



A REGULAR UPDATE FOR LEADERS, MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF  
THE VA-MD-DE ASSOCIATION OF ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

from Richard G. Johnstone, Jr.  
President & CEO

January 11, 2018

## Legislative Advocacy

### New Members, New & Smaller Offices, Recurring Themes Mark 2018 General Assembly

Following a **historic election**, the oldest, continuously meeting legislative body in the Western Hemisphere convened at 12 noon on **Wednesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>**, as the Virginia General Assembly began its **2018 session**.

Differing from recent history, the House of Delegates will see a Republican majority **drastically reduced** in size following a tidal-wave election this past November. There will be at least **50 Republicans and 49 Democrats**; Delegate David Yancey (R) potentially may not be seated following his recount, as the challenger, Shelly Simonds (D) has until January 16<sup>th</sup> to contest the final election results. His name was actually drawn out of a bowl to win the 94<sup>th</sup> district election, which **ended in a tie**.

Governor-Elect **Ralph Northam** will be sworn in on **Saturday, January 13**, along with Lt. Governor-Elect **Justin Fairfax** and Attorney General **Mark Herring**.

Over **1,000 bills** have been filed recently, with **thousands more on the way** in the next two weeks. Early on, **renewable energy** is a hot topic, as is **broadband deployment** and (once again) **pole attachment issues**.

With **nearly 20 new legislators**, we will rely heavily on a bolstered and updated grassroots system; and **YOU—our member-cooperative leaders—will as always be the key** to spreading the Electric Cooperative story throughout the hallowed halls of Mr. Jefferson's Capitol.

All of this action will take place in a **temporary work space**, as the permanent General Assembly Building (GAB) is **demolished and reconstructed**. The temporary GAB (the Pocahontas Building) is **smaller, with fewer public meeting spaces and cramped quarters**. This is something to note as your co-op plans for Legislative Day.

Expect **long lines** and **crowded hallways**. Make sure to make – and confirm – appointments **well ahead of time**, including letting the office know **how many people are in your group**. If you bring a large group, it may be prudent to **split into smaller groups** and thereby “divide and conquer.” We will send out more details on **room assignments and transportation** as we get closer to our **Electric Cooperative Legislative Day on Tuesday, Jan. 30**.

Your Governmental Affairs Department remains at your service to ensure your visit to Richmond is enjoyable and productive.

This is a “**long-session**,” meaning the session will last for **60 calendar days**, officially adjourning *Sine Die* on **Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup>**. Please reach out to **Andrew Vehorn** (757-647-0134), **Brian Mosier** (804-356-5688), or **Sam Brumberg** (804-380-2870) should you have any questions about legislation you see, hear about at the grocery store, or read about in the paper. **We are here to serve you!**

*-Report by Andrew Vehorn, VMD Association Director of Governmental Affairs.*

## Co-op Leaders Honored

### CVEC Dedicates Harlowe-Vest Community Room at New Palmyra Office

**Central Virginia Electric Cooperative** recently held an open house and dedication ceremony for the **Harlowe-Vest Community Room** in their new **Palmyra Division** office. The Cooperative invited members and community residents to join them for the dedication ceremony, during which **CVEC Board Chairman H.T. Brown, Jr.** dedicated the facility's large meeting room in honor of fellow board members **Roberta I. Harlowe** and **Gloria W. Vest**.

“Roberta and Gloria, both residents of Fluvanna County, were the first two female directors to serve on the CVEC board,” said H.T. “I can think of **no better way to recognize their many contributions over the years** than to name a room where people will gather as a community to share ideas and fellowship.”

CVEC’s Palmyra office is located on Salem Church Road just off Route 15 in Fluvanna County, Virginia. **The Cooperative will allow community groups from its East District**, which includes portions of Fluvanna, Louisa and Orange counties, **to use the room free of charge**, when available.



From left: Board Chairman H.T. Brown, Jr. and board members Gloria Vest, Roberta Harlowe and George Goin in the Harlowe-Vest Community Room.

*-Report by Melissa Gay, CVEC Communications & Public Relations Manager.*

## Magazine Matters

### New Cooperative Living Website Launched in Time for the New Year

The new year was ushered in with a brand-new look for *Cooperative Living’s* website, [www.co-opliving.com](http://www.co-opliving.com). Months of work by **Tommy Campbell, the Association’s design & E-media coordinator**, came to fruition with the **January launch** of the **mobile-friendly site**.

“We solicited proposals from **10 different website contractors** offering different levels of website development, ultimately selecting the company Websites for Anything,” explained Tommy. “By partnering with them, we were able to create a basic framework for us to construct the new site, plus affordable hosting and post-development support.”

The Association’s **Communications & Public Relations Committee** and department staff provided vital input during the development process, which resulted in an expanded **menu of choices** that allows users to submit photos for our Say Cheese section, submit letters to the editor, take part in the magazine’s contests, and more, in just a few clicks.

The new site also offers **community resources** and **content not available in the print version**, from videos related to feature stories to reader-submitted recipes and photos.

“We included **social media buttons** for Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram and YouTube, as well as **direct links to the Association’s 15 member cooperatives**,” added Tommy.

Visitors can not only browse current and past issues of the magazine, but also will see reminders of timely topics such as the Association’s scholarship program, annual Youth Art Contest, and more.

“We’re delighted to offer readers an inviting, easy-to-navigate way to enjoy the online version of our publication, whether they are at home or on-the-go,” said **Bill Sherrod, Association VP of Communications & Public Relations**.

If you haven’t “surfed” the *Cooperative Living* site recently, you’ll want to grab your computer “mouse” and check out the new look right away!

*-Report by Mary Howell, VMD Association PR Coordinator.*



## Co-op Training

### Mentoring & Coaching Will Be Focus of Association's 1<sup>st</sup> 2018 Class



#### Ask yourself:

- Who has made the biggest impact on your career? Was it a manager? A peer? A direct report? A member?
- Would you consider them a mentor? A coach?
- What did they do to make an impact?
- **Would you consider yourself a mentor? A coach? If not, why?**

Our first offering of the year will be the workshop, **"Mentoring & Coaching."** **ALL ARE WELCOME** to join us in Glen Allen on **Friday, January 19<sup>th</sup>**.

**Workshop Description:** *Although most of us see employee development as someone else's problem, **the fact is that most of us have to teach and/or train others to do various aspects of the job. The degree to which we succeed is based on our skills in mentoring and coaching others. In this workshop, we will learn to strengthen our coaching skills and habits, as well as recognize personality traits that impact development and communication effectiveness. (CE credit/PDH available)***

For details and to see additional leadership workshops, go to [www.VMDAEC.com](http://www.VMDAEC.com) and look for the [Contemporary Leadership & Management page](#) under Training & Events. The topics were chosen based on your feedback and the topics include project management, staff development, time management and crisis management, to name a few.

To see additional training opportunities including conferences, look under [Training & Events](#) and check out the [2018 Training & Events Calendar](#). Opportunities are still being added, so check back often!

"A mentor is someone who sees more talent and ability within you, than you see yourself, and helps bring it out of you."  
-Bob Proctor

If you do not see the topic or workshop that you need, then email me at [bburton@vmdaec.com](mailto:bburton@vmdaec.com). I would be glad to set it up for you, and don't forget, **I can bring the training to your cooperative!**

*-Report by Brandon Burton, VMD Association Director of Continuing Education.*

## Co-op People

### Patricia Hatcher Named REC Human Resources Director

**Patricia James Hatcher** was recently promoted to **Director of Human Resources** for **Rappahannock Electric Cooperative (REC)**. In her new role, Patricia has primary responsibility for directing the staff and in executing personnel policies and practices. She also will assist the manager of human resources and employee development in overseeing the day-to-day human resource operations.

Patricia previously served as a **human resources administrator and benefits specialist for REC**, among other roles. Before beginning her co-op career in 2005, she served as compensation and benefits administrator at the Virginia Housing Development Authority in Richmond.

Patricia earned a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from **Averett University**; a Master's in HR Management from **Capella University**; a professional in HR Certification from the **HR Certification Institute**; and, most recently, earned the title of Certified Professional from the **Society for Human Resource Management**.

A native and resident of **Caroline County**, Patricia is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and Second Mount Zion Baptist Church in Dawn.

*-Report by REC Communications Dept.*



**Patricia James Hatcher**

## **Help Us Keep You Informed!**



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

**Mary Howell** at [mhowell@vmdaec.com](mailto:mhowell@vmdaec.com) (804) 968-4070 or

**Phyllis Long** at [plong@vmdaec.com](mailto:plong@vmdaec.com) (804) 968-4077.

## **Want to Receive Your Issue of *Connections* a Day or Two Earlier?**



If you currently receive your copy of *Connections* via the USPS and have email availability at your home or office, please send us your email address and we'll add you to the large and growing circulation base for the electronic version of our *Connections* newsletter. By doing so, you'll help us save on printing and postage costs AND receive your copy on the day it's prepared!

Contact **Phyllis Long** at (804) 968-4077 or [plong@vmdaec.com](mailto:plong@vmdaec.com) and she'll add you to the electronic version mailing list.