

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



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New Alpine Power Plant
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Save Energy And Money

PIE&G Communities First
Fund Annual Report



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

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Negaunee's Lucy Hill is the only full-length natural luge track in the United States. United States athletes train here before traveling to competitions in Europe.

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Once used to describe the three devastating waves that led to the sinking of the Edmond Fitzgerald, Three Sisters is also the name for three tight turns and the most technical part of the Negaunee Lucy Hill luge track. Find Three Sisters Luge Pizza recipe submitted by featured guest chefs from the U.P. Luge Club at micookitchen.com, and see the full story on page 14.



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Gas Emergency Toll-Free: **800-655-8565**

pieg.com

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

Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Cooperative Principles In Action



Brian J. Burns
President & CEO

Let's be clear: you own this business, the co-op. Like your home, the co-op's equity (value less debt) is assigned to you, personally, a member, in proportionate shares. Yes, you can call the co-op and we will tell you how much of the more than \$50 million of equity has been assigned to you.

You govern this co-op. At the Annual Meeting last month, you elected three fellow members to represent you on the board of directors. The board members will set the co-op's strategy, policy and rates.

Many of you received a "capital credit retirement" check (or bill credit) last month, wherein we returned the equity (or capital) we received from you several years ago. With this capital, we were able to build the infrastructure (electric and natural gas systems) to deliver energy to your home.

Your co-op is unlike Consumers Energy, Alpena Power or DTE in almost every sense but the product it delivers. PIE&G is a not-for-profit cooperative; the others are for-profit, investor-owned utilities. PIE&G serves the challenging areas of rural Michigan with few members per mile of line; the others refused to serve much of rural Michigan and were content to serve urban areas. Hence, your neighbors were obligated to establish their own utility and do it themselves many years ago.

Last month, we joined with co-ops across the nation to celebrate National Co-op Month and our unique way of doing business. As we approach year's end we are grateful for the hard work and dedication of our employees throughout the year. We also thank our membership for their loyalty. From our entire PIE&G family to yours, we wish you all the best during the holidays and in the new year. ■

Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op will be closed for the holidays on the following dates:

Thanksgiving

Thursday, Nov. 24 and Friday, Nov. 25

Christmas

Friday, Dec. 23 and Monday, Dec. 26

New Year's Day

Monday, January 2, 2017

As always, you may access your account anytime online at pieg.com or by calling toll free 1-866-999-4571. To report outages or other emergencies, please call **1-800-423-6634**. For gas emergency only, please call **1-800-655-8565**.

From our families to yours, have a safe and happy holiday season!

Your Board In Action

At their most recent meetings the PIE&G Board of Directors:

- At its special board meeting open to members, approved establishing the 2017 Power Supply Cost Recovery (PSCR) factor to a maximum of \$0.00087/kWh and revised outdoor security lighting charges to represent cost of service as well as introduce LED technologies.
- Approved the 2017 General Plant Capital Budget for \$1,579,040.
- Directed management staff to elevate promotions of the Communities First Fund, review the feasibility of using drones for overhead distribution system inspections and report back to the board.
- Approved the annual meeting notice to members. ■

Natural Gas Rates Lower Effective November 1

Effective with bills rendered in November, PIE&G's natural gas rates will be reduced for each rate class as indicated below. Please note that only the distribution rate is decreasing. The monthly availability and the Gas Cost Recovery rate (GCR) will remain the same.

	Residential	General Service	Industrial
Monthly Availability	\$12	\$17	\$188
Distribution (\$/ccf)	\$0.37424	\$0.25629	\$0.19383
GCR (\$/ccf)	\$0.4941	\$0.4941	\$0.4941
Total, \$/ccf	\$0.86834	\$0.75039	\$0.68793
Reduction Amount (\$/ccf)	\$0.08016	\$0.06401	\$0.03977

NOTICE TO MEMBERS OF PRESQUE ISLE ELECTRIC & GAS CO-OP ELECTRIC TARIFF CHANGES EFFECTIVE FEB. 1, 2017

The Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op Board of Directors adopted the following changes to the cooperative's electric tariffs and rules at a special open board meeting held Sept. 27, 2016, in accordance with P.A. 167:

- Reviewed the Power Supply Cost Recovery Factor (PSCR) analysis and set the 2017 factor at \$0.00087 per kWh, effective with bills rendered on or after Feb. 1, 2017, due to expected increases in wholesale energy supply costs.
- Reviewed and revised the rates in the Outdoor Lighting Service tariff (Schedule OD) as reflected in the chart below, effective with bills rendered on or after Feb. 1, 2017.

Type of Device	Current Monthly Rate	Proposed Monthly Rate	Difference
175W MV	\$12.00	\$11.40	\$(0.60)
400W MV	\$21.74	\$19.70	\$(2.04)
100W HPS	\$8.55	\$9.00	\$0.45
250W HPS	\$14.68	\$14.80	\$0.12
LED 40W	\$7.30	\$6.80	\$(0.50)
LED 70W	\$7.30	\$7.70	\$0.40

For specific details of any Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op tariffs, rules or fees, please call us at 1-800-423-6634 or visit our website at pieg.com/content/electric-rates.

Low Income Energy Assistance Fund (LIEAF) Charge

On July 1, 2013, Gov. Snyder signed into law Public Act 95, creating the Low Income Energy Assistance Fund or "LIEAF," authorizing the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) to raise up to \$50 million annually for low-income energy assistance payments. The money would come from a surcharge of no more than \$1 per meter per month for all Michigan electric utilities participating in the LIEAF program.

On July 22, 2016, the MPSC issued an order reducing the monthly surcharge from 98 cents to 96 cents per meter for September 2016 through the August 2017 billing months. The surcharge is limited to electric bills only and one electric residential meter per residential site. The decrease will be effective on PIE&G's electric bills generated on or after Oct. 1, 2016, for service rendered in September. Annual bills will be prorated accordingly. ■

Home Heating Assistance Programs • 2016–2017 Season

Program: Winter Protection Plan
Contact: Your Local Utility Company

Income Guidelines 2016–2017

# in Household	150% Poverty Guide Maximum Income
1	\$17,820
2	24,030
3	30,240
4	36,450
5	42,660
6	48,870
7	55,095
8	61,335

Add \$6,240 for each additional member.

Note: All customers 65+ are eligible regardless of income. Customers are responsible for all electricity and natural gas used. At the end of the protection period, participants must make arrangements with their utility company to pay off any money owed before the next heating season.

The **Winter Protection Plan (WPP)** protects enrolled seniors and low-income customers from service shut-offs and high utility bill payments during the winter months (Nov. 1–March 31). If you are eligible, your utility service will remain on (or restored with the WPP) from Nov. 1 through March 31, if you:

- pay at least 7% of your estimated annual bill each month, and
- make equal monthly payments between the date you apply and the start of the next heating season on any past due bills.

When the protection period ends (March 31), you must begin to pay the full monthly bill, plus part of the amount you owe from the winter months when you did not pay the full bill.

Participation does not relieve customers from the responsibility of paying for electricity and natural gas usage, but does prevent shut-off during winter months. You qualify for the plan if you meet at least one of the following requirements:

- are age 65 or older,
- receive Department of Health and Human Services cash assistance, including SSI,
- receive Food Assistance,
- receive Medicaid, or
- household income is at or below the 150% of poverty level shown in the Income Guidelines chart at left.

Senior citizen customers (65 or older) who participate in the WPP are not required to make specific payments to ensure that their service will not be shut off between Nov. 1 and March 31. Service for seniors can be restored without any payments.

Program: Home Heating Credit

Contact: Mich. Dept. of Treasury

# Exemp.	Max. Income	# Exemp.	Max. Income
1	\$13,070	4	\$26,756
2	17,642	5	31,299
3	22,185	6	35,842

Add \$4,571 for each exemption over 6.

You can apply for a **Home Heating Credit** for the **2016** tax year if you meet the income guidelines listed at left or you qualify based on alternate guidelines including household income, exemptions, and heating costs. Additional exemptions are available for seniors, disabled claimants, or claimants with 5% or more of their income from unemployment compensation.

If you qualify, you may receive assistance to help pay for your winter heating bills. **Forms are available mid- to late-January wherever tax forms are provided or from the Michigan Dept. of Treasury (517-636-4486, or michigan.gov/treasury).** The Home Heating Credit claim form must be filed with the Michigan Dept. of Treasury **no later than Sept. 30 each year.**

Program: Earned Income Credit

Contact: U.S. Treasury Dept., Internal Revenue Service irs.gov/EITC
 Michigan Dept. of Treasury
michigan.gov/treasury

The **Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)** is a refundable federal income tax credit for low-income, working individuals and families who meet certain requirements and file a tax return. Those who qualify will owe less in taxes and may get a refund. Even a person who does not generally owe income tax may qualify for the EITC, but must file a tax return to do so. If married, you must file jointly to qualify. File Form 1040 or 1040A and attach the EITC.

You may claim a **Michigan earned income tax credit** for tax year **2016** equal to a percentage of the federal earned income tax credit for which you are eligible. Visit the website or see the MI 2016 tax booklet for details.

Program: Crisis Assistance Program

Contact: Local Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) michigan.gov/mdhhs

State Emergency Relief Program (SER): michigan.gov/mdhhs You do not have to be a DHHS client to apply for help with a past due bill, shutoff notice or the need for deliverable fuel through the SER. This program, available Nov. 1–May 31, provides most of its utility assistance during this crisis season. However, limited assistance is available outside the crisis season. If you receive a DHHS cash grant, you may vendor part of it towards heat and electric bills. Contact your local DHHS or call the Home Heating Hotline, 855-275-6424.

Program: Low-Income Home Weatherization

Contact: Local Community Action Agency

You may be able to receive help with weatherizing your home to reduce energy use if you meet low-income eligibility guidelines (200% of poverty guidelines) and funding is available. **Weatherization** may include caulking, weatherstripping, and insulation. Contact your local Community Action Agency for details. Visit mcaaa.org to find one in your area.

Program: United Way

Contact: Call 2-1-1 or UWmich.org/2-1-1

2-1-1 is a free phone service operating 24 hours daily to provide information about help that may be available in a particular area with utilities and other needs. Learn more at UWmich.org/2-1-1.

Program: Medical Emergency Protection

Contact: Local Utility Company

You are protected from service shut-off for nonpayment of your natural gas and/or electric bill for up to 21 days, possibly extended to 63 days, if you have a proven **medical emergency**. You must provide written proof from a doctor, public health or social services official that a medical emergency exists. Contact your gas or electric utility for details.

Program: Shut-off Protection for Military Active Duty

Contact: Local Utility Company

If you or your spouse has been called into **active military duty** you may apply for shut-off protection from your electric or natural gas service for up to 90 days. You may request extensions. You must still pay, but contact your utility company and they will help you set up a payment plan.

Program: Michigan Veterans Trust Fund Emergency Grant Program

Contact: MI Veterans Trust Fund

The Trust Fund provides temporary assistance to veterans and their families facing a financial emergency or hardship including the need for energy assistance.

Michigan Veterans Trust Fund at 517-284-5299 or michiganveterans.com

Program: MI Energy Assistance Program

Contact: Utility or 2-1-1 in late November

Agency assistance through Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP), includes services that will enable participants to become self-sufficient, including assisting participants in paying their energy bills on time, budgeting for and contributing to their ability to provide for energy expenses, and being energy efficient. Shut-off protection is provided Nov. 1–April 15 for all residential customers.

Safety During Hunting Season

By Tim Velder



Be aware of what's behind that big buck or it might cost big bucks.

Your electric co-op's time and money are spent every year repairing equipment and power lines that have been struck by a stray bullet. As a not-for-profit cooperative, owned by the members, we all share in this expense.

This doesn't even include the inconvenience, damages, and hazards to members down the line that require power for medical equipment or other needs, while a lineman does some hunting of his own looking at spans of line trying to locate the problem.

Hunters and other gun-owners should be cautious not to shoot near or toward power lines, power poles, and substations. A stray bullet can cause damage to equipment, could be deadly to the shooter, and potentially interrupt electric service to large areas.

Sometimes the damage isn't noticed for several weeks or months and is only discovered when an unexplained outage occurs.

Landowners are also encouraged to take note of nonmembers who are hunting on their property and remind them to be aware of power lines.

Shooting near overhead power lines or insulators can result in severe injury or death.

The main safety points to remember are:

- Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.
- Familiarize yourself with the location of power lines and equipment on land where you shoot.
- Damage to the conductor can happen, possibly dropping a phase on the ground. If it's dry and the electricity goes to ground, there is the possibility of electrocution and wildfire.
- Be especially careful in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.
- Do not use power line wood poles or towers to support equipment used in your shooting activity.
- Take notice of warning signs and keep clear of electrical equipment.
- Do not place deer stands on utility poles or climb poles. Energized lines and equipment on the poles can conduct electricity to anyone who comes in contact with them, causing shock or electrocution.
- Do not shoot at, or near, birds perching on utility lines. That goes for any firearm, including pistols, rifles or shotguns.
- Do not place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment. Anything attached to a pole besides utility equipment can pose an obstruction—and a serious hazard—to electric cooperative employees as they perform utility operations.
- Avoid the use of lofting poles near overhead power lines. Remember, electricity can jump across a considerable distance. ■

Easy Ways To Save Energy This Winter

Between cold weather, the holidays and spending more time indoors, energy use and costs can rise for many Michigan residents. However, by taking a few simple actions, the following small adjustments can result in big savings!

Deck the halls with LED holiday lights. Light-emitting diode (LED) holiday lights use up to 90 percent less electricity and last up to 10 times longer than standard bulbs. Plus, they produce almost no heat and are nearly impossible to break! Save even more energy by putting your lights on a timer.

Set your furnace fan to "auto." Selecting "auto" ensures the fan will operate only when necessary, which can save several hundred dollars per year. Setting the fan to "on" causes it to run constantly and it requires more heat to maintain the desired temperature.

Find and seal air leaks. Prevent cold air from seeping in and heated air from escaping outside. The largest air leaks are typically around gaps in plumbing, chimneys, and wiring bypasses, as well as in dropped ceilings and soffits above cabinets.



Prep your home before leaving for vacation.

Unplug as many appliances as possible. Many appliances use some energy even when they are turned off. You can also safely lower your thermostat to 55 degrees and turn your water heater to the lowest setting.

Take advantage of rebates. Before ringing in the New Year, claim your Energy Optimization rebates for energy-efficient products, such as lightbulbs, TVs, refrigerators and freezers, dishwashers, clothes washers/dryers and more.

View current incentives at michigan-energy.org or call **877.296.4319** for details. ■



'Tis the Season

Save energy and be merry

Practice these simple tips to save energy and money this holiday season!

- Deck the halls with LED holiday lights
- Keep your fireplace damper closed unless a fire is burning
- Turn down the thermostat while entertaining guests
- Use a timer to control tree and outdoor lighting
- Unplug appliances before leaving for a long weekend

ONLINE: michigan-energy.org

PHONE: **877.296.4319**



Energy Optimization programs and incentives are applicable to Michigan electric service locations only. Other restrictions may apply. For a complete list of participating utilities, visit michigan-energy.org.



Michigan Co-ops Lead The Way In Renewable Energy

Sun. Water. Wind.

Michiganders know these elements can make for a great day at the beach. Michigan's electric cooperatives also know these raw energy sources can be a great way to power your home.

From solar to wind to hydroelectric (hydro) power, Michigan's electric cooperatives are the state's undeniable leaders in renewable energy.

Collectively, Michigan's nine electric cooperatives will receive more than 20 percent of their energy from renewable resources in 2017. Meanwhile, the statewide average for other utilities is closer to the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) requirement of 10 percent.

Michigan's cooperatives have been ahead of the curve on renewable energy for more than a decade.

In 2006, Wolverine Power Cooperative* partnered with John Deere Renewables to develop Michigan's first commercial scale wind farm in Huron County. The wind farm was fully operational in 2007 with an output of 50 megawatts. The following year, Michigan adopted the RPS, which mandated a 10 percent supply of renewable energy be utilized by electric providers by 2015.

After Michigan's first wind farm, progress continued with the state's very first community solar project at Cherryland Electric Cooperative in 2013. Another community solar project was built by HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative in 2014. Community solar offers an affordable, convenient way for members to use renewable energy as a power source. A solar panel subscription entitles members to a share of energy produced on a utility-scale community solar array. Participants receive solar credits on their utility bill. It's a great way to remove up-front costs and installation barriers of solar, making it available to a wider membership.

Cloverland Electric Cooperative operates one of the largest hydropower facilities in Michigan. Located along the St. Marys River in Sault Ste.

Marie, the hydro plant produces one-fifth of the power needs of the eastern Upper Peninsula.

Now there's the new \$200 million clean natural gas Alpine Power Plant. Commissioned just this year, it was developed to meet peak demand needs for Michigan co-op members and to supplement the often intermittent nature of renewable energy. (See the full story on page 14 of this issue).

This fall, a partnership that includes several of Michigan's electric cooperatives will begin construction on a large solar project located in Missaukee County, between Cadillac and Lake City. This large-scale array will begin generating electricity using the sun starting in January 2017. The project is still in the early stages, and more information will appear in future issues of *Michigan Country Lines* as it develops. Additionally, members can sign-up to receive project updates at spartansolar.com.

So why do Michigan's electric co-ops continue to lead the way in renewable energy?

"We listen to our members and are able to capitalize quickly on renewable energy opportunities," said Craig Borr, CEO/president of the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association (MECA). MECA is the service organization representing electric cooperatives in Michigan.

"Michigan's electric cooperatives got into renewable energy because it was the right thing to do from an environmental standpoint," said Borr. "But it turns out it's also the responsible thing to do from a financial standpoint."

Clean, renewable energy generation is where the future of energy is headed.

And for Michigan co-ops, that future looks pretty bright. ■

**Wolverine Power Cooperative supplies power to its member co-ops that include Cherryland Electric Cooperative, Great Lakes Energy Cooperative, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative, Midwest Energy Cooperative, and Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op.*

CASSEROLES

These cozy comfort foods can go straight from your oven to your table.



Photos—831 Creative

Great Chicken Casserole

Mary Ellen Babcock, Thumb Electric

- 3 cups chopped cooked chicken
- 2 cups finely chopped celery
- 1 cup (4 ounces by weight) shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 can (4 ounces) water chestnuts, drained and chopped
- 1 can (10- $\frac{3}{4}$ ounces) cream of chicken soup
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup slivered almonds
- 1 can (6 ounces) French-fried onion rings

Preheat oven to 350 F. Coat a 9×13 inch baking dish with cooking spray. In a large bowl, stir together chicken, celery, cheese, sour cream, mayonnaise, water chestnuts, soup, and almonds. Spoon into prepared baking dish. Bake, uncovered, for 30 minutes. Sprinkle onion rings evenly over top and bake 5 more minutes, or until bubbly around edges. Let stand 5–10 minutes before serving. Enjoy with a nice tossed salad on the side.

Chicken and Rice Casserole

Mary Scodeller, Great Lakes Energy

- 4 chicken breasts
- 2 cups instant rice
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 can onion soup
- cooking spray

Preheat oven to 350 F. Blend the three kinds of soup with 2 cups of instant rice. Pour into a casserole dish sprayed with cooking spray. Top with the chicken breasts, and cook for 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Let cool and serve.



Noodle Cream Cheese Casserole

Jeanie Henrion, Ontonagon

- 1 tablespoon margarine
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 16 ounces tomato sauce
- 8 ounce package of noodles
- 8 ounce package cream cheese
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese



Preheat oven to 350 F. Brown ground beef in margarine. Add garlic, salt, sugar and tomato sauce. Cover and cook slowly for 15–20 minutes. Cook noodles and drain. Combine cream cheese and sour cream.

In a baking dish, layer noodles, cream cheese mixture and half of the sauce. Repeat layers. Spread cheddar cheese over the top. Bake for about 30 minutes (until heated throughout). Serve!

Uncle Ben's Chicken and Rice

Janice Harvey, Great Lakes Energy

- 6-ounce package Uncle Ben's Long Grain and Wild Rice
- 1 frying chicken or equivalent pieces
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 2 ½ cups water

Preheat oven to 350 F. Sprinkle rice mix on bottom of buttered 9x13 pan. Combine soup, seasoning packet from rice, and water. Place chicken on top of rice and pour soup mixture over all. Bake for 1 hour, 15 minutes.



Gather Round The Co-op Kitchen Table

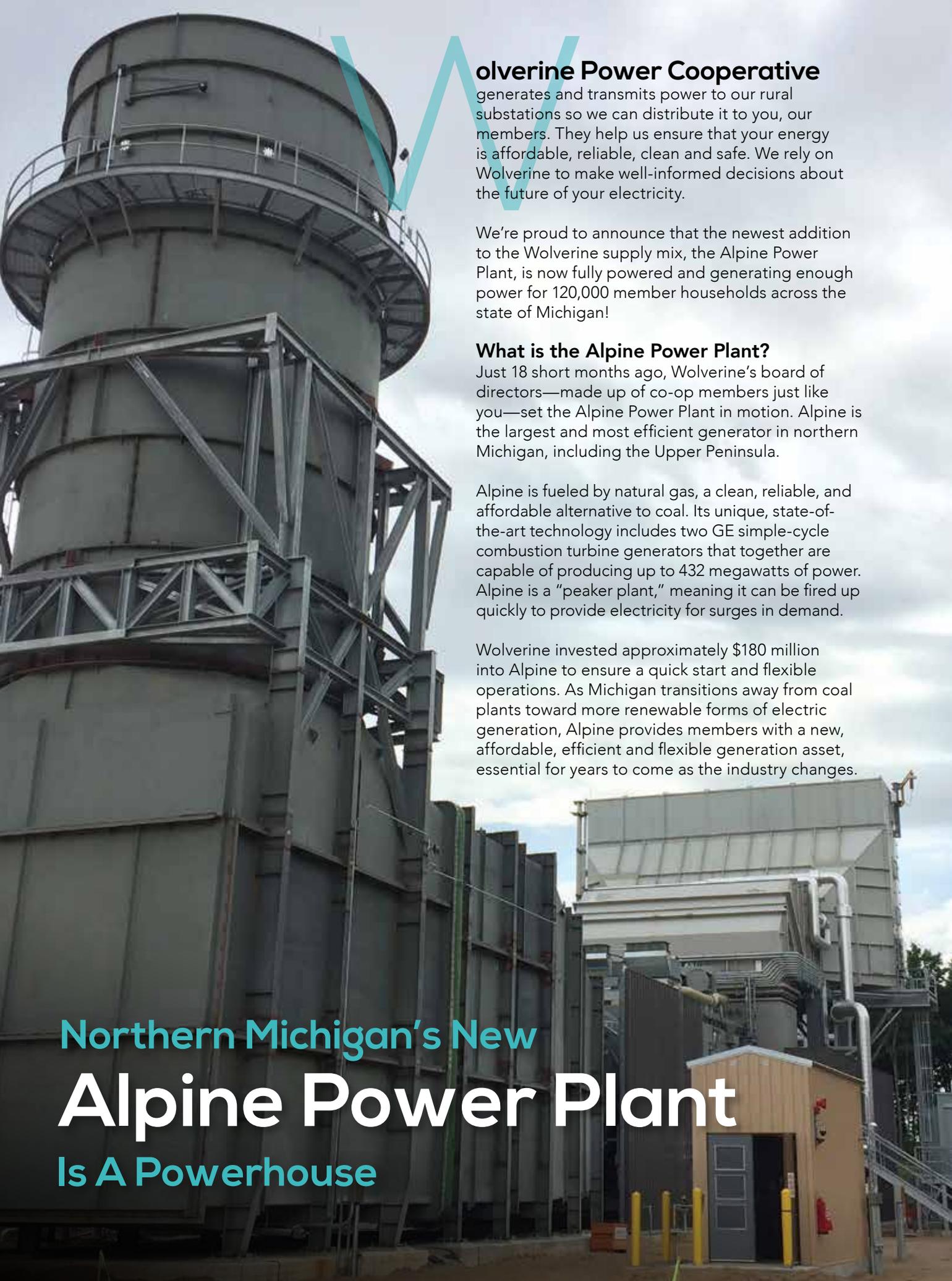
Join our **EXCLUSIVE** online cooking community to submit your recipes and try recipes from other members.

Go to **MICOOPKITCHEN.COM** and register.

Please submit your favorite recipe for **"CHIP DIPS"** by **DEC. 4**, **"SOUPS & STEWS"** recipe by **JAN. 4** and **"MUFFINS & BREADS"** by **FEB. 4** for a chance to win a \$50 bill credit and have your recipe featured in *Country Lines*.

Enter your recipe online at micoopkitchen.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.

micoopkitchen.com



Wolverine Power Cooperative

generates and transmits power to our rural substations so we can distribute it to you, our members. They help us ensure that your energy is affordable, reliable, clean and safe. We rely on Wolverine to make well-informed decisions about the future of your electricity.

We're proud to announce that the newest addition to the Wolverine supply mix, the Alpine Power Plant, is now fully powered and generating enough power for 120,000 member households across the state of Michigan!

What is the Alpine Power Plant?

Just 18 short months ago, Wolverine's board of directors—made up of co-op members just like you—set the Alpine Power Plant in motion. Alpine is the largest and most efficient generator in northern Michigan, including the Upper Peninsula.

Alpine is fueled by natural gas, a clean, reliable, and affordable alternative to coal. Its unique, state-of-the-art technology includes two GE simple-cycle combustion turbine generators that together are capable of producing up to 432 megawatts of power. Alpine is a "peaker plant," meaning it can be fired up quickly to provide electricity for surges in demand.

Wolverine invested approximately \$180 million into Alpine to ensure a quick start and flexible operations. As Michigan transitions away from coal plants toward more renewable forms of electric generation, Alpine provides members with a new, affordable, efficient and flexible generation asset, essential for years to come as the industry changes.

Northern Michigan's New

Alpine Power Plant

Is A Powerhouse

How does Alpine impact me?

Wolverine Power Cooperative and its members, including Cherryland Electric Cooperative, Great Lakes Energy Cooperative, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative, Midwest Energy Cooperative and Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op, are proud to be leaders when it comes to providing long-term solutions for Michigan's energy capacity. Old coal plants are retiring, leaving a void that new power plants can and need to fill.

Adding Alpine's output to Michigan's energy supply will help maintain affordable rates in the midst of coal plants retiring, by giving us an additional option when market rates fluctuate. The plant will also serve to integrate new renewable energy sources, as we expect to receive 30 percent of our electricity from renewable sources in the future.

Beyond the energy benefits for Michigan as a whole, Alpine Power Plant offers economic impacts for its local community. Strategically located to support reliability in northern Michigan, the middle-of-the-mitt location in Otsego County provides a boost to the local economy. During construction, the site was host to more than 300 workers that, in turn, contributed greatly to the local economy. The plant will be maintained by nine full-time employees. The plant also provides a tax boost to units of government in Elmira Township, the City of Gaylord and Otsego County.

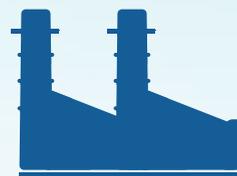
Michigan's energy future is secured in part because of projects like the Alpine Power Plant. We hope you're as excited as we are to see your electric bills stay low and your quality of life stay high! ■

Get more information about the Alpine Power Plant by visiting alpinecleanenergy.com.

WHAT IS ALPINE DOING?

Generating Electricity

Wolverine's Alpine Power Plant is the largest power plant in Michigan's northern Lower and Upper Peninsulas, capable of generating up to 430 MW of electricity.



Powering Members

Alpine ensures Wolverine's members have a reliable, clean and competitive power supply for decades to come.



Supporting Michigan

With retiring coal plants and expanding regulations, Alpine is essential for replacing capacity to meet Michigan's energy demand. Alpine is the only large-scale power plant within a 150-mile radius.



Helping Communities

Alpine provides a major boost to communities with increased tax revenues for local units of government.



Photos—Thom Skelding



U.P. LUGE CLUB COMPETES ON

WORLD STAGE

By Emily Haines Lloyd

Most Michiganders have had the experience of climbing a snowy hill with a plastic or wooden sled in tow, plopping down at the top and pushing off to feel the cold, stinging air. Regardless of the bumps or wipeouts that follow, most people laugh like maniacs, stand up and brush off the snow, then climb the hill to do it all over again.

Far fewer individuals have the experience of sliding down a 280-foot hill at speeds ranging from 50–80 mph, but that’s just what’s happening in

Negaunee, MI at the Upper Peninsula Luge Club. For more than three decades, beginners with wide eyes and daredevils with years of experience have made the trek up Lucy Hill to make their way down in increments upwards of a half a mile. All of this happens on a luge—which looks similar to an old-fashioned winter sled with metal runners.

“You don’t start fast,” Coach Levi Underwood is quick to explain. “Your first time, it’s just fast enough to get down the hill, and it’s still thrilling.”

The U.P. Luge Club has been holding clinics and open sledding for the public since the mid-80s. It provides local communities and tourists an opportunity to experience something few people ever get to do. Sliding (not “lugging” as you might expect) isn’t available just anywhere, and Lucy Hill is the only natural luge track in the United States.

“Sliding, particularly on a natural track, isn’t something you find in every community,” said Tammy Wills, the current secretary of the luge club, former coach from 2010–2016 and a competitive slider herself since age 13. “Yet, this one-of-a-kind experience is in the middle of the Upper Peninsula and completely accessible and affordable.”



All that is needed are warm clothes, a hat and mittens—the U.P. Luge Club provides the rest. But this is not just for recreational sliders.

The U.P. Luge Club is a feeder club for the luge natural track competitive circuit. As the only natural track in the U.S., young sliders who show both promise and determination are often taken to Europe to compete—where a natural track is both prominent and very competitive.

The U.P. Luge Club President, Fred Anderson, first started sliding when he took his Boy Scout Troop to luge at Lucy Hill.

“I was hooked, and I wasn’t the only one,” Anderson explains. “Years later, two scouts from that first trip went on to compete at the Olympics. Wendall Suckow and Chris Thorpe became very successful sliders—Thorpe going on to become the first American to medal in luge at the Olympics. And they both came through this club.”

Remembering his experiences at Lucy Hill, Underwood, who competed for years in Europe and on the Olympic development team, came back to coach.

“I had so many great teachers, Tammy included, who showed me how an athlete could be humble enough to coach,” said Underwood. “And I wanted to give back to this sport that gave so much to me.”

The joy seen on the faces at the U.P. Luge Club comes from all sorts: individuals who have fallen in love with this unexpected sport; novices who are taking their first slide down a track; adrenaline junkies looking for another hit; and that inner child who remembers the freedom and excitement that comes from climbing up a hill, sitting on a sled and just letting go. ■



Three Sisters Luge Pizza

Submitted by guest chefs from the U.P. Luge Club.

Once used to describe the three devastating waves that led to the sinking of the Edmond Fitzgerald, Three Sisters is also the name for three tight turns and the most technical part of the Negaunee luge track.

This “three-turn” pizza is a favorite with club members and goes down as fast as a luge.

Ingredients

- 1 French Bread, sliced lengthwise
- ½ cup sweet onion, diced
- 3 ounces ham, diced
- 2 ounces pepperoni
- 4 ounces cudighi, cooked
- ½ cup green pepper
- ½ cup red pepper
- ½ cup sliced tomato
- 1 cup cheddar cheese
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese
- 14 ounces pizza sauce

Instructions

Preheat oven to 450 F. Brown the 4 ounces of cudighi. Cut the French bread lengthwise and toast for 4 minutes at 450 F. Spread pizza sauce on both pieces of toasted French bread.

Then add the following ingredients to the French bread in thirds:

Turn one /Step one

First third—ham, green peppers, onions

Turn two /Step two

Second third—pepperoni, red peppers, onions

Turn three /Step three

Last third—cudighi, tomatoes, onions

Bake for 6–8 minutes and enjoy.

POWERING COMMUNITIES, EMPOWERING MEMBERS



Girls on the Run Sunrise Side

2015 PIE&G Communities
First Fund Awards:
\$55,478

The generosity of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op members and their desire to better their communities allows the PIE&G Communities First Fund to fulfill its philanthropic mission of distributing funds to help individuals and organizations in need across its service area. Members who volunteer to “round up” their energy bill to the next dollar (averages 50 cents monthly) provide funds overseen by a nine-member, volunteer board of directors. Funds are granted through an application process and allow small contributions to make a **BIG** difference in northeast Michigan. To those who participate in the fund—**THANK YOU!** For those who would like to join the cause and help their community, please see page 17 of this issue.

2015 COMMUNITIES FIRST FUND GRANT SUMMARY

APPLICANT	AMOUNT	APPLICANT	AMOUNT
Bois Blanc Fire Department, <i>Hoses, Nozzles, Turnout Gear</i> . . .	\$4,000	United Way of Northeast Michigan, <i>Project Connect</i>	\$879
Great Lakes Lore Inc., <i>Lighting Replacement Project</i>	\$1,000	Hillman Community Radio, <i>Radio Training Studio</i>	\$1,500
Wolverine Fire Dept, <i>Air Tank Replacements</i>	\$2,300	Lewiston Community Sharing, <i>Refrigerator/Freezer</i>	\$1,623
Alcona Community Schools, <i>Panel Mast IV – Update</i>	\$2,000	Onaway Community Schools, <i>Video Broadcasting Station</i> . .	\$1,992
Atlanta Church of Christ, <i>The Caring Place/Food Supplies</i> . .	\$2,500	District Health Dept. No. 4, <i>Girls on the Run Sunrise Side</i> . .	\$2,000
Case Township, <i>Summer Youth Program</i>	\$1,025	Metz Township, <i>Metz Fire Trailside Park</i>	\$4,000
Lewiston Chamber of Commerce, <i>Movies in the Park</i>	\$900	The Baby Basket, <i>Baby Food Pantry</i>	\$4,000
K of C Troop #68 & 7068, <i>Equipment Trailer</i>	\$1,000	Cheboygan County 4-H, <i>MSU Vet Visit</i>	\$1,500
Cheboygan Area Schools, <i>Audio/Visual Broadcasting</i>	\$1,700	Great Lakes Lore, <i>Lighting Replacement Project</i>	\$1,335
Forest-Waverly Firefighters Assn, <i>AEDs</i>	\$1,724	College Scholarships, <i>17 High School Seniors</i>	\$16,500
Green Township, <i>Roadside Park Improvements</i>	\$2,000		

**PIE&G Communities First Fund
Statements of Financial Position
Dec. 31, 2015 and 2014**

ASSETS	2015	2014*
CURRENT ASSETS:		
Cash	\$ 100,462	\$ 95,230
Cash – restricted	3,000	3,000
Accounts receivable	4,016	4,155
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 107,478	\$ 102,385
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	\$ 69,651	\$ 69,385
Unrestricted, designated	34,827	30,000
Permanently restricted	3,000	3,000
TOTAL NET ASSETS	107,478	102,385
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 107,478	\$ 102,385
ACTIVITIES AND CHANGE IN NET ASSETS		
REVENUE		
Contributions – members	\$ 52,282	\$ 53,190
Contributions – PIE&G	9,458	10,834
Accounts receivable	95	61
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 61,835	\$ 64,084
EXPENSES		
Grants	\$ 38,865	\$ 38,002
Scholarships	8,500	11,600
Professional fees	750	3,000
Program expense	7,361	6,916
Directors’ Mileage expense	1,266	1,000
TOTAL EXPENSE	56,742	60,518
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	5,093	3,567
NET ASSETS, beginning of year	102,385	98,818
NET ASSETS, end of year	\$ 107,478	\$ 102,385

*2014 Financial Position Data is Unaudited.



HOW CAN I HELP MY COMMUNITY?

The PIE&G Communities First Fund was created in 1998. The funds for this program are generated when PIE&G members volunteer to “round up” their utility bills to the next dollar. The average contribution is 50 cents per month or around \$6 annually per meter. All contributions are tax deductible.

To participate, call our Member Services Department at 800-423-6634. You may also mail in the completed enrollment form on this page with your utility payment.

Enroll To Help Your Community

Yes!

I want to participate in the COMMUNITIES FIRST FUND. Please enroll me and “round-up” my bill to the next highest dollar each month.

Name (please print) _____

Account Number _____

Mailing Address _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Include this coupon in your next bill payment, or mail to:
PIE&G COMMUNITIES FIRST FUND, P.O. Box 308, Onaway, MI 49765

Every Vote Counts

By Jack O'Malley

A busy year celebrating Olympians and honoring lost legends like Gordie Howe and David Bowie, 2016 will conclude with one of the most highly debated presidential elections in history. As we prepare ourselves for a new leader, I urge you to do one of two things.

1. Vote
2. Encourage someone you know to vote.

"I don't like the candidates." "My vote doesn't make a difference." "I'm busy." These may be reasonable explanations for the nearly half of Americans who choose not to vote during a presidential election year. To those who understand voting to be a great American privilege, they might sound more like excuses releasing our neighbors of any personal responsibility for the future of our nation.

"Voting is a right, not a duty," non-voters argue. "I have just as much right to exercise my right NOT to vote!" True. American people voluntarily fight (and sometimes die) for you to keep your right to vote—whether used or not. It's a right extended to every American citizen regardless of sex, race or economic standing. It's a right exercised in peace.

In 1964, the U.S. Supreme Court described voting like this: No right is more precious in a free country than that of having a voice in the election of those who make the laws under which, as good citizens, we must live. Other rights, even the most basic, are illusory if the right to vote is undermined. *Wesberry v. Sanders*, 376 U.S. 1 (U.S. 1964).

Vital for the democratic process to work, your vote not only counts, but it also serves as a united voice to elected officials regardless of party. Your vote says, "Here I am, I'm paying attention!"



Jack O'Malley

Whether you choose to exercise your right to vote or not, Abraham Lincoln described it best when he said, "Elections belong to the people. It's their decision. If they decide to turn their back on the fire and burn their behinds, then they will just have to sit on their blisters."

Hope to see you at the polls. ■

I Remember...

We invite members to share their fondest memories. *Country Lines* will pay \$50 for stories we publish.

Guidelines

1. Approximately 200 words
2. Digital photos must be at least 600 KB
3. Only one entry per household, per month
4. *Country Lines* retains reprint rights
5. Please include your name, address, email, phone number and the name of your electric co-op
6. Submit your memories online: countrylines.com



«« Where In Michigan Is This?

Identify the correct location of the photo on the left by Nov. 30 and be entered into a drawing to win a \$50 electric bill credit. 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 the name of your co-op.

Our Mystery Photo Contest winner from the September 2016 issue is Karen Wienke, a HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative member who correctly identified the photo as Black Star Farms in Suttons Bay. Winners are announced in the following issues of *Country Lines*: January, March, May, July/August, September and November/December.



Sept. Photo

American Metal Roofs

“Winter storms, ice dams, power outages...



We'll help you protect your home against the ravages of a Michigan winter ...”

Frank Farmer - President, AMERICAN METAL ROOFS

It's true, our main business is metal roofing, but this time of year we offer products that help protect your home against the damaging effects of our long, icy winters. Products like Heated Shingle[®] and Heated Shingle Ice Dam Cutter[®] are products designed to melt ice buildup on your roof before it can take hold and cause expensive damage.

Protection for any kind of roof - not just metal.

We designed our Heated Shingle products to work on asphalt roofs as well as metal. So, if you've got problem ice areas on your roof, one of our Heated Shingle options may be exactly the solution you need.

Keep the power on through local outages - no worries.

Imagine. Within seconds of a local power outage, electricity in your home is restored - automatically. A whole house generator system keeps critical systems like heat, well pumps and medical equipment online until power is restored - and you never have to go outside.

I grew up in the U.P. so I know firsthand what a Michigan winter can do.

There is no doubt that winter weather can be hard on your home. That's why we offer our Heated Shingle products and whole house generator systems; to help protect your home through the worst of winter. And once the snow clears, we'll be happy to talk with you about one of our Snow Country roofs as well.

Protection. Permanence. You deserve nothing less.

VISIT OUR SHOWROOMS:

FLINT - 6140 Taylor Drive • CHARLOTTE - 1875 Lansing Road

Call Today! 844-638-2576 844-METAL-ROOFS

Read Customer Stories and Watch Videos at:

AmericanMetalRoofs.com

See Dozens of Pictures • Enter to Win a Metal Roof • Request a Quote



Can We Use Your Home In Our Advertising?

You Could Save Thousands On A New American Metal Roof!
CALL TODAY to find out if your home qualifies for a Showcase Home Discount.

Veterans receive an extra \$500 discount!!!

PIE&G

SCHOOL FRIDAY FOLDERS



PIE&G has once again delivered "Friday Folders" for member students enrolled in local public elementary schools for the 2016–2017 academic year.

PIE&G has donated Friday Folders to member schools since 2003 to help teachers send important student papers home for parents' review. The laminated folders are custom printed complete with the school name, mascot and colors.

The folders are purchased by PIE&G through its national marketing alliance with Touchstone Energy Cooperatives.

BEST WISHES TO ALL KIDS AND TEACHERS FOR A SUCCESSFUL YEAR OF LEARNING!!