on each side. Brush or spoon sauce from one bowl onto chicken and pineapple every other minute. Discard remaining sauce from first bowl. To prevent chicken from drying out, finish cooking to minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees in oven. Using clean brush or spoon, coat with sauce from remaining bowl before serving. Serves four.



## Grilled Banana Pound Cake Kabobs

recipe courtesy of Family Features

### Ingredients:

- 1 loaf (10  $\frac{3}{4}$  oz.) frozen pound cake, thawed and cubed
- 2 large bananas, cut into 1-inch slices
- metal or soaked wooden skewers
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ice cream
- desired toppings

**Directions:** Heat grill to medium heat. Alternately thread cake and bananas on skewers. In small bowl, mix butter, brown sugar, vanilla extract and cinnamon. Brush mixture over kabobs. Place kabobs on greased rack and grill for up to 1 minute, turning once. Serve with ice cream and desired toppings.



## Got a tasty treat to share?

Email your favorite recipes to [cooperativekitchen@co-opliving.com](mailto:cooperativekitchen@co-opliving.com), or mail to Cooperative Kitchen, c/o Cooperative Living, 4201 Dominion Boulevard, Suite 101, Glen Allen, VA 23060 and include your email address.

You also can submit them online at [co-opliving.com/cooperativekitchen](http://co-opliving.com/cooperativekitchen). Selected recipes will be published in future issues of *Cooperative Living* or at [co-opliving.com](http://co-opliving.com). Because of volume we cannot guarantee publication of all recipes. Reader recipes are submitted in good faith. *Cooperative Living* cannot warrant results.



**Energize**Efficiently

# Beat the heat

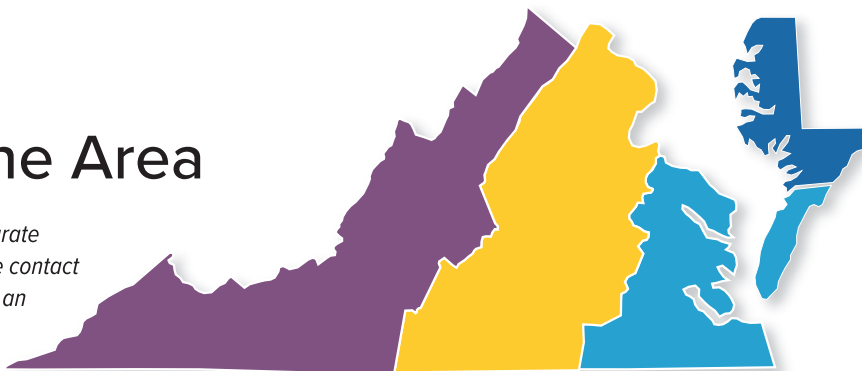
- **Use a smart thermostat** - to automatically adjust the temperature while away or sleeping, reducing your electric bill without sacrificing comfort.
- **Grill outside** - instead of heating up the kitchen from a stove or oven.
- **Keep curtains closed** - to avoid heat gain during the day.
- **Use a ceiling fan** - ceiling fans cool people, not rooms and can cool you down without adjusting the thermostat, saving you energy and money.

Visit [ee.odec.com](http://ee.odec.com) for more money-saving tips. 

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# Events Around the Area

*Editor's note: All information is believed to be accurate as of press time. Before you attend, please use the contact information to verify the status of an event. Listing an event does not constitute an endorsement.*



## BLUE RIDGE WEST

### JUNE

**21 SHENANDOAH. Free Movie Night: Honey, I Shrunk the Kids.** Big Gem Park. 8:30 p.m. Townofshenandoah.com.

**22 SHENANDOAH. Daughter of the Stars Farmer's Market.** Big Gem Park. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Daughterofthestarsfm@gmail.com.

**29 SHENANDOAH. Free Music in the Park.** Big Gem Park. 6-8 p.m. 540-652-8773. Townofshenandoah.com.

### JULY

**4 FORT VALLEY. Fourth of July Parade.** 7088 Fort Valley Rd. 10 a.m. Facebook.com/Fortvalleyruritanclub.

**4 CLIFTON FORGE. Stars and Stripes Extravaganza.** Grounds of C&O Heritage Center. 11 a.m. Facebook.com/cliftonfor-gemainstreet.

**4 MIDDLETOWN. July 4th Celebration.** 7833 Senseney Ave. All-day event. 540-869-2226. Middletownva.gov.

**5 SHENANDOAH. Free Movie Night: Clifford the Big Red Dog.** Big Gem Park. 8:30 p.m. Townofshenandoah.com.

**12 SHENANDOAH. Cruz-In on First Street.** 6-9 p.m. 540-742-1141. Townofshenandoah.com.

## PIEDMONT

### JUNE

**14 BOYDTON. Sit and Sip.** The Boyd Tavern. 5-9 p.m. 757-619-9796.

**14-16 AMELIA COURT HOUSE. Amelia Lavender Festival.** Windsor Lavender Farm. Times vary. Windsorlavenderfarm.com.

**15 CULPEPER. 2024 Virginia State Chili Championships & Fisher House Fundraiser.** Old House Vineyards. 12-6 p.m. Cruisinforheroes.com.

**15 ROCKVILLE. Community Summer Open House.** Springfield Christian Church. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Springfieldchristianchurchva.org.

**20-23 AMELIA COURT HOUSE. Amelia County Fair.** 16501 Five Forks Rd. Times vary. Ameliacountyfair.com.

**22 HUDDLESTON. Ray Judd's Music in the Park: Common Ground.** Beach Pavilion – Smith Mountain Lake State Park. 8 p.m. 540-297-6066.

**26-29 AMISSVILLE. Amissville Volunteer Fire and Rescue Annual Carnival.** 6 p.m. 14711 Lee Hwy. Amissvillevfr.org.

**29 STANARDSVILLE. Summer Marketplace: Craft Fair/Yard Sale.** 636 Madison Rd. 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Craft Show: 434-989-2156, Yard Sale: 434-985-6007. Craftsbysebi@gmail.com.

### JULY

**3 FARMVILLE. Farmville's 4th of July Celebration.** Downtown Main St. 6-10 p.m. Farmvilleva.com.

## TIDEWATER

### JUNE

**15 EXMORE. 25th Annual Juneteenth Celebration & Unity Parade.** Exmore Town Park. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Exmore.org.

**19 COLONIAL BEACH. Juneteenth Commemoration & Celebration.** Town Hill. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Facebook.com/ctttcbva.

**22 CAPE CHARLES. Concerts in the Park: Can You Dig it.** Cape Charles Central Park. 7-9 p.m. Citizens4centralpark@gmail.com. Capecharlesvirginiascape.com.

**29 CAPE CHARLES. Concerts in the Park: Celeste Kellogg.** Cape Charles Central Park. 7-9 p.m. Citizens4centralpark@gmail.com.

### JULY

**4 PORT ROYAL. Independence Day Celebration.** St. Peter's Episcopal Church. 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Facebook.com/historicportroyal.

**4 CAPE CHARLES. Fourth of July Celebration.** Cape Charles Historic District. 10 a.m. Julie.pruitt@capecharles.org. Capecharlesvirginiascape.com.

**6 CAPE CHARLES. Concerts in the Park: TFC Band.** Cape Charles Central Park. 7-9 p.m. Citizens4centralpark@gmail.com. Capecharlesvirginiascape.com.

**13 CAPE CHARLES. Concerts in the Park: Forest Hill.** Cape Charles Central Park. 7-9 p.m. Citizens4centralpark@gmail.com. Capecharlesvirginiascape.com.

## MARYLAND

### JUNE

**29 SNOW HILL. Summer Music Series: The Bay Country Drifters.** Furnace Town Historic Site. 5-8 p.m. Furnacetown.org.

### JULY

**13 SNOW HILL. Summer Music Series: The Folk Villains.** Furnace Town Historic Site. 5-8 p.m. Furnacetown.org.

**PRINT DEADLINES:** July 1 for Aug. 15-Sept. 15  
Aug. 1 for Sept. 15-Oct. 15

Email: happenings@co-opliving.com

Send to: Happenings, 4201 Dominion Boulevard, Suite 101, Glen Allen, VA 23060

Online: co-opliving.com/happenings

# Blade Stunner

*Beautifully made, magnificent to look at, this knife is a work of art at only \$99*

It's not often you happen upon a blade smith who has gem cutting skills. But finding needles in haystacks is what we do best, so when we saw this master craftsman's handiwork, we made certain to procure some of these Southwestern masterpieces to complete our collection.

The stainless steel blade, bolster and pommel are exquisitely etched and would have looked great with a less ambitious handle. But the results of overachieving are stunning here. The turquoise-blue colored handle is ablaze with assorted stones like jasper, marble, sunstone, and coral that have been hand cut and inlaid in a Southwestern motif.

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— WILLIAM B.

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# A Heartfelt Thank You

*Post-surgery notes, knitted items and a gnome*

by Margo Oxendine, Contributing Columnist



**M**y heart is full. And, half of it, anyway, is repaired after my first surgery in April.

I was amazed at how “easily” it was done, and it was also easy to recover.

I am walking every day again, and that is a joy. I may be a bit slower, and I may not go quite as far, but to be out in nature and among trees and wildlife does wonders for me.

What my heart is filled with, though, is gratitude to you, *Cooperative Living* readers. I have a stack of at least 100 cards and notes and well wishes from you. I just can’t convey how much each one means to me. Almost every card included words of encouragement and prayer. Thank you!

Some cards included things I’d never expected. One day, I came home to find my mailbox filled with a big brown package someone had spent \$11 to send. What could it be, I wondered as I parked the car.

It was a lovely hand-knit “prayer shawl” in shades of pink and purple — my favorites! Also in the package was a

cute little gnome sporting a hand-knitted cap with a pompom. I named him Homer. He’s a good luck charm. The prayer shawl came in very handy at UVA hospital. I used it to keep warm in the chilly room and, of course, prayed mightily while I was wearing it. Thank you, talented reader!

One fine artist, “Driver Dave,” sent me several hand-drawn cards that made me smile. Thank you, Driver Dave!

Another reader sent a tiny square of cloth with a cross inside. She suggested I carry it in my purse. I do.

Many of you, knowing of my love for Brownie, sent cards picturing beagles, or in one, a pile of pug puppies surrounding a surprised-looking kitty. It was hilarious.

I received quite a few handwritten letters, telling me of the writer’s own experience with what I am going through, and offering lots of heartfelt support and soothing words.

The “thinking of you” emails were another deluge that made me grateful. I think and hope I answered every single one. The emails were sent to the newspaper office so, in addition to their other “real” duties, Samantha and

Emily, who received them, had to forward them to me. I appreciate that too.

My full intention is to send a thank-you note to everyone who went to the trouble to send me a card. I plan to get started on that very, very soon, but I don’t know how long it may take me to whittle down the pile, and then finish it. I hope all of you know, though, I appreciated and treasure every single one.

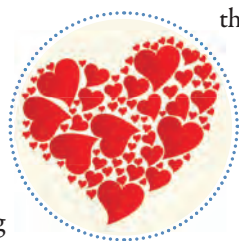
Here’s another thing I am grateful for: rides to and from Charlottesville. It is difficult to find someone who will agree to give up an entire day, sitting behind the wheel of a car, or in a waiting room chair, for someone who is not their closest friend or relative. The gentleman who drove to Charlottesville to bring me home after surgery went above and beyond, really. He was a good conversationalist, and an even better driver. He even carted my suitcase into the house. Thank you, Mr. D.A.

So, my heart is overflowing with gratitude, and my aorta is healing. After my next surgery, I plan to be “up and at ‘em” again.

Wouldn’t you know: When I called a friend to get another friend’s number to beg for a ride, she offered to do it herself. Ain’t life grand? Yes, friends, it is.

Thank you all very much. For everything. ●

*To order a copy of Margo’s “A Party of One,” call 540-468-2147 Mon.-Wed., 9 a.m.-5 p.m., or email [therecorderoffice@gmail.com](mailto:therecorderoffice@gmail.com).*



[ SCENE IT! ]

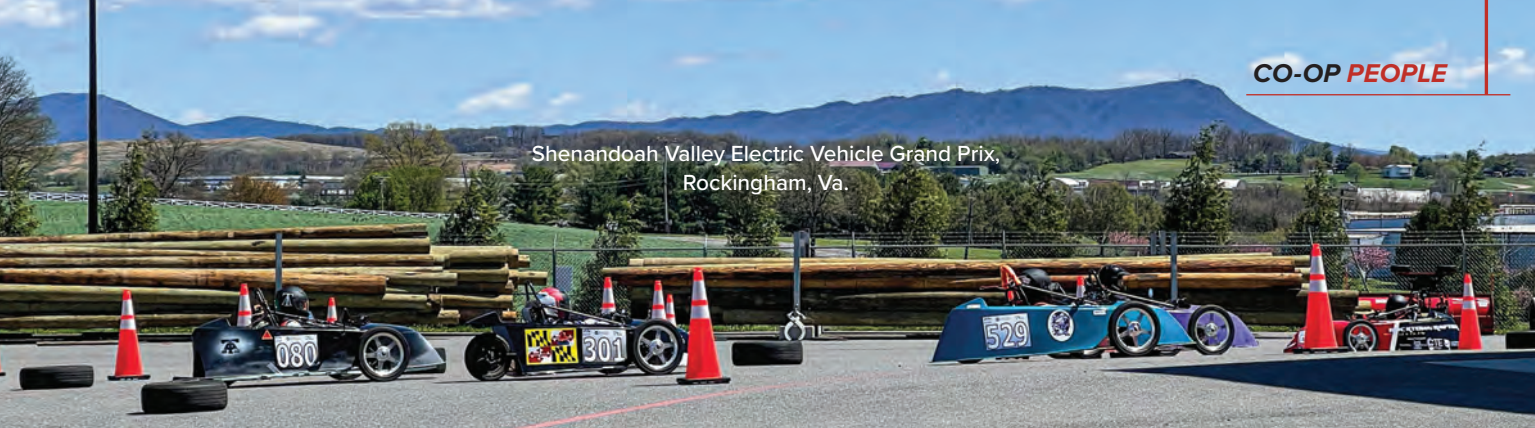
SMITH ISLAND, MD

PHOTO BY MILDRED MARSH, ANEC MEMBER



Look for the CL logo, like the one above, in the pages of this issue of *Cooperative Living*. Submit the page number where you found it, along with your name, email and phone number to **Wherezit**, c/o *Cooperative Living*, 4201 Dominion Boulevard, Suite 101, Glen Allen, VA 23060 or go online at [co-opliving.com](http://co-opliving.com) under “Contests.” Deadline is **June 20**. The winner will receive a \$25 Amazon email gift card.

Shenandoah Valley Electric Vehicle Grand Prix,  
Rockingham, Va.



## Small and In Charge

*Electric vehicles take over one Virginia electric cooperative*

by Preston Knight, Contributing Writer

**F**orget range anxiety. These tiny electric vehicles traveled from Virginia's Shenandoah Valley to Abu Dhabi.

Sure, airplanes were involved, but the distance covered still represents a significant achievement. It shows that participation in the Shenandoah Valley Electric Vehicle Grand Prix gives high school students more than just a cursory overview of the good and bad of battery-charged cars. There are educational opportunities at every turn.

The grand prix, hosted in April by Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative in Rockingham, Va., pits local high schools against each other, seeing which one could complete the most laps throughout two 30-minute heats. This year was the third installment of the race, featuring 13 teams, including two from Maryland.

Given their success from the previous two years, two Virginia programs, one from Harrisonburg High School and another from Augusta County, known as the Shenandoah Valley Short Circuits, went to Abu Dhabi in March for the competition's international version. The Short Circuits were victorious there, while Harrisonburg was the third-place finisher.

"I'd go back in a heartbeat," Short Circuits' participant Andrew Berry says. "The place is beautiful, safe, clean. Better than some places I've been in in the U.S. The architecture is so different. You ride down [here] and see field, barn, field. You ride down there and see skyscraper, skyscraper, skyscraper."

He recalled his overseas trip while decked out in full race gear at SVEC's office, where his father is a system engineer. Familial ties were not what led the younger Berry to participate in the competition; it was a personal interest in technology. "I think it's fun," he says. "I would recommend it to anyone. Anyone who likes racing. It's different than what you think, but it works."

### 'PEELING BACK LAYERS'

SVEC hosted the event in partnership with Global EEE, a Washington, D.C., nonprofit that stands for Education,

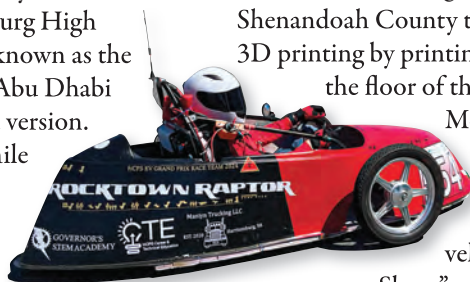
Energy and Environment. To offset the costs of electric vehicle kits offered by Global EEE, the cooperative and its wholesale energy provider, Old Dominion Electric Cooperative, provided financial assistance. Teams were also encouraged to find sponsors to cover expenses.

The grand prix gives students with diverse skill sets a hands-on chance to put their knowledge and interests to use. There's wiring, construction, data analysis and a touch of graphic design and marketing, as teams are advised to promote their work within their schools and communities. Awards handed out mirrored the educational aspects. There were recognitions for technical innovation, vehicle workmanship, women in science and engineering, car workmanship and team promotion, among others.

Massanutten Regional Governor's School in Shenandoah County took home an award for best use of 3D printing by printing floor brackets designed to secure the floor of the chassis more effectively. Eastern

Mennonite School in Harrisonburg was awarded best video for a two-minute compilation capturing the team's months-long efforts to construct its vehicle, set to the song "The Greatest Show," only the word "car" was dubbed over "show" in humorous fashion.

Harrisonburg exacted revenge on the Short Circuits by winning the local race. But for everyone involved, regardless of finishing position, the event was a success with far-reaching implications. "What the co-op is doing is looking way into the future," says Matt Brame, department head of technology education at Millbrook High School in Frederick County, Va. "Students are looking at this and figuring out their specializations of where they would fit. They're expanding their horizons and not saying, hey, if I want to go to work at SVEC, there's only one thing I can do, and that's be a lineman. They're seeing those layers and peeling back the layers of how to race an EV is the same for a career." ●



## BUSINESS

**FIREARM-RIGHTS RESTORATION.** Call for free consultation: Attorney John Janson at 434-953-8794 (Virginia Bar #91236).

## REAL ESTATE

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**OLD HOT ROD CAR PARTS.** 409 and 427 Chevy blocks, heads, intakes; aluminum intakes for any make, 4-speeds, Holley carbs, 3x2 intakes, 2x4 intakes; any old hot rod parts; old metal signs. Collector will pay cash. 804-943-2283 or send pictures to 66stingraycoupe@gmail.com.

## FREE

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## AUCTIONS

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**DEADLINE:** June 5 for July issue; July 5 for August issue; Publisher reserves the right to designate classification or reject any ad. No personals, please.

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- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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# Black Walnut: Massive and Messy

*The good, the bad and the nutty*

by Steve Carroll, Contributing Columnist

A landowner with a mature, open-grown black walnut is fortunate indeed, able to appreciate this tree's massive presence; thick, dark, furrowed bark and flavorful, protein-rich nuts in the fall. On the other hand, a homeowner with a tree whose branches overhang the sidewalk and driveway — not so fortunate, as they must deal with fallen leaves and branches; a barrage of walnuts on the roof, sidewalk and car; and the effects of juglone, a chemical that leaches from walnut parts and interferes with the growth of nearby plants such as vegetables.

Black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) is a striking tree, with brown-black bark, thick twigs and a typically straight trunk. Leaves are 12 to 24 inches long, with 10 to 24 finely toothed leaflets that turn yellow in the fall. These leaves drop earlier than most other hardwoods, and they are slow to leaf out in the spring. Walnuts are classified with hickories (genus *Carya*) in the walnut family.

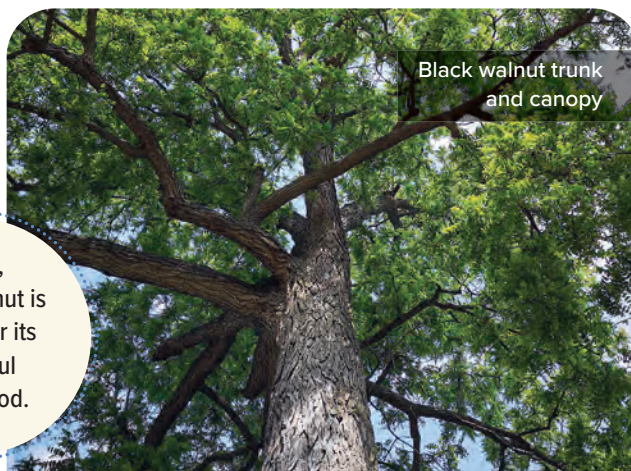
Black walnut is an eastern species, native from Massachusetts to the Florida panhandle, and west to South Dakota and east Texas. It prefers rich soil, moist uplands and floodplains, but also grows along fencerows and in old fields — and anywhere a squirrel has buried a nut. It can also be planted well outside its natural range.

Male flowers form in hanging catkins in late spring, with female flowers in small clusters at twig ends. Walnuts are wind pollinated, and if successfully fertilized, fruits mature by the fall. A newly formed walnut seed is enclosed within a hard, ridged shell, which itself is surrounded by a yellow-green husk. Walnut trees typically have both male and female flowers and can, therefore, self-pollinate. However, the resulting fruits may be relatively few or small. Better to plant two or more trees near each other to encourage cross pollination.

Walnuts are eaten by many birds and mammals, and the foliage is fed upon by more than 100 moth and butterfly larvae. Some Native Americans ate the nuts fresh, boiled, in soups and as flour, and they used the husks and roots to make dyes. After European settlement, the rot-resistant wood was used for fenceposts, shingles, railroad ties and mill waterwheels, and the fruits were, and still are, used to make dye for yarn and fabric. More recently, the ground shells have been used as an abrasive in the automotive and airline industries.

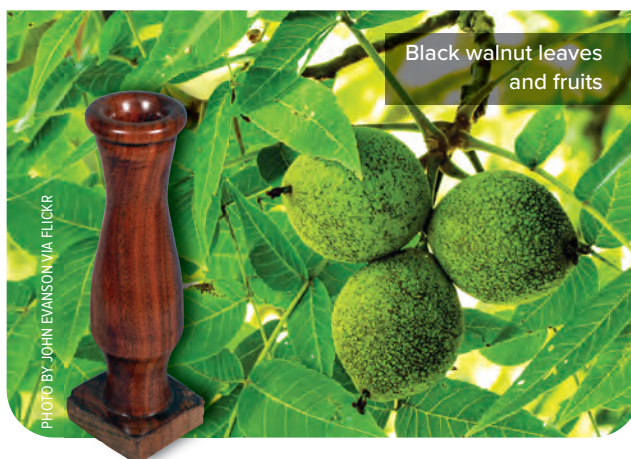
Today, above all else, black walnut is valued for its beautiful

Today, black walnut is valued for its beautiful heartwood.



Black walnut trunk and canopy

PHOTO BY KAREN HINE VIA FLICKR



Black walnut leaves and fruits

PHOTO BY JOHN EVANSON VIA FLICKR

PHOTO BY KATJA SCHULZ VIA FLICKR

heartwood, which is widely used in making fine furniture, cabinets, church altars, rifle stocks and more. Walnut wood is so valuable that landowners have sometimes planted trees as an investment for their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. On the other hand, having trees on your property doesn't guarantee financial success, as loggers may decline to maneuver large trees and logs around power lines, fences and buildings. Woodworkers may also worry that unseen embedded nails, bullets, pieces of metal fencing or hidden hammock anchors will damage their extremely expensive saws.

Walnut is relatively free of pests, but the spread of a fungal infection called thousand cankers disease in the western U.S. is causing concern.

Do you have black walnuts on your property? Perhaps you should do as in earlier times and host a fall "nutting party." Invite your friends and neighbors over to help shell the fruits, appreciate the rich, oily taste of the nuts, and prepare a few pounds of nuts for your winter cooking and baking. ●

*Steve Carroll is a botanist and ecologist who speaks and writes about trees, gardening and the world of plants. He is the co-author of "Ecology for Gardeners," published by Timber Press.*



# DRESSED TO Impress

PART 2

by Laura Emery, Staff Writer

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### ◀ UNLEASH THE FUN

Grant knows one must always look ready to have a good time.

PHOTO SUBMITTED BY ALETA SHELTON



### ◀ SUIT YOURSELF

Benji loves his fancy new tracksuit.

PHOTO SUBMITTED BY MARGIE RIDLEY

### BOW-WOW! ▶

Rosie Posey is positively pretty in pink. PHOTO SUBMITTED BY VERA GOOD



### DAPPER DOG ▲

Sir Winston is dressed to the nines. PHOTO SUBMITTED BY ELLEN PHAN



### ▲ ONE COOL CANINE

Forget wag, Brute has swag. PHOTO SUBMITTED BY BECKY LEWIS



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