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Art
on
Ice



Plus!

Save The Date—
Annual Meeting Is June 18

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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.

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

Cover photo by Dre Photography

IN THIS ISSUE

- 6 **OUR ENERGY**
Down Home Comfort With Geothermal Heat Pumps
Ted Clutter
- 7 **SAFETY**
Staying Safe In A Car Accident With A Utility Pole
- 10 **HOME COOKING**
Perfect Pasta Recipes!
Christin McKamey & Our Readers
- 14 **FEATURE**
Art On Ice With Stephanie Miller
Emily Haines Lloyd
- 18 **READERS' PAGE**
Surf's Up—In Michigan!
Jack O'Malley
Guess Our New Mystery Photo

IN YOUR WORDS

Question Of The Month—We Asked, You Answered.

Last month, we asked electric co-op members a question: What is the best compliment you have ever received? Thank you for all the responses. Here are some of your answers:

Something that I would have abhorred as a teenager but treasure now —“You remind me of your mom.”

The best compliment I ever received was, “You’re as pretty as a keeper rainbow trout on the end of the line on opening day.” James and I have been best friends for 40 years and married for over 38 years.

You are a good listener.

Our new Question of the Month is:

If you could be any age for a week, what age would that be?

Please submit answers to countrylines.com by April 1.



A PROGRAM OF AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES
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Don't forget to vote in the presidential primary on March 8. Visit vote.coop for more information.



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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.

The Importance Of Member Engagement



Debbie Miles
General Manager

In 2012, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), the premier trade association representing approximately 900 electric cooperatives in 47 states, released a report entitled, "The Electric Cooperative Purpose—A Compass for the 21st Century." The findings of the blue ribbon task force comprised of a dozen co-op leaders from across the country were that an electric cooperative's purpose is to, "Power communities and empower members to

improve the quality of their lives."

Ontonagon REA is a member of NRECA and firmly believes that you, our members, need to be at the heart of everything we do. We are proud of the fact that we are different from investor-owned utilities where the primary purpose is to generate profit for their stockholders. Many of those stockholders don't live in the communities served by the utility. While Ontonagon REA must, of course, generate enough revenue to cover our costs, profit is not our primary motive. Serving you and your neighbors is our number one priority.

As the Electric Cooperative Purpose report noted, "Our story is about ordinary people that banded together to improve the quality of life by providing electricity to our community when no one else would do it." But that was many years ago. As we look to the future, we once again need your active participation in determining the future of our co-op.

Cooperatives enjoy the support of people from all walks of life. We operate in every type of business from agriculture, housing, finance, health care, technology, small business, food and many more. Co-ops can be found in the most rural to the most urban areas.

Ontonagon REA welcomes your input on what we can do to ensure we are meeting your needs. Board meetings are held monthly on the third Thursday of each month at 10 a.m., and there is time set aside for member comments. There is also time for member comments at our annual meeting, which will be held this year on June 18.

One thing you can absolutely count on from your locally owned electric co-op is that we are right here and ready to serve our members. ■

Your Board In Action

Meeting Dec. 17, 2015, your board of directors:

- Approved a motion to accept the agenda.
- Approved a motion to accept Nov. 19, 2015, minutes.
- Reviewed monthly reports, including financial, power supply cost recovery, and operations.
- Approved a motion to accept the Special Equipment Summary dated Oct. 31, 2015.
- Approved a motion to accept the 2016 operating and capital budgets.
- Approved a motion to extend the key accounts representative contract on a month-to-month basis.
- Approved the 2015 write-off list.

Meeting Jan. 21, 2016, your board of directors:

- Approved a motion to accept the agenda.
- Approved a motion to accept Dec. 17, 2015, minutes with changes.
- Reviewed monthly reports, including financial, power supply cost recovery, and operations.
- Approved a motion to accept work order inventory for periods ended Oct. 31, 2015, and Nov. 30, 2015, and special equipment summary for period ended Nov. 30, 2015.
- Plans for the annual meeting were discussed and it will be held in Chassell on Saturday, June 18, 2016.
- Redistricting was discussed and will continue at the February meeting.

- Approved a capital contribution to American Transmission Company.
- The "Conflict of Interest Board Policy" was reviewed and all members were asked to sign a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form.

Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month at the co-op office at 500 James K. Paul Street, Ontonagon, at 10 a.m. The board reserves time at the beginning of each meeting for members who wish to address the board. ■

Save The Date—June 18

The board of directors and employees of your electric co-op invite you to join them at the 2016 annual meeting on Saturday, June 18, at Chassell High School. This is a chance to visit with your neighbors and friends from throughout our five-county service area and participate in your co-op's affairs. Following the business meeting there will be a drawing for prizes and lunch will be served. More information will be published in upcoming editions of *Michigan Country Lines*. So, for now, save the date—June 18!

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Earth Day is April 22. Give back to the environment by planting a deciduous tree near your home. Deciduous trees lose their leaves during the fall, allowing sunlight to warm your home. The extra shade during summer months will keep your home cooler and give your AC a much needed break.

Source: energy.gov

Down Home Comfort

Using the earth for heating and cooling makes sense.

By Ted Clutter, The Geothermal Exchange Organization

There's a movement afoot, but don't worry—the ground isn't shaking. It is quietly heating and cooling tens of thousands of homes and commercial buildings across Michigan with ground-source—or geothermal—heat pumps.

Geothermal heat pumps are renowned by both the U.S. Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency as our most efficient and environmentally friendly heating and cooling technology for homes, businesses and institutional spaces of all sizes. Indeed, by tapping the free

renewable energy of the ground, geothermal heat pumps (GHPs) can save consumers up to 70 percent on their monthly energy bills.

Geothermal Benefits

Geothermal heating and cooling saves energy and reduces fossil fuel use, either on-site or at power plants. Geothermal heat pumps reap huge savings on ratepayer energy bills because they use less electricity than conventional equipment.

Geothermal heat pumps are a comfortable, "green energy" solution and an easy way to act locally, while thinking globally about the environment. Indeed, they shrink the average carbon footprint of a typical American home by nearly 50 percent. Best of all, geothermal heat pumps are "Made in the USA" by an innovative industry that is creating jobs all across America.

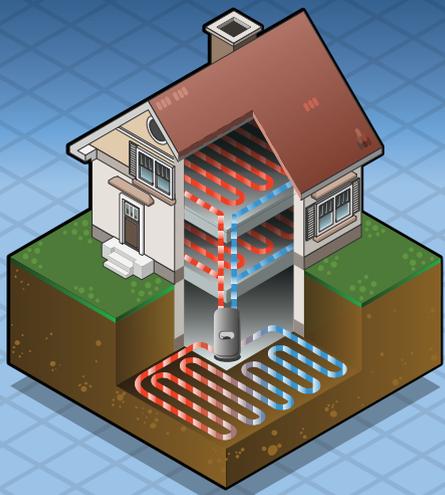
Geothermal Incentives

The federal government offers a 30 percent tax break for homeowners who install a GHP (10 percent for commercial jobs). Those credits expire at the end of 2016, but the Geothermal Exchange Organization (GEO) is working with Congress to extend them through 2022. For the time being, you can still take advantage of the credits if your project is in service before the end of the year.

And be sure to check with your electric co-op about any rebates they might offer for a geothermal system. Your trusted local geothermal heat pump contractor will be able to help you with that information.

For more information and member contractors in your area, visit the Geothermal Exchange website, geoexchange.org. ■

Please note this article focuses on one type of system, there are other types of energy-saving heat pumps, such as pond loop or air-to-air types. Discuss options with a trusted heat pump contractor.



How Geothermal Heat Pumps Work

Geothermal heat pumps use a series of plastic pipes—called ground loops—buried beneath the surface where temperatures are a constant 50° throughout the year (depending on where you live). The fusion-sealed pipes are connected to geothermal heating and cooling equipment inside the home or building.

Water circulating through the system carries heat to and from the ground, depending on the season. During the summer months, unwanted heat indoors is transferred outside to the ground for cooling by the earth. The cool water flows through the GHP system to provide air conditioning.



Staying Safe In A Car Accident With A Utility Pole

Winter wonderlands are beautiful, but they can be a driving nightmare. Snow, slush, ice and wind make driving more stressful and hazardous. If you are in an accident involving a utility pole, your vehicle may be charged with electricity. If this is the case and you step out of the car, you will become the electricity's path to the ground and could be electrocuted.

While downed lines sometimes reveal they are "live" by arcing and sparking with electricity, this is not always the case. Power lines do not always show signs that they are live, but they are just as lethal.

Stay in the car if you are in an accident with a power pole. Warn those who try to help that they must stay far away from the vehicle. Call 911 for help, and wait until a utility professional tells you it is safe to leave the car.

The exception to this rule is if your car is on fire. In that case, jump clear of the vehicle without touching it and the ground at the same time. Then "bunny hop" away with your feet together to safety. This way there will not be a voltage difference between your two feet, which would give electricity the chance to flow through your body. ■



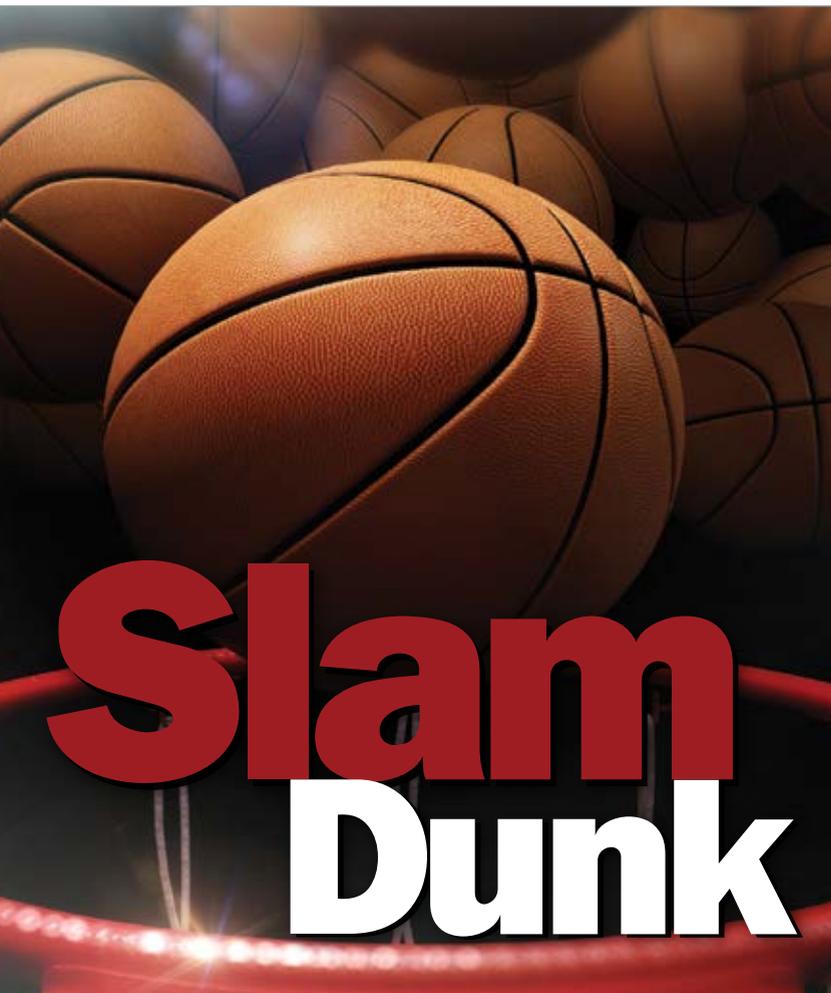
Help Us Celebrate National Lineman Day

As the “first responders” of the electric co-op family, lineworkers perform around-the-clock in dangerous conditions and challenging situations to keep power flowing and protect the public’s safety. That’s why electric co-ops have designated a National Lineman Appreciation Day. This year, April 11 is the day we honor the hard-working men and women who keep the lights on. Resolutions adopted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) explain it best: “Whereas linemen leave their families and put their lives on the line every day to keep the power on; Whereas linemen work 365 days a year under dangerous conditions to build, maintain and repair the electric infrastructure; Whereas there would be no electric co-ops without the brave men and women who comprise our corps of lineworkers.” “Electric lineworkers do not often receive the recognition they deserve,” says Ontonagon County REA general manager, Debbie Miles. “They work all hours of the day, often in hazardous conditions far from their families, going above and beyond to restore power to



Your electric co-op’s lineworker crew includes (L–R) Luke Jouppe, Kelly Clark, Pat Reilley, Dony Ison, Brad Hanson, Gil Martinez and Nels Erickson in the red cap.

their communities. Our lineworkers, and those across the nation, truly deserve this special day of recognition.” Ontonagon County REA invites you, as a co-op member, to take a moment to “thank a lineworker” for the job they do and show support for those who help light our lives. ■



Slam Dunk

The ball’s in your court.

Your game plan for 2016: Start saving energy. Get off the bench and score big when you purchase ENERGY STAR® lighting and appliances! The Energy Optimization program provides rebates on bulbs, smart power strips, ceiling fans, dishwashers, TVs, and more.

ENERGY TIP: For the fastest way to receive your rebate, use our new 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.

Shutterbugs Share 'Winter Fun' Photos



1



2



3



4



5



6

Photo Fun

Ontonagon REA invites members to share their amazing photos. Selected photos will be published in *Michigan Country Lines*. Upcoming topics and deadlines are: **"Saluting Our Armed Forces,"** due **March 15** for the May issue and **"All About Michigan,"** due **May 15** for the July/August 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 photos!

Remember <http://bit.ly/1JX5Afh> to submit photos!

1. This photo was taken at the Lucy Hill Natural Luge Track outside Negaunee, MI. It is the country's only natural luge track and has hosted local, national, and North American Continental competitions. An international World Cup luge competition was held at this track in 1995 and one will be held here in 2017. The public can slide on this track on weekends with all necessary equipment and instruction provided by the U.P. Luge Club. *Photo by John Porter, a national luge coach and international luge competition judge for 25 years.*
2. Brothers, Jack and Maximus, playing in their winter fort. *Photo by Jeanne Wolf*
3. Ice Fishing On East Twin Lake, Lewiston, MI. *Photo by Ted Neuner*
4. This is our dog, Chloe, who loves the snow. She had been running and throwing that orange peel in the air for an hour. Pure winter fun for her. *Photo by Diane LaHaie*
5. Angie and daughter, Abby, out for a morning snowshoe walk. *Photo by Wayne Brown*
6. Adam Granger kiteboarding on Long Lake.

PERFECT PASTA!

Try these inspiring pasta recipes full of flavorful ingredients!



Pasta Bacon Toss

Joy Frazee, Portland

- 1 lb. bacon, cut up
- 4 c. chicken broth
- 2-14.5-oz. cans Italian-style diced tomatoes
- 1 med. onion, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, minced (or more, if desired)
- ½ t. crushed red pepper flakes, optional
- 16 oz. box uncooked linguine pasta
- 4 ozs. cream cheese
- 5 ozs. parmesan cheese, shredded

Cut bacon into 1-inch pieces and fry; remove from skillet. Put approximately 1 T. of bacon grease in a pot. Add minced garlic and pepper flakes; cook for 10–20 seconds. Add onion; cook 2–3 minutes or until onion is tender. Add broth, diced tomatoes and about a handful of fried bacon pieces, reserving the rest for later. Add uncooked pasta, simmer for 9–10 minutes stirring occasionally, covered, or until pasta is cooked. Mix in the cream cheese until blended well with the pasta and the sauce is thickened. Serve and top with some bacon and shredded Parmesan. This is great for two nights; for the second night, top the remaining pasta with mozzarella and/or Parmesan cheese and bake at 350° until heated through and cheese is melted. Top with cooked bacon.

Greek-Style Scampi (pictured)

Patrick Simmer, Dewitt

- 6 oz. uncooked angel hair pasta
- 1 t. olive oil
- ½ c. chopped green bell pepper
- 2 t. bottled minced garlic
- 14.5 oz. can diced tomatoes with basil, garlic, oregano; undrained
- ⅛ t. black pepper
- 1 lb. peeled & deveined medium uncooked shrimp
- ⅛ t. ground red pepper
- 6 T. crumbled feta cheese

Cook pasta according to package directions, omitting salt. Drain pasta and keep warm. Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add green bell pepper to pan; sauté 1 minute. Add garlic and tomatoes; cook 1 minute. Add black pepper and shrimp; cover and cook 3 minutes or until shrimp is done (don't overcook). Stir in red pepper; remove from heat. Place 1 c. pasta on each of four plates. Top each serving with 1 c. shrimp mixture and 1 ½ T. feta cheese.

Pasta Salad

Becky Beard, Portland

- 1 lb. tri-color spiral pasta
- ¼ c. red or green pepper, chopped
- ¼ c. green olives
- ½ c. cucumber, chopped
- ¾ c. cherry or grape tomatoes, cut in half
- ½ c. feta cheese
- ¼ c. red onions, chopped
- ¼ c. pepperoni slices, cut in quarters
- 1 c. Zesty Italian dressing (or more if needed, to taste)

Cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain and rinse with cool water. Mix with remaining ingredients in a large bowl. Refrigerate until chilled.

SUBMIT YOUR RECIPE!

Thanks to all our readers who send in recipes. Please send in your favorite "Quick and Easy" recipes by **April 1** and "BBQ" recipes by **May 1**.

Enter your recipe online at countrylines.com or send to (handprint or type 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.

A RECIPE WINNER EVERY MONTH!

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



Pistachio Pesto Pasta

Christin McKamey

- 8 oz. pasta (gluten free, if desired)
- 2 c. fresh baby spinach, packed
- ½ c. shelled pistachios, roasted and unsalted
- 2 c. fresh basil leaves, packed
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ c. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 T. white wine vinegar
- 1 T. fresh lemon juice
- ½ t. ground sea salt, or to taste
- ¼ t. freshly ground black pepper

Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain and set aside. In a food processor or high powered blender, add the remaining ingredients. Blend until chopped and thoroughly combined. Mix the pesto with the hot pasta and stir to combine. Serves 4. Will last in the fridge about four days.

Creamy Ranch Pasta Salad

Karen Beard, Portland

- ½ box shaped pasta
- 1 head broccoli, chopped
- 1 c. frozen peas, thawed
- ½ pkg. mini pepperoni slices
- 4 oz. Monterey Jack cheese, chopped into small pieces or shredded
- 12 small carrots, chopped
- Ranch dressing (we use the packet and make our own...tastes much better)

Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain and run cold water over pasta to cool it. Combine rest of ingredients, except the ranch dressing, into a bowl. Pour cooled pasta into the bowl, then stir in dressing (as much as you like).



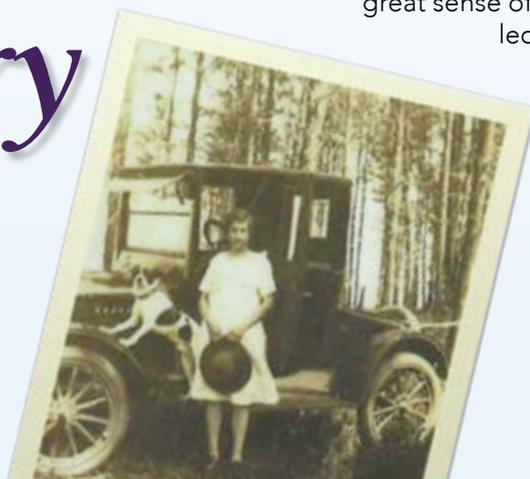
When Turning 100 Is Just A Memory

By Yvonne Whitman

They say that it's rude to ask a lady her age, but for 105-year-old Amber Clark the question elicits a smile and a flood of happy memories. And hugs. Amber is known for the still-strong hug each of her many visitors is certain to receive. In fact, her enduring embrace of people, and the world, are reflective of her simple philosophy for thriving well beyond the century mark: "I love life!"

Born in 1911, Amber has resided in Crystal Falls, MI, for most of her life. "I was very happy with my mother and father," she recalls, "but I had to tow the mark, too!" As a young woman, Amber's great sense of fun and adventure

led her to the Kimball Clubhouse, a local dance hall, where she met a young man who was playing in the band. In 1933, Amber became Mrs. Richard Clark Jr., and



they enjoyed over 60 years of marriage and raised three children together. Among the challenges of living for more than a century is outliving many of the important people in one's life. Amber has outlived her husband and two of her children.

As to advice she would give to young couples seeking a happy marriage, she says the key is, "Being good companions to one another. We did everything together. I especially loved hunting with him. And, I could shoot just as good as a man!" She owned a gun handed down from her German mother, who was also a terrific shot. "My mother had a Mossberg bolt action .22 caliber rifle. She was a hunter, and when we needed something for dinner she often went in the woods and shot the partridge, the rabbit, whatever. They were tough in those days."

Her lifelong appreciation of fun is evidenced when Amber recalls how she and Richard frequented Gay Gables, a dance hall on nearby Chicaugon Lake in the 1930s. One night, after dancing up what she described as "our usual storm," the Clarks decided to visit a nearby roller rink. Always up for a challenge, Amber strapped on the roller skates—right over her high heels—and stumbled out onto the rink floor. "I really had to hold onto the railings that night," she recalls. A passion for dancing continued throughout her life as evidenced at her 90th birthday party when she and her son-in-law Allen "cleared the dance floor and showed everyone exactly how to 'cut a rug'."

Amber Clark celebrating her 105th birthday joined by members of her family, son-in-law Allen Mendini (L), daughter Penny Mendini and grandson Pat Clark (R).



Astoundingly, at 105 years of age Amber takes zero medication. "I've always had good health," she chirps proudly. But then there is the water paradox, and her tip for longevity: "Don't drink water," she says emphatically. "I may have a few glasses a year, but that's all. Water is for fish." She did, however, enjoy other libations. In the summer, she loved to share a bottle of beer in the yard with her neighbor. "I drank one bottle of Miller High Life each evening in the summer and in the winter I enjoyed a glass of Fortissimo wine." Apparently the adage of 'everything in moderation' holds true.

"My Mom's attitude has always been that life goes on," adds her daughter, Penny. "That was her philosophy. My father died, my siblings died, but she never dwelled on anything and would say, 'We have to continue'. My Mother moves forward. She doesn't look back." This is echoed by her niece, Nancy Clark. "I've known Amber for over 35 years and she has always been an inspiration to me because of her positive attitude. Whenever I start feeling sorry for myself, I just think of Amber. She never dwells on the negative. I think that's the secret to her longevity."

And finally, Amber's advice for today's young people is: "Mind your own business." That's a tall order in the world of social media, but this woman has lived a happy 105 years, so perhaps we can all take a page from her book. ■



Art on Ice

By Emily Haines Lloyd

When she was younger, Stephanie Miller wanted a career in education—art, to be exact. She never became an art teacher, but she most definitely became an artist and a teacher.

For over 25 years, Miller has built her life around one of her true passions—ice skating. Spending many years at ice rinks around Metro Detroit, Miller became a successful competitive skater and an impassioned stylist. Bored with the uninspired costumes available to her, she started beading her own skating outfits. Before she knew it, other skaters were begging her to help them spruce up their costumes.

"I'm the unlikely story. I got my 'degree' in skating," said Miller. "I was a skater who had an artistic eye and before I knew it, I had a career."

Accident or not, the trajectory of Miller and her partner, Luanne Williams' business is nothing short of impressive.

Once a week, Miller leaves her small town of Kingsley, just 15 miles outside Traverse City, and travels to the Detroit Skating Club, where she and Williams (from Grass Lake) take over the rink's Club Room. There, skaters wait in line to meet with the designers about upcoming competition costumes and what will make them stand out on the ice.

The two have created costumes for an impressive list of world-renowned skaters, including Olympic gold medalists Meryl Davis and Charlie White. Davis wore one of Miller's designs when the duo won their gold medal in Sochi. She has designed Davis' costumes for nearly 20 years—a testament to the trust and respect the skating community has for Miller and Williams.

"I am always on the skater's side," said Miller. "I listen to their music, to what they like or don't like



and I encourage them to listen to their gut. They are the one that has to go out and perform in this costume. They have to love it."

While many have recommended that Miller collaborate with an apparel shop to mass-produce her designs, the costume veteran can't fathom it.

"My heart is in custom, original designs," she explains. "I love having a new piece of artwork to focus on. Otherwise, I would be bored out of my mind."

When she's not creating fresh designs and meticulously adhering stones, Miller is a coach at the Traverse City Skating Club. She's become the teacher she always wanted to be—grooming a new generation of skaters and possibly even clients.

When she drives home at the end of a day of coaching, she's inspired by any number of things, a billboard or the pure aqua blue of Traverse Bay. Before she knows it, there's a new idea for a costume for the artist/teacher who always seems to be working.

"I see something like the water in the bay and all I can think is how great that color will look on the ice." ■

Above: Wearing costumes designed by Miller, are Frances Rossiter (left), 12, a national skater from MI, and Anna Rossiter, 11, a top regional skater who started at age 3.

Photos—Dre Photography



Country Lines, Your Communications Partner



For over 35 years, our co-op members have received *Michigan Country Lines* because it is the most effective and economical way to share information with our members. This is our most empowering communication tool to keep members up-to-date about everything going on within their electric co-op.

Each issue contains information about our services, director elections, member meetings, and the staff and management decisions you need to know about as an owner of the co-op.

The magazine also includes legal notices that would otherwise have to be placed in local media at a substantial cost. And, sending *Michigan Country Lines* to you helps the co-op fulfill one of its important principles—to educate and communicate openly with its members.

The board of directors authorizes the co-op to subscribe to *Michigan Country Lines* on your behalf at an average cost of \$3.91 per year, paid as part of your electric bill. The current magazine cost is 48 cents per copy—less than the cost of a first class stamp. *Michigan Country Lines* is published for us, at cost, by the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association in Lansing. As always, we welcome and value your comments.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Fuel Mix Report

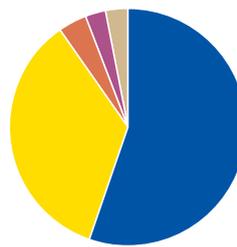
The fuel mix characteristics of Ontonagon REA as required by Public Act 141 of 2000 for the 12-month period ended 6/30/15.

COMPARISON OF FUEL SOURCES USED

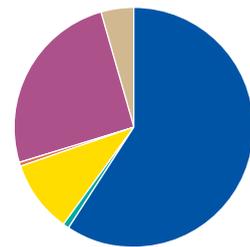
Regional average fuel mix used		
Your co-op's fuel mix		
FUEL SOURCE		
Coal	55.5%	60.4%
Oil	0.0%	0.7%
Gas	35.1%	8.9%
Hydroelectric	3.8%	0.54%
Nuclear	2.7%	24.6%
Renewable Fuels	3.0%	4.87%
Biofuel	0.0%	0.69%
Biomass	0.0%	0.40%
Solar	0.0%	0.04%
Solid Waste Incineration	0.0%	0.05%
Wind	3.0%	3.17%
Wood	2.1%	0.5%

NOTE: Biomass above excludes wood; solid waste incineration includes landfill gas.

Your Co-op's Fuel Mix



Regional Average Fuel Mix



EMISSIONS AND WASTE COMPARISON

TYPE OF EMISSION/WASTE	lbs/MWh	
	Your Co-op	Regional Average*
Sulfur Dioxide	1.0	7.6
Carbon Dioxide	1,307	2,170
Oxides of Nitrogen	0.5	2.0
High-level Nuclear Waste	0	0.0083

*Regional average information was obtained from MPSC website and is for the twelve-month period ending 12/31/15.

Figures for Ontonagon County REA are based on those of its principle power suppliers, Wisconsin Public Service and WE Energies.

A Great Future Is On The Line

By Yvonne Whitman

Do you think a job should be an adventure? Do you prefer working outdoors to sitting at a desk? Enjoy working with your hands and mind to solve problems? Then get ready for “one of the most rewarding and challenging professions in the world”—a career as an electrical line technician.

In 2003, Northern Michigan University (NMU) and the Lake Superior Community Partnership Foundation joined to bring students an opportunity to enter the electrical trades world with a diploma in hand. In one year.

The electrical line technician (ELT) program at NMU begins in the fall semester, at the end of August. However, the application process begins in the winter semester of the previous school year. Enrollment is limited to 40, and potential students must apply for acceptance to NMU and the ELT program. Those applying must be 18 years of age, have a valid driver’s license, and be a high school or GED graduate. Once qualified, students will take an online math placement test and be scheduled for a personal interview, which occurs in late April. Students are notified of their selection into the program in May.

The ELT program is offered through the partnership of NMU, the Midwest Skills Development Center—an entity of the Lake Superior Community Partnership Foundation, and many industry partners who make the program possible with their financial support, equipment donation, and volunteering of time. Students attend courses at the MSDC training site—a facility with a classroom building and 20 acres of land used for hands-on training on the former K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base in Gwinn. The instructors are experienced line persons who have worked extensively in the field. They are dedicated to teaching and sharing the knowledge needed to be successful in this field.

Once a diploma is earned, students are able to construct electrical transmission and power distribution systems; identify substation

components and operate electrical power distribution systems; and climb towers and poles, working comfortably at heights, among other skills.



“The utilities that the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association (MECA) safety team visit are reporting that it has become increasingly difficult to find journeyman lineworkers. Some have decided to hire their own apprentices that are coming out of apprentice schools,” notes Joe McElroy, director of safety & loss control for MECA.

“The Michigan Energy Development Workforce Consortium has stated that Michigan will need over 500 new linemen in Michigan by 2020,” McElroy adds.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the job outlook for electrical line technicians is expected to rise as growth in construction and telecommunication industries continues to grow throughout the country. Of the students who have graduated from this program, 75 percent have attained work in the industry.

For more information on this program, contact the Lake Superior Community Partnership at 906-226-6591, the Technology and Occupational Sciences Department at NMU 906-227-219, or visit the undergraduate bulletin at nmu.edu/bulletin.

Your future is on the line. Will you be a part of this exciting, growing field? ■



Surf's Up!

While most of us prepare for a snow storm by stopping by the gas station or grocery store, one Northern Michigan native is waxing her surf board. Her surf board? Yes, and a few adventurous souls like Ella Skrocki, 21, catch waves on the Great Lakes year-round.

A student at Northern Michigan University majoring in environmental studies, Ella grew up in the small coastal town of Empire where her parents own Sleeping Bear Surf and Kayak Shop. Brought up with the heart of a surfer, Ella attended surf camps in California where fellow students found the idea of surfing the Great Lakes far-fetched.

But there's nothing improbable about it, and many seasoned Great Lakes surfers prefer the winter waves because of their size and frequency. Ella caught a few 30 footers during a recent storm, describing the experience as "very rewarding." Put in perspective, the waves on Lake Superior that



sank the Edmund Fitzgerald in 1975 reached heights of up to 35 feet.

Waves big enough to sink a freighter present additional challenges including frostbite, dirtier water, and shorter wave periods (7 seconds between crests versus an average of 20 seconds on the ocean). So, why does Ella do it? "When I find the motivation to get out there during a blizzard and catch that one wave, it's so empowering!"

Sure, winter surfing can be brutal but Ella has the proper gear to stay warm and though she admits her "face will get a little numb" on occasion, a touch of grease on her cheeks takes the sting out of winter's icy chill.

If surfing the Great Lakes sounds like an activity worth exploring, Michigan's surfing community is a great place to start. A tight-knit group, they are happy to offer encouragement, tips and lessons. And while we're grumbling during the next



Jack O'Malley

winter storm warning, a small contingent of extreme sports enthusiasts will be gearing up for a wave even the most seasoned ocean surfer would be stoked to catch.

Visit Sleeping Bear Surf and Kayak Shop at sbsurfindkayak.com. ■



«« Where In Michigan Is This?

Every co-op member who identifies the correct location of the photo at left by **March 18** 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.



January Photo

Our Mystery Photo Contest winner from the January 2016 issue is John Stocki, a Cherryland Electric co-op member who correctly identified the photo as the Marilla Museum and Pioneer Place.



AMERICAN METAL ROOFS Customer Stories...



“It was a great experience...”

Sharon Somers is talking about her roof. Yes, her roof.

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