

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



Plus!

4 Generator Safety

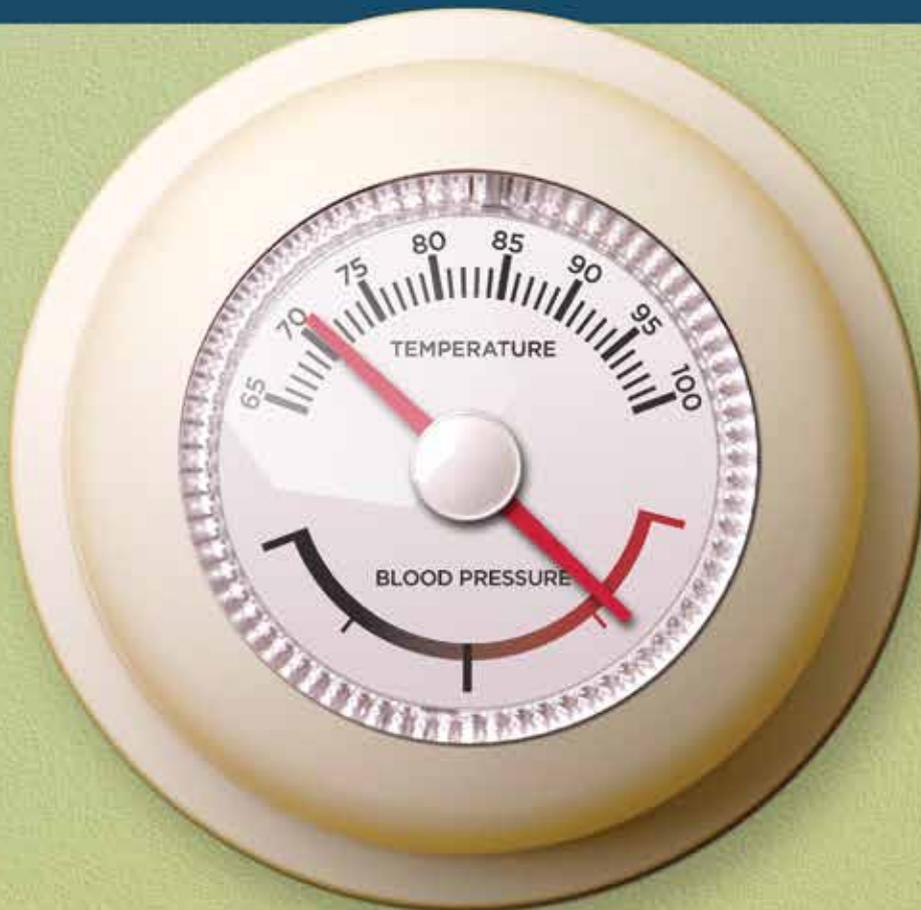
8 Local Bounty
At Les Cheneaux
Culinary School

12 A Magical Migration

Home Is Where The

Art Is

Local Co-op Artists On ArtPrize



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IN THIS ISSUE



6 OUR ENERGY
Legislation Would Strengthen Tie Between Michigan's Peninsulas
Craig Borr



7 HOME COOKING
A New Twist On The All-American Burger
Christin McKamey & Our Readers



10 FEATURE
Home Is Where the Art Is: Local Co-op Artists On ArtPrize
Emily Haines



13 SAFETY
Water and Electricity: Stay Safe Near Boats, Docks



14 READERS' PAGE
"Tour of Honor" Recognizes Heroic Men And Valiant Women Of Our Country
Jack O'Malley
Mystery Photo Winner!

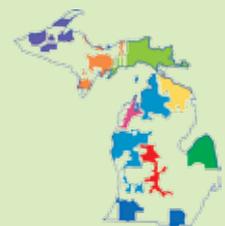
ON THE COVER*

"Trichromatic Spectra," created by Thomas Linder, was a past entry in the ArtPrize competition held annually in Grand Rapids, MI.

Linder's artwork is a kinetic inflatable installation involving thousands of LEDs that are controlled by computer animation.

Photo courtesy of Artprize.

*Some co-op editions have a different cover.



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Generator Safety:

Our Lives (and Yours) Are On The Line



Debbie Miles
General Manager

Summer is here and with it comes unexpected power outages due to inclement weather. The safety of you, our members, and our employees is a top priority at Ontonagon County R.E.A. Our crews are on call 24/7 and are dispatched as soon as they are made aware of trouble. It could be an outage, a downed power line or a tree on the line. We encourage you to protect the well being and safety of your family during emergency situations.

At Ontonagon County R.E.A. we have not had a lost time accident for the last eight years and we are proud of that record, but sometimes, no matter how many steps we take to keep everyone safe, there are dangers. Our line crews take necessary precautions before they work on downed power lines. But even after these measures, our workers' lives remain in your hands.

Portable generators, widely used when power lines are down, can prove fatal to lineworkers, and your neighbors, when used improperly. Of course no one would ever purposefully cause the death of a lineworker. Nevertheless, a generator connected to a homes' wiring or plugged into a regular household outlet can cause "backfeeding" along power lines and electrocute anyone who comes in contact with them—even if the line seems dead. And, Ontonagon employees are not the only ones in danger when a portable generator is used improperly. Generator owners themselves may be at risk of electrocution, fire, property damage, or carbon monoxide poisoning, if they do not follow the necessary safety rules.

Portable generators can be very helpful during outages, but we urge you to follow these safety guidelines:

- *Never connect a generator directly to your home's wiring unless your home has been wired for generator use.* This can cause backfeeding along power lines and electrocute anyone coming in contact with them, including lineworkers making repairs. Have a licensed electrician install the equipment necessary to safely connect emergency generators to your home.
- *Always plug appliances directly into generators.* Connecting the generator to your home's circuits or wiring must be done by a qualified, licensed electrician who will install a transfer switch to prevent backfeeding.
- *Use heavy-duty, outdoor-rated extension cords.* Make sure extension cords are free of cuts or tears and the plug has three prongs. Overloaded cords can cause fires or equipment damage.
- *Make sure it is properly grounded.*
- *Never overload a generator.* A portable generator should only be used when necessary to power essential equipment or appliances.
- *Turn off all equipment powered by the generator before shutting it down.*
- *Keep the generator dry.* Operate it on a dry surface under an open structure.
- *Keep a charged fire extinguisher nearby.*
- *Never fuel a generator while it's running.*
- *Follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation.*

Remember, when we work together for safety and the good of our communities, we all benefit. ■

A Change for the Better

When it comes to energy efficiency in the home, sometimes small changes can make a big impact. A small, unglamorous task like changing the filters on your HVAC system makes your unit run more efficiently—keeping your house cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. It also saves money. And the savings gained from having your system run more efficiently can be applied to more fun or entertaining pursuits that your family can enjoy together.

The lowdown on dirt

As you move around your home, you drive dust into the air from carpets, furniture and drapes. Regardless of where it comes from, dust and dirt trapped in a system's air filter leads to several problems, including:

- Reduced airflow in the home and up to 15 percent higher operating costs
- Costly duct cleaning or replacement
- Lowered system efficiency



Making the switch

Now, that you know the facts, it's time to get busy changing or cleaning the air filter in your heating/cooling system. Many HVAC professionals recommend that you clean or change the filter on your air conditioner or furnace monthly. It's simple and easy, and in many cases, it only takes a few minutes.

Filters are available in a variety of types and efficiencies, rated by a Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV). MERV, a method developed by the American Society of Heating,

Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers, tests filter effectiveness. The higher the MERV number, the higher the filter's effectiveness at keeping dust out of your system. While most types of filters must be replaced, some filters are reusable. And don't forget about the winter months. Your heating system needs to work as efficiently as possible to keep you warm, and a clean air filter helps it do just that.

Heating and cooling professionals recommend turning your system off before changing the air filter. Make sure that the arrow on the filter—which indicates the direction of the airflow—is pointing toward the blower motor. When you've made the change, turn your system back on.

A teachable moment

Beyond saving money and improving the air quality in your home, changing your air filter is a great opportunity to teach your family more about energy efficiency. Consider getting everyone involved, and the entire family will learn how simple changes can make a big difference. ■



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Legislation Would Strengthen Tie Between Our Peninsulas



Craig Borr
Michigan Electric
Cooperative Association
President and CEO

The Mackinac Bridge opened to vehicle traffic between the upper and lower peninsulas nearly 60 years ago. To this day, it continues to be a vital commercial link, as well as a symbol of what Michiganders can do when we work together for our state's benefit.

Legislators in Lansing may soon have an opportunity to debate legislation that could be a similar "bridge" for enhanced

flows of electricity between our two peninsulas. But it will take a great deal of determination and willpower to move this legislation forward. There are likely to be many detractors—as there were when we built the "Mighty Mac".

Legislation was recently introduced in the Michigan Legislature that could result in the development of an additional high-voltage transmission link between the peninsulas. The Senate version of SB 282 was introduced by Sen. Tom Casperson, while the House version, HB 4575, was introduced by Rep. Triston Cole.

Currently, our two peninsulas do not operate as one when it comes to electricity. Michigan policy, utilities and regulators control the Lower Peninsula, while Wisconsin interests and utilities dominate the Upper Peninsula. All too often these competing interests and policies do not align—and customers are caught in the middle.

In addition to creating a more robust electrical tie, the legislation would form one "resource adequacy zone" to include both peninsulas, as well as increase reliability by reducing electrical "congestion" costs involved in the flow of energy between the peninsulas.

These congestion costs are a hidden tax in the cost of electricity. Portions of the northern Lower Peninsula as well as the Upper Peninsula have some of the highest

congestion costs. Residents who live in these congested areas have higher electric costs because of this "hidden tax". These costs could be dramatically reduced, and in some cases eliminated, if we as a state have the will to invest in a more robust transmission link between the peninsulas.

Since most of Michigan's electric cooperatives are net buyers of wholesale electricity, this legislation could create more competitive markets with additional buyers and sellers of wholesale energy, as well as renewable energy—and that should provide tangible long-term benefits for electric cooperative consumers.

This legislation could also expedite the development of newer, cleaner generating capacity for the Upper Peninsula—an area of our state that recognizes all too well what can happen when there is only one significant generation resource and no meaningful way to access bulk electricity from the Lower Peninsula, where most of Michigan's electrical generating capacity is currently located.

Further development of renewable energy, particularly wind, can also be enhanced with additional connectivity between the peninsulas. The Thumb region of Michigan's Lower Peninsula has been identified as the best region for developing wind energy. A more robust transmission link will allow us to export wind from the Thumb area to the Upper Peninsula—or perhaps export wind from the Great Plains and Upper Midwest to utilities throughout Michigan.

If Michigan legislators have the fortitude to enact this legislation and we eventually fund and construct a new, more robust transmission link between our peninsulas, I believe we will look back someday, like we often do when crossing the "Mighty Mac", and feel a very real sense of accomplishment that we as Michiganders have done something to benefit many generations.

Time will tell. ■





ALL-AMERICAN FAVORITE BURGERS

Enjoy new twists on well-known favorites.

Bratburger Summertime Sliders



1 pkg. bratwurst
1 lb. 80/20 ground beef
2 pkg. pretzel dinner rolls

Onion Jam

3 T. butter
¼ c. olive oil
2½ lb. sweet onion, sliced thin
¼ c. balsamic vinegar
1 T. fresh thyme leaves (or 1 t. dried)
1 c. pure maple syrup
salt and pepper

Remove bratwurst from casing and mix bratwurst and burger until evenly combined. Make small patties to match the size of your rolls. Salt and pepper to taste and grill or pan fry burgers to taste. Slice rolls, add burgers and top with onion jam and arugula, if desired. To make onion jam, melt butter and olive oil in a dutch oven. Add onions and sauté on low, stirring occasionally for 15–20 minutes. There should not be any “color” or browning; this process will evaporate the extra water in the onions and concentrate the sweet onion flavors. “Low and slow” is the ticket here. When the onions are soft but not quite translucent, add balsamic vinegar, maple syrup and thyme, and cook until liquid is incorporated into onion mixture. Put into 2–3 jars and enjoy! May keep in refrigerator for up to three weeks. Hot water bath or freeze and keep 6 months. Great on grilled fare, pizzas, and omelettes.

Denise Chapel, Gaylord

Bacon Blue Cheeseburger *(pictured)*

½ lb. bacon, cut into ¼ inch slices
2 lb. 90% lean ground hamburger
½ t. garlic powder
½ t. onion powder
salt and pepper, to taste
1½ c. crumbled blue cheese
8 burger buns
lettuce
sliced tomatoes
sliced onions
your choice of condiments

In a large skillet, cook sliced bacon until crispy. Remove from skillet and drain on paper towel; discard fat or save for other use. Mix bacon with the hamburger and add the garlic powder, onion powder, salt and pepper. Divide the burger mixture into 8 portions. Divide each portion in half and flatten into patties ¼-inch thick, using waxed paper. Place 2 T. blue cheese in center of 4 patties and top with another patty. Seal by pressing edges together. Cook in large skillet or grill until medium well, or your choice of doneness. Remove from heat and place onto bottom half of buns, and top with more blue cheese and favorite toppings. Serves 4.

Ann Brown, Niles

SUBMIT YOUR RECIPE!

Thanks to all who send in recipes. Please send in your favorite “Candy” recipes by **Aug. 1** and “Easy Chicken” recipes by **Sept. 1**.

Enter your recipe online at countrylines.com or send to (handprinted or typed on one side, please): *Country Lines* Recipes, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, MI 48864. Please note the co-op from which you receive your electric service.

Contributors whose recipes we print in 2015 will be entered in a drawing and *Country Lines* will pay the winner’s January 2016 electric bill (up to \$200)!

Photos—831 Creative

Chefs Celebrate Local Bounty at LES CHENEAUX SCHOOL



Student chefs from L to R: Tina Nye, Morgan McLeod, Katie Keller, Executive Chef Zach Schroeder, Carie Birkmeier, Matt Nelson, Sean Hammond, Instructor Chef Ryan Junglas, and Dave Sheffler.

Photo-Bonnie Mikkelsen

The springtime forests surrounding Michigan's Les Cheneaux Islands offer up rich carpets of leeks and morels. The sparkling waters of Lake Huron provide a steady supply of fresh, succulent fish. Locally-derived pork, beef, lamb and buffalo as well as poultry, eggs and handmade cheeses, are plentiful. In summer, local fields yield an abundance of healthy, organically grown vegetables and fruits. And the chefs-in-training at Les Cheneaux Culinary School are busily gathering this magical harvest and learning to create uniquely Michigan gourmet cuisine from this exquisite local bounty.

Located on the northern shore of Lake Huron, the 36 wooded Les Cheneaux Islands are often described as "shoreline gems," and the Les Cheneaux Culinary School

may just be the newest jewel in the crown. Opened in September 2014, the school is located in the quaint 170-year-old village of Hessel and is housed in the former Hessel Bay Inn. The building has been meticulously renovated to reflect the iconic charm of the old boat houses dotting the channels that weave throughout the islands. The 5,000 square foot facility includes a state-of-the-art kitchen, a thoughtfully designed 55-seat rustic-modern dining room and a deck offering lovely views of the local marina and waterways. Also featured is a uniquely-designed indoor/outdoor bar where one can enjoy house specialties including a fresh rhubarb martini.

With a class size restricted to eight students, the school provides a year of hands-on experience in a real-time professional kitchen environment. "The small class size

"The sky's the limit as far as the quality of fine food in the U.P. if I can teach them how relatively easy it can be to source this food locally."



Dark Chocolate Raspberry Cake with almond tuille and a trio of berry coulis from Mill's farm.



A dish created by student chef Tina Nye and served at the Spring Wine Dinner: Smoked Trout Cakes made with King's Fish Market Lake Trout with horseradish aioli served over a bed of charred asparagus.



Buffalo Carpaccio crusted with mixed peppercorns and dressed with shards of Parmesan and baby arugula.



Student chefs Carie Birkmeier and Katie Keller pictured with Rhubarb Frasier Cakes that they created.

and the nature of the school allows the students to live, learn and share their love of and appreciation for fine food, while honing their cooking skills" according to Program Director and Executive Chef Zachary Schroeder. A St. Ignace area native, Schroeder states that "Fresh and local is our main theme and the niche that separates us. We go out and work with farmers, teaching students how to best source from the farmers and utilize that food." He says that they can obtain a superior product at an affordable, sometimes slightly higher price than would a typical restaurant using large distributors of product from random sources. "The students will learn a different process than those taught using typical restaurant suppliers. The sky's the limit as far as the quality of fine food in the U.P. if I can teach them how relatively easy it can be to source this food locally."

Having spent most of their year-long course immersed in learning to source and prepare an elevated local cuisine, summer finds the chefs-in-training throwing open the doors of the school's charming dining room—

inviting in the dining public along with the much-anticipated summer lake breezes. From mid-May to early September the students learn all aspects of restaurant management and service in a real-world environment while offering an utterly unique local dining experience.

Fine dining on locally harvested, organically-grown foods is a concept enjoying a worldwide resurgence. This makes increasing sense economically, environmentally and for reasons of health. While students emerging from the Les Cheneaux Culinary School are certainly equipped to carry their skills and experience in farm-to-table cuisine anywhere in the world, there is always the chance that—in an echo of the school's own credo—the local area will benefit, too. Pickford native and culinary school student Katie Keller, 21, isn't sure of her plans yet, but says, "I'm seriously giving thought to perhaps becoming a chef on a Great Lakes freighter." As with a restaurant menu, she has many options from which to choose.

For more information, including dining hours and dates, go to lcculinary.org or call (906)484-4800. ■



Acrylic on canvas of a factory ceiling by John Dempsey.

Home is Where the Art Is

Local Co-op Artists on ArtPrize

Coined the largest open art competition in the world—Grand Rapid’s ArtPrize has made its mark on the art world. It has been covered by the likes of *The New York Times* and *GQ* and lauded as both a great art experiment and lambasted as the art equivalent of a reality TV show.

The art competition opens up to any adult artist with the \$50 entry fee and a venue willing to act as its pop-up gallery for the event. When it launched in 2009, no one knew what to expect, but after the first week local restaurants had run out of food, hotels were booked solid and over 200,000 people came from around the country to check out the phenomenon. The big twist is the two \$200,000 grand prizes and eight category awards, resulting in more than \$500,000 awarded by both the public and a jury of art experts.

Whether you love the artful canvas that Grand Rapids becomes once a year or prefer your art in a climate-controlled museum amongst whispered commentary—ArtPrize has some very real rewards for Michigan artists.

“A large number of people see my work at ArtPrize. It is a large-scale event by any measure,” says John Dempsey, who lives on the Ocqueoc River and is a member of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op. “The number of people who come to see ArtPrize is extremely large



Colleen Whittaker’s Michigan map is made from authentic license plates fitted together like a puzzle.



Craig Snook's artwork, created with shredded paper, makes a kaleidoscope of colors that represents the beauty of a Michigan woodland landscape.



Lily Lihting Li Kostrzewa's "urban interweave" artwork is acrylic and mixed media on canvas.

compared to all of the other exhibition opportunities available to the vast majority of contemporary artists."

A Traverse City artist and member of Cherryland Electric Cooperative, Royce Deans says that with the sheer volume of people having exposure to his artwork, the feedback is immediate and thrilling. "ArtPrize is a good place to try out some new ideas in front of people. It can be a little dangerous."

The opportunities that ArtPrize exposes participating artists to can be anything from potential buyers, connections with fellow artists and even future employers. Grand Rapids artist and member of Great Lakes Energy Cooperative, Lily Lihting Li Kostrzewa credits her current teaching position at Kendall College of Art and Design to her participation in ArtPrize. Lily's daughter, Isabella Kostrzewa, entered the ArtPrize young filmmaker awards and won second place. Her prize allowed her to purchase video equipment to continue her passion.

While exposure to a massive audience and opportunities is rewarding, many artists have also benefited on a very personal level.



Royce Deans' "kitsch 2 kunst" is a matrix of 36 panels with original paintings.

"I gained a lot of confidence as an artist," says Craig Snook, an artist who splits his time between Saginaw and Lakeview, and is a member of HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative. "It was a great learning experience and it is fun being known as an 'ArtPrize artist'."

Colleen Whittaker, a Traverse City artist and member of Cherryland Electric Cooperative, says overhearing people comment on her artwork allowed her to capture uncensored opinions from the public. "The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, but the ones I remember are the critical comments—which I keep in mind while creating new work. Feedback from such a wide variety of people is invaluable in my quest to create art that appeals to a wide range of people while still being true to my artistic vision." ■

**ArtPrize 2015 will take place
Sept. 23–Oct. 11. Visit Artprize.org
for more information.**

A Magical Migration



Come early fall, clouds of monarch butterflies will paint the skies of Delta County in a breathtaking natural spectacle as they suddenly take flight by the thousands. This stunning annual show draws spectators eager to observe this phenomenon. The county's Stonington Peninsula, and in particular the cedar trees and lands surrounding the Peninsula Point Lighthouse, become a stopping off point for the delicate travelers during their 1,900-mile journey to El Rosario, Mexico. The exquisite insects, with wings resembling fine stained glass, spend summers in the U.P., taking full advantage of the county's unique conditions, more specifically, of a vital and increasingly hard-to-find plant species found on the surrounding lands: the milkweed.

Milkweed is critical for the survival of monarchs, as it is the host plant for this iconic butterfly species. Without it, they cannot complete their life cycle and their populations decline. Continuing eradication of milkweed both in agricultural areas as well as urban and suburban landscapes is one of the primary reasons monarchs are in trouble today. Monarch butterflies need milkweed to lay their eggs, and caterpillars only eat milkweed plants. Interestingly, milkweed also provides a natural protection against one of the monarchs' predators—birds—as it provides a toxin they retain as a result of dining on milkweed.

Researchers began documenting and studying the migration of the monarch in 1994, hoping to learn how to best protect this beloved and increasingly threatened species. In 1996, working with personnel from the U.S. Forest Service's Rapid River Ranger District and Wildlife Unlimited of Delta County, numerous volunteers spend the summer monitoring each stage of the monarch's life. They track from when they return to the U.P. area to lay their eggs—only on milkweed plants—to when they mature, and again migrate to follow their ancestral paths to their winter grounds in Mexico.

Can a committed group of volunteers counting larvae in upper Michigan have a true impact upon the survival of this globally renowned species? In the words of legendary American cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead, "Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing

that ever has." The internationally recognized project efforts in Delta County have resulted in one of the longest-standing monarch butterfly data sets in North America. The numbers are the result of weekly field counts, by volunteers, of chrysalis and larvae throughout the summer. Volunteers also tag the monarchs by carefully capturing them and placing an adhesive sticker the size of a pinkie fingernail on the wing and then releasing them.

According to Sue Jamison, a retired teacher and 13-year volunteer with the program, "The tagging process has proven that monarchs on the Stonington Peninsula have actually made their way to Mexico. These butterflies won't survive to make a return trip to the U.P., but their descendants will." It is imperative that the butterflies winter in Mexico, where they mate. The female will lay her eggs, dying shortly after. It is this next generation that instinctively begins the ancient northern trek. "In effect, we go through second and third generations from one fall to the next. The butterflies 'kids and grandkids' end up returning to the U.P." As anybody with northern Michigan roots knows, this phenomenon isn't exclusive to butterflies.

The best time to see the monarchs on the Stonington Peninsula is late August. For more information, contact the Rapid River District Ranger office at 906.474.6442. ■



Volunteer Therese Fix tags a monarch by placing a small tag on the wing, while Gina Badgett records the data. The tag number, date and sex of the butterfly are recorded.

Photos by USFS Wildlife Biologist Janet Kudell-Ekstrum



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

Almost one-half of Michigan is comprised of water, so it's easy to see why Michigan boasts a thriving recreational industry and leads the nation with approximately 1 million registered pleasure boats. For boating and water safety, there are items you must legally have on your watercraft—life vests, fire extinguisher, throwable flotation device, and properly working lights—but make sure the boat and the dock are safe, too.

July 2012 saw some horrific fatal accidents near boats and boat docks.

A 26-year-old woman was swimming with family in the Lake of the Ozarks and was electrocuted when she touched an energized dock ladder. Also at Lake of the Ozarks, a 13-year-old girl and her 8-year-old brother received fatal electrical shocks while swimming near a private dock; officials cited an improperly grounded circuit as the cause. In Tennessee, two boys, ages 10 and 11, lost their lives as they were shocked while swimming between house boats on Cherokee Lake, a result of on-board generator current apparently entering the water through frayed wires beneath the boat. 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 for more tips.

One Last Mission

World War II seems like ancient history to a lot of folks. After all, it ended nearly 70 years ago! Never mind that 16 million Americans served, and over 400,000 lost their lives in a war spanning 61 countries. Despite the staggering statistics, school history books dedicate little more than a page or two to what many today call “The Greatest Generation.”

Recently, I was privileged to join 150 WWII veterans and volunteers as they set off to rewrite a page in history during a “Tour of Honor” thanks to Mid-Michigan Honor Flight. Embarking on a one-day tour of Washington, D.C., that included stops to Arlington National Cemetery, Iwo Jima and of course, the National World War II Memorial, veterans learned first-hand the scope of this country’s gratitude.

Dedicated in 2004, the WWII Memorial serves as a fitting tribute to the magnitude of this global conflict. Set between the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial, stone architecture, bronze sculptures and water features pay homage to both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters. More impressive, though, were the tourists who stopped to salute or shake hands with members of the Honor Flight as they walked by. Hearing young and old alike say “thank you” reminded me that in an era when history might be lost to the archives, there are still many who care.

Averaging 92 years old, many veterans pass before having an opportunity to see the monument built in their honor. Honor Flights transport WWII and terminally ill veterans to Washington, D.C., where they can visit the memorials dedicated to their service and sacrifice. Paired with an attentive guardian, each vet was personally escorted from one memorial to the next with a volunteer staff of medics on-call in case of emergency. Every effort is made to make this a once-in-a-lifetime experience. From the corridor of flags lining a path to the departure gate at Cherry Capital Airport to the Pin Curl Girls singing us off at Reagan International Airport to the welcome home celebration at the U.S. Coast Guard Base in Traverse City, no detail was overlooked.



And while attention to detail is obviously critical to the enjoyment and safety of those participating in an Honor Flight, the unplanned displays of gratitude were often the most touching. A man walking through Arlington National Cemetery dropping his bags to salute our three-bus motorcade. A group of middle school students stopping to give thanks. A tour guide inviting a veteran to share his story. A veteran commenting softly in front of the Freedom Wall, “I never thought I’d see this.”

Reporting for WTCM Radio, I wasn’t paired with a veteran like most others traveling that day. Still, I had a few sentimental moments of my own. As I silently thanked my dad for his service in the Pacific Theatre as a member of the Fifth Air Force in New Guinea, I had the undeniable feeling he was with me while I paid reverence to a monument he didn’t live to see.

Harry Truman once said, “Our debt to the heroic men and valiant women in the service of our country can never be repaid. They have earned our undying gratitude. America will never forget their sacrifices.” Within the next five years, most, if not all of our WWII veterans will be gone, and with them, a living piece of history. So the next time you see one, say ‘thanks’. Because we all know freedom isn’t free. And it’s never too late to thank a veteran. ■



Jack O'Malley



Mystery Photo Contest Winner

The May 2015 Mystery Photo contest winner is Michael Mattox, a Midwest Energy Cooperative member who correctly identified the photo as “Turnip Rock” in Port Austin, MI, just off the shore in Lake Huron. The unique shape of the rock-island is the result of thousands of years of erosion by storm waves.

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