

cooperative **REVIEW**

for members of Southern
Maryland Electric Cooperative



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Learn ways to save energy and money when doing your laundry on page 3.

SMECO holds Elementary School Knowledge Bowl

The 21st annual Elementary School Knowledge Bowl was held in January 2015.

The Knowledge Bowl was an annual competition for students in elementary schools throughout Southern Maryland that tested the students' knowledge of mathematics, history, grammar, current affairs, and other subjects.

The bowl featured an online quiz of general knowledge for teams of fourth- and fifth-graders. Nearly 200 students from 14 schools in Charles and St. Mary's counties competed in SMECO's 21st annual Knowledge Bowl.

Working in teams of six, competitors used school computers to access an online test created by volunteers from Charles County Public Schools to solve problems and answer questions. Teams were given 75 minutes to complete the 75-question quiz. At the end of the competition, SMECO posted the overall results on its website, including the results by county.

This ends an annual tradition that began in 1994 when SMECO

launched the Southern Maryland Elementary School Computer Bowl, in cooperation with the school systems in Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties. After years of declining participation, Knowledge Bowl sponsors decided that 2015's would be the last.

When we started the competition 21 years ago, computers were not as widely used in the schools as they are today. The event originally provided students with a unique opportunity to capitalize on their strengths and work in teams, to compete, to use computers, and to use the internet. We've all come a long way over the years, and students are using computers at home before they even start first grade. We're proud to have been able to provide the support and the enthusiasm for friendly competition among schools, and we hope that the students enjoyed the event and sharpened their skills.

SMECO will continue to sponsor school events such as MATHCOUNTS, the High School Computer Bowl, the Elementary Math Challenge, and the Outstanding Math and Science Teacher Awards.

Winners of the 2015 competition are listed below by team name and school.

Overall Winners

- First: Osprey 2015, Leonardtown Elementary School, St. Mary's County
- Second: Terrific Tigers, Dr. James Craik Elementary School, Charles County
- Third: Osprey 2014, Leonardtown Elementary School, St. Mary's County

Charles County Winners

- First: Terrific Tigers, Dr. James Craik Elementary
- Second: Mighty Mustangs, Malcolm Elementary
- Third: Proud Pride, Dr. James Craik Elementary

St. Mary's County Winners

- First: Osprey 2015, Leonardtown Elementary
- Second: Osprey 2014, Leonardtown Elementary
- Third: LMDent Dolphins 2, Lettie Marshall Dent Elementary

Save while doing laundry

Besides hanging clothes on a clothesline, what are some quick and easy ways to save energy and money while doing that necessary chore—your laundry? The easiest ways would be to use less water by only washing full loads, choose the right water level setting, and limit the use of extra rinse cycles. Reducing the water temperature setting is also an easy way to reduce costs. When you predominately wash with cold water, you can limit the amount of time you need to use warm water or hot water to when your clothes have oily stains. The most important thing to remember is to ensure you use detergent made for cold water.

Whether you have a gas or electric dryer, it is important to keep the lint screen clean. You can use your vacuum cleaner or purchase a lint brush to clean below the screen catcher, improving energy efficiency levels and reducing fire hazards. You can also use the brush to clean the dryer vent located outside of the house. Be sure the dryer duct stays fully connected and does not have any blockages. Leaky or blocked exhaust ducts will allow humid air to be released into your house, which can cause moisture problems.

If you have a washer or dryer more than ten years old, consider replacing it with an ENERGY STAR® certified model. They use less water and energy, which will save you money for years to come.

Here are some additional tips to help reduce usage.

- Treat stains as soon as possible to reduce the number of times you wash to get the stain out.
- Avoid using the dryer, if possible, by air-drying your clothes outside or on drying racks because the dryer is the biggest energy hog in the laundry room. Not a fan of stiff, line-dried clothes? Put the line-dried clothes in the dryer for 10 minutes to soften them up.
- Separate heavy loads, towels and jeans, from your light-weight clothes, which take less time to dry. You can also add a dry towel to the light load to reduce their dry-time even more.
- Use the moisture sensor so you do not over-dry your clothes. Use the cool-down cycle to allow your clothes to finish drying using the heat still in the dryer.

The 2015 MATHCOUNTS winners announced

The 21st annual regional MATHCOUNTS competition brought together more than 130 students from 19 schools throughout Southern Maryland to test their math skills at Calvert Middle School in Prince Frederick on Saturday, February 7.

MATHCOUNTS aims to boost student interest in mathematics by making the subject challenging and entertaining, so that students have a foundation for success in science, technology, and engineering. Each year, more than 500 regional competitions are held in middle schools across the country, with winners advancing to state competitions and then to the national competition.

During the three-hour event, there is a series of rounds featuring mathematics problems to challenge students one-on-one and as teams. In the individual competition, which is based on combined scores in the sprint and target rounds, **Michael Gill** from **Milton Somers Middle School** in Charles County placed first and **Nicholas Matthews** from **Northern Middle School** in Calvert County placed second.

In the team round, foursomes of students answer 10 questions in 20 minutes. The top 12 scorers finish the competition by facing each other in the countdown round, a single-elimination tournament in which students must respond verbally to questions in a matter of seconds. **Michael Gill** finished first in the countdown round and **Preston Southan** from **Northern Middle School** placed second.

Sponsors for the local MATHCOUNTS competition are SMECO and the Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's county public schools, with the support of the National Society of Professional Engineers. Members of the Kiwanis of Charles County and the Westlake Key Club, along with SMECO employees and their families, volunteered their time to score the tests.

Winners of the Southern Maryland competition will go on to compete in the statewide contest at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. State winners will progress to the national competition held in Boston, MA.



First-place team, Northern Middle School

From left are Justin Patin, Preston Southan, Nicholas Matthews, Devin Tran, and Coach Carole Butler.



Second-place team, Esperanza Middle School

From left are Coach Gabrielle Sivak, Conlan McConvey, Margaret Holmes, McKenna Randall, Emme Staats, and Coach Christopher Adams.



Third-place team, Milton Somers Middle School

From left are Michael Gill, Peyton Carney, Sydney Marohn-Johnson, Coach Jessica Stiver, Aashka Patel, and Coach Jennifer Rowland.

The 13th annual Gaff-n-Go Rodeo is right around the corner

The 13th annual Gaff-n-Go Rodeo will be held on March 28, 2015, at the Caroline County Agricultural Fairgrounds in Ruther Glen, Virginia. This event offers an opportunity to see SMECO linemen compete in events that test their agility, skill, and safe work practices—talents vital to the work they perform daily. This event is free to the public and provides an opportunity for members of the community to see just what it takes to be a utility lineman—skill, strength, and respect for electricity.

This will be the tenth year that SMECO linemen will compete in the Gaff-n-Go Rodeo. In 2014, the rodeo drew more than 120 participants from 19 electric utilities and contractors in seven states.

During last year's competition, SMECO linemen Scott Gagliardi, Bobby Hamilton, and Josh Reithmeyer won the top prize of Overall Journeyman Team, the C.T. Bryant Award. The team scored a total of 495.3 points with a combined time of 48 minutes, 14 seconds—17 seconds ahead of the second place team. The C.T. Bryant award, named after the original organizer of the Gaff-n-Go Rodeo, is presented to the team with the highest combination of points and times earned in the following five events: Hurt Man Rescue, Climbing Skills Demonstration, CPR with AED, 600-Amp Switch Change-out, and Cross Arm Change-out.

Competition between the different utility crews is fierce. Utility supervisors and previous rodeo contestants judge the events following very strict criteria based on correct work procedures and safety practices. The top three teams and top three apprentices receive paid entry to the International Lineman's Rodeo to be held October 17, 2015, in Bonner Springs, Kansas.

Join our linemen at the 13th Annual Gaff-n-Go Rodeo. If you would like more information on attending the Gaff-n-Go Rodeo, please visit gaff-n-go.com or call 804-968-4073.

Sign up for the SMECO 75 Bike Ride

Join us for the bike ride through Southern Maryland.

Date: June 6, 2015

Time: Registration opens at 7 a.m. for packet pick-up/
same-day registration
Early registration, June 5, from 4 to 6 p.m.

Place: 15035 Burnt Store Rd., Hughesville, MD

Cost: Register* by May 6: \$35
May 7–May 28: \$40
May 29–June 6: \$50

* Register by May 6 to guarantee receipt of a shirt.

www.smeco.coop/SMECO75

aroundTOWN

April 18

Cancer Crusade

Sponsor: The Sanford
Concert Series

7:30 to 9:30 p.m. St. Andrew's
Episcopal Church, Route 4 south,
California. Proceeds will benefit
local cancer groups. \$ Admission.
Seating is limited so reservations
are recommended.

301-863-2315
sanfordconcertseries.com

April 19

Earth Day Celebration 2015

Sponsor: Commissioners of
Leonardtown and The Leonardtown
Business Association

Noon to 4:30 p.m. Leonardtown
Square and Wharf Park. Learn
tips for gardening, conservation
of natural resources, recycling,
reducing energy use and healthy
living. Event also includes live music,
entertainment, arts and crafts, face
painting, live animals, and kayak and
canoe rides.

301-475-9791
leonardtown.somd.com

April 25

End Hunger Bike Ride

Sponsor: Chesapeake Church
7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Chesapeake

Church, 6201 Solomons Island
Road, Huntingtown, MD. Join us for
a day of biking along the western
shore of the Chesapeake Bay.
Pedal along the bay-front, marina,
farmland, and wineries while you
enjoy the company of friends who
share your passion for biking. This
is a fully supported event with routes
ranging from 16 miles to a metric
century. If you are new to cycling,
you can sign-up for our new rider
route and ride with a group and
ride leader. \$ Admission.

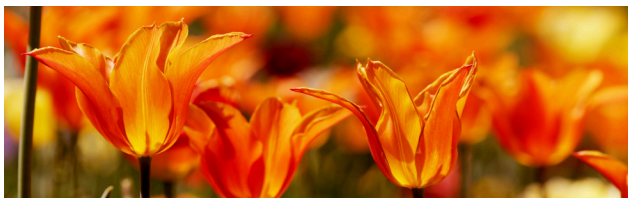
[endhungercalvert.org/events/
bike-ride/](http://endhungercalvert.org/events/bike-ride/)

Christmas in April— National Rebuilding Day

Sponsor: Christmas in April,
Charles County

8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Various locations
throughout Charles County.
Christmas in April is a one-day event
that will repair the homes of seniors
and low-income residents of the
county. Volunteers are welcome; no
special skills are needed. Volunteers
arrive at the home and work until
completed. Following your hard
work, join your fellow volunteers at
the Charles County Fairgrounds for
a picnic dinner.

301-392-0202
christmasinaprilcharlescounty.com



Have a plan for power outages

An outage is never convenient, but when it involves the elderly or those who rely on electrical health equipment, it's important to have a plan in place in case of an extended outage.

Outages lasting more than a few hours can happen after a major storm or weather event like we experienced after Hurricane Irene. With these storms, there is usually warning to prepare and ensure loved ones can safely weather a potential outage.

SMECO's restoration policy is to make repairs that will restore service to the most people in the least amount of time. Individual services cannot be restored until the power leading up to them is repaired.

- Transmission lines, which supply power to one or more substations, are the first priority. A transmission outage can affect more than 10,000 customer-members.
- Substations are repaired next and can serve as many as 5,000 customers.
- The co-op then fixes main distribution lines, which serve a group of customers from each substation.
- Now the tap lines, which serve smaller groups of customers from the distribution lines, can be fixed.
- Finally, individual services are restored.

SMECO works quickly and safely to restore power in the most efficient manner possible, but it is important to plan for a multi-day event just in case.

The elderly and individuals who rely on electric equipment for health reasons should make plans for alternate sources of power or lodging when a storm is expected. Know where the emergency shelters are located. SMECO has a special telephone number (1-866-524-9402) for emergency situations with up-to-date information on public shelters.