

# The importance of radio to your electric cooperative

*Jim Kinghorn, Executive Vice President & General Manager*

When television became widely available in the 1950s, many people probably believed that the future of radio was short lived. While television has replaced radio as the principal home entertainment medium, radio still remains a vital communications service for many reasons. Not only is radio more portable than television, it can be used to communicate with less distraction than the visual function that television requires. In many cases the visual aspect of television enhances but is not necessary to communicate the information required. Radio also provides two-way communications with more efficient use of the frequency spectrum than television. Cellular telephone service is one form of two-way radio communications. But neither cellular telephone, nor television

is the focus of this article. The focus here is the use of radio in the operations of Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative and communications with Cooperative members.

## **CHEC Two-Way Radio Communications**

The Cooperative uses licensed two-way radios, in addition to cellular telephones, to communicate with employees away from the office. The two-way system used by the Cooperative is essentially one large party line that Cooperative vehicles use to communicate. When two employees communicate with each other, all other radios carry the conversation. This feature may seem to be a disadvantage, but actually is beneficial because when communications are occurring during line switching operations or restorations of service all field employees know what every other employee is doing, providing an extra margin of safety.

Because anyone with the proper radio receiver can listen to Cooperative two-way radio conversations, confidential member information is carried out over cellular telephones rather than over the two-way system.

Another possible advantage of the open communications of two-way radio is that cooperative members with appropriate receivers can listen during outages or switching operations to get information about progress.

Unfortunately, receivers are not readily available to tune to the frequency used by the Cooperative. Should you have a receiver that can tune to this fre-

quency, and would like to do so, it is 855.8875 MHz.

## **Amateur Radio Service**

Amateur radio is described as a non-commercial "hobby," but the service carries on many important functions. During emergencies, amateur radio operators or "hams" provide communications for public services when other communications fail. For many years Hatteras Island amateurs have maintained several radio repeaters on the island. Radio repeaters allow the use of relatively low power hand-held, two-way radios to communicate long distances reliably.

There are at least 65 licensed amateur radio operators on Hatteras Island. Of these, 14 are either CHEC employees or individuals directly related to the operations of the Cooperative.

CHEC uses amateur radio as a part of its emergency restoration plan in a couple of ways. First, should a disaster sever other communications with the mainland, the Cooperative can communicate using amateur radio with other electric cooperatives and material suppliers to get the necessary personnel, material and equipment on the way to assist in restoration of power. Additionally, should CHEC's normal two-way radio system experience a failure the amateur radio system can be used as a backup.

Amateur radio can also provide a means to communicate information with many Cooperative consumers. While the Federal Communications



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## Radio (continued from page 22...)

Commission requires that individuals be licensed to transmit messages using amateur radio, anyone can listen to amateur radio transmissions with an appropriate receiver. While most home and car radios are not designed to receive transmissions in the amateur frequencies, most commercially available scanners do. The Buxton amateur radio repeater transmits at a frequency of 145.150 MHz. CHEC has begun communicating emergency information by way of this repeater related to Cooperative operations.

Members wishing to pursue an amateur license so they can transmit and talk with other amateurs can contact the Cooperative for information at (252) 995-5165 or by email at [info@chec.coop](mailto:info@chec.coop).

# CHEC Board seats in Hatteras and Avon villages open for 2010 election

**Dan Gray Oden, Jr., currently holds the District 1-Hatteras seat.** Oden was appointed by the CHEC Board of



Dan Oden, Jr.

Directors to fill the vacant seat in November 2007. Since the appointment, he has participated in the required NRECA courses and earned the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) status.

Oden, a native of Hatteras Island and a 1992 graduate of Cape Hatteras School, is a 1997 graduate of Elon University where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in marketing. He has served as a Hatteras Village Volunteer Fireman since 2003. Oden began serving on the Hatteras Civic Board in 2006 and the Dare County Planning Board in 2007.

Oden is employed by Oden Bros., Inc., his family-owned business. His duties since 1997 include working at Oden's Dock Marina, the Breakwater Inn and Restaurant and Oden Oil Co..

Oden enjoys hunting and fishing when he isn't working or enjoying time with his family. He and his wife, April, have two daughters, Clara and Alice. They reside in Hatteras village. Oden is

## Broadcast Radio for Hatteras Island

In 2007, when the Cooperative was seeking ways to communicate with members during emergencies, broadcast FM radio was considered. While this investigation was underway the FCC announced that an application filing opportunity for non-commercial educational (NCE) radio station licenses would occur in October 2007. CHEC considered filing for a license directly, but it was soon realized that the operation of such a station for Hatteras Island would be larger in scope than just the needs of the Cooperative. As a result, a separate non-profit entity, Radio Hatteras, Inc., was formed to make application for the license.

seeking election to the CHEC Board of Directors seat for District 1-Hatteras.

**Norman (Norm) K. Campbell has been the CHEC director for District 4-Avon for eight continuous years and is seeking re-election in 2010.** K. Norman (Norm) Campbell and his wife Ginger have been residents of Avon since 1999. The Campbell's have two daughters and three grandchildren



Norman Campbell

who reside in Northern Virginia. Campbell is the Hatteras Island Manager of the East Carolina Bank, responsible for the Hatteras and Ocracoke markets.

Campbell earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Accounting from Virginia Commonwealth University. He has over 25 years of strong accounting and financial management experience. In the past, he has been involved with the Ruritans, Chamber of Commerce, United Way and the Red Cross.

In the community, Campbell is treasurer of the Kiwanis Club of Hatteras Island, serves on the Board of Directors of the Avon Property Owners Association, is a member of the OBX Chamber of Commerce, is active with

In December 2009, after more than two years, Radio Hatteras received the initial indication from the FCC that Radio Hatteras has been selected as the licensee. Another proposed station was in conflict with the Radio Hatteras application, but the RH application was determined to be the better application. The competing applicant has the opportunity to appeal the FCC's initial ruling and as of this writing, the time period for that appeal has not yet ended. Should the license be granted and the station built, it can provide a more complete communications to CHEC members and weekly visitors, as well as many other functions for the benefit of island residents.

the Buxton United Methodist Church and the United Methodist Men. He has served on the Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative Board of Directors continuously for eight years and currently holds the position of Secretary-Treasurer. In 2003, Campbell earned the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate (CCD) and in 2007 he earned the NRECA Board Leadership Certificate (BLC). He represents CHEC board seat District 4-Avon.



Published by:  
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# CHEC sponsors 2010 Touchstone Energy Sports Camps Scholarships Program

Students in grades 6, 7 and 8 are eligible to apply for the 2010 Kellie Harper and Roy Williams basketball camps.

The Kellie Harper basketball camp for girls will be held in Raleigh at North Carolina State University on June 20-23. The Roy Williams basketball camp for boys will be held on June 19-23 at the University of North Carolina on the Chapel Hill campus. Expenses for these camps will be paid by Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative for the students chosen to attend. Scholarship recipients must provide transportation to and from the camps.

CHEC will begin accepting applications on February 1, 2010. Each applicant will be judged on academics, extra-curricular activities and their accompa-

nying essay. CHEC will sponsor one qualifying female student athlete for the Kellie Harper basketball camp and one qualifying male student athlete for the Roy Williams basketball camp.

The Touchstone Energy Sports Camps scholarship winners will learn fundamental basketball skills while they are encouraged to set goals and establish new friendships. Participating North Carolina Touchstone Energy Cooperatives annually sponsor 27 scholarship recipients for each camp.

The deadline for students to apply to either camp is March 31, 2010.



Applications are available from Anne Swain, CHEC Marketing/Communications Specialist, by emailing [annes@chec.coop](mailto:annes@chec.coop) or calling (252) 995-7083.

For more information on the Touchstone Energy Sports Camps program, please visit [www.ncelectriccooperatives.com](http://www.ncelectriccooperatives.com).

## CHEC wins tax lawsuit

*CHEC members should be aware that the Cooperative won its lawsuit concerning taxes imposed on the Cooperative by the N.C. Department of Revenue. The following news release was provided to local media on December 3, 2009:*

The Dare County Superior Court has ruled in favor of Cape Hatteras Electric Membership Corporation, now operating as Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative, in a complaint filed by the Cooperative in November 2000 concerning sales and franchise taxes the NC Department of Revenue collected beginning in 2000 and 2001. The Cooperative has paid the taxes under protest since 2000.

The Court found that the cooperative and its members did not owe the

taxes and has ordered the Department to make a refund of over \$3.6 million in sales taxes and nearly \$3.7 million in franchise taxes along with accrued interest.

The Cooperative is discontinuing collection of sales tax for electric billings effective immediately. When a refund of the taxes is received by the Cooperative from the Department of Revenue, a refund of the sales tax collected previously will be made to Cooperative members.

*Since the news release, it has been learned that the NC Department of Revenue is appealing the Court's decision. Please check the Cooperative's website for updates on the case.*

## CHEC updates Web site

On January 4, 2010, Cape Hatteras Electric made major revisions to its Web site. The new site uses the same internet address, [www.CHEC.coop](http://www.CHEC.coop), but has an all new look. The site features new photos and a cleaner look. Navigation through the pages follows more closely typical modern layouts.

Members can still use the website to pay online as before. The website is also structured to make updates of news concerning the Cooperative more quickly available on the site. News headlines now appear on the home page, with links to the full article.

## 2009 Operation Santa Claus Update

Contributors to the 2009 Operation Santa Claus program provided another phenomenal success for this year's holiday season. Bicycles, dolls, games, toys, clothing and money were donated and distributed to designated Hatteras Island families through the local churches and Dare County Social Services. CHEC expresses sincere appreciation to all who participated.

## Speakers Available

CHEC welcomes the opportunity to provide speakers for Hatteras Island organizations. Programs can be presented on a variety of subjects including:

- Saving Energy at Your Home and Business
- What is "Cap and Trade" All About?
- The Electric Cooperative Business Model
- High Voltage Electrical Safety for Emergency Responders
- Green Energy and the Electric Utility
- How Electricity Gets to You
- Emergency Generators
- Your Questions - Cooperative Answers
- Cooperative Community Services

For programs on these or other topics, contact CHEC at (252) 995-5616 or [info@chec.coop](mailto:info@chec.coop).