

April
AROUND TOWN CALENDAR

19

Good Friday
SMECO offices closed.

The Customer Care Center
is available 24/7.

1-888-440-3311
www.smeco.coop

28

The Black
Diamond
Disaster—The
Forgotten Tragedy
on the Potomac

2 to 3 p.m. St. Clement's
Island Museum
301-769-2222

Sponsor: St. Mary's County
Museum Division

smeco.coop/aroundtown

Have you signed up for the 2019 SMECO 75 Bike Ride?

Join your neighbors on June 1, 2019 for a ride through Southern Maryland to benefit the Spring Dell Center, Charles County; The Arc of Southern Maryland, Calvert County; and BAY Community Support Services, St. Mary's County.

- A 75-mile route for experienced riders and two shorter routes.
- Three rest stops, stocked with appropriate fuel for cyclists, an additional water stop, and lunch at the finish.
- Participating cyclists will also receive event-themed items.

See the SMECO 75 Bike Ride bill insert for more information.

Thank you for giving

SMECO introduced the Members Helping Members program in December 2010, and as of January 2019, more than 2,300 SMECO members have enrolled to contribute more than \$100,000 a year to help their neighbors who are struggling to pay their electric bills.

Members Helping Members is an easy and convenient way to give aid to those who need it. Members of the cooperative who enroll in the program are simply billed an additional \$1, \$5, or \$10 each month on their SMECO electric bill.

Each month, the accumulated donations are sent to the Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee, which will administer the funds to those members who seek aid and meet the qualifications. Only SMECO members who meet the eligibility requirements will receive assistance to pay their electric utility bill.

Members who are interested in enrolling in the program can call 1-888-440-3311, visit the website at smeco.coop/mhm, or sign up in person at one of the customer service counters at a SMECO location. Anyone who would like to make a larger donation may send a check to Members Helping Members at P.O. Box 1937, Hughesville, MD 20637.

"Despite relatively good economic conditions, we continue to see many hardship situations that demonstrate the critical importance of this fund," said Austin J. Slater, Jr., SMECO president and CEO. "SMECO remains dedicated to offering programs that help strengthen and sustain our community. Giving \$1, \$5, or \$10 a month to help a neighbor who is struggling is one thing many of us can do."

SMECO members who need assistance with paying their electric bill can contact the Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee for information on eligibility requirements and an application for assistance.

Other programs are also available to help eligible members with their electric bills.

Board election process begins

Nominating Committee appointed

- The Board of Directors appoints the 2019 Nominating Committee at their March meeting.
- The Nominating Committee will meet in May to select candidates for SMECO's five available Board positions.
- The meeting will be held at 15035 Burnt Store Road in Hughesville, Maryland.

Interested in running?

There are two ways for interested members to seek a spot on the ballot.

- Members can run as a nominated candidate by submitting their application to the committee by **Friday, May 10, 2019**. Applications may be mailed to SMECO, Attention: Joe Densford, Board Attorney, P.O. Box 1937, Hughesville, MD 20637 or delivered to Terrie Barringer at 15035 Burnt Store Road in Hughesville.
- Members can also run by submitting a petition signed by any group of 15 or more SMECO members no later than **Friday, May 31, 2019**.

All candidates, including those running by petition, **must complete a Board of Directors Candidate Application**. To obtain an application, contact Terrie Barringer at 240-528-9747 or terrie.barringer@smeco.coop.

Elections will be held to fill one position in Calvert/Anne Arundel counties, two positions in Charles County, one in St. Mary's County, and one in Prince George's County. All ballots will be mailed, and election results will be announced at SMECO's Annual Meeting on Thursday, August 29, 2019.

Selection of Nominating Committee members complies with SMECO's bylaws. For more information regarding the committee, nominations, and director qualifications, refer to Article IV, Sections 4.02 and 4.03. A copy of the bylaws may be obtained online at www.smeco.coop or from a SMECO office.



- 1 SMECO holds 25th annual MATHCOUNTS competition.
- 2 Stay safe around power lines—look up and call before you dig.
- 3 It's not too late to sign up for the SMECO 75 Bike Ride.
- 4 Contributions to the Members Helping Members program exceed \$100,000 a year.
- 5 Nominating Committee meets in May to select board candidates.

SMECO holds 25th annual MATHCOUNTS competition

The 25th annual regional MATHCOUNTS competition challenged more than 200 students from 21 schools throughout Southern Maryland to test their math skills at Calvert Middle School in Prince Frederick on Saturday, February 2, 2019.

A competitive technological world requires a proficiency in mathematics as a foundation for success in science, technology, and engineering. MATHCOUNTS aims to boost student interest in mathematics by making the subject challenging and entertaining. According to its website, MATHCOUNTS alumni are more likely to continue with science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), with 3 out of every 4 alumni studying a STEM field in college—nearly three times the national average. And MATHCOUNTS builds the critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary for success: 95% of teachers believe that MATHCOUNTS problems are effective at improving their students' problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

The local MATHCOUNTS competition features rounds of mathematics problems to challenge students one-on-one and as teams over the course of the three-hour event.

Individual competition

- The first part of the individual competition is a sprint round, which is a 30-question test that students complete individually.
- Competitors continue on to the target round. In the target round, they have four sets of math problems and six minutes to complete each set of two questions.
- **First place:**
Kyle Page, Northern Middle School, Calvert
- **Second place:**
Seth Hilton, Plum Point Middle School, Calvert

Team competition

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.

- **First place:**
Avery Thompson, Leonardtown Middle School, St. Mary's
- **Second place:**
Hogan Joo, Northern Middle School, Calvert



From left are Seth Hilton, Plum Point Middle School; Avery Thompson, Leonardtown Middle School; Hogan Joo, Northern Middle School; and Kyle Page, Northern Middle School.

Next step

There are 500 regional competitions across the country. Winners of the Southern Maryland chapter competition will go on to compete in the statewide contest at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. The top four individuals from each state competition receive an all-expenses-paid trip to the national competition in Orlando, FL, in May.

Support

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. Volunteers from SMECO helped score the tests.



First-place team, Northern Middle School

From left, coach Carole Butler, and team members Hogan Joo, Steven Vilcheck, Kyle Page, and Barbara Kaczmarek.



Second-place team, Plum Point Middle School

From left, team members Andrew Lamb, Tristen Millsaps, coach Jonathan Moreland, and team members Seth Hilton, and Aidan Moreland.



Third-place team, Leonardtown Middle School

From left, team members Mika Jones, Ben Dodge, Chloe Hair, and Avery Thompson, and coach Kathryn Smith.

Stay safe around power lines—look up

Spring is fast approaching and warmer weather means many people are heading outdoors for projects around the house and yard. Stay safe, and be aware of overhead power lines.

- 1 Never climb power poles, trees near power lines, or transmission towers.
- 2 If you are doing work close to power lines—such as trimming trees, working on your roof, or doing exterior renovations—keep yourself, your ladder, and anything you are handling a safe distance from the power line.
- 3 Keep equipment away from overhead lines when carrying ladders, pool skimmers, and pruning tools.
- 4 Contact SMECO to disconnect power if you are doing work that requires close contact with overhead lines attached to your home.
- 5 Please keep plants at least 10 feet away from the transformer. Avoid using ivy or other climbing plants that can overtake the equipment. Do not adjust the grade around the transformer.
- 6 Avoid planting trees near overhead power lines. Trees that will grow 20 to 50 feet tall should be planted at least 30 feet from overhead lines.

In addition to overhead lines, SMECO has many underground electric lines.

Call Miss Utility at 811 before you dig—every time you dig. This applies for every digging job, even small projects like planting a tree or shrub.

