

# MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

A man with dark hair and a bright smile is leaning on a rustic wooden fence. He is wearing a vibrant green button-down shirt. On the left chest of his shirt, there is a small logo that reads "BARNWELL LANDSCAPE & GARDEN SERVICES Mackinac Island". The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with green foliage and a wooden building.

Jack Barnwell Is  
**Mackinac's  
Master  
Gardener**

## Plus!

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# WATERFURNACE KNOWS THAT TRAINING MATTERS

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**Casey Clark**

Editor  
**Gail Knudtson**

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## ON THE COVER\*

Jack Barnwell and his crew are responsible for creating many of Mackinac Island's wonderful gardens and landscaping layouts. And, it's accomplished without motorized vehicles.

Photo—Ian Smithers

\*Some co-op editions have a different cover.



Michigan's Electric  
 Cooperatives  
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## PRESQUE ISLE ELECTRIC & GAS CO-OP

19831 M-68 Hwy., P.O. Box 308  
Onaway, 49765

Business Office & Billing: 989-733-8515

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Gas emergency toll-free: 800-655-8565

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1117 E. Heythaler Hwy.  
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1849 W. 638 Hwy.  
Rogers City, MI 49779

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### Raymond Wozniak – 989-766-2498

6737 State St.  
Posen, MI 49776

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[bburns@pieg.com](mailto:bburns@pieg.com)

Most PIE&G natural gas rates and charges are not regulated by the Michigan Public Service Commission.

# EPA's Climate Regulations Impede Economic Growth



**Jo Ann Emerson**  
CEO, National Rural  
Electric Cooperative  
Association

**A**round the country, families, communities, employers and businesses view their energy bills as “costs of life” and “simply doing business.” They turn off lights, turn down thermostats, and adopt energy efficient practices because it saves them money that is better put toward groceries, medications, retirement, and reinvestments in the economy.

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) new regulations to curb carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from power plants only stand to increase those energy bills. Even though not-for-profit

electric cooperatives work each day to provide affordable, reliable electricity to the more than 42 million Americans we serve, the latest red tape out of Washington could present a serious challenge.

Let's be clear—even the most aggressive and economically damaging regulations in the U.S. would have little impact on a global scale. Electric co-ops already have reduced emissions rates from power plants by 10 percent and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions specifically over the last seven years. Any additional CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reductions we achieve would be offset rapidly by emissions increases in China, India and other developing economies.

In fact, the European experience suggests that these regulations could undermine the administration's environmental goals.

For example, in the last decade residential electricity prices in Germany have doubled to almost 40 cents per kilowatt-hour, more than three times the U.S. average rate of 12.5 cents. This was primarily due to preferential pricing for wind and solar power, combined with public opposition to nuclear energy. To help maintain reliability, the country plans to construct 10 new coal plants in the next two years.

The EPA's proposed regulations could put us in a similar situation, dramatically increasing prices and disproportionately affecting those regions of the U.S. most dependent on coal for electricity. These areas also happen to host some of the largest manufacturing centers in the country, where low-cost electricity is critical to global competitiveness.

We cannot afford regulations that threaten to increase energy prices, destroy jobs or hamstring our economic recovery.

Leadership in a sustainable energy future requires us to make ambitious changes together—without leaving consumers in the dark. Even though a power plant that closes down cannot emit CO<sub>2</sub>, it also cannot incubate a new technology, give a bright young engineer an opportunity in the energy industry, or ensure that its community continues to receive reliable electricity regardless of what Mother Nature throws in the way.

To keep the power on in our communities and empower our consumers, it's time to turn the lights on in Washington and recognize the real potential impact of these regulations. Visit [action.coop](http://action.coop) today to express your opinion if you agree that we need a common sense approach to energy solutions. ■

# PIE&G Communities First Fund Awards \$15,500 in Scholarships

**P**resque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op members continue to assist area community organizations and individuals through the voluntary round up of their electric and natural gas billings. Member contributions to the Communities First Fund provide funds for grants and scholarships for use in their local communities that are within the PIE&G service area.

At their recent meeting, the PIE&G Communities First Fund Board of Directors awarded 15 scholarships of \$1,000 each to the following 2014 high school graduates:

## Alpena

Matthew Belanger  
Ryan Day  
Tanner Goebel  
Cade MacArthur

## Hillman

Alyssa Ableidinger  
Brice Kenyon

## Johannesburg-Lewiston

Shannon Kievit  
McKenzie Matthewson

## Onaway

Mariah Ehrke  
Sara Fullerton  
Emily Glass

## Rogers City

Ashley Hilla  
Rebecca Myers  
Margaret Spens

## Utica

Andrew Dillon

The A. Barkley Travis Memorial Scholarship, valued at \$500, was awarded to Joseph Torres of Almont. ■

## Your Board in Action

**At their April and May 2014 regular meetings, the PIE&G Board of Directors:**

- Revised the discount rate for special capital credit retirements.
- Authorized 2014 capital credit retirements in the amount of \$827,000.
- Directed management to initiate the process to amend electric aid-to-construction fee schedules that target a cost recovery of 40 percent from line extension requests of 1,000 feet or less.
- Reviewed the 2014 Financial Forecast as presented by CFO Sobeck.
- Accepted executive team reports from managers Szymoniak and Kieliszewski, CFO Sobeck, and CEO Burns. ■



Besides providing student scholarships, the PIE&G Communities First Fund helps community nonprofit groups, such as the Presque Isle County Council on Aging (PICCOA). The Council, which provides meals to senior citizens in need, was recently approved for a grant to help with the purchase of an industrial meat slicer for their Posen location (shown in photo by assistant cook, Maxine Shemanski). The cooks can now serve meat in consistent, uniform portions and there is considerably less waste in the process.

Call PIE&G at 989-733-8515 for grant information or to volunteer to round up your electric and/or gas bill by just a few cents monthly.



## Offices Closed for Labor Day

Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op will be closed Friday, July 4, for Independence Day and Monday, Sept. 1, for Labor Day. Payments may be made anytime at our drop box, online at [pieg.com](http://pieg.com) or using pay-by-phone at 1-866-999-4517, and will be posted on the next open business day.

To report an emergency anytime, call 1-800-423-6634 or 989-733-8515.



## PACK A PERFECT PICNIC

Pack the perfect picnic basket with these make-ahead, portable creations.

### Black Bean, Tomato & Mozzarella Salad

1 can black beans, drained and rinsed  
 1–2 green onions, chopped, include greens  
 ½ c. cilantro, roughly chopped  
 ½ c. finely chopped celery  
 1 pt. grape tomatoes, halved  
 ½ c. mozzarella cheese, cut in small cubes  
 zest of one lime  
 3 T. or more lime juice  
 1 T. lemon juice  
 3 T. olive oil  
 ½ t. sugar, or to taste  
 Optional—avocado slices

In a glass bowl, combine beans, onion, cilantro, celery, tomatoes and mozzarella.

Whisk together zest of lime, lime juice, lemon juice, olive oil and sugar. Pour lime/lemon dressing over the ingredients and mix gently. Refrigerate at least 2 hours before serving. Add avocado just before serving. This salad is very colorful and easy to take on a picnic. Everyone who tastes it wants the recipe.

*Barbara Steele, Charlevoix*

### Old-Fashioned Coney Dog Sauce

1 lb. ground beef, browned and drained  
 1 c. ketchup  
 2 c. chopped onion  
 ½ c. dark corn syrup  
 ¼ c. brown mustard  
 2 T. vinegar  
 1 T. chili powder

Simmer all ingredients in saucepan, stirring occasionally. Serve over hot dogs.

*Tommie Schmidt, Union*

### Banana Cupcakes

2 c. flour  
 2 ½ t. baking powder  
 ½ t. baking soda  
 ½ t. salt  
 ½ c. shortening  
 1 ¼ c. sugar  
 1 t. vanilla  
 2 eggs  
 1 ½ c. mashed ripe bananas

Sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Cream shortening. Slowly add the sugar while still beating the shortening. Add vanilla and eggs and continue beating for a total of 2 minutes. Add mashed bananas while alternating with the flour mixture. Beat 1 more minute. Bake at 375° in 18 cupcake lined pans for 25 mins. or till done. Cool. Frost with your favorite frosting.

*Mary Jean Troyer, Fairview*

### SUBMIT YOUR RECIPE!

Thanks to all who send in recipes. Please send in your favorite "Best Original" recipes by **Aug. 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)!

Find more of our readers' recipes at [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com)

Photos—831 Creative

# Energy-Saving Tips for Manufactured Homes

**If you own a manufactured home** (formerly called mobile homes), you may feel like the only option you have to make it more energy efficient is to replace incandescent lightbulbs with CFLs or LEDs. In fact, there are many actions you can take that will save energy for years to come.

Following are four areas where you can increase efficiency and comfort. If you are mechanically able, you can perform many of the tasks yourself. If not, contact your nearest professional for assistance.

## 1. FURNACE

Make sure the furnace is safe and burns fuel efficiently. Clean your fuel-oil furnace every year; gas-fired furnaces every two to three years. Hire a contractor with a good track record on manufactured homes and check company references.

For the highest energy savings, replace the old unit with a high-efficiency condensing furnace. The extra cost can be offset within the first few years of operation. It is essential to seal all ceiling gaps or cracks above the furnace with caulk and sheetrock (Fig. 1).

## 2. DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

Once the furnace is in top order, ensure that the heat and AC can be freely delivered to all rooms without restrictions or duct leakage. Clean or replace the filter to assure good air-flow through the furnace; replace all registers that are flattened; and inspect the AC evaporator coil for dust.

You can achieve *major* savings by sealing holes and gaps in the ductwork, but first you must find the leaks! Remove the registers and look for gaps at the boot and trunk. Then, use a flashlight and mirror to inspect ducts, if accessible. Use a high quality aluminum or butyl tape to seal gaps once you have cleaned the surfaces (see how-to resources below).

## 3. UNDER YOUR HOUSE

The road barrier on your home's underside should be intact to ensure that it is retaining heat. When entering the crawl space, lay down plastic or cardboard. Start under the furnace and water heater, where damage usually starts. Patch any holes on the outer edges using ½-inch foil-faced foam board. Large holes between the I-beams require a "sling-patch" made of 1x2 boards and air-barrier material, such as TYVEK® (Fig. 2). Before patching, seal any duct leaks and install insulation where possible, especially under the ductwork, using the widest material available. Do not isolate the water lines from heat, or they may freeze in winter.

## 4. AIR LEAKS IN SHELL

Large holes can often be found around the tub, furnace, under sinks, and behind cove molding in newer homes. Seal these openings with spray foam, caulk, or sheetrock.

Some newer manufactured homes can also be retrofitted to improve energy efficiency and incorporate renewable energy technologies, such as installing a geothermal heat pump (for permanently-sited homes), and solar water heating. Other measures to consider include spray or roll-on roof coating to reflect summer's heat. ■



Cove molding



Fig. 1—A large chimney hole is a huge energy loser. It can be sealed with sheetrock, then caulked air-tight.



Fig. 2—Underneath the home, a "sling-patch" can be screwed into the inner side of the I-beam. It stretches to the other I-beam and holds insulation under the ductwork in place.

Photos—Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corp.

## Other Resources

Visit <http://energysavings.togetherwesave.com/Manufactured-Housing> for a handy graphic that shows a full list of areas where you can make energy-saving improvements. Find other resources at [YOUTUBE.com](http://YOUTUBE.com): Sealing ductwork in a mobile home; <http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/energy-efficient-manufactured-homes>; and a book, "Your Mobile Home: Energy and Repair Guide for Manufactured Housing" (John Krigger).

And, installing CFLs, LEDs and using other energy efficiency tips that work for any home, really do help, too!

**STATE OF MICHIGAN  
BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
NOTICE OF HEARING FOR THE REGULATED GAS DIVISION  
CUSTOMERS OF PRESQUE ISLE ELECTRIC & GAS CO-OP  
CASE NO. U-17599**

- Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-Op requests Michigan Public Service Commission approval for its report relative to its Times Interest Earned Ratio (TIER) Ratemaking Mechanism for the 12 month period ended December 31, 2013, and the requested Regulated Cost Monthly Charge Adder (RCMCA) for a 12 month period for its Regulated Gas Division customers. If the request is granted, Regulated Gas Division customers will be assessed a monthly charge of \$2.70 per account beginning the first billing month following issuance of a Commission Order in this docket.
- The information below describes how a person may participate in this case.
- You may call or write Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-Op, 19831 M-68 Highway, P.O. Box 308, Onaway, Michigan 49765, (800) 423-6634 for a free copy of its application. Any person may review the application at the offices of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op.
- The first public hearing in this matter will be held:

**DATE/TIME:** July 29, 2014, at 10:00 a.m.

This hearing will be a prehearing conference to set future hearing dates and decide other procedural matters.

**BEFORE:** Administrative Law Judge Theresa A.G. Staley

**LOCATION:** Constitution Hall, 525 West Allegan, Lansing, Michigan

**PARTICIPATION:** Any interested person may attend and participate. The hearing site is accessible, including handicapped parking. Persons needing any accommodation to participate should contact the Commission's Executive Secretary at (517) 241-6160 in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance.

The Michigan Public Service Commission (Commission) will hold a public hearing to consider Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-Op's (Presque Isle) March 13, 2014 application for a TIER ratemaking mechanism review for the 12-month period ended December 31, 2013 for its Regulated Gas Division. Presque Isle represents that no revenue increase is required. All documents filed in this case shall be submitted electronically through the Commission's E-Dockets website at: [michigan.gov/mpscdockets](http://michigan.gov/mpscdockets). Requirements and instructions for filing can be found in the User Manual on the E-Dockets help page. Documents may also be submitted, in Word or PDF format, as an attachment to an email sent to: [mpscdockets@michigan.gov](mailto:mpscdockets@michigan.gov). If you require assistance prior to e-filing, contact Commission staff at (517) 241-6180 or by email at: [mpscdockets@michigan.gov](mailto:mpscdockets@michigan.gov).

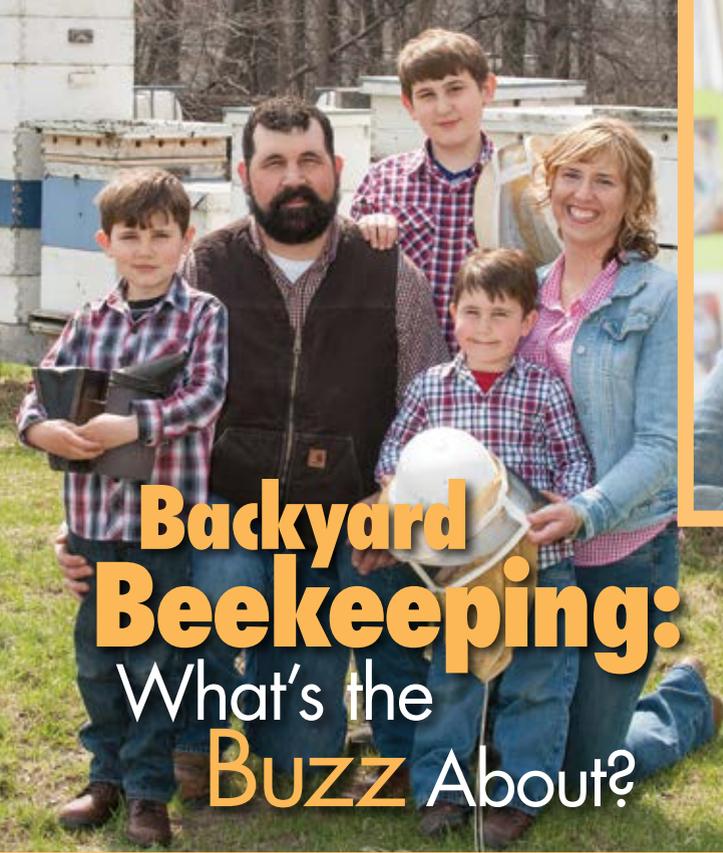
Any person wishing to intervene and become a party to the case shall electronically file a petition to intervene with this Commission by July 22, 2014. (Petitions to intervene may also be filed using the traditional paper format.) The proof of service shall indicate service upon Presque Isle's attorney, Shaun M. Johnson, at Dykema Gossett PLLC, Capitol View, 201 Townsend Street, Suite 900, Lansing, Michigan 48933.

Any person wishing to appear at the hearing to make a statement of position without becoming a party to the case may participate by filing an appearance. To file an appearance, the individual must attend the hearing and advise the presiding administrative law judge of his or her wish to make a statement of position. All information submitted to the Commission in this matter becomes public information: available on the Michigan Public Service Commission's website, and subject to disclosure. Please do not include information you wish to remain private.

Requests for adjournment must be made pursuant to the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure R 460.17315 and R 460.17335. Requests for further information on adjournment should be directed to (517) 241-6060.

A copy of the Presque Isle's request may be reviewed on the Commission's website at: [michigan.gov/mpscdockets](http://michigan.gov/mpscdockets), and at the office of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-Op. For more information on how to participate in a case, you may contact the Commission at the above address or by telephone at (517) 241-6180.

Jurisdiction is pursuant to 1909 PA 300, as amended, MCL 462.2 et seq.; 1919 PA 419, as amended, MCL 460.54 et seq.; 1939 PA 3, as amended, MCL 460.1 et seq.; 1982 PA 304, as amended, MCL 460.6h et seq.; 1969 PA 306, as amended, MCL 24.201 et seq.; and the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, as amended, 1999 AC, R 460.17101 et seq.



# Backyard Beekeeping: What's the BUZZ About?



**A**sk most people what bees contribute to the world and they'll name three things: honey, wax and stings.

Put the question to Josh and Jodie Kieliszewski and you'll get a longer list: soap, body creams, ointments, lip balms...

Another unusual fact about the Kieliszewskis: While describing the wild swarm of bees that set up housekeeping in a hollow maple tree near their home in 2007, they call it a "blessing."

One person's threat is another's opportunity. The swarm might have caused the average person to summon a pest control company. Josh and Jodie, who share an interest in the natural world, found the bees fascinating.

"We saw intelligence...a social structure," Jodie says.

The swarm moved on, but not before the Kieliszewskis were bitten by the beekeeping bug—a passion that eventually became Bee Lovely Botanicals, LLC (beelovelybotanicals.com or call 989-674-2475)—a home-based business offering handmade, all natural bee-related products sold at Michigan farmers markets and on the internet.

Honeybees have taken a beating in recent years. Colony Collapse Disorder—the result, experts believe, of pesticide overuse, has forced many commercial beekeepers out of business. This is an agricultural crisis because honeybees are essential for pollinating crops like apples, blueberries and cucumbers, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) notes that one-third of the food we eat is pollinated by bees.

Recognizing the importance of honeybees in our food supply, the USDA will, according to the *Associated Press*, pay farmers and ranchers in Michigan, Minnesota,

Wisconsin and North and South Dakota to reseed pastures with clover, alfalfa and other plants that attract bees. Publicity surrounding Colony Collapse Disorder has ignited interest in honeybees, and backyard beekeepers like the Kieliszewskis, are stepping up to fill the gap.

Josh and Jodie live in Unionville, Mich., with their three sons, where they are members of an electric co-op. A certified athletic trainer, Jodie now divides her time between her boys and the family business. Josh, a fisheries and wildlife biologist, is a quality-control scientist in his day job, but beekeeping, he says, has transcended from a hobby to a second job.

Not that he's complaining. "It's all fun; it's not really work," he explains.

The business, however, is not without setbacks. This winter's extreme cold took a heavy toll on the Kieliszewskis' bees, with only five out of 40 hives surviving. An average hive holds 60,000–70,000 bees at its peak occupancy. But the heavy losses won't stop the Kieliszewskis—they switched to a hardier breed called the Carnolian honeybee.

The Kieliszewskis pride themselves on keeping their operation friendly—to their bees, the environment, and the people who use their products.

"We do a lot of research, and are really careful about our ingredients," Jodie says. "We personally use all the things we make."

They also resist using chemicals on their hives—even if it means taking bigger losses in harsh weather.

Josh says that he's been stung "a time or two"—especially in the beginning, when he didn't own the proper gear. His dark hair doesn't help. Bees, he explains, equate the color black with bears and other predators.

Jodie casually mentions the time a swarm chased her 300 feet, and stung her 20–30 times. Bees, she says, have different personalities, and this swarm was particularly ornery.

Naturally, the Kieliszewskis know something about bee sting remedies—both conventional and unusual—noting they have "tried almost every bee sting remedy known to man." Jodie likes meat tenderizer, while Josh prefers a remedy that's free and always available: spit. It has enzymes, he says, that break down the venom. ■

—John Schneider



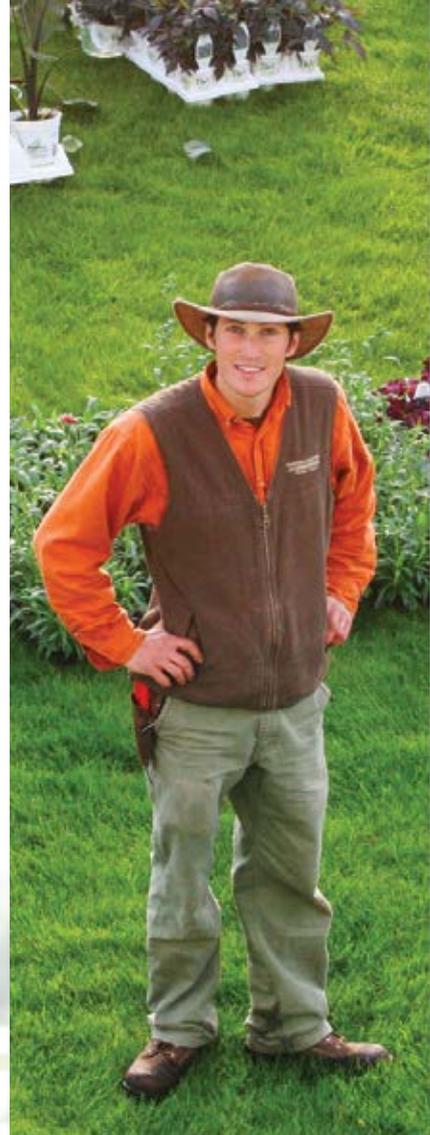
# Jack Barnwell Is Mackinac's Master Gardener

**M**ackinac Island has been getting a facelift. It's the kind that requires rakes and shovels, because it's a facelift in flowers and plants.

Barnwell Landscape & Garden Services has been designing and planting picturesque gardens for six years—with boatloads of colorful flowers—around Mackinac's stately Victorian homes and historic businesses. Jack Barnwell and his crew are painting the island, which is served by Cloverland Electric Cooperative, with a fabulous array of dazzling petunias, sweet-smelling alyssum, and gorgeous larkspur, to name a few.

"We've more or less created what has become the 'Mackinac Island look,'" says Barnwell, who spends much of the winter coming up with new designs for over 130 island clients.

It seems Islanders didn't know they needed Barnwell's services until he started sprucing things up. Now, he says people can't wait to get their landscaping done as early as possible. This creates a crunch for his crew who must rely on boats, bikes, horse-drawn buggies and strong backs to tote their plants and tools because motorized vehicles aren't allowed on the island (except for emergency vehicles and snowmobiles).



Photo—Kathy Holt





Photos—Mike Lanzetta

It all starts before the sun comes up over Lake Huron. “The boats arrive at 3 a.m. with annual flowers,” Barnwell says. “We’ll get the hanging baskets up downtown before it gets busy with tourists.” The remainder are bedding plants that must go directly into the ground. This all has to happen as soon as the weather starts getting nice, including accepting the delivery of six semi-trailer loads, brought over by Shepler’s Mackinac Island Ferry. “We have trusted them with hundreds of unique loads,” says Barnwell, whose company also plants trees, installs irrigation, and does stone work.

Dealing with the spring demand can be a challenge. “It’s such a short season to make their money,” he explains of the businesses he caters to. “My clients depend on it (the flowers) so much for their image.”

Barnwell relies on 12 workers to get the job done without pickup trucks, loaders and skid steers. They make it all work with horses, oversized bike baskets, trailers attached to bikes, and ancient ingenuity.

“I often tell my crew to ‘think like an Egyptian,’” Barnwell adds, “because all these concepts are not new. Many were used for 1,000 years to build some amazing structures, some which are still standing today.” For the heavier work, they’ve retrofitted standard ball carts (meaning the root ball of very large trees), used to move large trees and boulders, into three-wheeled swiveling carts that can handle more weight over long distance with less effort.

“We also use a lot of winch and come-along setups, block-and-tackle pulley systems, and good ol’ fashioned leverage,” he says. “It’s amazing what can be moved with the right fulcrum point.”

The Barnwell crew’s work is also a central feature in the Grand Garden Show, a joint venture with the Proven Winners® company, the Grand Hotel, and Barnwell Landscape. The second annual event is Aug. 24–26 (see [grandgardenshow.com](http://grandgardenshow.com)). ■



## Save By Upgrading With Energy Star Products

**W**ish you could replace that old, malfunctioning, energy-wasting refrigerator or dishwasher, but don't know where to start—or if you can afford it? If so, a smart way to search is by looking for appliances with the ENERGY STAR® label. ENERGY STAR products are more energy-efficient than other models, and Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op's Energy Optimization program offers many rebates to help offset the initial purchase price.

### What is ENERGY STAR?

Established over 20 years ago by the U.S. Department of Energy, it is now an international standard for energy-efficient consumer products. The ENERGY STAR label can be found on hundreds of items, including lightbulbs, electronics, major appliances, and even certified homes and buildings—as long as the product or dwelling meets stringent energy efficiency requirements. Over 4.5 billion ENERGY STAR products have been sold in the past 20 years.

To qualify for the ENERGY STAR rating, a product must contribute significant energy savings, deliver features and performance that customers demand, and back up energy savings claims with testing. In short, it is a trusted brand for quality products that use significantly less energy than minimum federal standards require. These products offer the same features you're used to, but can use up to 75 percent less energy than standard models.

### Rebates

While ENERGY STAR products often cost a bit more, the initial investment is almost always recouped in the long-term savings. Additionally, rebates available through the Energy Optimization program (see chart) can help offset up-front costs!

### Did You Know?

You can buy new ENERGY STAR appliances at whatever store you wish. After your purchase, visit [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org) to fill out the rebate form, and mail, fax or email

it back to the Energy Optimization program to receive your check. Please visit [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org) for information, or call 877-296-4319 with any questions. ■

ENERGY STAR Product/Appliance	Rebate Amount
Compact Fluorescent Light (CFL) bulbs	Varies by retailer via in-store mark-down
LED light bulbs	Varies by retailer via in-store mark-down
Ceiling fan	\$15
CFL fixture	\$15
LED downlight kit	\$20
Room air conditioner	\$25
Dehumidifier	\$25
Dishwasher	\$25
Clothes washer	\$25
Clothes dryer	\$25
Refrigerator	\$25
Chest freezer	\$25
TV (21"-50")	\$25
TV (51"+)	\$50

# Tune In

## BIG SCREENS = BIG SAVINGS

Is squinting at a small, fuzzy screen bringing you down? Invest in a new flat screen TV to save your eyes and your wallet! Energy Optimization rebates (up to \$50!) are now available for ENERGY STAR® TVs 21" and larger. And that's not all— your efficient TV will save you energy for years to come.

**ENERGY TIP:** Use the sleep timer feature to automatically turn off the TV after you fall asleep.

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).

## Check Your Boat, Dock and the Neighbor's, Too!

**F**or water fun and safety, there are items you must legally have on your watercraft—life vests, fire extinguisher, throwable floatation device, and properly working lights—but make sure the boat itself and the dock are safe, too!

July 2012 saw some horrific fatal accidents near boats and docks. A 20-year-old Port Huron man entered the water behind a moored boat and became disabled as he tried to climb onto the swim platform. Friends trying to pull him onboard reported getting shocks. He could not be resuscitated. An investigation confirmed voltage behind the boat, caused by an AC-to-DC fault in the battery charger that energized the underwater gear, and there was no AC-DC bonding connection. In another incident, a young woman was electrocuted by an energized dock ladder.

To help prevent such tragedies, the National Electrical Contractors Association says:

- All installations should be performed by a professional electrical contractor.
- All dock receptacles must comply with the National Electrical Code, which mandates a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI). A GFCI measures a circuit's current and senses any imbalance (such as a discharge into the water), which trips the GFCI and cuts off the power.
- Test a GFCI at least monthly. Locate it along the ramp to the dock so it can be easily tested by local fire departments.
- Metal dock frames should have “bonding jumpers” that connect all metal parts to an on-shore grounding rod. This means any dock part that becomes energized by electrical malfunction will trip the GFCI or circuit breaker.
- Ask neighbors if their dock electrical systems have been inspected and are up to Code.
- Household wire is not suitable for boats.
- *Do not* use wire nuts (these are for solid conductor wire, which should never be on a boat) or splice connectors (can cut wire strands)!
- Fuses are rated to protect the wire, not the stereo. If a fuse blows continuously, something else is wrong.
- If you rent a dock or boat, notify the owner of safety violations immediately.
- Have your boat's system (especially with onboard generators) checked at least annually, and when something is added or removed.
- Ropes, string, masts and rigging also conduct electricity—don't be the common ground between water and electricity!
- See [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org) for more tips. ■



# Summer Thrills

**S**ummer means “vacation” to many, and memories of family road trips along with the familiar mantra Mom and Dad grew weary of hearing: “Are we there yet?” I remember traveling to the Detroit Zoo and the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village back in the ‘60s when speed limits were more of a suggestion than law. Dad was known to occasionally hit 100 mph—a great thrill for a young lad!

Today, I still enjoy a thrilling ride with my family while taking in some of the most panoramic Lake Michigan views, thanks to Mac Wood’s Dune Rides in Mears.

A fourth generation family business that’s served by Great Lakes Energy Cooperative, Mac Wood’s began operating in 1930 when Mac started looking for ways to entertain guests at a nearby resort he managed. Mac built the first four-passenger ‘dune scooter’ from a Model A Ford and charged 25 cents per ride.

Things were less restricted back then and like my Dad, with Mac behind the wheel, many described the trips as ‘thrill rides.’ Mac’s granddaughter, Shelby Olson, describes it as a time when “there were no rules. It was a go-anywhere, full-speed fun ride.”

Though times have changed, the dune rides are just as exciting today (open until Oct. 5—see [macwoodsdunerides.com](http://macwoodsdunerides.com)) as they were 84 years ago. Between climbs and descents through some of the most beautiful dunes in the state, you’ll stop along the way to enjoy views of Lake Michigan and Silver Lake while learning about the ecology of the dunes.

Today’s dune scooters seat more folks more comfortably (your backside will appreciate it!) so bring a few friends along for the ride.

Working every summer since she was a child, Shelby emphasizes that the dune rides are still all about family,

friends and fun. “Visiting Mac Wood’s is a unique experience that everyone in the family can enjoy from babies to grandparents!” She also says that many former guests are now bringing their kids and grandkids to ride, commenting about riding the dunes “when they were little.” Ah, those family memories. You gotta love ‘em.

There is plenty of time left to enjoy a Pure Michigan summer. Comb the shores for beach glass, dip your toes in one of our Great Lakes, or simply soak up the sunshine.



Jack O'Malley

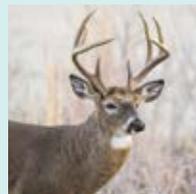
Family memories await just over the next dune! All you need is a map and the spirit of adventure.

Share a story idea with Jack by email to: [jack@countrylines.com](mailto:jack@countrylines.com) or write J. O'Malley, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, MI 48864. ■

## Deer Blind Contest: The Hunt Is On!

If you think yours is the best Michigan deer blind, enter our *Country Lines* Deer Blind Contest by **Aug. 15**.

Categories for entering a photo of your blind are: Most tricked-out; Best story behind it; and Most interestingly-engineered. Enter at [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) or mail it to CL Deer Blind Contest, 2859 W. Jolly Road, Okemos, MI 48864. Include your name, contact information, and a description of what makes it great. Winners will receive a \$50 credit on their co-op electric bill and have a photo of their blind published in *Country Lines*.



## «« Do You Know Where This Is?

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

We do not accept Mystery Photo guesses by phone. 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 the name of your co-op. Only

those sending complete information will be entered in the drawing. The winner will be announced in the Sept. 2014 issue.

The May contest winner is Luke Bourne, a Great Lakes Energy Cooperative



member from LeRoy, who correctly identified the photo as the LeRoy Hardware store.

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