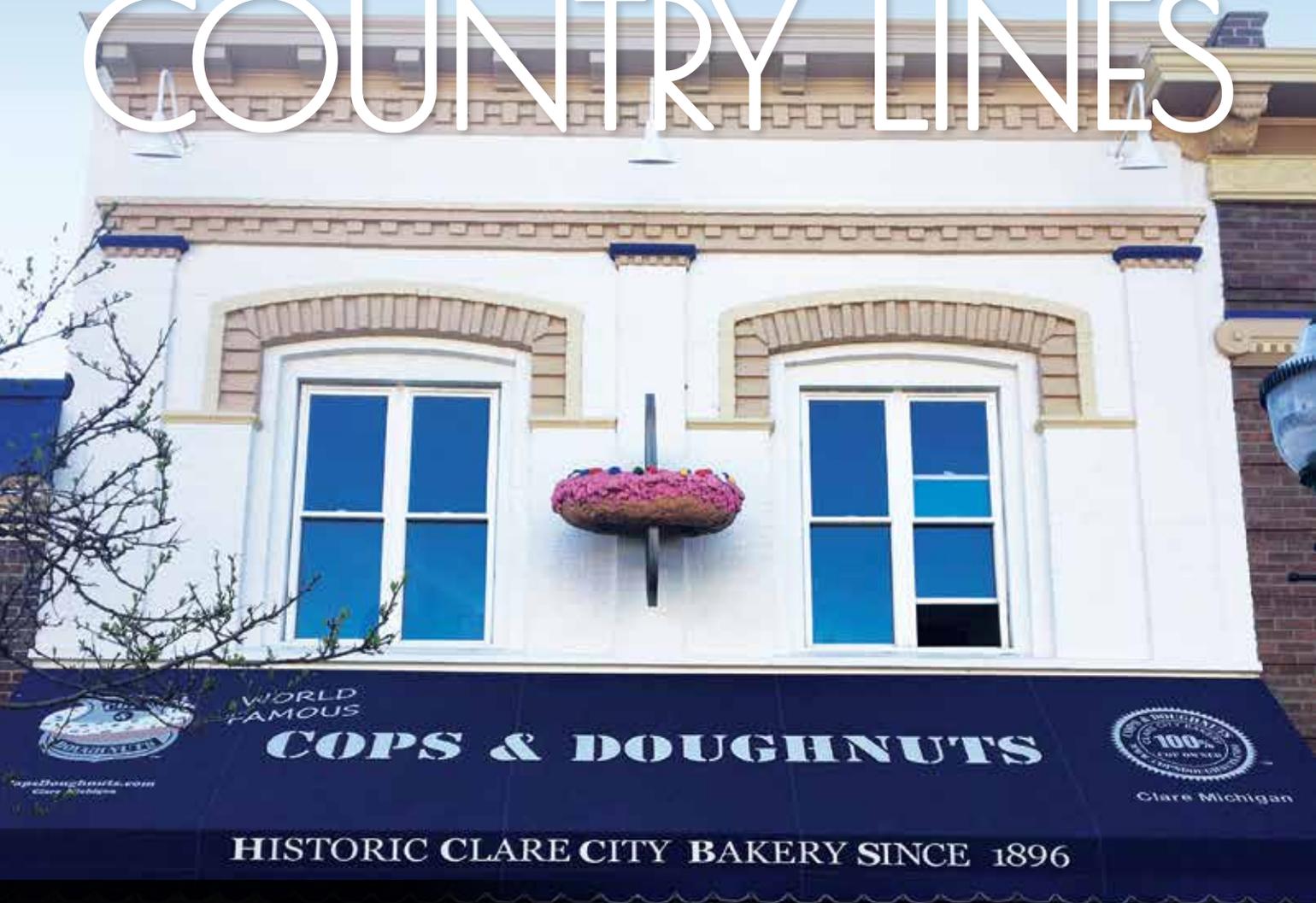


MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



PROTECT & Serve

The Sweet Story
Of Cops & Doughnuts

Members Make Annual Meeting A Success

A Lifetime Of Evolution



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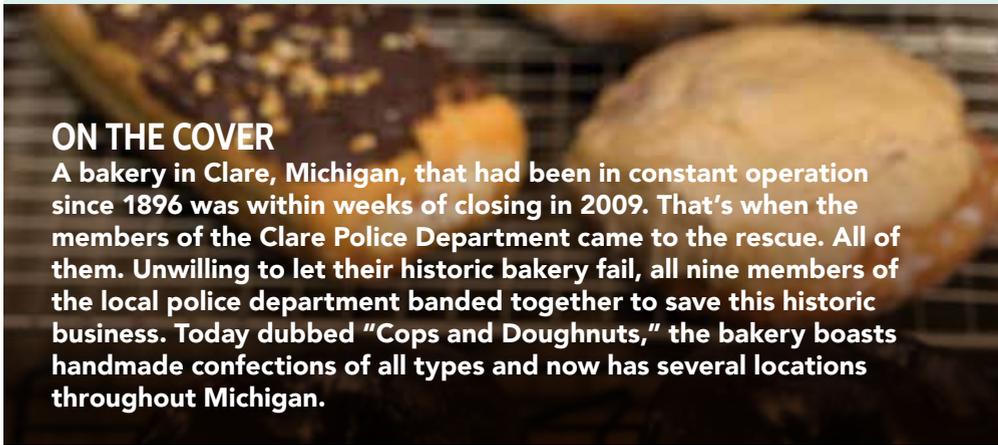


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ON THE COVER

A bakery in Clare, Michigan, that had been in constant operation since 1896 was within weeks of closing in 2009. That's when the members of the Clare Police Department came to the rescue. All of them. Unwilling to let their historic bakery fail, all nine members of the local police department banded together to save this historic business. Today dubbed "Cops and Doughnuts," the bakery boasts handmade confections of all types and now has several locations throughout Michigan.

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A \$50 Bill Credit!

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 or email to cdorr@meca.coop



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Fiscal year-end: Dec. 31

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The Power Of American Independence

Celebrating July Fourth And Declaring Our Energy Independence



Debbie Miles
General Manager

Fireworks and flags. Cookouts and cold drinks. The Fourth of July is a festive day on which we celebrate our nation's independence with family and friends. Typically, this is not a day of quiet reflection. While we spend a lot of energy having fun, if we give any thought about our forbearers and their determined efforts to bring about our nation's independence, it's fleeting.

An independent spirit is a part of our DNA.

However, it is worth reflecting that this uniquely American spirit of independence remains part of our collective DNA more than 200 years after the independent nation of the United States was formed and the Declaration of Independence was crafted. And, this sense of independence has served us well. For example, more than 70 years ago, an independent streak inspired groups of farmers across America's countryside to band together and improve their quality of life. Rural Americans had little help in bringing electricity to their homes. So, they did it themselves by pulling together and working cooperatively—a shining example of American determination and ingenuity.

The road to energy independence.

Consumers have an important role to play in the road to energy independence. They don't have to wait for Democrats and Republicans to agree or environmentalists and fossil fuel advocates to reach consensus on a path to energy independence. Consumers can play a part in moving us toward national energy independence by taking action in simple, practical ways: insulating and caulking around windows, doors and electrical outlets; washing clothes in cold water instead of hot; replacing air filters; installing a programmable thermostat; and using more energy efficient appliances and home heating and cooling systems. Efficiency efforts can cut costs for individual households, but the collective benefit to our country is even greater.

If we all work together to achieve increased energy efficiency and reduce our overall energy consumption, we can make even more progress on our road toward energy independence. So this Fourth of July, as you gaze up at the fireworks lighting up the night sky, reflect on the enduring spirit of independence that is integral to our American character. ■

No-Bake Recipes

Be Efficient In The Kitchen This Summer

Cooking in the summer can be unbearable. The last thing you may want to do on hot, humid days is turn on the oven to prepare a meal. Your air conditioner works extra hard during summer months to keep your home cool, so why not give it a break with easy, no-bake recipes. The recipes below are meant to help you make delicious treats for your family, without breaking a sweat!



Tzatziki

This refreshing dip can be eaten with pita chips or veggies. You can also add it to some grilled chicken or veggies as a sauce, or toss it with a salad to make a creamy dressing!

- 2 cups (plus one tablespoon) two percent Greek yogurt
- 1 cup cucumber, grated
- 1 ½ tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 tablespoons dill leaves (plus extra for garnish)
- salt and pepper to taste

Add all the ingredients to a bowl, then stir gently to mix.



Remember, no-bake recipes are a great way to keep your kitchen cool during the summer and show off your culinary skills. Stay cool, and happy cooking!



Lemon Truffles

These quick and easy lemon truffles are sure to satisfy any sweet tooth.

- 2 ½ cups lemon cake mix (see mix recipe below)
- 8 tablespoons butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- zest of one large lemon

For Lemon Cake Mix:

- 2 ¾ cups cake flour
- 1 ¾ cups fine white sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¾ teaspoons salt
- zest of two lemons

Combine the cake mix ingredients into a large bowl, stir gently to combine. Then add the melted butter, lemon juice and lemon zest. Use your hands to combine until the flour is moist and flaky. Roll dough into two inch balls, roll in sugar and serve!



Offices Closed For Labor Day

Cooperative offices will be closed for Labor Day on Monday, Sept. 4. Payments may be made at the drop box and will be posted on the next open business day.

From our family to yours, have a happy and safe Labor Day weekend.



PROTECT & SERVE

The Sweet Story Of Cops & Doughnuts

By Emily Haines Lloyd

There's something sweet happening in Clare, Michigan, and it's on a roll.

It started with a classic tale of a group of small-town police officers sitting in a local doughnut shop back in 2009. But then a twist occurred—the owner of Clare City Bakery told the officers he had to sell the bakery, which was one of the few open storefronts in the two-block downtown area of Clare. The officers lamented, continued talking and were struck by a thought—what if *they* bought the bakery?

“At first we laughed at [the thought of] a bunch of cops buying the only doughnut shop in town,” said

Al “Bubba” White, the now vice president of Cops & Doughnuts. “But eventually we stopped laughing.”

The recession had hit hard and the police force saw their small town slowly close storefront after storefront. Eventually, Clare City Bakery, a shop that had been around since 1896—surviving wars and the Great Depression—looked like it was about to be lost as well.

After making calls to the owner and quick talks among the nine-member police force, the deal was finalized within two weeks. Clare City Bakery became Cops & Doughnuts: Clare Precinct.

Without much business experience, White, along with now-president Greg “Ryno” Rynearson, as well as the other officers/owners, kept some of the bakery’s key recipes along with the head baker. The result was a good first day.

It wasn’t long before the story of a bunch of cops opening a doughnut shop caught some attention. They got a call from a reporter with *The Associated Press*, confirming that they were, in fact, a bunch of cops who opened a doughnut shop. Before they knew it, the guys were fielding interviews from





"It's a combination of things— a good product, of course, but it's also a good story. We don't just sell doughnuts," explains White. "We sell cops selling doughnuts."

"NBC Nightly News," "Fox and Friends," and "Good Morning America."

When asked why he thinks Cops & Doughnuts is a story, White has some ideas.

"It's a combination of things—a good product, of course, but it's also a good story. We don't just sell doughnuts," explains White. "We sell cops selling doughnuts."

That combination, plus a healthy dose of good humor and community spirit, seems to be working in a big way. The Cops & Doughnuts crew saw that they had a good thing and knew they could grow. But where to expand became the next question. It had been important to them to save their beloved Clare City Bakery and the important role it had played in their story. So, what if they could save another historic bakery?

The group expanded to McDonald's Bakery, a fifth-generation establishment in Ludington, Mich., followed by The Sutherland Bakery in Bay City, which originally opened in 1912. The crew then expanded and opened a precinct (or bakery) in Jay's Sporting Goods in Gaylord, and finally, a gem in South Bend, Indiana, was acquired, known as The Dainty Maid Bake Shop. Each town was reinvigorated by the lively atmosphere and genuine love that White, Rynearson and the team have for the history, community and, of course, the bakery.

With five precincts, more than 500 retail outlets, and approximately half a million customers visiting annually, Cops & Doughnuts is well on its way to their goal of "world domination," they attest. However, at the very heart, it's still a group of civic-minded public servants determined to protect the rich history of small-town bakeries by serving up great doughnuts. ■

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The Art Of Nature



Submit A Photo & Win A Bill Credit!

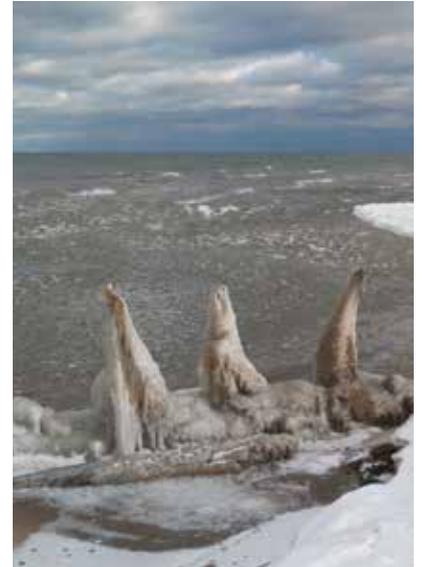
Ontonagon REA members whose photos we print in *Michigan Country Lines* will be entered in a drawing. One lucky member will win a credit up to \$200 on their December 2017 energy bill! Upcoming topics and deadlines are: **Birds and Feathers** due **July 20** for the Sept./Oct. issue and **Back To School** due **Sept. 20** for the Nov./Dec. issue.

To submit photos, and for details and instructions, go to <http://bit.ly/countrylines>

We look forward to seeing your best photos!



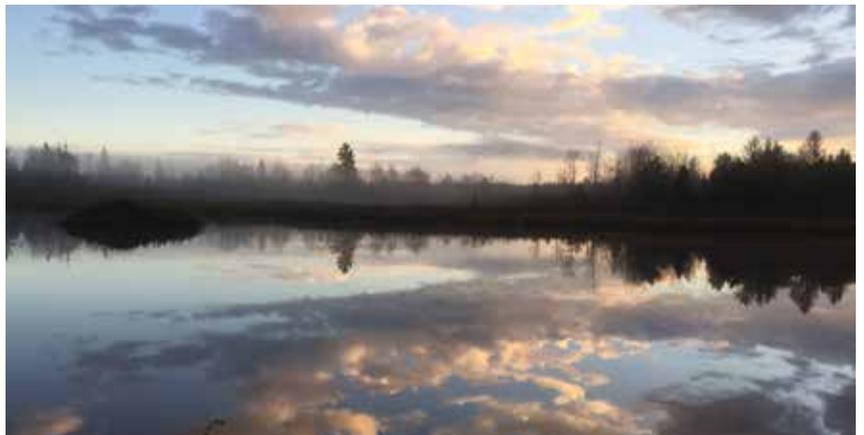
Fungus "flowers" on an old stump in the fall. *By Anne Schumer*



The ice looked like seals on the beach at the mouth of the Huron River. *By Karen Dault*



After a warm spell in February these bulbs happened to be budding! After transplanting them inside we got to enjoy an early indoor Spring! *By Kati Ek*



A glorious morning on Beaver Pond. *By Wally Green*



It was time to close the camp last fall. My wife was gone, but I still honored our tradition of saying "goodbye" to the camp. It was misting as I slowly walked to the beach; and there, to my surprise, was a complete rainbow before me. I have never seen the end of a rainbow, much less two. *By Claude Cybulski*

CHICKEN CHALLENGE

Transform your dinner with these easy-to-prepare chicken recipes.

Pepper Jack Pasta

Deb Mitteer, Great Lakes Energy

- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into medallions
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into small strips
- 1 green bell pepper, cut into small strips
- 1 yellow bell pepper, cut into small strips
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 4 cups mini penne pasta, uncooked
- 5 cups milk
- 8-ounce block pepper jack cheese, cut into small pieces
- 2–3 tablespoons cooking oil

Drizzle cooking oil in a dutch oven pot. Add the chicken medallions and cook chicken until no longer pink. Remove chicken from pot and set aside. Add the peppers and onions to the pot and cook until onion is transparent. Add chicken back to the pot with the peppers and onion. Add the uncooked penne pasta and 5 cups of milk to the pot. Bring the milk to a boil and stir constantly for 8–10 minutes or until pasta is tender. Remove from stove and add the pepper jack cheese. Let set until the cheese is melted. Stir until well mixed. Serve immediately.

▶ Watch a video of this recipe at <https://goo.gl/BRjFXS>



Rosemary Chicken And Brie Bundles

Denise Barth, Cherryland

- 8-ounce can refrigerated crescent dinner rolls
- 2 tablespoons green onions, sliced
- 6 ounces Brie cheese, rind removed, cubed
- 1 ½ cups cooked chicken breast, chopped
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 teaspoon crushed dried rosemary
- 1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese



Heat oven to 350 F. Separate dough into four rectangles, press perforations to seal. Spoon ¼ of green onions onto the center of each rectangle; top with ¼ of the Brie cheese cubes. Top each with ¼ of chicken, pressing into cheese. Fold short

ends over chicken, overlapping slightly. Fold open ends over about ½ inch to form a rectangle. Press all edges to seal. Place seam side down on ungreased baking pan or cookie sheet. Cut three 1-inch slashes on top of each roll to allow steam to escape. Brush with egg, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and rosemary. Bake for 21 to 26 minutes or until golden brown. Let stand 5 minutes before serving. Serves 4.

Dawn's Elegant Chicken

Dawn Wagner, Great Lakes Energy

- 8 half chicken breasts (4 whole)
- 8 Swiss cheese slices
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 can cream of celery soup
- ½ to ¾ cup white cooking wine
- Pepperidge Farm Stuffing mix (or your favorite)
- ⅔ stick of butter



Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray a 9×13 baking dish with vegetable spray. Place chicken breasts in the baking dish. Place a slice of Swiss cheese on each piece of chicken. In a separate bowl, mix the cream of chicken soup, the cream of celery

soup and the white wine. Pour the mixture over the chicken. Cover the entire top of the dish with stuffing mix. Melt butter and pour it on top of the stuffing/chicken. Bake for 1 hour. Serve over Uncle Ben's Wild Rice (or your favorite).



Submit your favorite recipe for a chance to win a \$50 bill credit and have your recipe featured in *Country Lines*:

- "Slow Cooker Favorites" due August 1
- "Pleasing Pies" due September 1

Go to micoopkitchen.com for more information and to register.

Cream Cheese Chicken Dumpling Soup

Jessi Smith, Great Lakes Energy

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 celery stalk, chopped
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 2 cups cooked chicken
- 8 cups chicken broth
- 2 eggs
- 1 package of cream cheese, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 cup flour
- salt and pepper, to taste



Melt butter in soup pot. Add chopped onions and sauté for 2 minutes or until lightly golden brown. Add chopped celery and carrots, and sauté for 2 minutes. Add chicken and chicken broth to vegetables. Continue to cook soup on medium

heat. To make the cream cheese dumplings, you will need either a food processor or a bowl and mixer. Combine the eggs, cubed cream cheese and flour, mix until smooth. When the broth in the soup pot is near a boil, reduce heat to low. Dip a large metal spoon into the pot to get the spoon hot. Remove about half a spoonful of the dumpling mixture and dunk the spoon into the soup, wiggling the spoon until the dumpling releases. Repeat this step until all the dumplings are in the pot. Allow the last dumplings to cook 2 minutes per side. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve and enjoy.

Annual Meeting *Highlights*



Approximately 150 members attend the Annual Meeting.

Chassell High School was the setting for the 2017 Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association's (OCREA's) Annual Meeting held on Saturday, June 17. Approximately 150 members from the co-op's five county service area attended the event which featured food, prize drawings, reports from the co-op manager and the board of directors, as well as the seating of new directors.

According to General Manager Debbie Miles, "This is the first meeting since 2014 that we have had a quorum and this provided a lot of input from the membership." During the business portion of the meeting three resolutions were presented regarding bylaws, redistricting and transparency. After a spirited open discussion between members and staff these resolutions were voted on and passed.

Reports regarding overviews of the 2016 co-op operations, finances and highlights from the past year were presented by both President Koski and General Manager Miles. Board of directors ballots were opened and counted by a committee chaired by Peggy Macko. James Moore ran unopposed for the vacancy in District 7 Boston/Lake Linden and



General Manager Debbie Miles addressed the members to give an overview of co-op operations.

incumbent Paul Koski defeated Jerry Kitzman to win District 3 Ewen/Trout Creek. Both directors were seated at the meeting.

During public comment, many members remarked positively on the co-op's excellent customer service and the line crews. Sara Green expressed appreciation to "the line crews who do a great job of keeping our power on and responding quickly to interruptions," which was greeted with a round of applause.

The meeting concluded with \$345 of cash prizes being distributed to those members with winning raffle tickets. A delicious continental breakfast and luncheon was catered and served by Kangas Café of Hancock. ■

“This is the first meeting since 2014 that we have had a quorum and this provided a lot of input from the membership.”

—Debbie Miles, General Manager



A continental breakfast and luncheon buffet were provided to members who attended the annual meeting.



Meeting moderator Ken Bradstreet kept the meeting moving smoothly.



Billing Clerk Fay Hauswirth is pictured receiving the director election voting ballots from **Chairperson of Elections Peggy Macko**.



Board President Calvin Koski presented **Rose Marie Smilie** with her cash prize resulting from holding one of the winning raffle tickets.



Members cast their votes for one of the three resolutions that were passed at the meeting.



Ontonagon Linemen Luke Jouppe and Gil Martinez acted as sergeants-at-arms during the meeting.

DOUGHNUTS & Craft Beer: A Divine Pairing

Our cover story on page 6 features the fun-loving Cops & Doughnuts bakeries. So, what better than to pair a few of these business-savvy police officer's favorite baked goods with some popular Michigan-made beers. It's a fun idea for dinner parties, tailgating or lounging around the fire pit.

By Emily Haines Lloyd | Photos—Christin McKamey

This is a classic doughnut for a reason and is a dream to pair.

When it comes to chocolate, fruit is pretty much a no-brainer. For a berry "wow factor," try **Short's (Bellaire) Soft Parade**—a fruity-rye ale featuring strawberries, blueberries, raspberries and blackberries. It's a home run in contrasting flavors.

If you want to stay in the sweet pocket, look at **Saugatuck Brewing Company's (Saugatuck) Neopolitan Milk Stout**. It truly drinks like its namesake with a blend of chocolate, vanilla and strawberry. Super smooth and rich, you'll feel like you just added a dollop of ice cream to your already delicious doughnut.



**CHOCOLATE
DIP RAISED
GLAZED**



**CINNAMON
BUN MAPLE
FROSTED**

You would think a fresh-baked cinnamon bun can't get any better, but then you discover the delicious Cops & Doughnuts maple frosting and realize you were wrong.

A dessert lover's dream is a rich pairing with **New Holland's (Holland) Dragon's Milk Bourbon Barrel Aged Stout**. Its roasty malt character intermingled with deep vanilla tones, all dancing in an oak bath, is a whopping 12 percent ABV, but perfect for sipping with this dreamy doughnut.

Screamin' Pumpkin Ale from Griffin Claw Brewing Co. (Birmingham) is like a slice of warm pie, offering flavors of cinnamon, clove, sweet pumpkin and a little molasses. Paired with the cinnamon bun, it's like double dipping in the dessert category.

PEANUT BUTTER DEPUTY

Cops & Doughnuts' Peanut Butter Deputy is a Long John filled with peanut butter cream, topped with chocolate frosting and chopped peanuts. In other words—YUM!

Founder's (Grand Rapids) Curmudgeon is an old ale brewed with molasses and uber malty. It's a barrel-aged brew that seems made for this kind of decadent pairing.

Atwater Brewery's (Grand Rapids) Vanilla Java Porter has the rich flavor of dark roasted coffee with plenty of vanilla notes. It's a fairly simple beer that packs a classic coffee and doughnut punch.



FELONY FRITTER

This is a classic apple fritter that is sweet, tart and showcases hints of cinnamon. Each one is handcrafted in the historic bakery in downtown Clare, Michigan. Let's be honest, they're huge, satisfying and could be shared, but do you really want to do that?

For a beer pairing, try a hoppy IPA like North Peak's (Traverse City) Diabolical. It is unfiltered and dry-hopped with Michigan grown Chinook and Cascade hops. It has a smooth malt character and citrus pine aroma that brings forward the tartness in the apples.

Looking for something a bit more earthy and smoky? Try a Scotch Ale, such as Dark Horse Brewing Company's (Marshall) Scotty Karate. It's brewed with cherry wood smoked malt instead of the traditional peat smoked malt, offering up warming notes of coffee, caramel and sweet caramelized brown sugar. If that doesn't sound like a pair made in fritter heaven, we don't know what does.





Branstrom's "Rusty's Ball" was constructed out of numerous cans saved from the Rapid River school's hot lunch program and fastened together with hundreds of screws.



Ritch with his bluebird sculpture. The bird's breast is fashioned from a Volkswagen hood. The bird will soon be on its way to the Elk Rapids Walk of Art Sculpture Park.

A LIFETIME OF EVOLUTION

By Yvonne Whitman

Finding random items on his workshop doorstep is an everyday occurrence for Rapid River "found object artist" Ritch Branstrom. "People leave me things. Lots of things," the 50-year-old says with a wide grin. And from his doorstep many of the items find themselves transformed into something quite different via Branstrom's artistic vision. Old cans, license plates and fenders become metal sculptures of fish, canoes and even heavy metal bands.

Branstrom received his Fine Arts degree from Northern Michigan University, but his parents

were not on board with his artistic inclinations, telling him, "You'll never make a living as an artist." Branstrom says, "I listened to them for a while, but after about five years I decided to figure out my own future," and it led him back to his artistic roots and to the U.P. "This is one of the best places to live," he confidently states.

At about the same time, his father fell ill with brain cancer. "It was a life-changing experience," he recalls. "It made me realize that it's important to make the most out of life every day and to do what your passion is." His passion turned out to be found



Many of the clever creations of Ritch Branstrom, a "found object artist."

object art and he initially began creating pieces from rusty items that were scattered around the family homestead. "I would work in my folk's garage and make dinosaurs in the driveway from old farm equipment," and soon the adage of, "If you build it they will come" occurred. "People began to show up and drive by very slowly," he remarks with a smile.

Eventually Branstrom opened a workshop studio in a defunct service station on U.S. Highway 2 that drew people in. "I used to joke that when I opened the old garage door it was the vortex to the universe because so many people from around the world would walk through that door." His current workshop on the main street of Rapid River was once a grocery store and some of his creations are cleverly showcased in old produce display coolers. The top floor functions as his warehouse, storing the vast collection of found metal objects waiting to be transformed into a future piece of Branstrom's artwork. "I repurpose them and give them a new life, he remarks. And, from where does he draw his inspiration? "A lifetime of evolution," he notes.

While the doorstep deliveries provide most of his raw material, he does sometimes need to go out looking for a certain item. But, according to

Branstrom, things have changed quite a bit during the years he has been working. "The countryside has been cleaned up in the last 20 years. In my youth, there were old farmsteads and junkyards with rusted farm equipment and automobiles, but those days are gone. The things I really like to find and use are rare now."

Starting out he sold his work on the art show circuit, and eventually in galleries and soon his work began to get recognized with numerous Best of Show awards. Branstrom has participated in the Grand Rapids-based ArtPrize three times. In 2011, his 3,000-pound dog sculpture, "Rusty," finished 5th place out of 1,582 entries. Getting the sculpture there was quite an escapade due to the size of the piece. "It was like a traveling performance piece going down the interstate. Everyone had their cameras out." His successful work as an artist has also led to a seat on the Governor's Board of the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs.

"Everything has a story," Branstrom concludes. "It's been traveling through time and space and interacting with people. It fascinates me when I can create a piece that changes the way I view life." ■

Branstrom's work can be found at the Michigan Artists Gallery in Traverse City. Visit his website at adhocworkshop.com to learn more.

Beaver Island's Music Festival Offers Unique Vibes In A Throwback Setting

With a population of 600 living on 56 square miles of land off the coast of Charlevoix in Lake Michigan and accessible only by boat or air, Beaver Island could be described as a throwback to another era. How fitting then that the island hosts its own musical festival featuring sounds of the Renaissance.

Celebrating its 16th season this summer, Baroque on Beaver (known as BonB) focuses on classical music; however, guests may also be treated to jazz, Broadway, folk and other genres throughout the 10-day festival. Renowned musicians from symphonies in Midland, Grand Rapids, Chicago, and even as far away as Mexico, gather for what many consider the epicenter of classical music on the Great Lakes.

Originally organized by locals for locals, the event quickly gained a wider audience and became one of the island's most popular events and tourist destinations. According to Festival Director Matthew Thomas, the reason for the event's growth is simple. "Beaver Island is a unique place. Add high-quality music you can enjoy up close and personal, and suddenly a great experience becomes unforgettable!" For this small community, that's music to its ears.

While the event continues to be celebrated for raising cultural awareness of classical music, BonB also makes an important economic contribution to the island. Guests tend to stay longer, spend more, and support businesses whose primary focus is tourism, hospitality and transport. For those who don't have time for an extended stay, day packages are now available. Visit baroqueonbeaver.org for ticket, travel and accommodation information.



In the meantime, as locals and tourists gather under a canopy of stars on a remote island, the sound of music echoing off the water and surrounded by the region's finest musicians, the words of one musician sum up the experiences of most who attend BonB. "This might sound strange," this first-time event musician said, "but I really hope you have me back next year." ■

The Beaver Island Cultural Arts Association was formalized as a 501c3 corporation in 2006. BICAA's mission is "To serve the Beaver Island community by promoting and supporting the cultural arts, including the annual Baroque on Beaver Festival." For information about BICAA, please visit the website at bicaa.org or by calling 888-511-5189.



Jack O'Malley

The 2017 festival is July 28 through August 6.



«« Where In Michigan Is This?

Identify the correct location of the photo on the left by August 10 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 May 2017 issue is Paul Morningstar, a Midwest Energy Cooperative member, who correctly identified the photo as the annual Harbor Beach BiYakAthon (bike, run, kayak) at Lincoln Memorial Park.

Winners are announced in the following issues of *Country Lines*: January, March, May, July/August, September and November/December.



May Photo



AMERICAN METAL ROOFS President, Frank Farmer



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