

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



Plus!

Co-op Completes New Substation

Enter Our Photo Contest!

Quilting Threads Its
Way Through A Life

Partners For
POWER

Michigan Electric Co-ops Help Bring Power
To Buena Vista, Guatemala



CUT YOUR GAS BILLS IN HALF LITERALLY.

Imagine eliminating the need for gas, propane or fuel oil and **drastically reducing your energy bills**. WaterFurnace geothermal systems tap into the **clean, renewable energy** in your own backyard to provide **savings up to 70% on heating, cooling and hot water**. They're safer, more comfortable and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. For more information, contact your local WaterFurnace dealer today. Now get out those scissors.

YOUR LOCAL WATERFURNACE DEALERS

Bad Axe

B & D Htg
(989) 269-5280

Berrien Springs

WaterFurnace
Michiana
(269) 473-5667

Big Rapids

Stratz Htg & Clg, Inc.
(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 Plmb & Htg
(231) 238-7201

Jackson/Adrian

Comfort 1 Htg & A/C
(517) 764-1500

Kalkaska

Kalkaska Plmb & Htg
(231) 258-3588

Mt Pleasant

Walton Htg & Clg
(989) 774-1566

Muskegon

Adams Htg & Clg
(231) 873-2665

Muskegon

Kiessel Geothermal
Htg & Clg
(231) 747-7509

Portland

ESI Htg & Clg
(517) 647-6906

Sunfield

Mark Woodman
Plmb & Htg
(517) 886-1138

Traverse City

Geofurnace Htg & Clg
(231) 943-1000

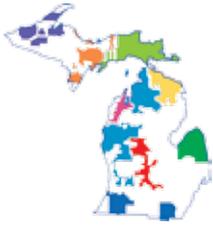
Traverse City

D & W Mechanical
(231) 941-1215



visit us at waterfurnace.com





Michigan's Electric Cooperatives
countrylines.com

January 2016
Vol. 36, No. 1

Executive Editor
Casey Clark

Editor
Christine Dorr

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 Lansing, MI, and additional offices. It is the official publication of the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association, 201 Townsend St., Suite 900, Lansing, MI 48933.

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

POSTMASTER: SEND ALL UAA TO CFS.

Association officers are **Robert Kran**, Great Lakes Energy, chairman; **Mark Kappler**, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric, vice chairman; and **Eric Baker**, Wolverine Power Cooperative, secretary-treasurer. **Craig Borr** is president and CEO.

CONTACT US:
Michigan Country Lines
201 Townsend St., Suite 900
Lansing, MI 48933
248-534-7358
cdorr@meca.coop

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.

ON THE COVER*

Ofelia De Leon (far left), of Buena Vista, with his family and lineworkers when the lights came on in their home for the very first time. Ofelia had the honor of flipping the switch, and when the light came on the room radiated with happiness—lots of laughter, and tears. Linemen (L-R) Tom Ulatowski, Cherryland, Dan King, MECA, and Tony Reichle, Great Lakes Energy.

*Some co-op editions have a different cover.

Cover photo by Garrett Hubbard



IN YOUR WORDS

Question of the Month—We Asked, You Answered.

Last month, we asked electric co-op members a question: If you could have a lifetime supply of anything, what would it be? Thank you for all the responses. Here are some answers from our members...

"Love, good health, happy family & friends, great weather and a very large pay check to share."

"Burgers and fries from Clyde's Restaurant in Manistique, MI."

"If I could have a lifetime supply of anything, it would be free electricity. I am 90 years old, a World War II Veteran, and have a bronze star (along with many other medals). I've been a member of Great Lakes Energy most of my life. My wife and I have been married 70 years this coming July. God Bless."

"Wisdom."

"Unwavering Faith."

Our new Question of the Month is:

If you could only have one meal for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Please submit answers to countrylines.com by Feb. 1.

6 **OUR ENERGY AND SAFETY**
Saving Energy In The Kitchen
Brian Sloboda

Be Prepared For Winter Storms
Abby Berry

10 **HOME COOKING**
Warm Up With Comforting Chili Recipes
Christin McKamey & Our Readers

14 **FEATURE**
Partners For Power In Guatemala: It Takes A Village
Emily Haines Lloyd

18 **READERS' PAGE**
Michigan Quilt Maker
Jack O'Malley

Guess Our New Mystery Photo



**500 J.K. Paul Street
Ontonagon, MI 49953**
Phone: 906-884-4151
Toll-free: 800-562-7128
After hours: 866-639-6098

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

Calvin Koski, President
 Aura/Skaneec District
 906-524-6988
 cgkoski@up.net

Frances Wiideman, Vice-President
 Lake Mine/Toivola District
 906-288-3203
 fwiideman@alphacom.net

Randy Myhren, Secretary/Treasurer
 Green/Firesteel District
 906-884-4092

Wayne Heikkinen, Director
 Pelkie/Keweenaw Bay/Herman District
 906-353-6496
 wayneheikkinen@yahoo.com

Paul Koski, Director
 Ewen/Trout Creek District
 906-988-2593
 pkoski@jamadots.com

George Rajala, Director
 Chassell District
 906-370-0416
 rajgeo50@yahoo.com

Thomas List, Director
 Boston/Lake Linden District
 906-337-4005
 thomasflist@hotmail.com

PERSONNEL

Debbie Miles, General Manager

Fay Hauswirth, Billing Clerk

Bill Tucker, Line Superintendent

OTHER INFORMATION

Date of Incorporation: Sept. 30, 1937
Fiscal year-end: Dec. 31
countrylines.com/coops/ontonagon

Ontonagon County REA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

There Is A Cooperative Difference

While all electric utilities offer the same product, where it comes from makes a difference.



Debbie Miles
General Manager

In the U.S., the vast majority of people receive their electricity from one of three types of utilities: investor-owned, municipal-owned or through their electric cooperative, which is owned and controlled by the people who use it. Let's take a closer look at these ownership models and see why it matters to you.

In the investor-owned model, the corporation is owned by a great number of stockholders who may or may not be real customers of the utility.

Investor-owned utilities tend to be very large corporations such as Integrys, UPPCO or We Energies. They serve large cities, suburban areas and some rural areas, too. In most cases, investor-owned utilities (IOUs) have few employees in the communities where they operate. This, combined with the fact that they have outside investors whose sole motive is to make a profit on their investment, tends to lead to less personalized service. Consumer surveys confirm that IOUs have the lowest customer satisfaction ratings. About 72 percent of the U.S. population is served by investor-owned utilities.

Municipal electric systems, as the name implies, are government-owned. They can serve large cities, like Los Angeles, Austin or Orlando, or smaller areas, like Marquette, L'Anse, or Negaunee. In municipal systems, the city runs the utility with little to no meaningful oversight from the citizens. About 16 percent of the market is served by municipal utilities.

Rural electric cooperatives serve the smallest number of consumers, about 12 percent of the market, which equals 42 million people. There are over 800 other electric co-ops in 47 states in addition to Ontonagon REA. While co-ops serve the fewest number of people, our electric lines cover more than 75 percent of the U.S. landmass. This is because we provide power where others once refused to go because of the low population density and lower profit margin. Electric co-ops rank highest in member satisfaction among the three types of utilities. We believe this is because we serve member-owners, not customers.

As the electric utility business continues to evolve, we are committed to being there for you, our members, to provide for your electric energy needs. Unlike large IOUs, we are rooted right here in the Upper Peninsula. Over the years, we have answered the call to provide additional benefits and services because it is extremely important to us that our community thrives and prospers. There is a cooperative difference. You own us, and we are here to serve! ■

New Co-op Substation Completed

The Ontonagon County REA (OCREA) Board of Directors is pleased to announce the completion of their new substation, with a tap to the transmission line, to service their members in the Boston Location. According to OCREA general manager, Debbie Miles, "This has been a long process. Land was purchased for the substation in June of 2006 and the Cooperative had been trying, since that time, to get approval for the transmission tap, which was key to additional capacity and reliability, particularly for the tenants of the Airpark."

The Ontonagon County REA is the smallest cooperative in Michigan, with limited resources. In June of 2013 Wolverine Power Cooperative, of Cadillac, MI, in keeping with the cooperative way, offered their extensive resources. Once Wolverine became involved, the project started to move forward, but it was still another two years to get all of the documents executed between OCREA, Rural Utilities Services (RUS) and ATCLLC (American Transmission Company LLC) before construction could begin. Wolverine designed the substation and that design had to be approved by RUS. Bids were let for the project in the spring with Hydaker Wheatlake of Reed City, MI, being awarded the contract. Work began on the substation on July 6th and was completed and the load transferred, without a blink, on Nov. 6, 2015.



Pictured at the completed Boston substation are (L-R) are Bob Siekas (Wolverine Power), Jeff Ratcliffe (Keweenaw Economic Development Alliance, director), Gene Londo (Airport Committee), Calvin Koski (president, Ontonagon County REA board), Al Koskela (Airport Committee), and Dennis Hext (airport manager).

The lengthy process and collaboration paid off as they resulted in, according to Miles, "Truly a milestone accomplished and a step forward for our member owned coop." The new substation is located on Boston Road, approximately 1.5 miles northwest of the Airpark and is strategically positioned to accommodate future growth. ■

There's A Story In Every Photo



Ontonagon County REA is pleased to announce our new "Photo Contest." Co-op members are invited to submit their amazing photos. Selected photos will be published in *Michigan Country Lines* during 2016. Upcoming topics and deadlines are: "**Winter Fun,**" due **Jan. 15** for the March issue; and "**Saluting Armed Forces,**" due **March 15** for the May issue. Details and instructions for photo submission—including rules, topic list, publication date, and submission deadlines—can be found at <http://bit.ly/1JX5Afh>.

We look forward to seeing your best shot!

Saving Energy In The Kitchen

By Brian Sloboda

Most of us spend a lot of time in the kitchen. Whether you are considering replacing an appliance or simply looking for ways to be more efficient, here are some tips to help you save energy—and money.

Most people don't think about their refrigerator that often—as long as it's working. Older refrigerators use more energy. Upgrading this appliance can bring a major return on your investment. Look for rebate programs, too!

Cooking also uses a lot of energy. To save energy while cooking, placing the lid on a pot of boiling water will trap heat and cause the water to boil faster. And there is no need to preheat the oven when cooking a large piece of meat, like a turkey or ham (you do need to preheat when baking, or cooking smaller dishes). If you are planning on using the oven for a long period of time, consider turning

down your home's thermostat. Cooking will add warmth to the home because the heat from the oven can raise the temperature in the kitchen and surrounding rooms.

Even after the meal is over, you can save energy. Make sure your dishwasher is full before it's started. Next, make sure you are using the right setting on your dishwasher. Newer models have sensors that detect how clean your dishes are. When these "auto" cycles are used, they will get dishes clean without wasting energy or water. The sanitize setting should rarely be used since it is energy intensive. It is also a good idea to make sure the filter at the bottom of the washtub is cleaned to help the washer work at its optimal level.

As you can see, there are many different ways to practice efficiency in the kitchen, and maybe even save enough money to have dinner out sometimes! ■

Be Prepared For Winter Storms

By Abby Berry

When winter temperatures drop and storms hit, it can be challenging to stay safe and warm. Your electric cooperative cares about your safety, and we want you to be prepared.



Heavy snow and ice can lead to downed power lines, leaving you without power. During a power outage, our crews will continue to work as quickly and safely as possible to restore power, but there are a few things you can do to prepare yourself.

- **Stay warm** – Use a safe alternate heating source, such as a fireplace or wood-burning stove, during a power outage. Exercise caution when using, and never leave the heating source unattended.

If you are using gasoline, propane or natural gas-burning devices to stay warm, never use them indoors. Remember that fuel and wood-burning sources of heat should always be properly ventilated. Always read the manufacturer's directions before using.

- **Stay fed** – Be sure to have several days' supply of food on hand. Crackers, cereal, canned goods, bread, and other foods that do not need to be cooked, are good options. Five gallons of water per person should also be available in the event of an extended power outage.
- **Stay safe** – When an outage occurs, it usually means power lines are down. Try not to travel during winter storms, but if you must, bring a survival kit along, and do not travel alone. If you encounter downed lines, always assume they are live and stay as far away from them as possible.

Winter weather can be unpredictable and dangerous, and planning ahead is important. For more winter safety tips, visit ready.gov/winter-weather. ■



Photo: Garrett Hubbard

Electric Cooperatives Donate Suitcases Packed With A Purpose

The recent Partners for Power team reached their goal to build an electric line extension in Guatemala that changed the lives of about 54 families in the small community of Buena Vista. But our team's work did not end there. The 10-person team distributed over 450 pounds of donated items sent over with the Partners For Power project.

The suitcases were filled by a team effort of employees from Cherryland Electric Cooperative, Great Lakes Energy, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric, Midwest Energy, Wolverine Power, and Cloverland Electric. The much needed items included school supplies, shoes, backpacks, toothbrushes, toothpaste, dental floss, mouthwash, stuffed animals, sweatshirts/t-shirts of all sizes, small sewing kits, stocking caps, baseball hats, soccer balls, a basketball, a football, air pumps, soccer nets, and basketball nets. The electric cooperatives were eager to help out and make a difference for the villagers in Buena Vista.

To distribute the supplies fairly, the team of linemen divided the items into three stations, grouped by age, so that everyone received something. "The villagers have worked so hard on this entire project with us," said Wolverine Power safety coordinator, Matt Monroe. "It was fun to be able to give their



families one more surprise before we headed back home."

Partners For Power also sent a basketball backboard, rim and hardware, along with individual pieces of plexiglass, glass cutters, and caulk to replace broken school windows in the village.

Read the full story about how Michigan electric cooperatives teamed up to "turn on the lights" in Buena Vista, Guatemala, on page 14. ■

Edna designed this piece in 1990, in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of Earth Day and titled it "Song for the Earth".



Quilting Threads Its Way Through A Life

By Yvonne Whitman

Edna Harbison-Yonker was born and raised as a "horse-and-buggy" Mennonite in Lancaster County, PA. During those simpler days, Edna watched her mother and aunts gather often for quilting bees that were part of a self-sustaining and industrious lifestyle. "I was always excited to see their fabrics and hear their ideas and see their finished quilts," Edna recalls. These impressions, along with the skills she acquired, would follow and serve her through many decades—and several states—providing necessary income and, ultimately, an award-winning career and thriving business.

Following a family move to Lower Michigan, Edna married her high school sweetheart, and they headed to Montana. "It was just after the Vietnam War and that had been a difficult time so we decided we wanted to live somewhere less crowded. It was beautiful there, but we couldn't afford the price of land." On their way back to Michigan, they detoured through the U.P. and fell in love with the entire area, but specifically Ontonagon, where they were able to buy 80 acres and build a small log cabin. "We had to get creative because we needed money, which is when I started

making quilted wall hangings," she explains. Having no electricity, Edna made her first quilts by hand-sewing each one. Edna's late husband created frames for them, and for 20 years they made a living by selling the pieces at art and craft shows throughout Wisconsin and Michigan.

The thread of quilting through her life led the couple to the 2001 purchase of a historic former grocery store in Ontonagon, which they dubbed "The Nonesuch Gallery," serving as a store and showplace for their unique work. When Edna's husband became ill and died in 2004, she was forced to expand her handcrafted offerings to include aprons, purses, note cards and even iPad holders.

Of the thousands of pieces Edna has created through the years, her favorite is a quilt entitled "Living a Dream," a piece inspired by her life in the U.P. At the behest of a friend, Edna submitted this quilt to "The All American Quilt Competition" sponsored by *Good Housekeeping* magazine and Land's End. Having already garnered over 40 national quilting awards, she knew that the year-away deadline would require a great deal of work, but she began the project hopefully. As the deadline loomed, Edna found herself working on the quilt every day for 12-16 hours. In the end, "Living a Dream" was chosen from



One of Edna's beautiful quilted creations. This original design is titled "Sailing Home."

4,000 other entries as the winning quilt from Michigan! As such, it was part of an invitational exhibit at the "International World's Fair of Quilts Show" in Houston, TX, displayed along with other winning state quilts. Unbeknownst to Edna, a team from the Library of Congress was also at the show to photograph and create a documentary titled, "Quilting in the '90s" for the Library of Congress Folk Life Center. They chose to feature 12 quilts from hundreds at the show, and Edna's made the cut. Since then, the quilt has been permanently displayed at the Nonesuch Gallery.

Edna's life took another fortuitous turn in 2006, when a Wisconsin tourist stopped into the shop. "We just started talking and became fast friends," Edna says. She and "the tourist," Brad Yonkers, married in 2007. "We became partners in life and in our work and are just so thankful to have found each other," she says. "It's a wonderful life." A talented craftsman, Brad has made considerable improvements to the store, including turning the lower level into a shop where he displays and sells an assortment of new and used acoustic instruments as well as his own handmade guitars.

When asked about the best part of having her own gallery and store, Edna thoughtfully responded, "The people. I get to meet so many interesting people and everyone has a story. I love that." Stop in sometime and share your story with Edna. ■

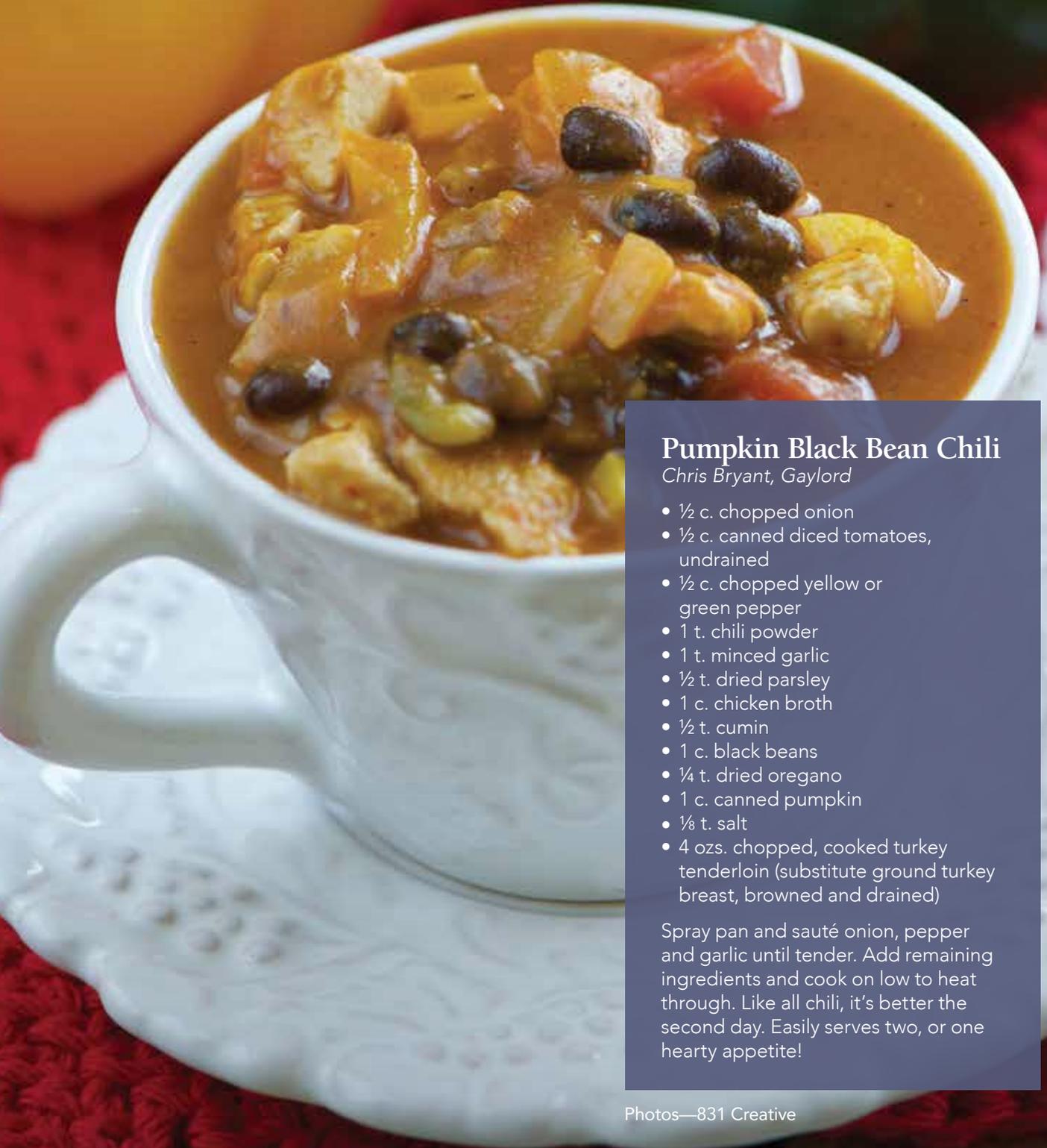
The Nonesuch Gallery is located at 638 River Street in Ontonagon and is open 10-5 Monday through Saturday, from November-April and daily, May through October.



Edna sits in the store in front of her prize winning "Living a Dream" quilt.

CHILI

Warm up this season with these comforting chili recipes.



Pumpkin Black Bean Chili

Chris Bryant, Gaylord

- ½ c. chopped onion
- ½ c. canned diced tomatoes, undrained
- ½ c. chopped yellow or green pepper
- 1 t. chili powder
- 1 t. minced garlic
- ½ t. dried parsley
- 1 c. chicken broth
- ½ t. cumin
- 1 c. black beans
- ¼ t. dried oregano
- 1 c. canned pumpkin
- ⅛ t. salt
- 4 ozs. chopped, cooked turkey tenderloin (substitute ground turkey breast, browned and drained)

Spray pan and sauté onion, pepper and garlic until tender. Add remaining ingredients and cook on low to heat through. Like all chili, it's better the second day. Easily serves two, or one hearty appetite!

Congratulations



to Ann Brown of Niles. Her name was drawn from all readers whose recipes we printed in 2015 and *Country Lines* will pay her January electric bill (up to \$200) as a prize.

Ann and her family have been Midwest Energy Cooperative members since her father built their home back in 1940. Her winning "Campfire Chicken" recipe was an original created by her mother. "My dad liked to grill and camp. When we couldn't go camping he would cook out in the backyard and this was a favorite recipe." Ann is a home healthcare nurse and enjoys cooking, sewing and knitting.



White Chicken Chili (pictured)

Donna Theriault, Petoskey

- 3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 T. olive oil + extra for drizzling on chicken
- 2 lg. onions, sliced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 c. chicken broth
- 1 c. dry white wine
- 2 cans Navy or cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- ½ c. lime juice
- 1 small can green chilies
- 1 T. ground coriander
- 1 t. ground oregano
- ½ t. ground cumin
- ¼ t. cinnamon
- 1 c. Monterey Jack

Drizzle olive oil, and sprinkle salt and pepper on chicken. Roast seasoned chicken on cookie sheet at 350° for 40 minutes, or until cooked through. Cool chicken and shred with fingers. Put 1 T. oil in large pot. Add onions and garlic and stir until onions are golden, about 20 minutes. Add broth and remaining ingredients, except cheese. Simmer for 15 minutes. Add cheese to melt just before serving.

Angie's Chili

Mary Scodeller, Lansing

- 1 ½ lbs. 80/20 ground beef
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 28-oz. cans whole tomatoes
- 2 15.5-oz. cans kidney beans
- 15.5-oz. can mild chili beans in chili sauce
- Spartan chili mix envelope
- 1 pkg. French's original chili seasoning mix
- ¼ t. salt
- ¼ t. pepper
- ¼ t. seasoning salt
- ¼ t. garlic powder
- ¼ t. chili powder
- ¼ t. ground cumin

Brown meat with the chopped onion. Drain fat, crush tomatoes and add to meat. Add all beans, seasoning mix, and other seasonings. Simmer on medium to high heat for 20 minutes, stirring constantly. Reduce heat and simmer another 30 to 45 minutes. Very good and great for a crowd.

SUBMIT YOUR RECIPE!

Thanks to all our readers who send in recipes. Please send in your favorite "Side Dish" recipes by **Feb. 1** and "Snacks and Appetizers" recipes by **March 1**.

A RECIPE WINNER EACH MONTH IN 2016!

Contributors whose recipes we print each month will be entered in a drawing and *Country Lines* will pay the winner's electric bill with a \$50 bill credit! A winner will be selected every month!

Enter your recipe online at countrylines.com or send to (handprinted or typed on one side, please): *Country Lines Recipes*, 201 Townsend St., Suite 900, Lansing, MI 48933. Please note the co-op from which you receive your electric service.



Rocking The Ranch— Fire And Ice Chili

Ted Herrst, Mancelona

- 2 lbs. pork butt
- 1 lb. ground beef or chorizo sausage (for more fire, use hot chorizo*)
- 1 c. bacon, fried crisp and crumbled
- 2 ½ T. hot chili powder
- 20-oz. can pineapple chunks, drained, reserve juice
- 4-oz. can green chilies, drained
- 2 roma tomatoes, diced
- 1 medium onion (½ sliced thin and separated into rings, ½ diced)
- 2 t. mesquite seasoning
- 1 T. jalapeño pickling juices, optional (or for more fire, use diced jalapeño peppers)
- 2 stalks celery, sliced and diced
- 1 green pepper, divided (½ sliced thin, ½ diced)
- 2 T. butter
- 24 oz. beer
- 2 14-oz. cans stewed tomatoes
- 6-oz. can tomato paste
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- ½ t. parsley
- 2 t. cumin

Toppings:

- 1 pt. sour cream
- 1 c. shredded cheese (pepper jack, colby, cheddar, etc. or a combination)
- 4 green onions, diced

Cut pork into ½ inch thick strips. Smoke over indirect heat until lightly browned (about 2 hours), then cut into bite sized cubes. In a Dutch oven, sauté sliced onions, celery and peppers in butter. Set aside. Brown ground meat with mesquite seasoning and jalapeño juice until crumbled. **If using hot chorizo sausage, omit the jalapeño pickling juice and mesquite seasoning.* Add beer, garlic, salt, pepper, parsley and bring to a boil.

Add tomato paste and heat until thin, stirring well. Transfer to slow cooker and add pineapple juice, chili powder, cumin, tomatoes, chilies, pork cubes, bacon, and sautéed pepper and onions. Cook on high setting 1 hour. Add diced onions and pepper. Simmer 1 hour. Add pineapple chunks, reduce to low setting and simmer ½ hour. Serve with a mix of shredded cheese, sour cream and chopped green onions. Serving suggestions: in a bowl or cup, over a baked potato, over mashed potatoes, or let your imagination go wild.

Judy's Chili

Judy Durrant, Portland

- 1 ½ lbs. ground beef
- 2 T. vegetable oil
- ½ small onion, chopped
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 1 pkg. French onion soup mix
- ½ t. salt
- 2 T. chili powder
- 2 t. ground cumin
- 1 t. oregano
- ½ t. black pepper
- 1 can chili beans
- 1 can black beans, rinsed
- 6-oz. can tomato paste
- 1 t. cocoa powder
- 1 c. coca cola
- 2 T. apple cider vinegar
- 1 can sloppy joe sauce
- 1 can diced tomatoes
- shredded cheddar cheese
- sour cream

Brown onion and green pepper in oil. Add hamburger and brown. Add the rest of the ingredients and simmer for at least 1 hour. Serve with chopped fresh onion, shredded cheddar cheese, and of sour cream.

>> What's on that pole?

This illustration shows basic equipment found on electric power distribution poles. Not all poles have all this equipment on them. They vary according to location and the service they provide.

>> **Primary wires** run on top. Each usually carries 7,200 volts of electricity from a substation.

>> A **crossarm** holds power lines, allowing required clearances between lines.

>> **Surge arrestors** protect the transformer from lightning strikes.

>> A **secondary service drop** carries 120/240-volts of electricity to the end user. It has two "hot" wires from the transformer, and a bare neutral wire connected to the ground wire on the pole.

>> **Telephone and cable TV lines** are typically the lowest wires.

>> A head-high "**birth-mark**" shows the size of the pole, as well as where and when it was made.

>> 40-foot **poles** are sunk six feet into the ground.

>> **Insulators** (made of porcelain or a composite) prevent energized wires from contacting each other or the pole.

>> The **neutral wire** acts as a line back to the substation and is tied to ground, balancing the electricity on the system.

>> **Transformers** convert higher voltage electricity from primary wires to lower voltage for use by consumers.

>> **Guy wires** help stabilize poles. They also are connected to the pole's ground wire.

>> **Pole ground wire**—running the length of the pole—connects to the neutral wire to complete the circuit inside the transformer. It also directs electricity from lightning safely into the earth.

>> Co-ops are responsible for **keeping vegetation around poles trimmed** to avoid interference with the electric system.

It Really Does Take A Village

Partners For Power

By Emily Haines Lloyd

Photo: Garrett Hubbard



In rural Guatemala, not far from the border with Mexico, is a tiny village called Buena Vista and it is just that—a “good view.” Set amongst the mountains, with peaks poking through the clouds—it’s a magical sight. At least during the day.

At night, the small town disappears into the fog banks and darkness due to a simple reality—Buena Vista did not have electricity.

Which is why in early 2015, Michigan electric co-ops partnered with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) International, an organization that helps developing countries gain access to safe, reliable and affordable electricity, to bring power to approximately 54 families in Buena Vista. Lineworkers from five electric co-ops in Michigan packed over 1,500 pounds of luggage, equipment and tools and traveled to Buena Vista to do just that.

“On the day we arrived, we realized that all of the villagers—men, women and children—had gathered there to greet us. It was humbling to see so many smiling faces, all filled with such joy and gratitude, because they knew we had come to help bring them electricity,” said Brad Parkhouse, HomeWorks





Photo: Garrett Hubbard

Tri-County lineworker. “They expressed how grateful they were to us for coming, and we told them how happy we were to be there. It was emotional, really.”

The Michigan lineworkers discovered that local residents had already hand-dug and set all of the electric poles. With the mountainous terrain, the lineworkers remarked how difficult that task was, particularly without the power tools that would have been used stateside for such an undertaking.

Over 12 days, the Michigan lineworkers and their unofficial team of about 40 local residents prepared poles (by climbing them the old fashioned way, no bucket trucks here) and hanging wire.

“I thought I was a hard worker until I met these people,” said Trevor Stratton, Wolverine Power lineworker. “They’re pulling wire into the valleys where the elevation drop is incredible...I don’t know how we could ever do this job without them.”

While electric power is taken for granted by those in the United States, it is seen as nothing short of a lifeline to this community—which is likely why the local people were so committed to making it happen

in their small town. It promises improvement in health care, safety, education and economic growth. Power is the spark that changes communities, provides opportunities, and ignites imaginations. While the social and economic impact is nothing short of staggering—the experience for the team of 10 linemen did not lie in the metrics, but the experience itself.

“One of the locals, Ofelia De Leon, invited several of us to be with his family when the lights came on in their house for the very first time,” said Dan King, Michigan Electric Cooperative Association safety instructor. “You could feel the anticipation in the air as we all gathered together inside their small mountain home. Ofelia had the honor of flipping the switch, and when the light came on everyone began clapping. The room radiated with happiness—there was plenty of smiling, laughter, and even some tears. It was a very emotional experience, and by far my proudest moment in 26 years of linework.” ■

For more information about Partners for Power and to see more amazing photos please visit partnersforpower.org.

New Year's Resolution—Peace Of Mind In 2016

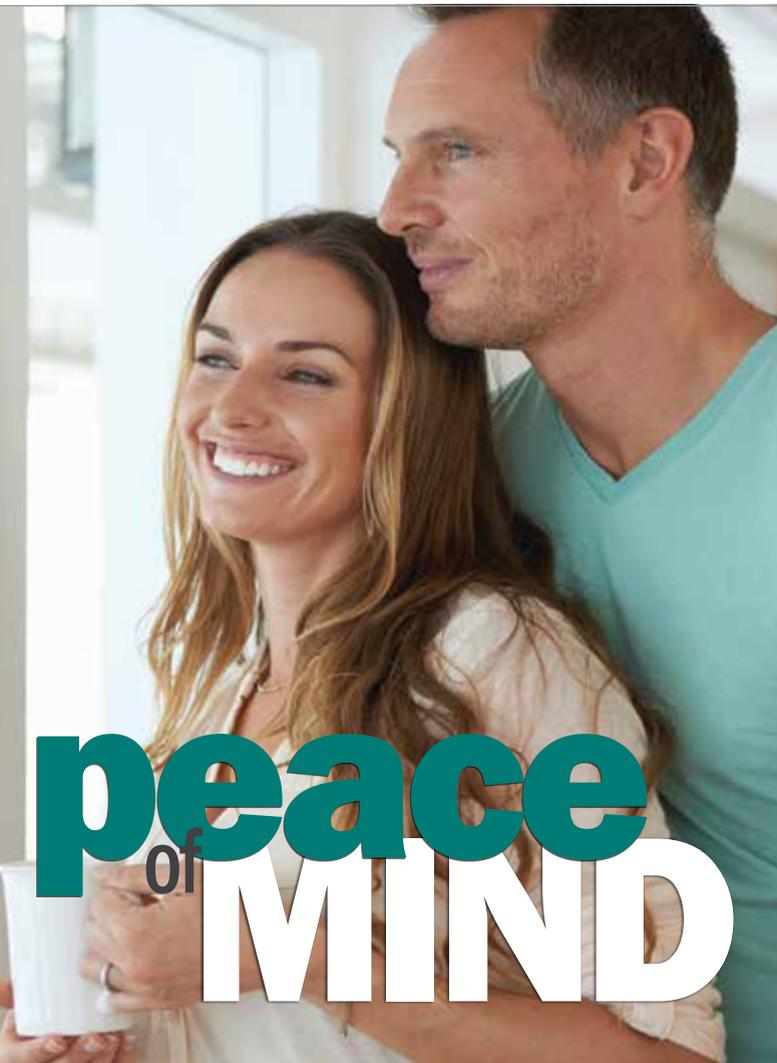
You know the story. The clock strikes midnight and millions of people make resolutions to change. But, if something is working great, why fix it? Our thoughts exactly. Ontonagon County REA is keeping its most popular 2015 Energy Optimization (EO) rebates for 2016, and adding a few new options. Ring in the New Year with savings and peace of mind by participating in some top rated rebates.

Make a resolution to manage your energy use in 2016 by taking advantage of these popular customer incentives, as well as a new option for smart occupancy-sensing thermostats.

Next Steps

For a complete list of EO rebates offered by Ontonagon County REA visit michigan-energy.org to see which solutions are right for you, or call us at 877-296-4319 if you have questions about applications or product eligibility. ■

Rebate Name	Incentive Amount
ENERGY STAR® television	31–40" = \$25 41–50" = \$25 51–60" = \$50
ENERGY STAR® dehumidifier	\$25
Efficient HVAC—furnaces with electric commutated motors (ECMs)	\$200
ENERGY STAR® refrigerator/freezer side-by-side	\$25
Programmable or Wi-Fi-enabled thermostat	\$20
Smart occupancy-sensing thermostat	\$50
Online home audit—Home Energy Optimizer	FREE energy-saving kit (\$30 value) and a list of energy efficient home improvement options



Peace of mind, comfort and savings

We provide the savings—you enjoy peace of mind while saving energy with our Energy Optimization program.

There are many ways to save, from appliances to lighting and maintaining the comfort of your home with our efficient HVAC programs. Visit Michigan-energy.org for a complete list of opportunities and rebates.

ENERGY TIP: Receive your rebate faster by using the online application.

ONLINE: 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.

Dial 2-1-1 For Heating, Other Help

Find help paying your utility bills this winter by dialing 2-1-1.

It's a free community health and human services information and referral service that connects eligible residents with energy payment assistance help, and much more. By simply dialing 2-1-1, available 24/7, callers are connected with a trained, caring professional who will confidentially assess their situation, identify their needs, and refer them to local resources for help.

While they vary by location, local resources include basic needs such as food, housing, shelter, temporary financial assistance, transportation, utility assistance, and more. In addition, local resources include mental health care and counseling, health care, individual/family life assistance and other services.

If you have trouble accessing 2-1-1, visiting the website at 211.org to search for the closest 2-1-1 provider in your area. You can also find program and contact information in the November-December issue of *Michigan Country Lines* magazine by visiting countrylines.com and choosing the "My Co-op" menu at the top. Then, click on "Ontonagon" and the November-December 2015 issue cover (see the Home Heating Assistance chart on p. 6).

Please remember to review Ontonagon County REA's Energy Optimization programs, too, for energy efficiency rebate offers. Visit michigan-energy.org for details or call 877-296-4319.

Helping our members with their energy costs is another way we're looking out for you.

How To Report An Outage

You hear a loud pop, almost like a gunshot, and suddenly you are sitting in the dark. Your power is out. What do you do first? Start by checking your breakers. Just do a simple off-and-on with your main breaker switch to determine if the problem is something within your own fuse panel. If that doesn't solve the problem, then you need to make sure that Ontonagon County REA is notified about your outage. It is very important that you notify us of a power outage: don't rely on your

neighbors to do it—you may be the only house without power! You can notify us by calling 906-884-4151 or toll-free 800-562-7128; or after hours at 866-639-6098. At that time, you will be able to report any important information that you may have concerning the outage, such as a fallen tree or a dead animal on the transformer. ■



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Tip of the Month

If you only want to heat or supplement inadequate heating in one room, small space heaters can be less expensive to use than your central heating system. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions for operating the heater safely.

Source: energy.gov



The Quilt Lady

By Jack O'Malley

Eleanor Howard's story began when she was eight years old and asked her mother how to quilt. As a team, they pieced together Eleanor's first quilt and 87 years later, she still has it. "I've used that quilt on all my children's beds. I pert near wore it out!"

Speaking of children, Eleanor has five. And 15 grandchildren, along with 20 great-grandchildren. Each one has a quilt lovingly stitched by grandma. In addition, Eleanor donates many of her quilts to charity. How many has she made? "Oh, too many to



count!" Of the dozens of quilts assembled in her 95 years, one in particular stands out.

She made the quilt for her son, Albert, carefully patching each piece over two years. The result? A quilt depicting the state of Michigan, including all 83 counties, each painstakingly cut to its exact shape and featuring the product or service it's



Jack O'Malley

known for. Using appliques, stenciling, embroidery and hand painting, Eleanor had no pattern. She bought the biggest map she could find and went to work on figuring scale. The detail of Eleanor's Michigan quilt catches everyone's eye and has won multiple medals and ribbons. ■



«« Where In Michigan Is This?

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

We do not accept Mystery Photo guesses by phone. Enter your guess at countrylines.com or send by mail to: *Country Lines* Mystery Photo, 201 Townsend St., Suite 900, Lansing, MI 48933. Include the name on your account, address, phone number, and name of your co-op.



Our Mystery Photo Contest Winner from the November/December 2015 issue is Brian Thompson, an Alger Delta co-op member who correctly identified the photo as "U.S.-31 Outlet Bridge in Charlevoix with the Emerald Isle boat."

KEEP YOUR POWER ON!

WHOLE HOUSE GENERATOR SYSTEMS
NOW AVAILABLE FROM



AMERICAN METAL ROOFS

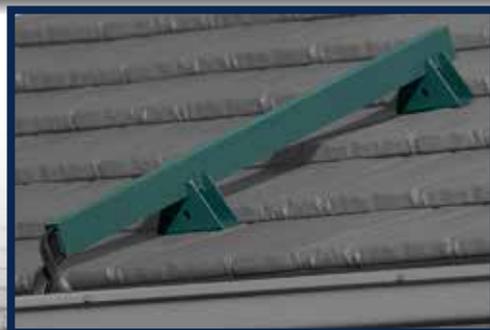


HEATED SHINGLE ICEDAM CUTTER

A NEW Product From American Metal Roofs

AMR introduces Ice Dam Cutter - designed to relieve your home's ice dam build-up. Ice Dam Cutter uses heat to melt channels in roof ice allowing water to flow freely. The open channels prevent ice damming and build-up.

CUT ICE DAMS FOREVER - CALL TODAY!



Installing through the Winter!

See our Photo Gallery and Enter our **SWEEPSTAKES** at

www.AmericanMetalRoofs.com

Visit the American Metal Roofs Showrooms at

6140 Taylor Dr., Flint, MI 48507 or 1875 Lansing Rd., Charlotte, MI 48813

844-METAL-ROOFS

844-638-2576





**Ontonagon County Rural
Electrification Association**



We Get Our Power From You.

Your electric cooperative is a special organization. Instead of out-of-town stockholders, we're owned by the people we serve. Instead of sending money out of town, we give back to the communities we serve. Most important, our consumers are our source of power and direction. You see, we're not just your electric service. We're your friends and neighbors. From the lineworkers to the board of directors. That's why all of us here at your electric co-op work so hard to deliver the best and most affordable electric service possible. We know that we can't deliver electricity without getting the power from you.