

# Michigan COUNTRY LINES



## Shaggy's Company Skis to Success

**4** District Elections Proposed

**8** Helping Wildlife

**9** Cutting Outages

1.



### ABANDONS ALL-OF-THE ABOVE

The Administration is reversing course: ditching our **All-of-the-Above** energy strategy for an **All-But-One** approach that bans new coal plants.

2.



### TECHNOLOGY GAMBLE

New regulations essentially require technology that's **not commercially viable and prohibitively expensive**—leading to higher bills down the line.

# TOP 4 FACTS

ABOUT THE EPA'S NEW CLIMATE REGULATIONS

3.



### LIMITS ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, DOMESTIC ENERGY

By banning new coal plants, Americans forfeit a **236-year domestic source of energy** with a historically stable price.

4.



### HISTORY REPEATS: ALL-BUT-ONE DOESN'T WORK

A 1978 mandate prevented use of natural gas & forced utilities into coal or nuclear—**before common sense prevailed and it was repealed 9 years later.**

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**ACTION NETWORK**

Visit **ACTION.COOP** today to send a message to the EPA

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Michigan Electric  
Cooperative  
Association

# Michigan

## COUNTRY LINES

### IN THIS ISSUE

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#### ON THE COVER

John (L-R), Shari and Jeff Thompson have made over 1,000 pairs of skis at their family shop, Shaggy's Copper Country Skis, in Boyne City. Featured are their "Brockway" model, and the best-selling "Tubby" (red) all-mountain ski. They have also started making skateboards, and are members of Great Lakes Energy Cooperative.

Photo - Roger Boettcher, Leavenworth Photographics



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## YOUR CO-OP

# Please Support District Elections

In February, Great Lakes Energy (GLE) members will be asked to approve amendments to our cooperative's bylaws that will allow the board of directors to be elected by district.

Having served nearly 28 years on the board, I have learned there's no organization I'd rather represent than one that is locally owned, operated and governed. Doing business today often means working with people you never get a chance to meet. That may be okay, but I'd rather know the people who are there to serve me. We are the largest electric co-op in the state, but still have local offices staffed by employees who deliver the personal service and value you expect.

That friendly "small business" connection should apply to Great Lakes Energy directors, too. Currently, directors are elected at-large, which means the nearest director could live several hundred miles away. The only connection you may have to a director may be a name, email address and phone number that appears in every issue of *Michigan Country Lines*.

In order to change this, your help is needed. When you receive the February issue of *Country Lines*, there will be a cover wrap containing a mail-in ballot

for voting on the proposed bylaw amendments. Please carefully read the proposed bylaws changes that will appear in that same issue before casting your vote.

Your "yes" vote would allow us to establish nine geographic districts, with each district represented by one director who lives within it. Each director would be elected by GLE members within their district. Those who wish to run for the board would still need to submit nominating petitions containing valid signatures from at least 50 GLE members. However, the signatures would have to come from members who reside in the same district as the candidate.

Another change is that the three-year terms of the nine-member board would be equally staggered, with three director seats (each from a separate district) open each year.

If approved, the first district elections would start this year. By the end of the 2016 election, all nine directors would have been elected by district.

I feel our large service territory should be equally represented by those you elect locally to govern Great Lakes Energy. With your support, we can make that happen.



Richard Walsworth  
Board Chairman

### Correction

In the December 2013 PowerTalk billing insert, we reported that a meeting would be held in March 2014 at which voting would be held for the proposed amendments to the co-op's

bylaws. There will be no meeting. All voting will be done by mail-in ballot. See related details above and on page 5. We apologize for any confusion.

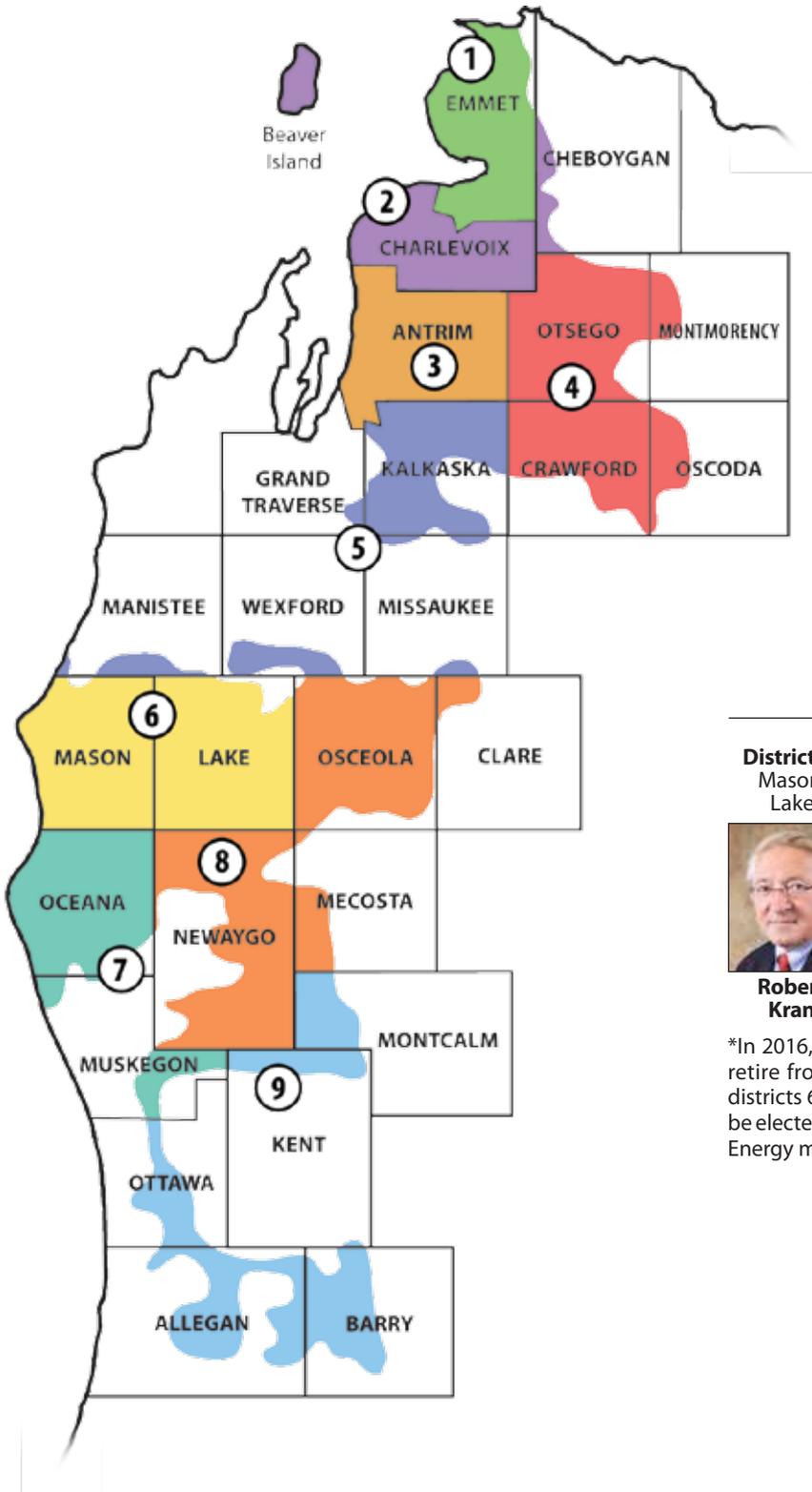
## Who Are Your Electric Co-op's Directors?

Your directors are Great Lakes Energy members just like you. Director Larry Monshor of Gaylord was recently honored at the American Red Cross in Petoskey with a commemorative pin for donating 10 gallons of blood. Monshor has served on the Great Lakes Energy board for nearly seven years, and finds time to give back to his community by donating blood outside of his work as an educator and trained engineer and CPA. Great Lakes directors live, work and give back in your community, and that's the cooperative difference.



The American Red Cross recently honored Great Lakes Energy board member Larry Monshor for donating 10 gallons of blood.

# Proposed Election Districts for Great Lakes Energy Directors



**District 1**  
Emmet



**Paul Schemanski**

**District 2**  
Charlevoix,  
Cheboygan



**Mark Carson**

**District 3**  
Antrim



**Richard Evans**

**District 4**  
Otsego,  
Montmorency,  
Oscoda,  
Crawford



**Larry Monshor**

**District 5**  
Grand  
Traverse,  
Kalkaska,  
Manistee,  
Missaukee,  
Wexford



**Dale Farrier**

**District 6\***  
Mason,  
Lake



**Robert Kran**

**District 6\***  
Mason,  
Lake



**Robert Thurow**

**District 7\***  
Oceana,  
Muskegon



**Paul Byl**

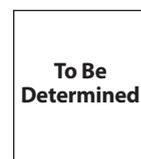
**District 7\***  
Oceana,  
Muskegon



**Richard Walsworth**

\*In 2016, directors Robert Thurow and Richard Walsworth will retire from the board, which will leave one director each in districts 6 and 7. Also, new directors for districts 8 and 9 would be elected in 2016 if bylaw changes are approved by Great Lakes Energy members.

**District 8**  
Osceola,  
Clare,  
Newaygo,  
Mecosta



**To Be Determined**

**District 9**  
Ottawa, Kent,  
Montcalm,  
Allegan,  
Barry



**To Be Determined**

**Vote for your cooperative's bylaw changes next month!  
A ballot will be included with the February issue of  
*Michigan Country Lines* magazine.**



# Cooking For One

Cooking for one? These single-serving recipes will help you save time and energy, are easy to prepare, and sized perfectly for just you!

## Burrata Caprese with Balsamic Glaze

- 1 small loaf of french bread, cut into 1-inch slices, toasted
- 7-8 grape tomatoes, cut in half
- 3-4 large basil leaves
- 1 container burrata (mozzarella filled with cream) or mozzarella cheese

### Balsamic glaze:

- 1½ c. balsamic vinegar
- ½ t. honey

On a plate, arrange bread, tomatoes, basil, and burrata. For glaze, bring balsamic vinegar to a boil in a small saucepan. Reduce to a simmer, and cook until thick and syrupy. Remove from heat and stir in honey. Let cool completely before serving (it will thicken as it sets). You can also use store-bought balsamic glaze which is much easier. On each piece of

bread, spread the burrata. Add the balsamic glaze, a piece of basil, and top with 2 tomato halves. This is a quick, healthy meal that is perfect for one person. No cooking required.

Christin McKamey

## Grilled Chicken Nachos

- 1 oz. baked tortilla chips
- ¼ c. drained, low sodium black beans, heated
- 4 oz. grilled lean boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into small cubes
- 2 T. salsa con queso
- 3 T. chopped tomato
- 2 T. thinly sliced jalapeño pepper

Lay chips on plate. Top them evenly with the beans followed by the grilled chicken. Drizzle the salsa evenly over the top. Top with the tomato and jalapeño slices and serve. Serves 1.

Lorraine Green, South Boardman

## Apple Crisp for One

- 1 T. quick cooking oats
- 1 T. brown sugar
- ½ T. flour
- dash of cinnamon
- dash of nutmeg
- dash of salt
- ½ T. margarine
- 1 c. sliced, peeled apples

Combine oats, brown sugar, flour, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt. Cut in margarine with fork until crumbly. Set aside. Place apples in small microwave-safe dish. Top with oat mixture. Microwave on full power, uncovered, 2-4 minutes or until apples are tender, rotating dish once. Serve with frozen yogurt or ice cream, if desired.

Barb Spencer, Petoskey

## Curried Chickpea Stew

- 1 t. olive oil
- 1 c. onion, diced
- 1½ c. carrots, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, finely dice
- 1½ -2 T. curry (depending on taste)
- 1 14.5-oz. can diced tomatoes
- 1 16-oz. can chickpeas
- 1½ c. water
- 1 cube chicken or vegetable bouillon
- 1 whole chicken breast cut into ½-inch pieces
- 1 T. butter
- 1 t. sugar

In a 4½-quart stock pot, add ½ c. water, carrots and onions. Simmer until carrots are tender. Add more water if needed, remove carrots and onions. Add olive oil and curry, and heat for 30 seconds or until bubbles appear. Add garlic, remaining water, tomatoes (juice and all), drained chickpeas, chicken



and bouillon cube. Stir until bouillon cube is dissolved. Simmer until chickpeas are tender. Add more water, if needed. Stir vigorously to thicken. Remove from heat, add sugar and butter, stir to dissolve sugar. Garnish with Greek yogurt (optional). This is a delicious, one-pot meal.

Jeff Ullen, Bellaire

Photography by: 831 Creative

## Recipe Contest Winner!



Chris McAfee

Congratulations to Chris McAfee of Pointe Aux Pins on Bois Blanc Island. Her name was drawn from all readers whose recipes we printed in 2013 and *Country Lines* magazine will pay her

January electric bill as a prize.

Chris and her family have been members of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op since the co-op brought electricity to the Island in 1964. She loves her piece of paradise with lots of wonderful people, miles of ATV trails, beautiful woods, and the surrounding crystal-clear water of Lake Huron.

**Submit your recipe!** Thanks to all who send in recipes! Please send in your favorite "Easter" recipes by **Jan. 10** and "Hawaiian Luau" recipes by **March 10**.

Mail (handwritten or typed on one side, please) to: Country Lines Recipes, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, MI 48864; or email [recipes@countrylines.com](mailto:recipes@countrylines.com).

Contributors whose recipes we print in 2014 will be entered in a drawing and *Country Lines* will pay the winner's January 2015 electric bill (up to \$200)!



Visit recipe editor Christin McKamey's website, [veggiechick.com](http://veggiechick.com), for healthy, vegetarian recipes and info!

# HYDROPOWER

## TIME-TESTED RENEWABLE ENERGY

This is fifth in a series on how electricity is generated. The first (January) was about coal, the second about new nuclear options (June), the third about wind (July-August), and the fourth about natural gas (October). Watch future issues for stories about other fuel sources.

**E**nergy from flowing water has been harnessed and used for over 2,000 years, beginning with the ancient Greeks using water wheels to grind wheat. In the 1880s, converting a rush of water into electricity became a reality in the United States.

Today, hydropower provides about 80,000 megawatts (MW) of capacity in the United States—enough to power over 25 million average homes—and accounts for about 75 percent of all renewable electricity used by co-ops.

But how does it work? Simply, hydropower converts the natural energy of moving water to mechanical energy, using a turbine that is attached to a generator. With these highly efficient turbine-generators doing the job formerly performed by water wheels, electricity flows in a number of ways:

**Impoundment:** When most people think of hydropower, dams come to mind. By plugging a river and amassing water in a reservoir, its flow (and the resulting electricity) can be better controlled and generated as needed.

**Diversion:** Water is channeled away from a river, typically near natural falls, down to generators at the falls' base. This can be done without any visible impact to a river's natural course. In fact, this kind of generation was used to bring electricity to Buffalo NY, from Niagara Falls in the late 1800s.

**Pumped storage:** This method essentially uses off-peak electricity to make electricity for use during times of high consumption. Two reservoirs are filled, one typically uphill from the other, with an electric pump/

generator in between. At night, when demand is low and electricity less expensive, water from the lower reservoir is pumped uphill. During the day, when demand for power increases, that water is released down through the generator to make electricity.

Over 600 electric co-ops across the country buy power from 134 federally-owned and operated dams, most of which were built between the late 1930s and early '60s. Despite the incredible importance of these resources, maintenance has lagged in recent years and created room for improvement.

Electric co-ops are making efforts to address this problem, advocating that the government set aside funds to repair and maintain the dams and turbines. Researchers are also looking to create more efficient and fish-friendly ways to generate hydropower. Careful studies of aquatic environments have given dam operators a better idea of how to simulate a natural river downstream.

A 2012 report from the U.S. Depart-

ment of Energy (DOE) revealed many of the nation's dams hold untapped power. Roughly 2,500 provide conventional and pumped-storage hydropower in the United States. But the vast majority of dams—some 80,000, ranging from 4 to 770-foot-high—are non-powered. The DOE analyzed 54,391 of them.

Locks and dams on the Ohio, Mississippi, Alabama and Arkansas rivers—facilities owned and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers—offer the most untapped potential. The top 10 sites alone could provide about 3,000 MW.

“Many of these dams could be converted to generate electricity with minimal impact to critical species, habitats, parks or wilderness areas,” the DOE report states.

Co-ops' efforts in pushing for increased maintenance and technology development will ensure that hydropower remains a reliable, affordable, renewable resource for decades to come.



Cloverland Electric Cooperative's hydroelectric plant in Sault Ste. Marie generates between 25 and 30 megawatts of electricity. Clean, renewable hydro makes up nearly 35 percent of the co-op's fuel mix. To see a recent chart showing what your electric co-op's fuel mix is, visit [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) and click on the co-op name and then click the Sept. 2013 issue.

Photo Courtesy - Cloverland Electric Co-op

## Helping Wildlife

**G**reat Lakes Energy vegetation management staff have planted crabapple seedlings in a state game area in Kent County that will one day provide food for wildlife.

As part of an Energy For Wildlife project, 100 Roselow Sargent crabapples were planted last fall along a Great Lakes Energy power line right-of-way (ROW). The seedlings will grow into short, fruit-bearing shrubs that will not pose a threat to overhead power lines. They were placed along the ROW edges so they are away from the path of crews who may need to work on the lines.

“We also worked with the state Department of Natural Resources and placed posts that will help control vehicular trespassing in the game area,” explains Joe Van Dyke, the GLE project leader.

Seedlings were purchased from Cold Stream Farm LLC, a GLE member near Free Soil.

The vegetation management department does an Energy for Wildlife project every year. The first one, in 2008, involved a similar planting of wildlife food by Boyne City High School students along a ROW in Charlevoix County.

The Energy for Wildlife program is run by the National Wild Turkey Federation, which works with utilities to improve power line rights-of-way for wildlife habitat. It also encourages hands-on learning activities for youth in land and wildlife management

practices so they develop a better understanding and appreciation of their natural resources.

Earlier projects that also involved student participation include tree plantings at schools in Boyne Falls, Pellston and Shelby. In 2011, the co-op’s vegetation management staff planted clover along a right-of-way, creating another food source for wildlife within the Barry State Game Area.

Assisting with this year’s planting project were workers with Trees, Inc., Great Lakes Energy’s ROW tree-clearing contractor.



Great Lakes Energy’s Kevin Lockman prepares to plant a crabapple seedling along the edge of a power line right-of-way that passes through a state game area in Kent County. These plantings will one day provide food for area wildlife.

## Annual Tree Re-Clearing

Contracted tree-trimming crews will begin removing trees and limbs near power lines throughout the Great Lakes Energy service area this winter.

The work is part of the cooperative's annual vegetation management program to improve electric service reliability and safety. About \$4.4 million will be invested in 2014 to re-clear trees along 1,506 miles of power line rights-of-way (ROW) in 15 counties and 77 townships.

Great Lakes Energy members will be notified by post card and phone if ROW re-clearing work is scheduled near them. Please be sure we have your current billing address and primary phone number for your service location. This will help ensure we are able to reach you.

Tree-related power line damage is a major cause of outages for your cooperative. Re-clearing of the co-op's entire power line distribution system is done on approximately six to seven year cycles.



Contracted tree-trimming crews plan to remove trees and limbs this year along over 1,500 miles of Great Lakes Energy power line rights-of-way.

The amount of trimming to maintain adequate power line clearance depends on the tree type, location and growth, and line voltage size. In addition to weak and dying trees, healthy trees may need to be trimmed or removed if they pose a threat to your electric service.

Please see the list on this page of areas where contracted crews will work this year. Questions about ROW re-clearing should be directed to our vegetation management department at 888-485-2537, ext. 8221 (central and south counties), or ext. 1295 (north counties).

## Areas Scheduled for Re-clearing

Re-clearing of vegetation along Great Lakes Energy power lines is scheduled this year in the following counties and townships:

**Allegan:** Allegan, Gunplain, Heath, Martin, Monterey, Otsego, Overisel, Salem, Valley, Watson

**Antrim:** Banks, Echo, Jordan, Star, Warner

**Barry:** Orangeville

**Charlevoix:** Bay, Boyne Valley, Chandler, Charlevoix, Eveline, Hayes, Hudson, Marion, Melrose, South Arm, Wilson

**Emmet:** Resort

**Grand Traverse:** Fife Lake, Union

**Kalkaska:** Boardman, Springfield

**Lake:** Cherry Valley, Pinora, Newkirk, Yates

**Mason:** Amber, Branch, Custer, Eden, Logan, Pere Marquette, Riverton, Summit

**Mecosta:** Aetna

**Montcalm:** Reynolds

**Newaygo:** Ashland, Barton, Big Prairie, Croton, Everett, Garfield, Goodwell, Home, Monroe, Sheridan, Wilcox

**Oceana:** Benona, Crystal, Ferry, Golden, Hart, Newfield, Shelby

**Osceola:** Hartwick, Highland, Marion, Middle Branch, Osceola, Rose Lake, Sylvan

**Otsego:** Bagley, Corwith, Dover, Elmira, Hayes, Livingston



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# Shaggy's Company Skis to Success

Like most kids, Jeff and Jonathon Thompson loved taking things apart and putting them back together, never thinking that their inquisitiveness might lead to a new family business.

They were teenagers when they first built a surfboard with the help of their dad, John. That winter, Jeff wanted to build a "ski bike" by cutting apart an old pair of Dynastar skis to attach to a bike frame. Noticing how

they were built in layers, the boys decided to build a pair of skis, too.

That was 2005, and that first pair of skis was not a successful start.

"We built them in a barn that was about 40 degrees, and discovered that it needs to be warmer for skis to cure in a press. My brother brought them to the U.P. for a race that winter right after they were made, and they de-laminated before we got them on

the slopes," laughs Jeff

Previously, the family had a successful construction business, building as many as 300 homes in some years before the economic downturn. "We had vacationed in the Boyne City area for years, and as the ski business started picking up and the building business slowing down, we decided to make the move from South Lyon, where we had lived for years," John adds. ●●●●●●●●●●



John (L) and Jeff Thompson, of Shaggy's Copper Country Skis, prepare materials that will be pressed into skis, including an ash wood core, Durasurf 4001 base, triaxial fiber glass, damping rubber strips, steel edges, ABS sidewalls, Durasurf tip/tail spacer, and a graphic topsheet.



If you want to demo a pair of Shaggy's skis, the Thompsons and their reps will be visiting Michigan ski areas this winter (check the schedule at [sccskis.com](http://sccskis.com) or call 231-459-4323), or stop by their Boyne City shop.



After stone grinding, Shari Thompson applies hot wax to a new pair of skis. The Thompsons are members of Great Lakes Energy Cooperative.

Carving a turn on a Shaggy's dropdeck longboard.



Fast forward to 2013, and you find what started as a hobby is now a full-time business called Shaggy's Copper Country Skis.

"This year we will probably make around 200 pairs of skis," John notes proudly. "We've produced over 1,000 skis since that first mistake."

The Shaggy's company is staffed by Jeff, John and wife Shari, who does the bookkeeping, ordering materials and sales. Brother Jonathon has moved to Colorado in another line of business. John and Shari have been married for nearly 35 years.

"One of the reasons we chose to move up here, in addition to having wonderful testing facilities in nearby Boyne Mountain and Nubs Nob, is that the heart of our ski – ash and beech wood – is milled just down the road at Metalski Lumber," John explains.

Each ski takes eight to 10 hours to construct and fine-tune before it's ready to sell. The company offers 10 different pairs of skis, ranging from \$595 to around \$795.

Jeff, 23, recently graduated from Michigan Tech with a mechanical engineering degree and is applying that knowledge of how a ski performs physically and geometrically to making a top ski for Midwestern and Michigan users. "Our all-mountain ski has a tighter turning radius that works well on our conditions, but it's a great ski for the mountains, too," he says. "The Tubby, one of our best-selling skis, floats well in powder and softer spring snow conditions but provides a good ride on hardpack, as well."

The Shaggy's Copper Country Skis name was Jeff's idea. Their great uncle, Shaggy Lehto, was a blacksmith who lived in the Keweenaw Peninsula and had a hobby building hand-carved skis. "He made a pair for dad's mom that's a family heirloom, and I thought, 'what a great name for the company,'" Jeff recalls. "It's uniquely Michigan."



Besides skis, Shaggy's has started making longboards (skateboards). Here, Jeff Thompson mills out the shape of a longboard deck.

# Energy-saving Resolutions for 2014

A new year is an opportunity to assess different aspects of your life and determine how you can make positive changes. Unfortunately, resolutions can be tough to keep. So, why not try a new one this year that's easy and painless? Saving energy is simple and rewarding—and, any amount you save counts. Here are four simple tips from Great Lakes Energy's Energy Optimization program to help you save energy—now and throughout the year.

## 1. Set, program, relax: Use a programmable thermostat.

A programmable thermostat automatically controls your home's indoor temperature based on your schedule. In the winter, it is not necessary to keep an optimal heating temperature on weekdays when you're away or at work. Just input the time you typically leave and return, set the temperatures accordingly, and your home will be nice and cozy by the time you arrive, saving you energy and money.

### Results:

Save up to 10 percent on your heating and cooling costs per year.

**EO rebate:** \$20 (any model).

## 2. Open up and let the light in.

Window treatments are an unexpected energy saver. In colder months, keep your blinds open during the day. This allows sunlight to enter your home and warm things up. After the sun sets, close your drapes to keep out the cold and hold onto some of the warmth generated during the day.

### Results:

Energy savings will gradually add up over time. Most importantly, your home will feel more comfortable.

## 3. Same features, less energy: Switch to energy-efficient products.

Shop the ENERGY STAR® label for guaranteed product performance and quality. ENERGY STAR products—from refrigerators to TVs and lightbulbs—are backed with third-party testing, have the same features as standard models, and use significantly less energy.

### Results:

Expected energy savings range from 15 to 75 percent per year.

## Energy Optimization rebates:

\$10-\$50—choose from over 20 high-performing energy-saving products. See [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org) for details.

## 4. Dive in: Easy water-saving options.

Whenever you use water, you also use energy to pump and heat the water. Making energy-saving adjustments can be simple: 1) Turn your water heater down to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. 2) Install water-saving retrofit devices, such as faucet aerators and low-flow showerheads. For recommended models that don't sacrifice water pressure, visit [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org).

### Results:

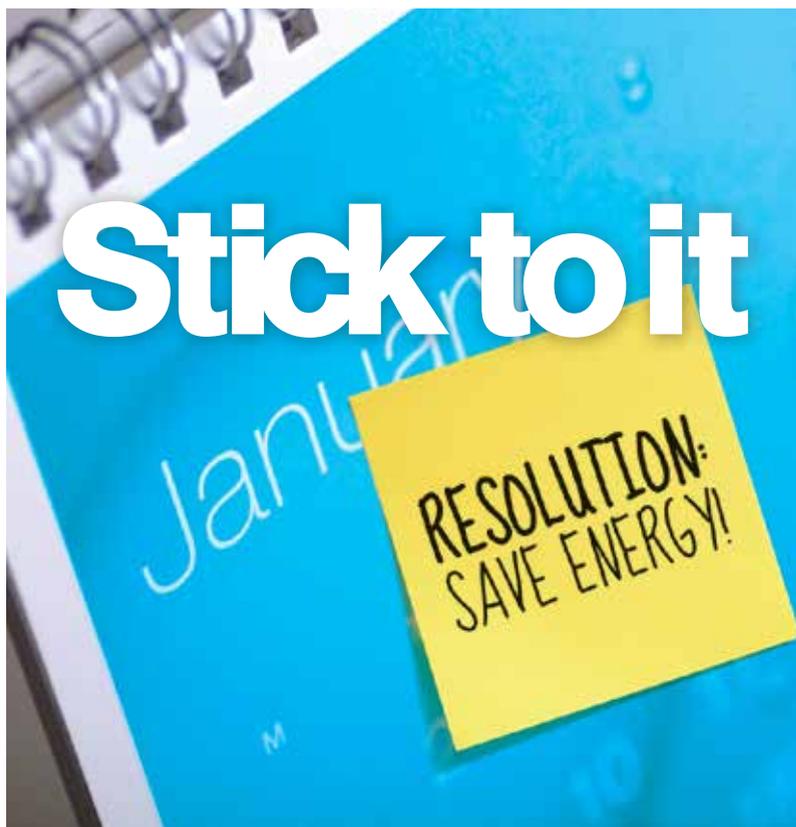
Save energy, and thousands of gallons of water.

## Energy Optimization rebates:

\$10 per low-flow faucet aerator.

## Got the energy-saving bug?

View more energy-saving opportunities and current rebate offers at [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org) or call 877.296.4319 for details.



## Resolve to save energy in 2014

Want a New Year's resolution that's fast and easy? Save more energy at home and at work. Why?

**It's painless, doesn't involve exercise, and still makes you feel good!** With the help of the Energy Optimization program, it's easy to kick-start savings with rebates for energy-efficient lighting, appliances, furnaces, thermostats, and more.

### ENERGY TIP: Take advantage of the sun's heat.

**Even in the winter, opening your drapes during the day can allow enough radiant heat into your home to allow you to lower your thermostat settings.**

ONLINE: [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org) PHONE: 877.296.4319



Energy Optimization programs and incentives are applicable to Michigan service locations only. Other restrictions may apply. For a complete list of participating utilities, visit [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org).

## Cash Back for Online Shoppers

Shoppers can earn cash back on their online purchases from over 5,000 merchants by taking advantage of a service offered to Great Lakes Energy members through the Co-op Connections© program.



### Cash Back Mall

With Cash Back Mall, it literally does pay to purchase online from your favorite participating merchants such as Bass Pro Shops, Macy's, Target, Walmart and many more.

At Cash Back Mall, you can:

- Shop directly from popular search engines like Yahoo, Google, and Bing;
- Shop without needing to log-in;
- Earn more cash back on thousands more products and services;
- Access 20,000 discounts every day, in addition to earning cash back.

There is no limit to the "cash back" you can earn. A free shopping assistant tool bar keeps track of the cash back you earn. As you make online purchases from participating merchants, watch the money in your account pile up. This service is only available for online purchases from participating retailers.

Start shopping now by visiting [connections.coop](http://connections.coop) and clicking on "Cash Back Mall." Check out the other Co-op Connections programs, too, that offer discounts on prescriptions, health services, and more.

## New Features for Managing Your Electric Account Online

- Graphs
- Usage History
- E-Billing, and more

Recent improvements in accessing your Great Lakes Energy account online will benefit over 34,000 GLE members who use this service.

You can benefit, too, by creating your own GLE online account.

The enhancements offer members new features, including graphs that show monthly total and daily average kilowatt-hour (kWh) usage and cost, as well as payment history. The usage history graph allows you to click on any month and see the daily breakdown for that month. It should be easier to find information and also gives members a way to download usage history to their computer.

You can also access your GLE account with mobile devices, such as an iPad.

We have retained popular features such as e-billing for those who wish to receive an electronic

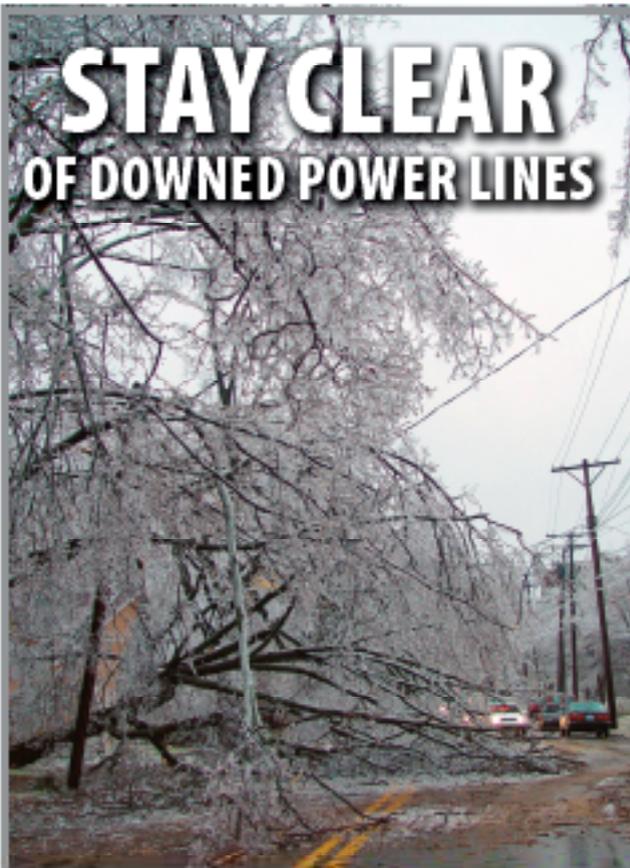
billing statement rather than a paper copy and online payments with a check or credit card without a service fee. We also offer other convenient payment options, such as automatic bill payment that eliminates the need to write and mail checks.

Online account access is particularly handy for those who are frequently away from their GLE home. By regularly checking your account, you will know whether power is being used in your home (and shouldn't be) or is not being used (and should be).

You can also find current news about GLE programs and services, outage information, and a bill calculator.

To open an online account, visit [gtlakes.com](http://gtlakes.com), click on "Account Log-in" at the top and click again on "Sign Up." Please have your account number handy.

## STAY CLEAR OF DOWNED POWER LINES



- ▼ **Assume all power lines are energized and dangerous.** Even downed lines that seem "dead" can be re-energized at any time during power restoration efforts or improper use of generators. Lines do not have to be sparking to be live!
- ▼ **Any utility wire, including sagging or downed telephone or cable lines could be in contact with an energized power line, making them very dangerous, too.**
- ▼ **Never touch a downed line—or a person or object that is touching it!** A downed line can cause things around it to become energized, traveling through the ground to chain link fences or other objects.
- ▼ **If someone is injured from electrical contact, do not try to assist. You could be injured or killed, too. Call 911.**
- ▼ **If it rains on your vehicle, do not drive away or get out. Stay inside until utility workers say it's okay. Warn others to stay away. If you must leave the vehicle—only in the case of fire—jump free without touching the ground and auto at the same time, keeping both feet together, and hop to safety. A live wire touching the ground causes electricity to fan out, and walking or running allows one foot to move from one voltage zone to another. Your body then becomes the electricity's path, and electrocution results.**
- ▼ **Never drive over a downed line, it could cause poles or other equipment to come crashing down.**
- ▼ **Call 911 immediately to report a downed power line. Then call your electric co-op or the local utility.**

Visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org) for other electrical safety tips.

# Embrace Change

Last summer, a dog walked into the Bay Pines Veterinary Clinic, near Harbor Springs. He must have been amazed when the staff knew him by name. "Are you Bandit?" they asked. "THE Bandit?" His Australian Shepherd tailless butt wagged with delight as he hobbled to meet their outstretched hands.

How did they know Bandit? It turns out that everyone in the clinic reads *Michigan Country Lines* and remembered him from a column I wrote over two years ago. That's the kind of community this magazine was meant to build when it began 33 years ago.

Then, every town of decent size had a printer who crafted posters, flyers, school programs, and the weekly newspaper (a local Facebook, Twitter and Craigslist rolled



Sadly, Bandit has been diagnosed with bone cancer, so this will be his last winter.

business because they couldn't adapt to the changes computers have brought to printing and publishing.

But, *Country Lines* is adapting and changing in ways that will pave the way for greater integration between print, online and social

into one). I wrote for those printers, before I became *Country Lines*' first editor.

Many of those printers, including the one in which *Country Lines* was born, no longer exist.

They went out of

media communications. These changes embrace all the ways we communicate today, and will help *Country Lines* build a stronger co-op community.

I'm proud to have been part of this magazine, and I loved working on it. It was never a job. We won a few awards along the way, and it became one of the best-read of similar publications across the country. Thank you for reading it and letting me know what you thought.

Even though this is my last *Country Lines* column, I intend to keep writing, but where I will publish is uncertain. Send me an email at [mike.f.buda@gmail.com](mailto:mike.f.buda@gmail.com) or "friend" me on Facebook if you want to know where to find my ramblings



Mike Buda is the creator and editor emeritus of *Michigan Country Lines*.



## Michigan Heritage Quilt Finds a Permanent Home

Created from 36 winning squares in a *Country Lines* quilt contest held in 2002, the Michigan Heritage Quilt depicts personal memories, traditions and images from across our beautiful state, and the Eastern Upper Peninsula History Consortium has become its permanent home.

The Consortium represents 22 E.U.P. museums, and while the Pickford Area Historical Museum will be the quilt's official caretaker, it will rotate for display among all member museums.

Many thanks to readers who sent in their ideas on where the quilt should live. For more information on the quilt or the E.U.P. Consortium, contact the Pickford Area Historical Society, 175 E. Main St., P.O. Box 572, Pickford, MI 49774, or call 906-647-1372.

Pictured above with the quilt are (L-R) Mary June, Consortium treasurer; Dianne Schmitigal, Pickford Area Historical Society president; and Susan James, vice president of the Chippewa County Historical Society.



### ◀ DO YOU KNOW WHERE THIS IS?

Every co-op member who identifies the correct location of the photo at left by **Feb. 10** will be entered in a drawing for a \$50 credit for electricity from their electric cooperative.

**We do not accept Mystery Photo guesses by phone!** Email [mysteryphoto@countrylines.com](mailto:mysteryphoto@countrylines.com); enter your guess at [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com); or send by mail to *Country Lines Mystery Photo*, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, 48864. Include your name, address, phone number and name of

your co-op. Only those sending complete information will be entered in the drawing. The winner will be announced in the March 2014 issue.

The Nov./Dec. 2013 contest winner is Bill Pioszak of St. Johns, who correctly identified the photo as the Cairn Monument on Cairn Hwy, north of Kewadin, marking the 45th parallel.



Nov/Dec photo

## LETTERS

### Raw Egg Recipes

I have been meaning to write and tell you that pasteurized raw eggs can be found in grocery dairy and egg sections. These are safer for recipes calling for raw eggs. Maybe you can pass that along to the lady who wrote about them in the July/Aug. 2013 issue.

I also want to comment on the diabetic recipes (Oct.). Thinking regarding diabetics and sugar has greatly changed. They are no longer limited to sugar-free substitutes for their sweetening choices. The focus is now on balancing diet with assorted proteins, fats and carbs, eating smaller portions throughout the day, and counting carbs.

As a nurse, I try to pass along information people can use. The danger of sugar substitutes is they can make diabetics think such foods are good for them or don't need to be limited or counted. Managing diabetes is a lifelong, critical process that's so much more than removing sugar from the diet.

— Laura Tomell, Tecumseh  
Midwest Energy

### Mystery Photo

The Nov-Dec mystery photo (at left) was built as a WPA project. It has a representative stone from each of Michigan's counties.

My sister-in-law's father (a stone mason in Traverse City) helped build it, so I make sure whenever any of his great-grandchildren are here that they stop to see it.

— Peg Gage, Free Soil  
Great Lakes Energy

If the only thing bigger than your propane bill is your propane tank...



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