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COUNTRY LINES

Great Lakes Energy Cooperative

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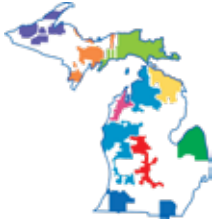
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Please notify your electric cooperative. See page 4 for contact information.

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Best Of Michigan: Best Beaches!

Here are members' top beaches along Michigan's coastlines.

[Guess Our New Mystery Photo And Win A \\$50 Bill Credit!](#)

Win \$150 for stories published.

Guest Column

Country Lines invites members to submit stories.

Guidelines

1. Approximately 350 words
2. Digital photos must be at least 600 KB
3. Submit your guest column at countrylines.com under the MI Co-op Community tab

Win \$50 for stories published.

I Remember...

We invite members to share their fondest memories.

Guidelines

1. Approximately 200 words
2. Digital photos must be at least 600 KB
3. Submit your memory at: countrylines.com under the MI Co-op Community tab.

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Elect GLE's Board of Directors— Your Vote Counts!

Bill Scott, Great Lakes Energy President/CEO

If you're a Great Lakes Energy member in districts 1, 2 or 7, please read about the candidates inside and cast your vote with the attached mail-in ballot. For all other members, your opportunity to vote will come in 2019 or 2020.

Every co-op, whether it's your credit union or a farm co-op, follows the basic principle of *one member, one vote*. Most often you are asked to vote to elect fellow members who will represent you on the board of directors. These folks are your friends, neighbors and fellow residents of your community.

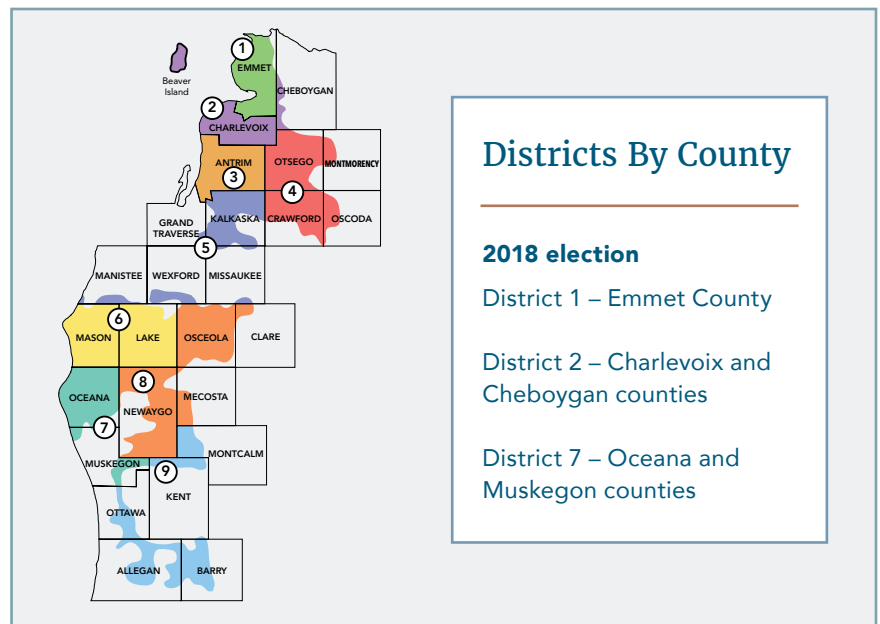
Simply cast your vote from the comfort of your home and drop the postage-paid ballot in the mailbox. Voting is that simple and convenient. If you lose or accidentally throw away the ballot, contact us and we'll send you another one.

Members vote for a director once every three years. In my case, I'm a GLE member in District 1 so I will be voting this year.

Part of the value of being a cooperative member is everyone's vote carries equal weight. Whether it's a business with several owners or a small home with a single owner, each has one membership and one vote. In the case of a husband and wife, their joint membership entitles them to one vote.

The nine directors on the board are elected from each district for a three-year term.

Co-ops believe in the power of human connections and encourage your participation in the board election. If you live in districts 1, 2 or 7, please join me in exercising your right to vote. It's the cooperative difference.





The Oceana County Council on Aging is just one of many local organizations helped by the People Fund.



Congratulations To Our Winners!

Thanks for your ongoing support of the People Fund.

- Renee Hooker, Cadillac
- Steve Fay, Levering
- Rob Markiewicz, New Era
- Douglas Montey, Fountain
- Donna Rebman, Alden
- James Carney, Pentwater

Be A People Fund Winner

Did you know we award \$100 billing credits to Great Lakes Energy members who support the People Fund? Six winners are randomly selected twice per year.

Several generous People Fund supporters recently became winners. See the list of members on this page who received a \$100 bill credit.

Current People Fund supporters and any member who becomes a People Fund contributor before the next drawing on Dec. 1 are eligible to win.

People Fund contributors allow Great Lakes Energy to round up their electric bills to the nearest dollar each month. The rounded-up amounts, which average less than 50 cents a month, are used to award grants to local charities and community groups such as food pantries, senior citizen centers and youth programs.

Gifts are provided by Great Lakes Energy and do not involve the use of any People Fund round-up money.

Don't miss your chance to be the next winner! Call our office or visit gtlakes.com to sign up today.

We are looking out for you!

Access your GLE account anywhere, anytime!



- » View and pay your electric bill
- » Sign up for paperless billing
- » Track your electricity use
- » Set up or modify Auto Pay
- » Update your personal information
- » View and report power outages
- » Schedule payments



2018 YOUTH TOUR

Photos courtesy of Doug Snitgen

Washington, D.C. Highlights

Electric Cooperative Youth Tour teaches students about their past and helps equip them with the skills they need to be Michigan's next generation of energy-minded leaders. Youth Tour offers a unique opportunity to explore leadership lessons from our nation's history, build life-long friendships with students from across the country, and be immersed in the cooperative spirit.

Michigan's electric cooperatives sponsored 22 high school juniors and seniors on this once-in-a-lifetime trip to Washington, D.C. this past June.



Students from across the state toured multiple landmarks, including a guided tour of the U.S. Capitol.



The Michigan pillar is a tribute within the National World War II Memorial, and represents the 620,000 Michigan residents who served during World War II.



Youth Tour students visited the historical home of George Washington, Mount Vernon.



The group visited the Marine Corps War Memorial.



Students enjoyed meeting with Congressmen Bill Huizenga and Jack Bergman on the steps of the U.S. Capitol building.

Information is available at CooperativeYouthTour.com



Five Friendly Tips For The Farmers Market

By Grace Derocha

Michigan residents are fortunate in their ability to grow and buy fresh, locally grown produce throughout the summer and fall. According to the Michigan Farmers Market Association, the mitten is home to more than 300 farmers markets, reaching residents in nearly every county of the state. Trips to the farmers market can be a fun family tradition to inspire healthier eating habits and explore new foods and flavors. While planning a visit to the farmers market, keep in mind some of the following tips:

1. Ask Questions

Don't shy away from making conversation with the vendors at a local farmers market. Unlike a grocery store setting, shoppers are given the opportunity to learn more about what they're purchasing, ask questions and get advice for their own growing/gardening purposes. Some vendors may even have insight on cooking methods or tasty food pairings.

2. Bring Bags And Cash

Farmers market vendors do not usually supply shopping bags. Bringing reusable bags from home guarantees a means of carrying purchases while reducing waste. It's also common for farmers market vendors to only accept cash, so be sure to have bills and small change on hand before heading out the door.

3. Pick The Right Time To Go

Crowds at the market tend to pick up around midday, so it's best to arrive right as it opens. Early shoppers have a better chance of avoiding lines, getting advice from vendors and picking from high-demand fruits or vegetables. On the other hand, those in the market for a good deal may want to visit later in the day. Oftentimes farmers market vendors will discount their products instead of risking waste.

4. Know Seasonal Produce

Having an idea of what produce is in season can help set expectations for purchases at the market. Research what grows in the area, talk to the farmers about what produce will be coming and plan shopping trips from there. Many farmers markets provide customers with a crop calendar at the information booth to show when various fruits and vegetables will be available.

5. Meal Plan Ahead

Going to the farmers market without a list or plan may lead to unnecessary purchases. To avoid waste, look around the kitchen and get an idea of which foods might pair well for meals in the week ahead. Use the seasonal produce available at the market for inspiration and explore using any leftover produce in a new soup, salad, sandwich or casserole recipe.

To find a farmer's market nearby use the **Find a Farmers Market** tool, found on the **Michigan Farmers Market Association** website: mifma.org/findafarmersmarket/.

Fruits and vegetables in-season throughout the summer in Michigan include, but are not limited to:

- Apples
- Apricots
- Asparagus
- Beans
- Broccoli
- Blackberries
- Blueberries
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Celery
- Cherries (tart and sweet)
- Cucumbers
- Greens (turnips, collards, kale)
- Peaches
- Peas
- Peppers
- Radishes
- Raspberries
- Spinach
- Squash (yellow, zucchini)
- Strawberries

Now Available:

Free Energy-Saving Products And Installation

Don't have time to think about saving energy? No problem! It takes just moments to request your free energy-saving kit from our Home Energy Express Program.

How does it work? The free kit contains products that immediately improve the efficiency of your home. The devices will help you control the amount of energy used to heat and cool your home, as well as the electricity used by lighting, appliances, and electronics.

Your kit could include:

- Energy-efficient lighting (LED bulbs)
- Water-saving products (such as faucet aerators and/or low-flow showerheads)
- Smart power strip
- Pipe wrap
- Smart thermostat or programmable thermostat (depending on eligibility criteria)

There are no strings attached—the kit is completely free for Great Lakes Energy customers.

Free installation: We know you're busy, and may not have time to install your energy-saving devices. Just let us know, and we'll schedule a contractor to come to your home and install your products at no cost. We'll make sure you know how to use all the items before we leave.

Get started today!

Contact us to schedule your FREE services, either by calling 877-296-4319 or emailing info@michigan-energy.org. Before calling, please review the following eligibility requirements. You must:

- Be a member of Great Lakes Energy Cooperative.
- Own a single-family home or, if you are a tenant, must have owner's permission to have work done on the home.
- Be willing to sign a document to allow work to be done on the home by professional, trained contractors.



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made
SIMPLE

CLAIM YOUR FREE ENERGY-SAVING PRODUCTS!

The Home Energy Express Program provides Great Lakes customers with FREE delivery and installation of energy-saving products, such as:

EFFICIENT LIGHTING

SMART POWER STRIP

WATER-SAVING DEVICES

SMART OR PROGRAMMABLE THERMOSTAT
(pending eligibility)

Start reducing your electricity and water use today.

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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.



GLE Photo Contest

Fan Spirit

1. Mitten chip with Michigan beer on Michigan golf course—*Cathy Daniels, Irons*
2. Go Wings—*Sheila Lenhart, Dorr*
3. Detroit Tigers' Littlest Fan—*Sarah Lohman, Montague*
4. Lovin' Our Wolverines—*Kim Kinstle, Baldwin*
5. I'm a Fan of Fans—*Michael Ross, White Cloud*
6. Pink Out the Park Tiger Stadium—*Sandy Sonnenberg, Wolverine*



1



2



3



4



5



6

Submit Your "Pumpkin Faces" Photo!

Each month members can submit photos on Facebook or our website for our annual photo contest. The photo with the most votes on Facebook is published here along with other selections.

Our July contest theme is Pumpkin Faces. Photos can be submitted by July 20 to be featured in the October issue.

How To Enter:

Visit [Facebook.com/greatlakesenergy](https://www.facebook.com/greatlakesenergy) and click "Photo Contest" from the menu tabs. Not on Facebook? You can also enter the contest at [gtlakes.com/photocontest/](https://www.gtlakes.com/photocontest/). Make sure to vote and encourage others to vote for you, too. The photo receiving the most votes from our online and Facebook contest will be printed in an issue of *Michigan Country Lines* along with some of our other favorites. All photos printed in the magazine throughout the year will be entered to win a \$200 bill credit in December 2018.

Enter to win a
\$200
energy bill
credit!

Eggcellent

Jump start your day with these egg recipes!

Crustless Quiche

Mary Gavlek, Great Lakes Energy

- ½ cup Bisquick
- 3 eggs
- ½ cup melted butter
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1½ cups milk
- 1 cup shredded cheese
- cooked chopped meats of choice
- diced vegetables of choice

Preheat oven to 425 F. Mix together Bisquick, eggs, butter, salt, pepper, milk and cheese with a wire whip. Add meat and vegetables. Pour into a round pie plate or 9×9 square pan. Bake uncovered for 45 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes, serve and enjoy.



Watch a video of this recipe at micookitchen.com/videos



Rise N' Shine Eggs

Kathie Riess, Cherryland

- 2-3 tablespoons butter
- 4 large eggs
- ⅓ cup grated sharp cheddar cheese
- ⅓ cup seeded and chopped tomatoes
- 1-2 teaspoons prepared horseradish (not cream style)
- Tabasco sauce, to taste
- salt and pepper

Melt butter in a skillet over medium heat. In a mixing bowl, whisk eggs until almost totally homogenized. Add eggs to skillet and stir gently. After they have begun to thicken, add remaining ingredients. Stir until cheese melts and is incorporated. Serve immediately.



Potato Crusted Quiche With Morels, Ramps, Asparagus, Bacon And Swiss

Bonnie Langworthy, HomeWorks Tri-County

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 medium potatoes, peeled and sliced 2 tablespoons oil ½ cup ramps (leeks), chopped ½ cup roasted red bell pepper, chopped ¼ cup morel mushrooms, coarsely chopped ¼ cup blanched asparagus, chopped | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¾ teaspoon dried thyme 8 strips bacon, cooked crisp 4 ounces gruyere cheese, grated 8-10 large eggs ½ cup half & half ¼ teaspoon salt ¼ teaspoon ground pepper • pinch of nutmeg |
|---|---|

Preheat oven to 350 F. Lightly grease a 9-inch pie pan. Blanch potatoes in salted, boiling water for 1½ minutes. When cool, place a single layer of potatoes in the pan, slightly overlapping. Stand up slices (also overlapping) around edge. Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add ramps (leeks), red pepper, morels, asparagus and thyme and sauté 5 minutes. Spoon mixture on top of potatoes. Crumble bacon on top of veggie mix. Spread cheese on top. Whisk together eggs, half & half, salt, pepper and nutmeg. Whisk until color lightens. Pour into pie dish. Bake for 35 minutes. Cool 25 minutes and serve in wedges.



Cocktails And Drinks: due August 1
Holiday Favorites: due September 1

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

Enter to win a
\$50
energy bill
credit!

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

FEATURED GUEST CHEF

When Courageous Coffee's Tanya Schneider puts so much soul into roasting the perfect coffee beans, it seems a shame not to take advantage of all that heartfelt flavor. She shares a recipe that uses brewed coffee for the ultimate coffee companion.



Cappuccino Muffins

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 cups all-purpose flour ¾ cup sugar 2½ teaspoons baking powder ½ teaspoon salt ½ cup milk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ½ cup strong brewed coffee ½ cup butter, melted 1 large egg 1 teaspoon vanilla extract 1 cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips |
|--|--|

Preheat oven to 350 F. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. In another bowl, combine the milk, coffee, butter, egg and vanilla. Stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Fold in chocolate chips.

Fill greased muffin cups two-thirds full and bake for 15-20 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Serve with cream cheese spread (optional).

Cream Cheese Spread

- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips

Mix all ingredients together until well blended and spread on muffins.

These muffins pair well with a cup of Courageous Coffee!

Read the full story about Tanya Schneider, owner of Courageous Coffee, on page 14, and find this recipe and others at micoopkitchen.com.

Need A Generator?

Safety And Buying Tips From Great Lakes Energy

1

Standby vs. Portable

Not sure if you want a whole-house standby generator or a portable generator?

Standby generators are automatic, so they will come on even if you're not home. They power your whole house and are quiet. Standby generators are more expensive, but tend to last a long time.

Portable generators are manual, which means you have to be home to start it. They may not be best if you have a seasonal home. They will power essential appliances you may need during an outage. They are a more cost-effective option, but do have to be filled with gas and be placed outside.

2

Special Meter Base

If you are considering a standby generator, be sure to install a meter base with a generator safety switch. GLE sells these special meter bases for \$350.

They protect our lineworkers, your family and neighbors, and they eliminate the risk of damage to your generator or appliances.

3

Hire An Electrician

Hire an electrician to install a standby generator and the special meter base.

LEARN MORE



Search the web for more details:

- Search "standby vs. portable generators"
- Search "generator manufacturers"
- Contact a local electrician

Please note, GLE does not sell or install generators.

Tell Us How We're Doing!

We'd like to hear from you. Have you had a positive interaction with a GLE employee either on the phone or in-person? Tell us about it and you could win a **\$25 energy gift**.

Contact us with specific details of the interaction by phone, mail or email, and include the employee's name. You can even post the comment through a form on our website or on our Facebook page. We'll print your great comments in our employee newsletter. Employees who are recognized will be entered in a quarterly, random prize drawing. Plus, we'll award the member who submits the feedback for the winning employee with a \$25 energy gift!

We appreciate your feedback! We also welcome any suggestions or concerns with our service so we can work with you to resolve your issue as quickly as possible.

You Could Win A
\$25 Energy Gift

Contact us with your
feedback today.

Please be specific and include
the employee name.



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Think before you post that sign!
Staples, nails and tacks used to hang signs and fliers create dangerous obstacles for electric lineworkers. *Their jobs are dangerous enough – help us keep them safe!*



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVES



Courageous Coffee

The
Perfect Blend

By Emily Haines Lloyd



While coffee is a daily part of many people's lives—there are some folks for whom coffee is more than a ritual, it's a calling.

For Tanya Schneider, her fascination with coffee started early in life.

As a young girl, she would get up in the morning with her father, an otherwise busy man, and watch him sit down with a simple coffee cup and relax. By the time she was six, she'd asked for her first mug of coffee, served with an ice cube and a dash of milk. It was love at first sip.

Years later Schneider began to educate herself more deeply. She read books on the growing seasons of coffee beans and how to roast them. While Michigan weather would never allow her to grow her own beans, it couldn't keep her from roasting them.

Armed with her first coffee roaster, which was the size of a toaster oven and only roasted about a quarter-pound of beans at a time, Schneider trial and errored her way into her craft. She saved money along the way with a bigger dream in the back of her mind.

In 2010, Schneider, who is employed with HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative, had an opportunity to roast her coffee for military care packages that were being assembled at work.



"It felt so good to roast for someone else, instead of just myself and my family," said Schneider. "I knew that if this ever grew—the purpose would have to be bigger than myself."

Soon after the mission trip, she and her husband bought the future home of Courageous Coffee—a 12x12 Amish-built building that found itself on the back of the couple's property. Next

In 2016, Schneider found herself on a mission trip to Belize with a group of individuals from church. In the evenings, she and the other women on the team sat together and shared stories about their lives and connected with one another. Schneider shared with them that she'd just started a business the month before—Courageous Coffee.

came a larger, upgraded roaster and a few 150-pound bags of quality coffee beans. By the end of the year she'd sold her first bag of coffee to a co-worker. Within a few months several local businesses were carrying Courageous Coffee for sale and it was available for purchase online at mycourageouscoffee.com.

"I shared that I roasted coffee—mostly for family and friends—and I told them of my mission to make a difference by roasting coffee," said Schneider. "I was so amazed by their support and it gave me a huge boost of confidence that I really needed in order to move forward."

Since then, Schneider has been roasting her heart out. In line with her early vision to have her business serve others, 10 percent of all proceeds are donated to nonprofit causes.

At that moment, Courageous Coffee went from a quiet passion to a full-blown dream come true.

For Schneider, Courageous Coffee is an homage to perfect moments over a cup of joe and a knowing nod to seemingly impossible dreams. Bold, strong, courageous—it really is the perfect blend for coffee. And for life.

Bolivian Expedition Blend Fundraiser



Courageous Coffee's next service mission to give back is a specialty blend that's brewing to support the next *Partners for Power* project by Michigan's electric cooperatives.

This September, linemen from Michigan electric cooperatives are headed to Bolivia to bring reliable electricity to the community of Yata. The people of Yata are an ambitious bunch. But before many of them can realize their dreams, they need access to reliable electricity.

When you buy a bag of Courageous Coffee's *Bolivian Expedition Blend*, you help support the project. To learn more about the project and other ways to get involved, visit partnersforpower.org.



Join Tanya in her kitchen as she explains how she brews the perfect cup of coffee using the pour over method. A short instructional video is available at countrylines.com.



Truestream Brings Fiber Internet To GLE

Starting this month, Great Lakes Energy contractors will begin work constructing the fiber network that will bring life-changing fiber internet service to our members.

The build-out begins in our Petoskey service district which covers most of Emmet and parts of Charlevoix and Cheboygan counties. Select members in this district will be eligible for Truestream as early as this fall. The service will first become available to a group of approximately 700 members with overhead service along the main fiber line that is set to be installed this summer. Service to other areas will branch off from this main line and become available in 2019 and 2020 based on demand.

Installation of the service into homes and businesses will be done by GLE installation technicians who will provide the service you expect from your co-op. In fact, we may be hiring qualified fiber internet employees

as this project takes off so please be sure to check the career center on our website for job postings.

Even if you're not one of the first members who is able to receive service on the core line, you can still get ready to enjoy Truestream fiber by following these important tips:

Truestream Tip #1:

Sign up for a portable email address, such as Google, Yahoo or another no-cost service. With Truestream you won't have a dedicated email address so if you use one through your current provider, it will go away when you make the switch. Start moving your contact list and subscriptions over to this new email address ahead of time.

Truestream Tip #2:

Don't sign long-term agreements with your current provider if they would prevent you from being able

to get Truestream when it comes to your area.

Truestream Tip #3:

Spread the word! We hope you're as excited as we are about this amazing new service so tell your friends and neighbors! With internet speeds ranging from 100 Mbps to 1 Gig and prices starting at around \$60 per month, you'll want to join Truestream today.

Truestream Tip #4

Go to jointruestream.com to enroll or show interest, even if you're not in Petoskey service district. We'll be gauging your interest and may be making decisions on where to construct service next based on member demand! Plus, by signing up you'll receive the latest updates and information on the project.

Introducing Truestream.

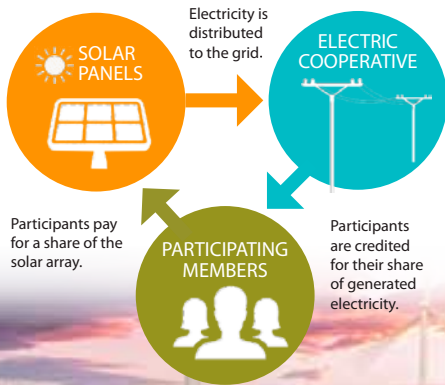
Fiber internet powered by Great Lakes Energy.

Truestream, Great Lakes Energy's fiber network, will bring the unbeatable service you need from a name you can trust. With speeds up to 1 Gigabit per second (1,000 Mbps) available, Truestream will offer high-speed fiber internet and phone service to homes and businesses throughout Great Lakes Energy's service area. Construction begins in Emmet County this month with limited service available by the end of the year!

Learn more at jointruestream.com



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Great Lakes Energy is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Historic Farms Honored

Several Great Lakes Energy members have farms that recently received historical recognition. They include centennial farms owned by Clifford and Jackie Youngs of Reed City, Mary Fox of Johannesburg and Kenneth and Sharon Zeinstra of Zeeland. A sesquicentennial (150 years) farm owned by Donald and Margaret Fleming Knapp of Shelby was also recognized.

Great Lakes Energy is a sponsor of the Michigan Centennial Farm Program that honors Great Lakes Energy members and other Michigan residents whose farms have been owned and operated by the same family for at least 100 years. Centennial farms that continue to be owned and operated by the same family for at least 150 years can be certified as a sesquicentennial farm. Once a farm is certified, the owners receive a certificate as well as a display marker for their farm.

GLE members can request an application or receive more information about the program by contacting The Historical Society of Michigan, 517-324-1828, or by visiting their website at centennialfarms.org.

Information For All Members Of Great Lakes Energy Cooperative



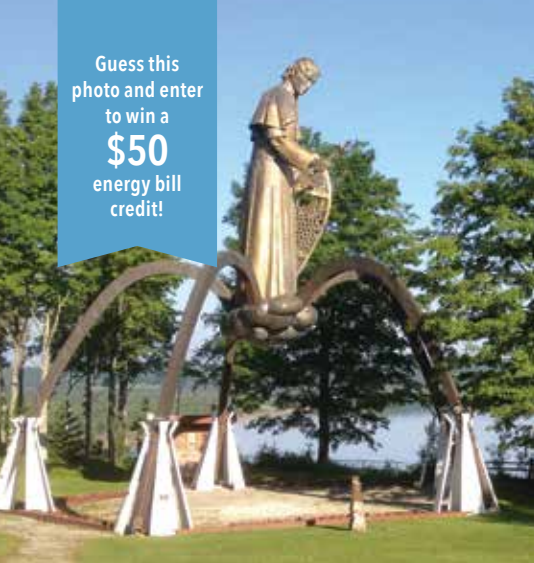
Your cooperative offers a program called the People Fund, which is funded through the voluntary rounding up of your monthly utility bill to the next whole dollar.

An all-volunteer board of directors appointed by the member-elected board of Great Lakes Energy Cooperative distributes the funds throughout the cooperative's service area. The Fund supports charitable efforts in and around the communities we serve. Money from the People Fund has been distributed to educational programs, medical groups, recreational organizations serving all ages, senior organizations, and numerous other local charities. A copy of the most recent People Fund annual report, which details contributions, is available by contacting Great Lakes Energy, and prior year reports are highlighted in previous issues of *Michigan Country Lines* magazine.

Your participation in the People Fund is voluntary. If at any time you wish to discontinue participation in the People Fund, please let us know and we will make the change. If you are participating, your monthly bill is rounded up to the next whole dollar. If your bill is \$58.42, it would be rounded up to \$59. The 58 cents would then be contributed by Great Lakes Energy Cooperative on your behalf to the People Fund. A member's average annual contribution is about \$6. Your annual contribution to the People Fund is tax deductible and is reported on your monthly statement at the end of the year.

For additional information regarding the People Fund, contact the co-op office by mail or call 888-485-2537.

Guess this photo and enter to win a \$50 energy bill credit!



Where In Michigan Is This?

Identify the correct location of the photo above by July 20 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 2018 issue is Richard Fluegge, a Thumb Electric Cooperative member, who correctly identified the photo as Stafford Park in Port Hope. It's an icy view from the Port Hope Marina looking back at the famous historic chimney at Stafford Park.

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

May 2018



Photo courtesy of Karen Murphy

Best Beaches

We asked our members to share their favorite Michigan beach in our Great Lakes state—so take their recommendations to heart and enjoy!



1 Brimley State Park, Whitefish Bay

Brimley State Park, located on the shores of Whitefish Bay in the U.P., is one of the best beaches in Michigan in my opinion. It provides a non-traditional “beach” setting in the fact, that the water is a little cooler, the sand isn't the most pristine, and there isn't a fancy pier. What you will find is a beautiful, relaxing and picturesque scene of the beautiful Whitefish Bay. The very best part about this beach is that the Soo Locks are very close, so you will see freighter traffic throughout your day! Don't forget to download the “Boatnerd” app on your phone, so you know the names of the freighters you will see floating by! —Karen Murphy, Thumb Electric

2 Tawas Point State Park and East Tawas City Park Beach, East Tawas

We visit East Tawas for its beaches every year. There are wonderful cottages to rent, gorgeous sunrises and the water in the bay is shallow and warm for swimming. East Tawas also has the cutest downtown with great ice cream, antique shops, a chocolatier and more. —Joanne Preston, Midwest Energy & Communications

3 Aral Beach, Empire

Aral Beach is hands down my favorite in Michigan! It is located outside of Empire at the end of a dirt road in the middle of nowhere. Beautiful views of the Empire bluffs, very few people around and my four-legged friends are welcome. —Mindy Aves, HomeWorks Tri-County

4 Young State Park, Boyne City

Young State Park in Boyne City is a favorite. You can just enjoy the beautiful sunrises and sunsets, and walk the sandy beaches. Amazing! —Kristine Diegel, Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op



Best of Michigan

Up Next: Best Cider Mills! Apples, Cider and Doughnuts—Oh My! Share your favorite spot for these delicious fall treats. We will publish these gems in our September issue.

Submit your favorites at countrylines.com under the MI Co-op Community tab by August 1.

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