

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

Plus!

- 4 Providing Stability
in Unstable Times
- 5 Midwest Propane
Customers Weather
2013-14 Winter
- 12 Rebates For Recycling
Old Appliances

Media-Man
O'MALLEY
Joins Country Lines

Before a WaterFurnace
geothermal dealer makes a
commitment to you...

THEY MAKE A COMMITMENT TO US.

It takes a special contractor to become a WaterFurnace geothermal dealer. It requires an ongoing commitment to the industry's best training and education programs. WaterFurnace only invests in dealers who are passionate about providing the finest in products and service, and are less concerned with simply being the cheapest. Maybe that's why WaterFurnace is the **most recognized and respected name** in residential geothermal. Or maybe it's because WaterFurnace units use the **clean, renewable energy** found in your backyard to provide **savings up to 70% on heating, cooling and hot water**. Or is it thanks to the **industry's best warranty**? Contact your local WaterFurnace dealer for more information, and decide for yourself.

YOUR LOCAL WATERFURNACE DEALERS

Bad Axe
B & D Htg
(989) 269-5280

Berrien Springs
WaterFurnace
Michiana
(269) 473-5667

Big Rapids
Stratz Htg & Clg
(231) 796-3717

Caro
AllTemp Comfort, Inc.
(866) 844-HEAT
4328

Carsonville
Certified Temperature
Innovations
(810) 300-7748

Clifford
Orton Refrig & Htg
(989) 761-7691

DeWitt
S & J Htg & Clg
(517) 669-3705

Grand Rapids
Total Comfort
Resource, LLC
(616) 406-3182

Hart/Ludington
Adams Htg & Clg
(231) 873-2665

Indian River
M & M Plbg & Htg
(231) 238-7201

Ionia
Home Experts
(800) 457-4554

Jackson
Comfort 1 Htg/
Lenawee Htg
(517) 764-1500

Kalkaska
Kalkaska Plbg & Htg
(231) 258-3588

Lapeer
Porter & Heckman
(800) 445-4328

Mount Pleasant
Walton's Htg & Clg
(989) 772-4822

Muskegon
Adams Htg & Clg
(231) 873-2665

Muskegon
Kiessel Geothermal
Htg & Clg
(231) 747-7509

Onaway
Standard Htg
(989) 733-8309

Palms
Lakeshore
Improvements
(989) 864-3833

Portland
ESI Htg & Clg
(517) 647-6906

Traverse City
Geofurnace Htg
& Clg
(231) 943-1000

Traverse City
D&W Mechanical
(231) 941-1215

UPPER PENINSULA
Manistique
Hoholik Enterprises
(906) 341-5065

Marquette
J Goods Plbg & Htg
(906) 235-5788

Marquette
Swick Plbg & Htg
(906) 228-3400

**Sault Ste Marie/
Kinross**
Great Lakes
Services Inc.
(906) 632-5543



visit us at waterfurnace.com



May 2014
Vol. 34, No. 5

Executive Editor
Casey Clark

Editor
Gail Knudtson

Publisher
Michigan Electric
Cooperative Association

Design and Layout
Ciesa Design

Michigan Country Lines, USPS-591-710, is published monthly, except August and December, with periodicals postage paid at Okemos, MI, and additional offices. It is the official publication of the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, MI 48864.

Subscriptions are authorized for members of Alger Delta, Cherryland, Cloverland, Great Lakes, HomeWorks Tri-County, Midwest Energy, Ontonagon, Presque Isle, and Thumb electric cooperatives by their boards of directors. Subscriptions for nonmembers are \$6 per year.

POSTMASTER: SEND ALL UAA TO CFS.

Letters to the editor should be sent to Country Lines, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, MI 48864. Phone 517-913-3531. Email: gknudtson@meca.coop.

Association officers are **Ken Swope**, Midwest Energy, chairman; **Robert Schallip**, Cloverland, 1st vice chairman; **Jon Zickert**, Cherryland, 2nd vice chairman; **Eric Baker**, Wolverine Power, secretary-treasurer; and **Tony Anderson**, Cherryland, past chairman. **Craig Borr** is president and CEO.

Unsolicited letters, photos and manuscripts are welcome. *Country Lines*, however, will not be responsible for their safe keeping or return.

The appearance of advertising does not constitute an endorsement of the products or services advertised.

Change of Address: Please notify your electric cooperative. See page 4 for contact information.



IN THIS ISSUE



6 HOME COOKING
Give Your Tastebuds
a Hawaiian Vacation
*Christin McKamey
& Our Readers*



7 OUR ENERGY
Cool Energy Bills
With Metal Roofing
B. Denise Hawkins



10 FEATURE
Media-Man O'Malley
Joins *Country Lines*
John Schneider



13 SAFETY
Call 8-1-1
Before You Dig



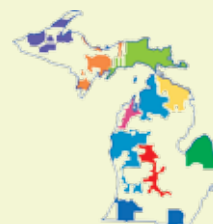
14 READERS' PAGE
Jack O'Malley's
New Column,
Mystery Photo

ON THE COVER*

Jack O'Malley, a Cherryland Electric Co-op member and host of a northern Michigan radio show and TV 9-10 broadcast called "Jack's Journal," is joining *Michigan Country Lines* magazine as a READERS' PAGE columnist.

Photo Courtesy - Beth Price / bethpricephotography.com

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



Michigan's Electric
Cooperatives
countrylines.com

**PRESIDENT & CEO**

Robert Hance

CASSOPOLIS OFFICE

P.O. Box 127 (901 E. State Street)

Cassopolis, MI 49031-0127

M-F, 8 a.m.– 5 p.m.

Drive-up window: M-F, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

TELEPHONE

269-445-1000 or 800-492-5989

Fax: 269-445-3792

PAW PAW OFFICE

59825 S. LaGrave

Paw Paw, MI 49079

M-F, 8 a.m.–1 p.m. and 1:30–4:30 p.m.

ADRIAN OFFICE

1610 E. Maumee St.

Adrian, MI 49221

M-F, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

TELEPHONE

517-263-1808 or 800-492-5989

INTERNET TeamMidwest.com**E-MAIL** info@teammidwest.com**EDITOR**

Patty Nowlin

BOARD OF DIRECTORS**Clarence (Topper) Barth** *Chairman*

Three Rivers

Kenneth Swope *Vice Chairman*

Adrian


Colyne Sorsby *Secretary*

Cassopolis

John Green *Treasurer*

Dowagiac

Ron Armstrong, Lawton**James W. Dickerson**, Bloomingdale**Harry Gentz**, Blissfield**Ben Russell**, Constantine**Fred Turk**, Decatur

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 
The power of human connections®

Providing Stability in Unstable Times



Robert Hance
President/CEO

Many of us rely on help and support from financial advisors when it comes to our investments. There's comfort in having someone else monitor the financial landscape and assume the risk on our behalf.

Midwest Energy offers a similar value as a propane supplier to 6,400 customers across our service area. They trust us to assume the risk on their behalf, not only related to supply and cost, but more importantly for the warmth and comfort of their families and homes.

When Midwest Propane set its first tank over 15 years ago, we knew we were offering up a different kind of experience. Our focus was to provide exceptional service to our loyal family of customers with a capped rate that was guaranteed through the heating season with no additional fees. Like a trusted financial advisor, we assume the risk for our customers by monitoring markets, evaluating world economics and politics that impact gas and oil prices, and engaging with suppliers and consultants. The ultimate result is peace of mind and stability during the most expensive months of the propane year.

It's the Midwest Propane difference, and that difference was never more apparent, and never carried more value, than during the winter of 2013–14.

It was a challenging winter in so many ways, but propane users faced an entirely different set of circumstances as prices escalated out of control and supply issues repeatedly made national news headlines. Our customer care reps were overwhelmed with calls from our own customers, as well as customers of other providers who were looking for price relief.

It wasn't unusual to talk to someone paying north of \$4 per gallon, translating into a bill of close to \$2,000 for a 500-gallon tank. With users burning through considerably more gas, desperation quickly set in as temperatures went down.

As much as we wanted to help those at the mercy of other providers, our priority was our current family of loyal customers. We did set several hundred new tanks early in the season, but then began declining opportunities for new sales or scheduling into the spring months to make sure we could provide for the gas and customer service needs of our existing customers. Where other providers would have been motivated by sales, we were motivated by keeping our family warm and safe.

Loyalty has its benefits. Despite our best efforts to manage price risk, we haven't always been able to provide the lowest price in the propane market. However, our loyal customers know the value of our capped-rate program and commitment to exceptional service, and therefore enjoyed the fruits of that relationship with a guaranteed rate of \$1.899 and comfort in the knowledge that their supply would not be interrupted.

It's the Midwest Propane difference at work. ■

Midwest Propane Customers Weather the 2013-14 Winter

Were you buried by this winter's out-of-control propane prices?

We weathered a winter of epic proportions as a deep freeze blanketed much of the country. Record usage was complicated by very real propane supply and wholesale pricing issues. Retail customers, particularly in the Midwest, were fearful about the availability of gas, and even more afraid of what that next delivery would cost.

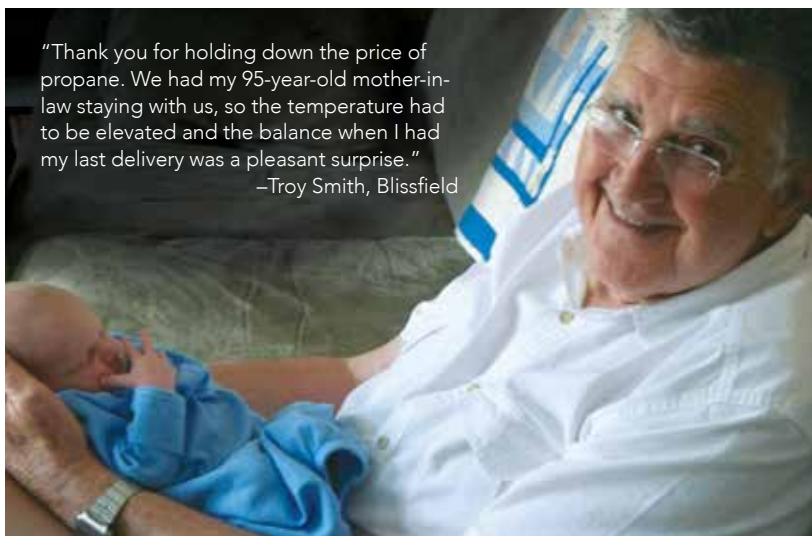
Midwest Propane customers weathered the winter with the peace-of-mind of a capped rate, provided at no charge and guaranteed through the heating season. Most propane users experienced something very different. As the frigid temperatures set in, retail propane prices escalated out of control. People burned through significantly more gas and were left buried with high bills as prices continued their upward spiral.

The Michigan Public Service Commission reports average statewide retail prices through the heating season. From October through late February, the average price of propane in Michigan was \$2.75/gallon (it topped out at \$3.76/gallon at one point in February!). And that doesn't include any of the fees or add-on costs imposed by many retailers!

During that same period, 6,400 Midwest Propane customers paid a guaranteed capped rate of \$1.899/gallon,

"Thank you for holding down the price of propane. We had my 95-year-old mother-in-law staying with us, so the temperature had to be elevated and the balance when I had my last delivery was a pleasant surprise."

—Troy Smith, Blissfield



saving a collective \$2.1 million on winter gas bills. Our unique approach to gas supply and pricing once again provided great benefit to our loyal customers.

Midwest Propane has been meeting the needs of Michigan homeowners for 15 years. We are a locally-owned propane company with a strong commitment to providing outstanding customer care, combined with competitive pricing for our family of customers. Learn more about the Midwest Propane difference at TeamMidwestPropane.com. ■

A Comparison of the 2012-13 and the 2013-14 Heating Seasons

| | 2012-13 Heating Season (Oct. 1, 2012-Feb. 28, 2013) | 2013-14 Heating Season (Oct. 1, 2013-Feb. 28, 2014) |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| Gallons Delivered | 2,349, 617 | 2,830,092 |
| Number of Deliveries | 9,489 | 11,519 |
| Hours Delivering | 4,194 | 5,175 |
| Miles Driven | 77,502 | 93,530 |
| New Tanks Set | 156 | 317 |
| Fuel and Maintenance Costs | \$101,227 | \$134,300 |
| Propane calls into Customer Care | 8,753 | 13,103 |



Midwest Propane is not regulated by the Michigan Public Service Commission.



Photos – 831 Creative

GIVE YOUR TASTEBUDS A HAWAIIAN VACATION

These island-inspired recipes are perfect for any Hawaiian luau or just for fun.

Hawaiian Sweet & Sour Meatballs

3/4 lb. ground beef
3/4 c. fine bread crumbs
1/8 c. sesame seeds, toasted
1 small can pineapple chunks
1 small onion, minced
1 egg, beaten
1 t. salt
dash pepper
1 T. salad oil

Sweet and Sour sauce

2 T. cornstarch
1/2 c. sugar
2 T. shoyu sauce (soy sauce)
1/4 c. white vinegar
1/4 c. pineapple juice
1/4 c. water



Combine beef, bread crumbs, onion, egg, sesame seeds, salt and pepper. Shape meat mixture into balls and put a chunk of pineapple in center of each meatball. Heat oil in skillet; sauté meatballs a few at a time, browning well on all

sides. Cover and cook on low heat until meatballs are done. Combine ingredients for Sweet and Sour sauce in small pan. Cook about 5 minutes, stirring constantly till thickened. Pineapple chunks may be added to sauce, if desired. Pour sauce over meatballs and serve. Serves 4. This is a traditional Hawaiian recipe given to me by my daughter-in-law, who is Hawaiian.

Tanya Blackmer, Atlanta

Hawaiian Refrigerator Cake

1 1/3 c. sweetened condensed milk
10 maraschino cherries, quartered
1/4 c. fresh lemon juice
1/2 c. heavy cream, whipped
1 c. miniature marshmallows
Ladyfingers cookies, about 3 dozen
1/2 c. crushed pineapple, undrained



Combine milk and lemon juice; stir until thickened. Add marshmallows, pineapple, maraschino cherries and whipped cream. Line large loaf pan with separated ladyfingers, standing halves around edge and laying them across the pan bottom. Pour in filling and cover with ladyfingers. Chill at least 6 hours. Garnish with additional whipped cream and maraschino cherries, if desired. Serves 8–10. I received this recipe from friends who had just returned from Hawaii.

Janice Harvey, Charlevoix

SUBMIT YOUR RECIPE!

Thanks to all who send in recipes. Please send in your favorite "All About Snacks" recipes by **June 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.

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**

Cool Energy Bills with Metal Roofing

Asphalt shingles are still the norm in most regions, but the next roof over your head could be an energy-saving metal one made of stainless steel and painted to reflect hot sun rays. Thomas Jefferson chose metal roofing to shelter Monticello, his Virginia estate. Centuries later, historians say, Jefferson's "tin" roof "is in fine shape."

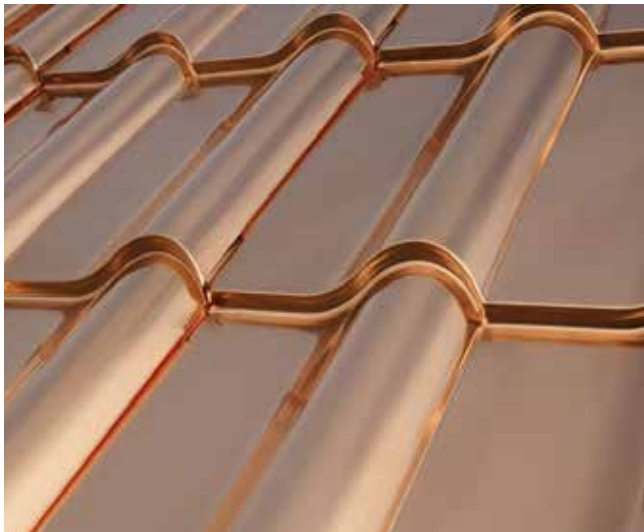
That kind of durability, say metal roofing retailers and manufacturers, is a strong selling point to a growing band of homeowners who want a building material that is not only sustainable, energy efficient, and cost-effective, but more aesthetically pleasing than asphalt. Today, consumers can select metals from copper to zinc, and roofing styles ranging from traditional vertical seams to those resembling wood shake, slate, shingles, and clay tiles. A multi-year study conducted by the Oak Ridge National Laboratory's Building Technology Center suggests that replacing conventional asphalt roofs with metal ones can reduce air conditioning energy use by up to 25 percent.



The metal roof on this log home features a standing seam design that reflects the sun's rays, making it both easier to cool in summer and great for shedding snow.

If you're wondering whether your house should be clad with a metal roof, ENERGY STAR® offers this guidance: homes that are hampered with high air-conditioning bills, have large roof surfaces, lower insulation levels, or located in hot, sunny climates benefit the most from metal roofing. Painted metal roofs, also known as "cool metal roofs," are designed to reflect more sunlight and absorb less heat than a standard roof. Special reflective color pigments make this possible. Whether white or a darker paint color is used, heat will still reflect well and help reduce cooling loads in summer and insulate homes in winter.

With metal roofs, there are additional ways for homeowners to save money over time, but the initial purchase price can be a factor. The cost for using metal roofing systems in home renovations or new residential construction is higher than most other materials, manufacturers say. But compared to traditional, dark gray asphalt shingles and other non-metal roofs that last an average of 17 years and require replacing about every decade or two, metal roofs last longer. A metal roof lifespan is about two to three times longer, says William "Bill" Hippard, chair of the nonprofit Metal Roofing Alliance, a coalition that educates consumers about the benefits of modern metal roofing, and the product is virtually maintenance-free. ■



Gleaming copper that is shaped like barrel tile forms this home's new roof.

Photos – Metal Roofing Alliance

Need a New Water Heater?

Buying a new appliance can be an overwhelming proposition. Which brand is best? What features do I need? What will this do to my energy bills?

When it comes to your next water heater purchase, Midwest Energy Cooperative wants to take the confusion out of your hands.

We are pleased to offer a program that will put a 50-gallon, high efficiency water heater in your home with only \$100 out of your pocket. Comparable units are \$400 and above at most hardware stores and retail outlets.

The Rheem® High Efficiency Residential Electric Water Heater offers a .95 efficiency rating. The unit comes with a full one-year in-home warranty through Home Depot, and a six-year limited warranty on tank and functional parts. It features double 4,500-watt heating elements and a factory-installed temperature and pressure relief valve. A special porcelain lining provides tank protection.

Co-op members who are homeowners and use a minimum of 400 kilowatt hours a month can now buy this high efficiency water heater for only \$100 out of pocket when they participate in our load management program. Load management allows us to remotely control the electricity to your water heater. As a utility, we have periods of peak usage during which customers are using a lot of power at the same time. Because energy supply charges from our power suppliers are based on monthly peak demand, all co-op members ultimately benefit when we can reduce our peak load. We then pass the savings back to those participating in the load management program in the form of a credit on your electric bill.

With this program, your \$4 monthly water heater load management credit will be applied to the cost of your water heater for 66 months. After that time, you will receive the full monthly credit under the load management program terms. Essentially, you pay only \$100 out-of-pocket for a brand new high efficiency water heater, and begin pocketing a load management credit after 66 short months.

Water heater control does not exceed five hours a day, and occurs predominately between 3 p.m. and 9 p.m., when the system is at its peak. The hot water stored within your insulated tank will remain hot for a long time.

Water heaters are available for pick up from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Cassopolis and Adrian offices, and from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 1:30 to 4 p.m. in Paw Paw. For more information about this program or to see if you qualify, please call Midwest Energy at 800-492-5989, or visit one of our offices. ■



\$50 Rebate Offer

The water heater load management offer, combined with the HVAC Program offered through Midwest Energy Cooperative's Energy Optimization Program could put a new water heater in your home for only \$50!

The HVAC Program is designed to encourage residential members to install energy-efficient heating, cooling and water heating equipment. Co-op members are eligible for a \$50 rebate in the form of a bill credit when they replace an existing electric water heater with a high efficiency (.93 or greater) electric water heater. Members must live in a single family dwelling in Michigan.

Members do not have to participate in the load management program to qualify for the HVAC Program offer.

To claim the rebate, members must complete an incentive claim form and submit it with all required documentation. The claim form submitted must be for equipment purchased on or after Jan. 1, 2014. Claim forms are available at our website at TeamMidwest.com or by calling 800-492-5989. Rebate incentives are subject to change and availability.

**STATE OF MICHIGAN
BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
NOTICE OF HEARING FOR THE CUSTOMERS
OF MIDWEST ENERGY COOPERATIVE
CASE NO. U-17099-R**

- Midwest Energy Cooperative requests Michigan Public Service Commission approval to reconcile its 2013 power supply cost recovery costs and revenues and to increase its revenues in the amount of \$1,629,155, or 2.24%.
- The information below describes how a person may participate in this case.
- You may call or write Midwest Energy Cooperative, 901 East State Street, P.O. Box 127, Cassopolis, Michigan 49031, (800) 492-5989 for a free copy of its application. Any person may review the application at the offices of Midwest Energy Cooperative.
- The first public hearing in this matter will be held:

DATE/TIME: May 28, 2014, at 9 a.m.

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

BEFORE: Administrative Law Judge Mark E. Cummins

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 Midwest Energy Cooperative's (Midwest) April __, 2014 application to reconcile its 2013 power supply cost recovery (PSCR) costs and revenues. Midwest represents that after taking into account prior years overcollections and undercollections, the result is a net undercollection of \$470,742. Midwest requests authorization to roll-in the \$470,742 undercollection into its 2015 PSCR plan, to be filed on or before September 30, 2014. Midwest is also seeking a revenue increase through its Times Interest Earned Ratio (TIER) Ratemaking Mechanism for the 12-month period ended December 31, 2013 of \$1,629,155, or 2.24%.

All documents filed in this case shall be submitted electronically through the Commission's E-Dockets website at: 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. If you require assistance prior to e-filing, contact Commission staff at (517) 241-6180 or by email at: 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 May 21, 2014. (Interested persons may elect to file using the traditional paper format.) The proof of service shall indicate service upon Midwest'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 Midwest's request may be reviewed on the Commission's website at: michigan.gov/mpscdockets, and at the offices of Midwest Energy Cooperative, 901 E. State Street, Cassopolis, MI. 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.

The Commission has jurisdiction pursuant to 1909 PA 106, as amended, MCL 460.551 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 460.6j 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.

Media-Man O'MALLEY

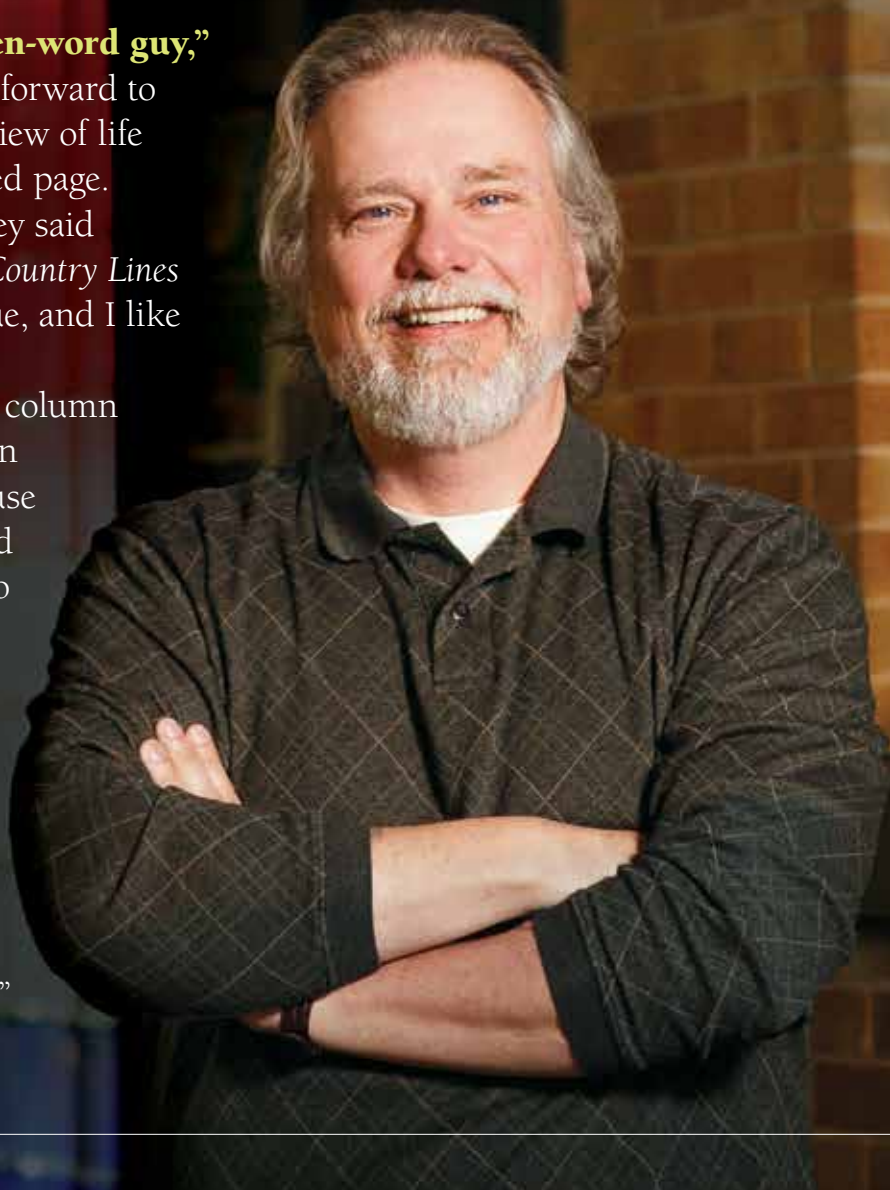
Joins *Country Lines*

A self-proclaimed “spoken-word guy,” Jack O'Malley is looking forward to transferring his upbeat view of life in Michigan to the printed page.

“I’m thrilled about this,” O'Malley said about his new gig with *Michigan Country Lines* magazine. “It’s a whole new avenue, and I like a challenge.”

Beginning with this edition, his column on the Readers’ Page will appear in alternating issues. O'Malley will use the hallowed space, once occupied by Jim Hough, then Mike Buda, to expand on what he already does on northern Michigan radio and TV: celebrate the great and quirky people and places of his home state, filtering the stories through the lens of his buoyant personality.

“People get enough bad news,” he says. “They want a little good news.”



O'Malley, 54, relishes the role of good-news messenger. To Traverse City area people, his voice is as familiar as cherry pie. He's hosted the WTCM Radio Morning Show since 1984, making it the longest-running morning radio show in northern Michigan. O'Malley describes the program, which airs from 5 to 9 a.m. Monday through Friday as "full-service," meaning a complete package of music (country), news, weather, traffic reports—everything listeners need to start their day, except the coffee.

"People waking up want to know the world is still here and that all is well," O'Malley explains. "The idea is to be happy and fun, and keep people informed."

Brief interviews with various guests are also part of his routine—a local librarian offering a glimpse of what Traverse City folks are reading, an outdoor writer discussing what's biting in the Bay, or a city official discussing a development project.

A true multi-media man, O'Malley also turns up every Monday on the northern Michigan CBS affiliate WWTV (TV 9&10), in the form of "Jack's Journal," a 2-minute human-interest feature that airs during the 6 p.m. news.

The subjects?

"Gosh, it's everybody and everything," O'Malley says, tossing out a few recent examples—a hidden gem known as the Manton Military Museum, a one-man band, a funky little "Up North" tavern...

O'Malley describes the drill: "I get a cameraman and travel all over northern Michigan—from Alpena to the eastern Upper Peninsula, to the Ludington area—I follow the subject around, do an interview, put it all together."

Now and then O'Malley spends the 2 minutes musing about one of modern life's marvels—the overwhelming number of options, for example, in a supermarket cookie aisle.

O'Malley gleans ideas from his viewers and listeners, production team members, and his own observations. For *Country Lines*, O'Malley, who grew up in Detroit, will continue working Michigan's fertile human-interest soil, but on a broader, statewide field.



Jack O'Malley says his WTCM Radio Morning Show is a complete package of music, news, weather and everything listeners need to start their day, except the coffee.

"I'm a Michigan boy," he says. "My heart is in Michigan." O'Malley and his wife Robin are, by the way, Cherryland Electric Co-op members. O'Malley has two grown daughters and a 12-year-old son. As this *Country Lines* edition went to press, a first grandchild was also expected.

A veteran hunter of human-interest stories, O'Malley knows that the eyes and ears of his listeners, viewers, and now, readers, are his best bush-beaters. If you have an idea for a column, he wants to hear from you.

"I'm always open to ideas and suggestions," he says.

On column writing, as well as on grandfathering. ■



That Old Fridge or Freezer is Too Costly to Keep

Recycle now and get a \$50 rebate.

Do you have an old refrigerator or chest freezer taking up valuable space in your basement or garage? While you may not think much about these secondary appliances that are typically out of sight, refrigerators or freezers that are over 10 years old are most likely costing you hundreds of dollars per year.

You can eliminate unnecessary energy use and costs by recycling old appliances with the help of Midwest Energy and the Energy Optimization (EO) Appliance Recycling program! Simply call us at 877-296-4319 and we will come and pick up your old refrigerator or freezer—and you will earn a \$50 rebate! (Rebates are limited to two refrigerators or freezers per home.)

What qualifies for a recycling rebate?

The appliance(s) must be in your home or garage and in working order. Sorry, but rounding up trashed or curbside refrigerators or freezers won't earn you rebates.

A few other things to note:

- To be eligible for pick up and a rebate, the refrigerator or freezer must be a secondary unit.
- The refrigerator or freezer must be between 10 and 30 cubic feet.
- Side-by-side refrigerators count as one appliance for recycling.

Have any other old appliances lying around?

While we're at your home, we can also pick up your outdated (yet functioning) air conditioning units or dehumidifiers for free recycling. By acting now, you can receive a \$15 bonus rebate for each!

With these EO rebates, you now have a great reason to finally get rid of your old appliances. If you have any questions about appliance recycling or residential, business or farm rebates, call 877-296-4319 or visit michigan-energy.org. ■



Get \$50 for your old refrigerator or freezer.

Have an extra working refrigerator or freezer? Don't let it sit there wasting energy. Turn it in. You'll receive a \$50 rebate from the Energy Optimization (EO) Appliance Recycling program and we'll recycle it. Schedule your FREE pick-up today.

ENERGY TIP: Turn in your old room air conditioner or dehumidifier with your refrigerator or freezer and get a \$15 bonus rebate per unit.

ONLINE: michigan-energy.org **PHONE:** 877.296.4319

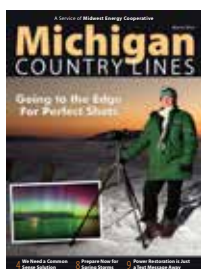
 **Energy Optimization**

 **MIDWEST ENERGY COOPERATIVE**

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.

Why We Send You Country Lines

We send *Michigan Country Lines* to you because it is the most convenient and economical way to share information with our members. It takes the place of many mailings we would otherwise make to get information to you about our services, director elections and member meetings, and about the staff and management decisions you should know about as an owner of the co-op. The magazine also carries legal notices that would otherwise have to be placed in local media at a substantial cost. And, sending *Country Lines* to you helps the co-op fulfill one of its basic principles—to educate and communicate openly with members.



The board of directors authorizes the co-op to subscribe to *Country Lines* on your behalf at a cost of \$4.69 per year, paid as part of your electric bill. The current cost is 47 cents per copy, less than a first-class stamp.

Michigan Country Lines is published for us, at cost, by the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association in Okemos. ■

Closed Memorial Day

Midwest Energy's offices will be closed for Memorial Day on Monday, May 26. Payments may be made at the drop box and will be posted on the next open business day. From our family to yours, have a happy and safe Memorial Day weekend.

ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

For your safety and for the protection of underground utility lines, always follow these steps before starting any digging project.

1. Contact MISS DIG at 811 or missdig.org
2. Wait 3 days for utility owners to mark their lines
3. Respect the marks
4. Dig with care



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

visit missdig.org for more information

Winter's in the Rear View

Whew! Winter is finally in our rear view mirrors. All of Michigan's 83 counties experienced a humdinger, didn't they? Persistent cold, high accumulations without a traditional mid-season thaw, an abundance of snow days, and the Great Lakes nearing an ice-cover record made the Winter of 2013 one for the books! Yowsers!

I'm as ready for spring as the next guy, but let's be honest about winter in Michigan, too. We all love it! Winter is as much a part of who we are as the DNA that determines our eye and hair color.

We love seeing how southern towns react when hit with an inch or two of snow. Schools close, YouTube videos of garbage trucks pirouetting down the interstate are circulated, and news crews are on the scene! Why do we find such humor in our southern neighbors' response to what we consider a "light dusting"?

Bragging rights, pure and simple. We Michiganians are a tough bunch—enduring months of snow and frigid cold, driving to and from work (uphill both ways), and sending kids to the bus stop on days when the slightest breeze can leave cheeks raw and chapped. And, when warm weather friends call to complain about an inch of snow or temperatures below freezing, we can let loose! "Heck, we got a foot last night! It's minus 8 with wind chills at 35 below and schools have been closed all week!"

Not for the faint of heart, winter gives folks true grit, an identity. Anybody can do sunny and 75, but it takes seasoned Michiganians to handle negative temperatures and snow up to their backsides! Floridians have lawn mowers. A rake or two. But look in any Michigan garage and you will find all that plus an assortment of snow blowers, shovels, ice choppers, snow scoops...an arsenal for the war with winter we secretly enjoy waging year after year.



*"Winter gives folks true grit...
Anybody can do sunny and 75."*

Jack O'Malley pictured using a snowblower during this infamous "Winter of 2013."

Enjoy the warm months ahead. You've earned 'em! And while boating, camping or lazing on the beach this summer, pay attention to the number of times you catch yourself bragging about how you survived the infamous "Winter of 2013." Because you will. And, you should. The seasons make us who we are. And we are from Michigan, home of the real winter!



P.S. I am looking forward to talking with you through this column (every other issue), so if you have a topic idea to share about unique Michigan people, places and things, give me a shout to jack@countrylines.com or write: J. O'Malley, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, MI. ■



«« Do You Know Where This Is?

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

We do not accept Mystery Photo guesses by phone. Enter your guess at 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 July–August 2014 issue.

The March contest winner is **Deborah Dunlap**, a Cherryland Electric Cooperative member from Traverse City, who correctly identified the photo as Lakenenland Sculpture Park in Marquette.



March Photo

FREE Upgrade

from aluminum to steel
in May only!

Showcase Homes WANTED! Earn Big Discounts

We would like to use your home to showcase a beautiful American Metal Roof. Qualified homes can earn big discounts. Call today to see if your home qualifies. 844.638.2576 (Note: Not all homes will qualify. Not a free roof.)

AND GET
**30%
OFF**

garage or outbuilding
when added to your order. *Hurry
offer good in May only.*

Why choose metal?

- Permanent/Lifetime Guarantee
- Add beauty & value to your home
- A rainbow of colors & styles
- Year round statewide installation
- Senior/Veteran discounts
- Ask about our Do-It-Yourself seminars
- Visit our showrooms:
FLINT • 6140 Taylor Dr.
LANSING • 1875 Lansing Rd.

 facebook.com
/AMRmichigan

Call today! 844.638.2576
844.METAL.ROOFS



NEW! Pocket Rib Panel for Rural Buildings

Toughness and low maintenance requirements make metal roofing perfect for the demanding needs of agricultural applications. Each roof is handcrafted and finished with custom trim and accessories by installers with a minimum of 300 hours of training. Available in a variety of colors.

Hurry, limited time offer!

Financing Available

www.AmericanMetalRoofs.com



TeamMidwest.com

POWER TOOLS

TeamMidwest.com

When you're in the dark

and trying to report your power outage, there's nothing more frustrating than a fast busy signal or sitting in a crowded phone queue waiting for the next available customer care representative.

SmartHub offers quick and easy outage reporting from the comfort and convenience of your computer or mobile device. It's the latest power tool in the SmartHub toolbox designed to help you manage your energy service experience.

