

Michigan COUNTRY LINES



10 Jewel of West Michigan *Shelby Gem Factory*

Don't Miss The
Annual Meeting
On June 16!

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MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Controlling Costs

For several months, I have talked about cost increases and the various reasons behind them.

Our last general rate increase was two years ago. Now, we are faced with another small general increase, but the timing is such that it will be in combination with a large wholesale power increase.

At the annual meeting on June 16, I will once again review all the reasons behind these increases and lay out specific numbers. Today, while we continue to hone the final numbers, I would like to answer the question: "What the heck has Cherryland been doing to control costs?"

An obvious place to look is the work force. Labor and overhead is a huge expense at a utility like ours. In 2006, we had 62 employees (full- and part-time). Today, we are serving almost 34,000 meters with only 50 employees. When we look at national co-op rankings for meters served per employee, Cherryland has finished either #1 or #2 in this industry measure of efficiency. Every employee has a little more on his/her plate and I am proud to say they are handling it well. I estimate the savings in employee reductions to be well over \$500,000 per year.

What about employee medical insurance that has been such a hot topic in the news across the country recently? Well, your board addressed the issue of retiree medical coverage more than five years ago when it wasn't so "cool" or "trendy" to do so. It made simple financial sense to begin to eliminate a benefit that is costly and not available to the average member.

In 2010, we began to address medical insurance coverage to current employees. Non-union employees were moved to a high deductible health savings account, making Cherryland one of the first cooperatives in Michigan to do so.

Faced with a pending increase of

\$153,000, we ended up achieving annual savings of more than \$230,000. When the union contract expires in September 2011,

we will attempt to bring the rest of the employee group under a similar plan for even more savings to the membership.

With a state mandate for renewable energy, Wolverine Power Cooperative (our supplier) has slowly been adding wind and hydro resources to its portfolio at affordable rates. While one major utility is charging its customers

\$2.50 per month to meet the mandate, Cherryland's power supplier has thus far been able to move towards its 10 percent goal without asking for any additional contributions from our members. This has saved the entire membership almost \$1 million per year over the last two years.

All the utilities in Michigan also have a mandate to conserve energy. As I have reported previously, Cherryland has met



Tony Anderson
General Manager

Last year, Cherryland returned \$1.5 million to its members.

its requirements without using down-state contractors and without charging the maximum allowed by the state.

While other utilities have an average monthly charge over \$1.50, we have been averaging only 50 cents per member, per month. This is saving our members another \$400,000 per year.

Finally, there is the fundamental basis for being a cooperative: capital credits. Last year, Cherryland returned \$1.5 million to its members. This means the average residential member received a check or bill credit for approximately \$27 to help offset their energy costs.

Yes, rates are still going up. Do I like it? NO. Do I believe the board, management and employees are doing all that we can? YES, the savings I listed above comes to \$2.1 million. Can we do more? We will certainly try.

Cherryland Annual Meeting is June 16



Batter up!



It's time for Cherryland Electric Cooperative's 73rd annual meeting.

The popular event at Wuerfel Park, home of the Traverse City Beach Bums minor league baseball team, attracts nearly 2,000 Cherryland members every year. This year's meeting is Thursday, June 16.

"Since Wuerfel Park is a Cherryland member, it's a win-win situation for everyone," says Cherryland general manager, Tony Anderson. "Ever since we moved our annual meeting to Wuerfel Park in 2008, our crowds have shot up from 350 to nearly 2,000. That tells us our members really enjoy coming to this venue to combine learning more about Cherryland and attending a baseball game."

The gates will open at 3 p.m. and the business meeting will start at 4 p.m. The Traverse City Beach Bums will host Joliet at 7:05 p.m. in a Frontier League game. In the time between the business meeting ending and the game starting, fans can enjoy their free ballpark dinner—a hot dog, chips

and soft drink—while watching batting practice and enjoying the atmosphere around the park.

Beach Bums general manager, Jeremy Crum, notes there are several new family entertainment offerings at the park this summer—including a pitching machine that measures how hard a ball is thrown.

The gates to the ballpark will open at 3 p.m. for Cherryland members. If the past three years are an indication, most members will have voted for the board of directors by mail. If they haven't, they can when they enter the park. As they pass through the line to the park, members will receive up to four tickets to the game and for the ballpark dinner.

Two members of the Cherryland board are running unopposed this year—Leelanau County director Tom Van Pelt and at-large director Rick Deneweth.

The business meeting will feature updates by general manager Tony Anderson, board president Tom Van Pelt, and Wolverine Power Cooperative CEO Eric Baker.

Save Energy By Figuring Your 'Degree Days'

Is it warmer or colder this month than last year at the same time?

Many of us ask this very question throughout the different seasons. At Cherryland Electric Cooperative, we have been tracking this monthly data for years. This data is known as "degree days" and it relates to both heating and cooling energy demands.

Heating engineers, who wanted a way to relate each day's temperatures to the demand for energy to heat or cool your home or building, developed the concept of heating and cooling degree days.

The degree days are actually calculated for us and are obtained at the website of the National Weather Service (NWS), Climate Prediction Center. This website tracks degree days for 200 cities across the United States on a weekly and monthly basis. To access this website, go first to cherrylandelectric.com and click on the "Energy Optimization" link.

The heating degree days computation is based on the assumption that a home or building does not require any heat if the outside temperature averages 65 degrees during a 24-hour period.

To calculate the heating degree days for a particular day, find the average temperature by adding the day's high and low temperature and dividing by two. If the number is above 65, there are no heating degrees for that day.

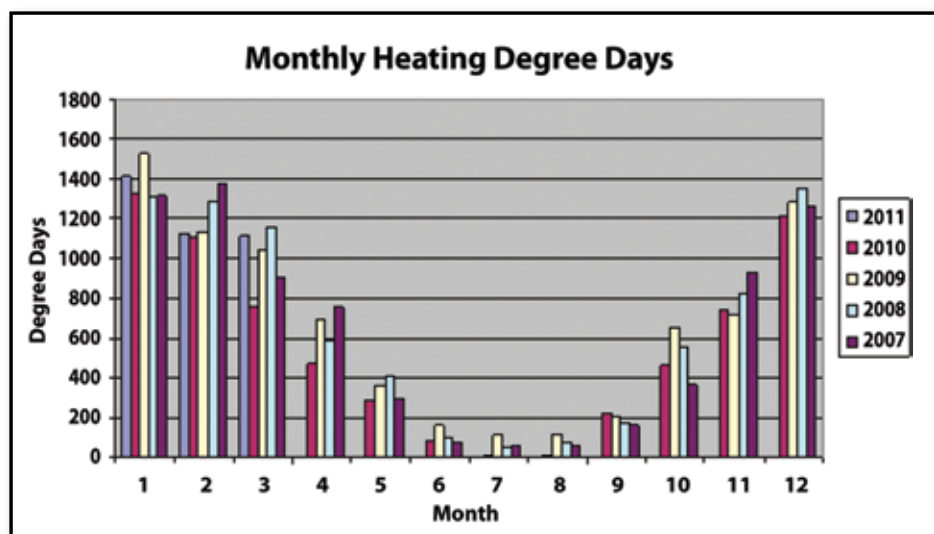
If the number is less than 65, subtract that number from 65 to find the number of heating degree days. The higher the degree day number, the more energy required to heat your home or building.

For example, if the day's high temperature is 60 and the low is 40, the average temperature is 50 degrees, and 65 minus 50 equals 15 heating degree days. Fifteen is the number of degrees needed that day to get up to the comfortable 65 degrees.

Cooling degree days are also based on the day's average, minus 65. They relate the day's temperature to the energy demands of air conditioning. For example, if the day's high is 90 and the day's low is 70, the day's average is 80 (80 minus 65

reference your energy bills for that same time frame to see the impact on your energy costs.

So, now you know if we are having a warmer or colder month compared to last year, or the last five years, and how it may



equals 15 cooling degree days).

Degree day figures can be used to relate how much you spend on heating or air conditioning in any given year. You can also use past degree day records to see if the money you spent on insulation or a new furnace or air conditioner is paying off.

To do this, you would also need records from the past year's energy use. You can access your 12-month usage history on our website in the "account access" tab, or on the back of your monthly statement.

The Climate Prediction Center also allows you to view other cities (last three weeks and three months of data) and their degree days to understand why a home in southern Michigan may have lower energy costs as compared to a home in the Traverse City area.

By tracking this data yourself, you can

relate to your heating and cooling costs.

The higher the degree day number, the more energy demand to heat or cool your home or building and potentially, a higher monthly energy bill. The graph above shows you the monthly comparison for the past five years.

*Tammy Squires is
Cherryland Electric
Cooperative's
energy use advisor.*





Cherry Bay Orchards, Shoreline Fruit Donate \$1,000



Tony Anderson, Cherryland's general manager, ran the Boston Marathon in April and posted a personal best in completing the world's most famous marathon in 3:58.09.

Anderson has run a marathon in 18 different states and in doing so has raised over \$20,000 for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Michigan. Among his most recent donations was \$1,000 from Cherry Bay Orchards

◀ Andrew Gregory (right) presents a check to Cherryland GM Tony Anderson while Tom Berg looks on.

and Shoreline Fruit, LLC, processors and marketers of premium dried cherries and other dried fruits. They made the donation after seeing a story about Anderson's efforts.

Member Input Session in June

The next Cherryland Electric quarterly member input session is planned for June.

Co-op members can address the board at 9 a.m. on Monday, June 27, at the start of the meeting, and are asked to keep comments to less than 5 minutes.

The next quarterly meeting for members to address the board is scheduled for Sept. 19.

Hammond Wins \$4,000 CEC Scholarship

Ashleigh Hammond, a senior at Traverse City West, has won Cherryland's \$4,000 high school scholarship.

Hammond was selected over a field of 123 applicants representing 18 schools. She is an 'A' student who has overcome dyslexia and taken part in many extracurricular activities and stays active as a volunteer. She plans on attending Northwestern Michigan College in the fall.

James Kelderhouse of Traverse City won the \$500 Cherryland Adult Scholarship. He was among 12 applicants.



Two Selected for D.C. Youth Tour

Alyssa Zuiderveen of Grand Traverse Academy and Grace Wiesner of Traverse City West have been selected to attend the National Rural Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., for an all-expense-paid trip with other co-op teens from around the state and nation this month.

Alyssa is a junior and Grace a sophomore. They were selected after attending Michigan Electric Cooperative Teen Days in late April, along with three other Cherryland members—Lauren Sieloff of Traverse City West, Brandon Acre of St. Francis, and Jacob Russell of Traverse City Central.

Amanda Olds, a member service supervisor at Cherryland, and Aaron Heming, a Cherryland lineworker, attended as chaperones for the event. (See more about Teen Days on page 6.)



Back row from left: Brandon Acre, Jacob Russell, Lauren Sieloff; front: Aaron Heming, Grace Wiesner, Alyssa Zuiderveen and Amanda Olds.



Cherryland lineman Andy Bott (R) is congratulated by safety consultant Joe McElroy after Andy won second place in the apprentice division at the Overhead Line-school Rodeo sponsored by the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association.

Vozza Family Members Win Home Show Drawing

Angela and Michelle Vozza won a Cherryland Electric Cooperative backpack filled with items at the Traverse City Homebuilders Show. The annual event draws thousands of visitors to Traverse City East Junior High School, a Cherryland member.

Included in the gift bag that the Vozza family won were a beach towel, umbrella and several other items that can be used throughout the year.

Was It Really 50 Years Ago?

It was 50 years ago this month—on June 27, 1961—that I saw the most beautiful sight in the world.

It was located in the heart of Detroit, at the corner of Michigan and Trumbull.

That was the first time I stepped into Tiger Stadium. It was the first time I had seen such green grass, such perfect white chalk lines, and so many people gathered in one place.

Remember, this was 1961 and very few people had color TVs. We watched baseball in black-and-white. I had no idea about the rich tapestry of color that I would walk into that day.

So, I was blindsided by the beauty. As we came through the small, dark tunnel leading to our seating section, I started to spot the color. When it unfolded in front of me, like a large picture, I stopped and just stood there with my mouth wide open.

“C’mon kid, ya gotta keep moving,” said the usher in back of me. My mom quickly grabbed my 7-year-old hand and brought me in close as we walked toward our seats.

As luck would have it, my first Detroit Tigers game turned out to be historic. It was a two-night doubleheader against the Chicago White Sox, and since the Tigers were having their best season since 1945—when they won the World Series—the team was drawing big crowds.

On this night, more than 56,000 people showed up, one of the biggest crowds in Tigers history. We were jammed into our seats. But it didn’t seem to matter once the first pitch was thrown.

The Tigers were the talk of Detroit. They were in first place in the American League, ahead of the hated New York Yankees. On June 11, 16 days before I came to my first game, Norm Cash had become the first Tiger to hit a ball out of Tiger Stadium. He didn’t that night, but I couldn’t keep my eyes off him or his teammates Al Kaline and Rocky Colavito.

I still have the scorecard from that doubleheader. It wasn’t pretty. Despite winning 101 games that year, the Tigers lost

both games that night—11-1 and 6-5. The White Sox used the hitting of future Hall of Fame players Luis Aparicio and Nellie Fox to beat the Tigers twice.

Back then, a 7-year-old lives and dies on how the Tigers do and on the way home that night I was on the verge of tears after two losses.

“Just remember,” said my uncle on the drive back to his place in Royal Oak, “the White Sox played in the World Series two years ago.

They are still a darn good team.”

Except he didn’t say darn. By swearing, he broke the ice and my brother, my cousins and I started to laugh.

That day turned out to be life-changing for me. That was the day baseball became an obsession in my life. I remember following the 1961 Tigers closely the rest of the season.

Cash hit .361, won the batting title and drove in 132 runs. Colavito slugged 45 homers and knocked in 140 runs and Kaline played a beautiful right field and hit .324.

The truth is, I came from a basketball family. But on June 27, 1961, I became hooked on baseball for life. I was lucky enough to have dinner with Kaline several times during my time as a daily sports editor. That summer of 1961 I started to collect baseball cards and I’ve never stopped.

One of the most treasured parts of my collection is my tribute to the 1961 season. From that year, I own a Detroit Tigers yearbook and media guide, along with a press pass to that season formerly owned by the great Jerry Green of the *Detroit News*, whom I later got to know.

Since 1963, I’ve played a table game called Strat-O-Matic baseball and one of the seasons I re-play many times during the year is 1961. It’s like jumping in a time machine.

So that night 50 years ago is forever etched in my mind. It wasn’t a better time, it was just a simpler time. And the older I get, the more I enjoy the simple pleasures of life. Like family. Like friends. Like baseball.



Nick Edson

“The truth is, I came from a basketball family. But on June 27, 1961, I became hooked on baseball for life.”

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32,000 clients we serve each year.

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have food tonight.

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Help a kid.

MARATHON 4 KIDS

Please help us with our new 2011 initiative:

300 x \$300 x 300

The goal is to have 300 individuals raise \$300 to serve the 300 kids in the program in our eight-county region by the end of 2011. You can walk around your block, run a 5k or run a marathon. Pick the event or activity of your choice and make a big difference in the life of a child.

Go to marathon4kids.com and click the **"JOIN THE TEAM"** button. You will be able to set up an electronic system for collecting donations. The system allows you to send emails to friends and family and it will track the funds you collect. And, 100 percent of the money goes directly to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Michigan.

WHAT IS IT? Marathon 4 Kids is a fundraiser developed by Cherryland General Manager Tony Anderson to raise money for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Michigan.

HOW DOES IT WORK? Tony's goal is to complete 50 marathons, one in each state. So far, he has run marathons in 16 states.

WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO? 100 percent of the money goes towards serving kids in northwest Michigan through Big Brothers Big Sisters.

MORE INFORMATION? Contact Tony at 231-486-9214 or marathon4kids@gmail.com, or visit marathon4kids.com.

