

A Service of **Ontonagon County Rural Electrification**

September/October 2011

Michigan

COUNTRY LINES



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Like Home

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**You could save
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"We are very happy with the geothermal system we had installed. At first we were a bit overwhelmed because it's just so different from what we were used to and were afraid it would be a costly mistake. I became more comfortable with the decision when I read that the EPA published reports saying that geothermal is the most environmentally friendly and energy efficient system available. The average operating cost for heat, hot water and air conditioning is at least a 60 percent savings compared to every other heating system we've used (electric, wood and oil). Now that we have used it for a year, we find the system quiet, comfortable and are experiencing the great savings. Geothermal was the right choice."

— Ira Jones

Visit our website to find out how:

www.GeothermalEnergyMI.com

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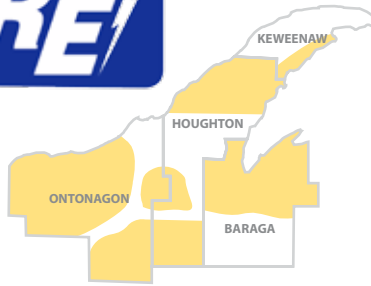
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On the Cover

Dominic Fredianelli (L) and Cole Smith are two of three soldiers featured in a new documentary about coming-of-age, the young who fight our wars, and the families and towns they come from. Photo – Heather Courtney

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countrylines.com





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Fiscal year-end: Dec. 31

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MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Let's Talk: Seasonal Members Can Prepay, Board Election, Rates Update

Since you are both a "member" and an "owner" of Ontonagon County REA, we take care to keep you updated about what's happening at your electric co-op. In this issue of *Country Lines*, I have three items to chat with you about.

Seasonal Member Billings

If you are a member with a seasonal account, you know that your account is billed on an annual basis. For the current year, this means you will be billed in October for electricity used from October 2010 through September 2011.

This bill is due by Nov. 13, 2011. While some of you prefer the annual bill, others have asked to receive it monthly. Since our billing system is specifically programmed to bill seasonal accounts annually, we do not produce a monthly bill for those accounts. Changing to monthly would be costly, due to additional postage and processing fees. However, if receiving the large annual bill is a concern, you may want to make payments during the year. You can do so by either sending a check with your account information or setting up an automatic, electronic ACH (Automated Clearing House) transfer using a credit card, or just stop in the office. The ACH is a secure network used by banks to transfer funds.

With our AMR (automated meter reading) system, we obtain daily readings, so you can get an update on your account by contacting our billing department at 800-562-7128.

Board of Directors Election

Two seats on the board of directors were up for election this summer at the co-op's annual meeting. In the Ewen/Trout Creek district, Ian Wainio, of Ewen, was elected to replace Randy Myhren; and in the Boston/Lake Linden district, Barbara Bouwkamp, of Laurium, ran unopposed and was re-elected for another term.

Rate Increase Update

In the last issue, I also shared with you that rising power supply costs, including the high cost of fuel to run power plants, has made it necessary for us to request a rate increase. Approval for this must come from the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC), and we have requested a 14.2 mill increase in the energy charge, and a \$3 increase in the monthly service charge.

On your bill, the new energy charge would mean an increase of \$10.10 for 500 kilowatt hours of electricity used. The monthly service charge for residential customers would rise from \$12 to \$15, and from \$17 to \$20 for seasonal customers. Our recent cost-of-service study supports a much higher service charge.

The monthly service charge is meant to cover maintenance, poles, wires, billing, member services, brushing and other fixed costs involved in normal operations. These are expenses attached to service over and above wholesale power costs and are incurred whether or not energy is used.

The rate increase would not become effective until approved by the MPSC, after they finish auditing our purchased power costs and expenses. When it's complete, the MPSC will determine the amount and effective date of our increase.

Costs are rising for all utilities, but when it comes to your electric bill, it's important to know that as a nonprofit business, Ontonagon's rates are set only to *cover the cost of doing business*, not to generate profits for distant stockholders. Because of this, you can trust that the rate request is based on keeping your co-op financially strong on behalf of all members.

We'll keep you informed.



Debbie Miles
General Manager

Insulating Your Attic: More Is Better

Is there enough insulation in your attic? By adding insulation, you can improve your home's energy efficiency and save money. Here's a tip from your electric co-op that can help reduce your energy consumption—and your electric bills.

With adequate attic insulation, your home's heating/cooling system will operate more efficiently. It will keep you cooler in the summer and warmer in winter. Adding insulation to your attic can save you \$240 a year.

Older homes tend to have less attic insulation than newer ones. An energy audit can indicate whether additional insulation is needed.

Before adding insulation to your attic, determine how much insulation is already installed, what kind it is, and how thick it

is. Next, you'll need to know the R-value—which indicates the insulation's resistance to heat—of existing attic insulation. The higher the R-value, the greater the insulating effectiveness. Once you know the R-value, you can determine how much insulation to add by using the U.S. Department of Energy's Zip Code Insulation Program.

Now you're ready to decide what kind of insulation to install: loose-fill or blanket insulation. Loose-fill insulation consists of small particles of fiber, foam, or other materials. Blanket insulation, the most common and widely available type, comes in the form of batts and rolls made from mineral wool and plastic and natural fibers. Loose-fill insulation is usually less expensive to install than batt insulation, and when installed properly, can provide better coverage.



Find more tips on how to save energy and money at energysavers.gov.

Increase energy efficiency. And your bottom line.

Ontonagon County REA helps commercial and industrial members **save energy** and **protect the environment** through energy efficiency improvement projects and valuable rebates. Eligible projects include:

- Lighting
- HVAC
- Refrigeration
- Food Service Equipment
- Motors, Fans, Pumps & Drives

In order to qualify for incentives within the Commercial and Industrial Programs, applicants MUST obtain written approval prior to any installations. Please call 1-877-296-4319 or email EnergyOptimization@FranklinEnergy.com for pre-approval.

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL PROGRAMS

RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

Start Saving at Home!

Ontonagon County REA offers its residential members:

- Rebates on ENERGY STAR® products, heating & cooling systems and energy efficient home improvements
- Appliance recycling
- FREE Online Home Energy Assessments
- No-cost energy efficiency improvements for income-qualified households

Must be a Michigan resident and receive service from Ontonagon County REA to be eligible for this program. Items purchased must be installed in a home that receives service from Ontonagon County REA. For residential accounts only while supplies last. Restrictions may apply.

Learn about our programs at michigan-energy.org • Questions? 877.296.4319

In-home Devices Show Electric Use, Help Save Money

To help raise awareness of energy use, increasing numbers of consumers are considering installing in-home display devices that show how much energy a home uses at any given time.

Most in-home displays connect to a co-op's advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) system to provide real-time pricing. When the price of generating electricity rises, the unit sends a signal for you to begin conserving energy. Some models even allow you to set an energy-savings goal and track your progress online through a free energy use web portal like Google PowerMeter or Microsoft Hohm.

But no matter the features, folks who use in-home displays are likely to save 6 to 10 percent annually on their electric bills, according to studies by the Cooperative Research Network (CRN), an arm of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Even



In-home displays like the PowerCost Monitor™ are being developed to provide a variety of information related to energy use, including how many kilowatt hours you have consumed and how much money you are currently spending on electricity.

after people stop actively paying attention to the displays, electric use behavior often changes permanently. On average, homeowners who "forget" about the displays may consume 1 to 3 percent less energy

than before they had one. By using less electricity, consumers help shave their electric co-op's service load. This saves everyone money in the long run by delaying the need to build power plants or purchase

additional wholesale power in a competitive market.

The most effective displays are easy to understand, interactive, and show electric use of individual appliances, says Brian Sloboda, CRN senior program manager. "These devices are best for those who are comfortable with gadgets, and possibly those with higher home energy use."

"People considering in-home displays should have a desire to reduce or at least understand their energy use," Sloboda adds. "The displays, for example, will show how much electricity is needed when lights are left on in an empty room, and how much it takes to operate a really big LCD TV."

In-home displays typically cost between \$100-\$200, depending on their features.

—Magen Howard

Sources: Cooperative Research Network, NRECA Market Research Services

MYSTERY PHOTO

Every co-op member who identifies the correct location of the photo below by **Oct. 10** will be entered in a drawing for a \$50 credit for electricity from your electric cooperative.

Please note that we do not accept Mystery Photo guesses by phone! Email mysteryphoto@countrylines.com, or send by mail to *Country Lines*, 2859 W. Jolly Road, Okemos, 48864. Include your name, address, phone number and co-op. The winner will be announced in the November/December 2011 issue.

The July/August contest winner is Elizabeth Wilson of Dowagiac, who correctly identified the "Cheetahs On The Run" sculpture on Depot Drive in Dowagiac.



Do you know where this is? ➤



Tell us about your favorite Michigan-made products!

Share a few paragraphs with us about your favorite Michigan-made product and we may write about it. Be sure to share why you like it and if you have a unique story to go with it, please send that, too. Email to czuker@countrylines.com or send to: *Country Lines*, 2859 W. Jolly Road, Okemos, MI 48864.

Info on Tattler Canning Lids/ Michigan-Made Product

If you are still intrigued about our July-August feature on the Tattler Reusable Canning Lids, here's the missing contact information:

WEBSITE: reusablecanninglids.com

PHONE: 877-747-2793





"stock" photos and do not claim these are professional kayakers, but the photo gives readers an idea of what kayaks look like and the fun that can be had with them, which is our main intent for this story. Thanks.

More About Vernors

I called the Snapple Co. again, and they said, "Yes, it is aged for three years in barrels" (there is a telephone number on the bottle). Also, they haven't changed the recipe in over 40 years. The above is in answer to the letter in the last *Country Lines* (July-August).

I have had a lot of good comments about the article (June Michigan-made product, "Memories and History of Vernors Ginger Ale").

— Marjory Priest

Kayaks

To your article in *Country Lines* (July-August 2011) on kayaks, the picture is staged—you do not see water movement and the paddles are in the wrong position—the one out of the water has to be at 90 degrees to the one in the water to reduce air flow. And, I have not seen any kayak on display or in the water that would be long enough, so it would not waddle like a duck unless it is an original "Eskimo" or a "Klepper."

I was about 5-years-old when I first sat in a kayak—this is a little more than 80 years ago. We did not have any canoes, just kayaks going down the Mosel and Rhein rivers. Those kayaks were not plastic—they had a wooden frame and a canvas skin. Since 1963, I've owned a 17-foot (not seaworthy any more) folding kayak with a rudder sideboard and sail. Sometimes I think to take it out again, fix it, and play with it again.

— Hans Mueller, LeRoy

Editor's Note: *It's great that you have a long history with this wonderful sport and we hope you get to use your kayak again. As to the photo, we sometimes use*

More About Eagles

Regarding Don Ingle's article, (May, "High-Flying Eagles") how many bald eagles are currently nesting in Michigan? What county has the most? Least? How many counties are they nesting in?

— William Robson, Whitmore Lake

Don Ingle replies: *"According to Mathew Stuber of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Michigan's population of American bald eagles is about 700 pairs, and they are now widespread in Michigan. Their favorite nesting sites are near large bodies of water, like rivers and lakes, as they are primarily fish eaters, although they will eat carrion. After nearly becoming extirpated from Michigan, their population rebound is one of conservation's best success stories. Many consider passage of the Clean Waters Act in the 1970s to be the major reason for the recovery, since eagles eat fish and if fish were from contaminated waters it led to hatching failures.*

The highest number of eagles are found in the U.P. and northern half of lower Michigan, but they are now being seen in a majority of Michigan's counties.

To Send Us a Letter:

We enjoy hearing from our readers, so if you wish to comment, email your letter to editor@countrylines.com or send to: *Country Lines* Letters, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, MI 48864.

Letters are printed on a space-available/content basis, and we reserve the right to edit slightly for space reasons. Since there isn't room to print every letter, please keep the size to no more than 350 words so we can include as many as possible.

Thanks for reading with us!

College Fire Safety

While college provides new and exciting opportunities, it also introduces safety hazards, especially to students living in dormitories, apartments and other community locations. An impeccable personal safety record doesn't safeguard someone against the actions of other residents in shared college housing facilities. Therefore, it is extremely important to **develop and practice an escape route should there be a fire.**

Fire Safety

Fire is the third leading cause of accidental deaths in the United States. A residential fire occurs every 82 seconds in this country, and, once burning, the size of a fire doubles every 30 seconds. If a fire occurs in your building, evacuate as soon as possible. Do not try to act bravely or put the fire out. That is a fight too easily lost and is just not worth it.

If you have an escape plan, follow it at the first sign or smell of a fire. Never exit a door if it feels hot to the touch, as flames are likely on the other side. It is also a good idea to know where all the fire extinguishers are located in the building.



Stay safe—don't overload power strips!

Fire Prevention

In community living facilities, everyone must do their part to make their dwelling a safer place. Here are a few easy steps you can take to help prevent fire through electrical hazards:

- ▶ Look for the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) mark on all products. It means they have been tested for safety.
- ▶ Make sure outlets are not overloaded.
- ▶ Check electrical wires and cords on appliances, tools, lamps, etc., to make sure they are not worn or frayed.
- ▶ Never run electrical wires or extension cords under carpets or heavy items, and never bunch them up behind a hot appliance.
- ▶ Unplug appliances when not in use.
- ▶ Make sure there is at least one smoke alarm on each level, and make sure they are maintained and tested regularly.

Fire facts

Fire is a chemical reaction involving fuel, oxygen and heat. Take away any of these elements and a fire cannot last. There are four classifications of fires, depending on their fuels:

Class A – Ordinary materials like wood, paper, cloth, rubber, and plastics. Most home fires fall into this category.

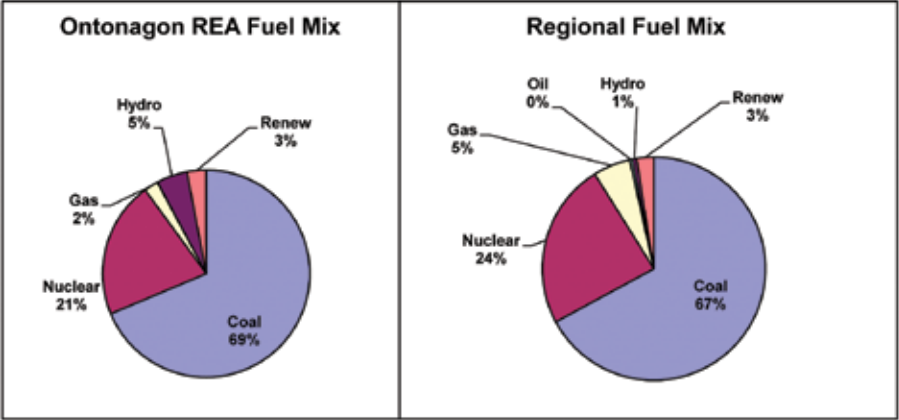
Class B – Combustible liquids—gasoline, kerosene, alcohol, paint, and propane—tend to be more severe and dangerous than Class A fires because the fuel is highly flammable.

Class C – Electrical equipment like appliances, switches, and power tools. These fires are extremely dangerous due to added shock hazards and because the source is energized. An energized fire source supplies a steady and constant ignition condition.

Class D – Combustible metals like magnesium, titanium, potassium, and sodium. These fires burn at a very high temperature and can react violently with water or other chemicals.

— Source: Underwriters Laboratories

Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association
The environmental characteristics of your electricity as required by Public Act 141 of 2000.
Comparison of the Fuel Sources Used to Generate Electricity
Ontonagon County REA versus a regional average for the 12-month period ended 06/30/11.



Fuel Sources	Percentage of fuel types used to produce Ontonagon County REA electricity.	Percentage of fuel type used to produce electricity in Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Wisconsin
Coal	68.51	67.1
Nuclear	21.23	24
Gas	2.21	5.4
Oil	0.05	0.4
Hydroelectric	4.78	0.6
Total Renewable Fuels	2.99	2.5
Biomass	0.12	0.1
Biofuel	0.04	0.3
Solid Waste Incineration	0.00	0.5
Wind	1.92	1.3
Wood	0.05	0.5
Other	0.24	0

Note: (1) Biomass above excludes wood; solid waste incineration includes landfill gas, and (2) “-” indicates not applicable or negligible, less than 0.1%.

Airborne Emissions and High-Level Nuclear Waste Comparison
Ontonagon County REA versus a regional average for the 12-month period ended 06/30/11.

Type of emission/waste	Ontonagon County REA average lbs/MWh	A regional average of all generation in Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Wisconsin
Sulfur Dioxide	1.92	8.2
Carbon Dioxide	1,585	2186
Oxides of Nitrogen	1.06	2
High-level nuclear waste	0	0.0083

Note: Figures for Ontonagon REA are based on those of its principle power suppliers WPS and WE Energies.

Seal Air Leaks to Cut Electric Bills

If energy bills for your manufactured home seem too high, the likely culprits are air leaks. Here are some tips from your electric co-op that can help you stop leaks from your home—and your wallet.

Older manufactured homes, especially those built before 1994, may be plagued by leaking ducts and inadequate insulation. Leaky ductwork can reduce your heating/cooling system’s efficiency by as much as 20 percent. Check for leaks on a windy day, when it’s easier to find drafty spots.

Experts recommend going after big leaks first. That means plugging all holes around chimneys, vents, water pipes and heating system ductwork. Seal any duct leaks with mastic. Avoid using duct tape, which can dry out and disintegrate. Adding insulation to floor, walls and ceiling cavities can improve energy efficiency, but may be a job for a professional contractor.

Once you’ve sealed major leaks, look for smaller ones—around windows, doors, electrical outlets and light switches. Seal gaps around windows and doors by using caulk on non-moving parts, and replace any worn weatherstripping.

Caulk or expanding spray foam are perfect in spots where plumbing, wiring, vents and ducting penetrate through walls. Installing foam outlet gaskets behind electrical outlets and light switches—especially on outside walls—can save energy, too.

For safety’s sake, make sure that all combustion appliances, such as furnaces, stoves, and water heaters, are properly vented.

For more tips on saving energy and money, visit michigan-energy.org or energysavers.gov.



Notice of Member Access To Rules And Rates

This notice of *Access to Rules and Rates* is published pursuant to the rules established by the Michigan Public Service Commission as set forth in the Consumer Standards and Billing Practices for Electric and Gas Residential Service, R460-2146.

As a member-customer (member) of Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association, please be advised that the following information is available to you from the cooperative, upon request:

- 1.) Complete rate schedules;
- 2.) Clear and concise explanation of all rates the member may be eligible to receive; and
- 3.) Assistance from the cooperative in determining the most appropriate rate for a member when the member is eligible to receive service under more than one rate.

USDA Partners With Your Electric Co-op To Help Economy

A key element in reviving our state is inexpensive, sustainable energy. Rural electric cooperatives play a critical role in Michigan's economic revitalization, and the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development is pleased to be their partner.

Since 2009, USDA Rural Development has provided over \$140 million for infrastructure improvements to Midwest Energy Cooperative, Alger-Delta Cooperative Electric Association, Thumb Electric Cooperative, Great Lakes Energy Cooperative and Tri-County Electric Cooperative.

These investments have helped strengthen Michigan's agricultural sector, now the second-largest part of our economy.

USDA Rural Development provides a wide array of tools to help communities generate jobs, complete needed infrastructure improvements and provide their young people with the skills they need to create businesses in their hometown.

Our Business and Industry loan guarantee program can cover up to 90 percent of loans, helping banks to extend credit, and often causing them to offer better terms. Last year, 160 Michigan businesses were assisted with guaranteed loans or grants for a total investment of more than \$141 million.

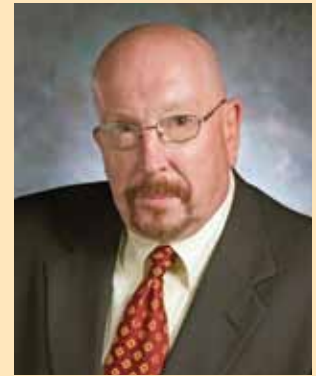
Applicants can apply through federal or state-chartered banks, credit unions, and savings and loan associations. The funds can be used for many purposes, including acquisition, start-up and expansion of businesses that create rural employment, though they may not be used for agricultural production (this falls under a different area of USDA).

Another tool is the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program, which finances business start-ups or expansions by working with an intermediary electric cooperative to provide low-interest loans to rural businesses.

We are also able to help communities with funding for emergency services, such as police cars and fire trucks, as well as long-term financing for water and sewer systems.

Rural Development funds can also be used for technical assistance, to improve energy efficiency, or to develop renewable energy resources.

In June, USDA Rural Development provided a \$12,825,000 loan guarantee with NOVI Energy to finance a community digester in Fremont. The project, which has a total cost of \$22 million, will be one of the first commercial-scale anaerobic digesters in the United States and will convert organic waste products—mainly farm and food processing waste—into biogas that is used to generate electricity. The facility will process more than 100,000 tons of waste annually, reducing landfill usage and improving the quality of agricultural runoff. In addition,



James J. Turner
State Director
USDA Rural Development

“The project will be one of the first commercial-scale anaerobic digesters in the United States and will convert organic waste products—mainly farm and food processing waste—into biogas that is used to generate electricity.”

the solid byproducts can be used for soil amendments and cow bedding.

Anaerobic digesters are not new in Michigan—many farms have them, and USDA Rural Development has taken a leading role in funding them. What sets Fremont apart is the scale—it will take in the food waste of an entire community and the electricity and byproducts it generates will likewise be provided on a wider basis. In fact, NOVI Energy has already signed a long-term contract with Consumers Energy for the power the digester will generate.

It is this confluence of renewable energy and sound environmental management that offers a chance for Michigan to once again take the lead in economic development.

James J. Turner is the state director for USDA Rural Development in Michigan.



Where Soldiers Come From

A Michigan native's new documentary is about family, friends and coming-of-age in wartime.

Like many of us, Dominic Fredianelli, Matthew Beaudoin and Cole Smith hail from a small Michigan town. Unlike many of us, these 23-year-olds have already spent nine months of their lives fighting in Afghanistan.

Heather Courtney is from a small town, too. She grew up in Houghton—a close neighbor to Hancock, where the three young men are from, but she didn't know them until a few years ago.

A journalist frustrated with how the media portrays small towns, Courtney came back to rediscover her own roots and find a new story. "I just think they tend to stereotype by telling rural stories that put people in a box that is easily identifiable, (such as 'farmers'

or 'people from Appalachia') and some of the stereotypes are not friendly," Courtney explains.

She found her story after a newspaper notice led her to attend a local National Guard unit meeting. That's how she met Dominic and his friends Matthew and Cole, and came to spend the next four years getting to know them and their loved ones before, during and after their service in Afghanistan. The finished story is a film called "Where Soldiers Come From," and is being released now.

Courtney is adamant, however, that her documentary is not a political statement about war. She's more interested in the emotional and personal aspects, so it's more about

taking the leap into adulthood in relation to our country's soldiers, families, friends and communities. "Good filmmaking is all about good storytelling, period," Courtney says. "It is a coming-of-age film set in the context of a war, but to me, the growing up in a small town part of the story was just as important as going off to war."

She will say, however, that the film brings up issues that need more attention, including better veterans' care, especially relating to the new "silent" war wound known as traumatic brain injury (TBI), and also post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Beaudoin agrees, noting that he is 90 percent disabled from this "invisible" wound, and Smith also has TBI, after experiencing



Page photos-Heather Courtney



Top: When Heather Courtney first started filming, there were five soldiers from Hancock (western U.P.) in the documentary, and this photo of them walking on a snowy street in Marquette is the film's signature photo. **Above, left:** Courtney spent five months filming soldiers from Hancock at war in Afghanistan. **Above, right:** Matthew Beaudoin is one of the three featured soldiers from Hancock. About 20 just from the Hancock area went to Afghanistan, and there are about 3,500 in the area's Guard unit.

exposure to eight explosions. Many soldiers have TBI, Beaudoin explains, which is caused by a severe blow(s) to the head and can cause many other illnesses, including memory loss, inability to walk, loss of feeling in limbs, and even related suicide.

“Their biggest challenge now is dealing with the continuing issues of TBI and PTSD (as seen in the film),” Courtney adds. “And, as is the case with many young 20-somethings today, dealing with the lack of jobs, and dwindling college resources.”

Beaudoin attends Northern Michigan University and hopes to become a social worker so he can help other veterans who struggle with TBI and other readjustment issues. The college support, and being from a family with a lot of military service, is one of the main reasons he and many of his friends joined the Guard.

“I love where we live because you don’t see problems like homelessness as much and it’s a great place to grow up, but it’s not the best for my future—it’s more expensive and working-wise, it’s a hard place to excel,” Beaudoin says.

About that “growing up,” Beaudoin notes, “Once someone goes over there [Afghanistan], you’ll never be the same person...” He and his friends were 20 when they went to war and it will take years, and lots of understanding and work, to digest the things they’ve done and seen. “For a lot of us the injuries are difficult, and minor things start to bug you more, like 18- or 19-year-olds who complain because their parents aren’t buying them a car—it boils you.”

After seeing the film, Courtney says, “I hope audiences will question a previously held belief, or change their perspective, or discover a truth about themselves.” For herself, she is more open to differing political views than before, “But mostly I feel changed because now I have all of these people who



Dominic Fredianelli rests after taking part in a weapons search in Afghanistan.



Photo—Anthony Maddaloni

Heather Courtney, a U.P. native from Hancock, created the new Michigan-made documentary, “Where Soldiers Come From.” She now lives in Austin, TX, working on freelance films and as a reporter for National Public Radio.



Photo—Justin Hernard

A talented graphic artist that recently graduated from Finlandia University, Fredianelli paints a love mural on a wall in Hancock.

Where to see the film:

- Gala Hometown Premiere – Sept. 25-30 historic Calumet Theater, Calumet, MI
- Detroit Institute of Art – Sept. 30-Oct. 2
- Ann Arbor – Oct. 1
- Grand Rapids/Lansing/Saginaw – October (check local listings or internet)
- PBS Broadcast: Nov. 10, 9 p.m. (pbs.org)
- To see the film trailer and other info: wheresoldierscomefrom.com

are a part of my life and always will be—not just Dom, Cole and “Bodi,” but their families and others in the community,” she says. “Their openness, courage and love for each other continue to inspire me. And, I am thankful that I grew up in such a beautiful and unique place as the Upper Peninsula of Michigan!” Beaudoin adds, “She’s become part of the family—one of us—she’s like an auntie.”

As to being in a film, Beaudoin says, “We’re just small-town kids who hadn’t been to big cities, but people would come up and shake our hands, wanting autographs on posters, and stuff. It’s kind of weird at first...” But they enjoyed the Q&A tours and visiting L.A. and New York, and he notes, “It’s really all about Heather—going to film festivals and helping her get whatever recognition she can. She did a beautiful job of portraying us in this film.”

In her own mind, Courtney’s goal was

to tell a universal story about growing up so that people, no matter *where* they come from, could really get to know and identify with the people on the screen and see them grow and change. A number of screenings of the film aired this summer, with a jury award win at the South By Southwest film festival, but the national broadcast premiere is this fall (at left) on PBS’ “Point of View” documentary series.

“I think it’s a very good rep film of the everyday, regular soldier and where they come from—the humble beginnings all of us have, the brother connection of a small town, and going to war with people you grew up with,” Beaudoin says. “It’s not so much a war film as about soldiers who fight it, but if you want to see the effects on young kids who fight our wars—maybe you should see this film.” Afghanistan is America’s longest war (10 years), he adds, and “it’s time to bring our boys home.”

Beyond Swirly Bulbs

Federal regulations are spurring new lighting options.

On hot summer evenings, children love to chase fireflies, often catching them in jars. Then the real magic begins, as the intermittent glow captivates the captors.

That same sense of wonder can be found in labs as scientists refine the process of making light-emitting diodes (LEDs)—highly-efficient lightbulbs comparable to a firefly's glow. Commonly used as solitary sensor lights in electronics, manufacturers are now searching for economical ways to contain a colony of LEDs in a single lighting shell. Just as children attempt to gather enough fireflies to make a lamp, an LED "jar" would create enough light output (lumens) to match that of traditional incandescent bulbs.

This research is part of a national effort aimed at redefining household lighting. Starting in January 2012, incandescent bulbs—a technology developed in the United States by Thomas Edison in 1878 and largely untouched since—must become more energy efficient.

Federal Mandate

Why is the government shining a light on—well, lighting? The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) estimates we use 13.6 percent of our nation's energy supply to keep the lights on, and a lot of that power is wasted. If you've ever touched a traditional lightbulb when it's on, you realize much of the energy (90 percent) is released as heat (ouch!). This leaves a lot of room for improvement.

To tackle this issue, Congress passed the Energy Information and Security Act of 2007 (EISA). By 2014 household lightbulbs using between 40 and 100 watts will need to consume at least 28 percent less energy than traditional incandescents, saving Americans



Photos - GE Lighting

LED lightbulbs like the Energy Smart model from GE use between 75 and 80 percent less energy than classic bulbs.

an estimated \$6 billion to \$10 billion in lighting costs annually. The law also mandates that lightbulbs become 70 percent more efficient than classic bulbs by 2020 (LEDs already exceed this goal.)

"With shifting lighting options and consumers looking for every opportunity to save, navigating lighting solutions has never been so important," declares David Schuellerman, GE Lighting's public relations manager.

Look for Labels

Such a massive product change means consumers must switch from thinking about lightbulbs in terms of watts (amount of energy used) to lumens (amount of light produced.)

"Lumens, not watts, tell you how bright a light bulb is, no matter the type of bulb," explains Amy Hebert at the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). "The more lumens, the brighter the light."

The consumer-focused agency has designed a "Lighting Facts" label and shopping guide that compares a bulb being purchased with traditional incandescent lightbulbs based on wattages and equivalent lumens. Beginning in 2012, labels on the front and back of lightbulb packages will emphasize a bulb's brightness in lumens, annual energy cost, and expected lifespan.

Is this a "Bulb Ban"?

Contrary to popular belief, the EISA law does not ban incandescent bulb technology;

it requires that bulbs use less energy.

"It's equivalent to standards passed in the 1980s to make refrigerators more energy efficient, and we're reaping those benefits," remarks Brian Sloboda with the Cooperative Research Network (CRN), a division of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade arm of local electric co-ops. "Refrigerators use less than one-third of the electricity today than they did in the mid-1970s, but consumers can't tell a difference in how their food is cooled. The premise is, why not do the same for lightbulbs?"

The EISA law halts the manufacture of inefficient lightbulbs, but stores will not remove tried-and-true incandescent bulbs from their shelves right away—current inventory will still be available for sale until exhausted. And, the improved efficiency requirements only apply to screw-based lightbulbs; specialty bulbs for appliances, heavy-duty bulbs, colored lights and three-way bulbs are exempt.

Explore Your Options

Once traditional incandescents go the way of the passenger pigeon, residential bulbs will largely fit into three categories, each stacking up a bit differently: **halogen incandescents** use 25 percent less energy and last three times longer than regular incandescent bulbs; **compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs)** use 75 percent less energy, last up to 10 times longer; and **LEDs** use between 75 and 80 percent less energy and can last 25 times longer.

"CFL, halogen and LED technologies all offer energy savings, but at different intervals, and all with their own pros and cons," says Schuellerman.

For consumers comfortable with their old incandescent bulbs, halogen incandescents will be an easy first-step. Featuring a capsule of halogen gas around the bulb's filament, they're available in a variety of familiar colors and can be dimmed.

"Halogen offers a big efficiency advantage over standard incandescent bulbs," says John Strainic, global product general manager, GE Lighting. "It consumes fewer watts while delivering a precise dimming capability and a bright, crisp light."

The most familiar and economical options



Some consumers don't like the swirly look of CFLs, so companies like GE are placing them inside shells, both clear and diffused, to look more like classic bulbs.

on the market are CFLs. The technology operates the same as fluorescent lighting in offices or kitchens, and the bulbs are now available in a wide array of colors (some can be dimmed). Always check the package to make sure a bulb meets your needs.

Schuellerman adds that CFLs are generally best when used where lighting is left on for extended periods and full brightness is not immediately necessary, such as family rooms, bedrooms, and common areas. As with all fluorescent bulbs, each CFL contains a small amount of mercury (five times less than a watch battery) and should be recycled. Many retailers offer free CFL recycling; visit epa.gov/cfl for details.

The final choice (remember the fireflies?) is LEDs. Although still developing, you can find LED lights, recessed fixtures, and some lower wattage replacement bulbs on store shelves.

"LEDs are the up-and-coming solution," predicts Schuellerman. "As they come down in price, homeowners will embrace them. Currently, most residential LEDs are used for outdoor lighting where fixtures are left on for extended periods and changing bulbs is not easily done. LEDs are also great for linear applications like under cabinet lighting, where light sources with thin profiles are needed."

The LEDs are more expensive than other options: a replacement for a 60-W incandescent bulb costs between \$30 and \$60. But costs will fall as manufacturers respond to growing consumer demand.

For example, in 2008 LEDs comprised 10 percent of the output from CREE Inc., a Durham, N.C.-based lighting manufacturer. Fast-forward three years and LEDs are responsible for 70 percent of the company's business, and bulb efficiency has doubled. Innovations like a new production line last year are driving costs down.

However, LEDs are not without their problems—they have to stay cool to operate efficiently, and when several bulbs are placed together for a brighter, more consumer-friendly light, lifespan decreases. However, many manufacturers are accounting for this by adding cooling elements to LED bulbs. Some bulbs feature a spine designed to allow air to flow around the base; others have fans built into the ballast.

Can You See a Difference?

Some consumers believe more efficient bulbs won't provide the same "warm" look and feel as classic bulbs, but Schuellerman disagrees.

"Lighting technologies are advancing at

such a rate that consumers won't notice a marked difference in the color of light from different technologies or how that light is dispersed. You also won't necessarily see a difference in bulb shape. Some consumers don't like the look of twist-shaped CFLs, for example, so we offer covered CFLs that look just like incandescent bulbs. We also have an LED bulb that is a replacement for a 40-watt incandescent, as well as halogen bulbs, that both are housed in incandescent-shaped shells."

The difference will be found on your monthly electric bill—more efficient bulbs use between 25 and 80 percent less energy than traditional incandescents, and last much longer. The U.S. Department of Energy claims each household can save \$50 a year by replacing 15 traditional incandescent bulbs.

"With these new technologies, homeowners will be spending less on electricity bills for lighting and changing fewer bulbs," says Schuellerman.

Visit energysavers.gov/lighting to explore lighting options. For details on the change and other tips, visit ftc.gov/lightbulbs.

Sources: U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Energy Information Administration, Federal Trade Commission, Cooperative Research Network, LUMEN Coalition, GE, Sylvania, Philips

Sources

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ftc.gov/opa/2011/06/lightbulbs.shtm

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■ U.S. Department of Energy:




As of Jan. 1, 2012, traditional 100-watt incandescent lightbulbs will no longer meet efficiency standards and be unavailable at most stores. As of Jan. 1, 2013, traditional 75-watt incandescent bulbs will no longer be available; 40 and 60-watt versions will be unavailable as of Jan. 1, 2014.*

*The act specifically limits the import or manufacture of inefficient bulbs. Stores will be able to sell remaining inventory.

What Are My Lighting Options?

Starting in 2012, lightbulbs must be more energy efficient.

The three most common bulb options consumers will find on store shelves are:

- **Halogen incandescents**
Energy Savings:* 25 percent
Lifespan:* Three times longer
Annual Energy Cost: \$3.50
- **Compact Fluorescent Lightbulbs (CFLs)**
Energy Savings:* 75 percent
Lifespan:* 10 times longer
Annual Energy Cost: \$1.20
- **Light-emitting diodes (LEDs)**
Energy Savings:* 75-80 percent
Lifespan:* 25 times longer
Annual Energy Cost: \$1

*As compared to traditional incandescent bulbs

Learn more at energysavers.gov/lighting

'Mums' the Word for Fall Color

For late summer or early fall blooms in your garden, chrysanthemums are a spectacular choice.

It might surprise some folks to learn that chrysanthemums have been popular in the U.S. for only the past 60 to 80 years. Mums are actually native to China and were traced as far back as the 15th century B.C. The plant was introduced to the West in the 1600s. The term chrysanthemum is traced to Swedish botanist, Karl Linnaeus, who in 1753 first coined the word from the Greek chrysos (gold) and anthos (flower). In the late 1990s, botanists reclassified the mum and placed it in the genus *Dendranthema*. However, botanists recently reversed themselves and placed mums back in the genus *chrysanthemum*, which is how most gardeners recognize the plant.

There are essentially eight different types of mums to choose from:

1. **Anemone** – a daisy-like flower with one to 5 rows of petals radiating from a rounded crest;
2. **Cushion** – often called “azalea” mum growing on low, bushy plants;
3. **Decorative** – a large mum with multiple rows of petals either curving toward or away from the center;
4. **Pompom** – small, stiff, globe-like flower;
5. **Quill** – long, straight tubular petals;
6. **Single** – daisy-like flower with several rows of flowers radiating from a flat center;
7. **Spider** – long tubular petals with curled ends;
8. **Spoon** – petals are spoon-shaped. Anemone, cushion, decorative and single have the largest number of varieties that are hardy for our area while pompoms, quill,



Chrysanthemum pacificum

Mums are long-lasting perennials that come in many brilliant varieties.

spider and spoon have fewer varieties that are hardy here.

Since there are so many reasonably priced mums sold in late summer, many people think of them as annuals. In the fall, they buy mums for their brilliant colors, then dispose or compost them once the frost comes. However, mums *are* perennials and if you are interested in varieties that are not readily available, you may decide to grow your own.

Here are some tips from Donald Ellwood, president of the Michigan Chapter of the National Chrysanthemums Society in Dearborn. Ellwood is also currently serving his second term on the board of the National Chrysanthemums Society.

“The best time to plant mums is in the spring, once the frost has past,” says Ellwood. “This gives the plant plenty of time to get established before winter, since their roots are shallow.” Make sure the mum you buy is hardy for your USDA zone. “Choose a location that gets at least six to eight hours of sun. Mums like well-drained soil that’s watered regularly,” says Ellwood. Since he’s growing mums to show, he feeds them with a 20-20-20 granular fertilizer when planting, then uses a liquid fertilizer every 10-12 days once they are established. The average gardener can get away with an initial granular fertilizing when planting, then once again in mid-July.

The key to good flower production is to

start pinching them back when the plant is 6 inches tall. Take them back about an inch, then pinch back every two weeks until mid-July. Mulch your plant to keep weeds down and moisture in the soil. An extra mulching of 4 to 6 inches in the fall help them survive the winter. Ellwood likes to mulch his 80-plus plants with alfalfa, which he buys from the feed store. “I’ve found that chopped maple leaves get too heavy, but the coarser chopped oak leaves would work well.”

Ellwood grows lots of spider mums (or Fuji mums) which are considered the most exotic variety. One of his favorites is *c. Fleur de Lis* which is one of the largest spider mums with exquisite, fine lace metallic silver florets which spill gracefully from a very full wine-colored center. The *Fleur de Lis* is not hardy in Michigan and would need to be overwintered in a root cellar.

Another of his favorites is *C. pacificum* (Zone 5; Zone 4 with protection). This unclassified mum has a very distinctive white trim around the leaf’s lobed edges. The flowers are tiny button-like yellow blooms reminiscent of an ageratum. Both these varieties are available from King’s Mums out of Oregon (kingsmums.com).

For more information on growing mums visit michigangardenerscompanion.com.

Rita C. Henahan is an author, freelance writer and photographer.



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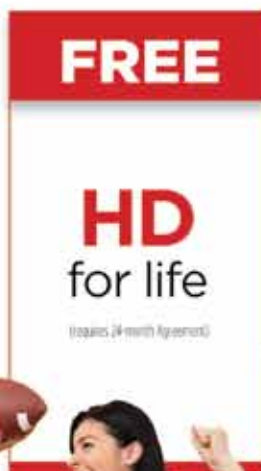


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Back-to-school Relationship Skills

Instead of school supplies, give 'life supplies.'

It's September, when families engage in a ritual dance of shopping, backpack stuffing, bus-stop waving, form-signing, and finger-crossing in an effort to ensure success for their child's school experience.

Sometimes I wonder, though, if we pack all the right things for that first day of school. I'm all for equipping students with the best wardrobes, notebooks and technology tools they can afford. It all supports learning and sends a message that school matters.

But let's face it. School is about far more than reading, writing and arithmetic for kids. (Some days, I suspect their teachers wonder if it's about those things at all!) What really gets our kids' attention is relationships. And relationships—with teachers, parents and peers—can make all the difference in success at school and in life.

Research tells us that when children have friends they are happier, get in less trouble, achieve better grades and higher test scores, and are more involved in school activities. Socially competent children and youth get along better with their teachers, who tend to like them and give them more support, which improves their school performance. Students who feel connected to school are more motivated to succeed academically, are more engaged in class, and are less likely to repeat a grade.

So what if, this year, we all skipped the back-to-school shopping and instead stuffed our kids' "social-emotional backpacks" with the skills they need to build strong and healthy relationships—with their peers, certainly, but also with key adults in their lives. Those kinds of school supplies are easy on the pocketbook; but they take lots of time and conversation.

Mark Hansen, author of "Success 101 for Teens: 7 Traits for a Winning Life," has some ideas on how to start. "Too many people talk in abstracts about communicating with their kids," says Hansen. "You have to talk about specific issues."

Hansen thinks the start of school is the perfect time for parents to discuss friendships

with their kids.

"The truth is many kids wind up in trouble ...because they've simply chosen the wrong friends," Hansen notes. "At the beginning of every school year, kids meet new friends every day, and it's important to recognize that sitting next to a guy who feeds you answers in English class is not necessarily the best basis for a friendship."

Hansen said that adults evaluate friendships based on whether people share our interests and values. If parents taught their kids to approach their friendships in the same manner, they might experience fewer problems with their kids "hanging out with the wrong crowd."

He points to seven traits kids should look for both in themselves and their friends:

► **Determination** means being committed to what you want to achieve and making sure you are mentally and physically prepared.

► **Responsibility** revolves around accepting full responsibility for ourselves. We are each in charge of our own behavior and actions.

► **Confidence** is about believing in yourself, because if you don't believe in yourself, no one will.

► **Love** means understanding the power of that emotion. It has the power to drive us to do both wonderful and dreadful things, and we must be able to manage that power with wisdom and judgment.

► **Persistence** maintains that you must stick to what you want to achieve and continue forward with making sure what you are doing is supporting those goals.

► **Dreams** are important, because they are the fuel for our engines. We must keep each of our dreams alive; each of our personal dreams that we have for ourselves.

► **Attitude** is about making choices. A consistently positive attitude is what we need in order to accomplish all of our dreams.

"Every day there are discussions in the media about problems with our youth," Hansen adds. "Just read the papers each day. My belief is that we must counter that



attack and provide a step-by-step guide for our youth to follow, empowering them for a winning life."

I often see bumper stickers claiming "My child is an honor student"; if your child earns one, plaster it on with pride. Just don't forget to mention his kindness, persistence and delightful sense of humor. Those important traits might not earn awards, but success—or happiness—will be hard to achieve without them.

Homework Can Wait

Time spent on-task makes a huge difference when it comes to success in school, on stage, or through sports. But save time for heart-to-heart talks as a family. While peers have a lot of influence on teens, studies show parents have more. A 2004 study, for example, showed that nine out of 10 teens say their mothers have a high level of influence in their lives; and eight in 10 say the same of their fathers.

Adolescents who are strongly connected to their parents perform better in school and are less likely to smoke, abuse drugs, and engage in other destructive behaviors. Even if you feel you've lost all influence, keep talking. Your teens are listening.

Harley Bra Keeps It 'Cool'

While laid-off from his work as a trim carpenter, Tom Hovie was looking for something to keep him busy. Instead, he became employed with his own new business, Northern Michigan Leather.

A long-time Harley Davidson rider, the Great Lakes Energy Co-op member always liked the idea of a front bra on cars because they are classy and protect the paint, so he thought, "Wouldn't that be cool to have a leather bra on my Harley?"

Finding only two unacceptable covers (vinyl that didn't look good or fit, and another at a spendy \$950), he began making his own fairing bra (photo, right and p. 3).

An admittedly detail-oriented guy who often changes things he buys to "fix crappy engineering or simply make it my own," he went through tons of trial and error before making a few he could take to bike shows. "The response was overwhelming!" says the Charlevoix resident.

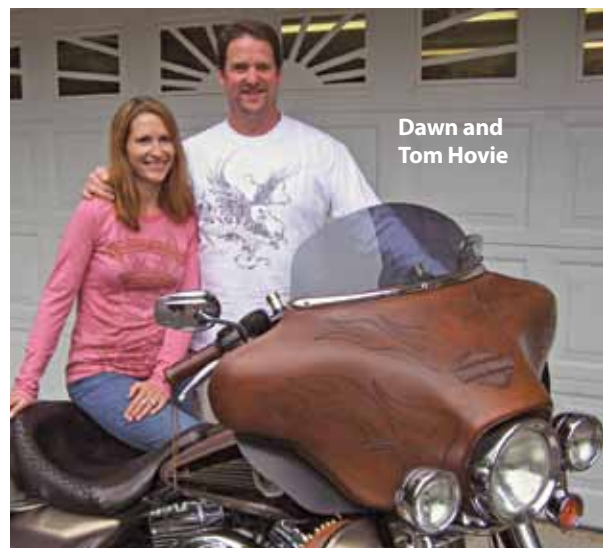
When the first leather fairing hit the streets,

he knew he had something because everyone who saw it said, "wow, that's the coolest thing I have ever seen—there is nothing like it available on the market." "The fairing cover does personalize your Harley, stones bounce off instead of chipping the paint, and bugs clean off easily," he explains.

Hovie now sells one custom fairing bra a week, and a few at each show he attends. Prices vary, depending on how much customization is requested. "Things are evolving on a daily basis and I am constantly preparing for more orders," Hovie says.

His wife Dawn manages the website (motorcyclefairingbra.com or call 231-675-4712) and helps with new designs. Their son, Sammy, also designs leather motorcycle hand grips.

"With the help of a few ads in biker mags



Dawn and Tom Hovie

Photo courtesy Tom Hovie

coming out soon, I speculate growing this business again," Hovie says. He likes Harleys because you can modify them in any way, and you're still just "a guy living his dream."

Hovie's dream is to work at home, be happy and content with what he has, and "make cool bikes even cooler."

See page 6 to tell us about your favorite, or a unique, Michigan-made product.



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Roasted Eggplant with Basil & Garlic

6 small or 2 large eggplants
1/2 c. fresh parsley
1/4 c. tomato paste
2 lg. cloves garlic, peeled
1/2 c. fresh basil
3/4 c. water, divided

Halve eggplants; sprinkle with salt and set aside. Place garlic, parsley and basil in a food processor; process until smooth. Pat eggplant dry. Cut a gash into the meat of the eggplant, but do not cut through skin; stuff with parsley mixture. Place halves in a baking dish sprayed with cooking spray. Combine tomato paste with 2 tablespoons water; spoon over eggplants. Add remaining water to pan. If using large eggplants, cover and bake at 400° for 30 minutes, uncover and bake 15 minutes longer. If using small eggplant, bake uncovered at 400° for 30 minutes.

Marjorie Gask, Livonia

Savory Lettuce Salad

4 c. shredded lettuce
1/2 c. chopped tomato
1/2 c. chopped green pepper
1/2 c. chopped sweet red pepper
1/2 c. chopped fresh mint
1/4 c. chopped fresh parsley
1/4 c. chopped fresh chives
1/2 c. chopped green onion
Italian dressing

Toss fresh ingredients together; add enough dressing to coat, and toss thoroughly. Garnish with fresh dill and pomegranate seeds, if desired. Serves 6 to 8 people.

Deborah Black, Sandusky

Fresh Herbed Dipping Oil

1 t. minced garlic
1 t. finely chopped fresh rosemary
1 t. finely chopped fresh oregano
3/4 t. finely chopped basil
1/3 t. crushed red pepper flakes
1/2 c. extra virgin olive oil

Combine ingredients and salt and pepper to taste. Serve with crusty bread. Makes 1/2 cup.

Jacqueline Muma, Hastings

One tablespoon of fresh herbs is equivalent to 1 teaspoon of dried (except rosemary—which is the same, fresh or dried). The flavor of fresh herbs will disappear if overcooked, so add them to your cooked dish at the very end. To store fresh herbs, wash, dry and roll them in a damp paper towel and place in an unsealed plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to seven days. Always find hundreds of recipes at countrylines.com.

Grandma's Minted Watermelon

6 c. cubed, seedless watermelon
3/4 c. fresh mint, finely chopped and packed
Dressing:

4 T. sugar
1/2 c. lime juice
1 t. olive oil

Whisk dressing ingredients together until sugar dissolves. Mix watermelon and mint; pour dressing over top and mix well. Serve chilled.

Deborah Black, Sandusky

Easy Summer Marinade

1/4 c. lemon juice
1/2 t. crushed red pepper
1/2 t. black pepper
1/2 t. salt
3 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 c. fresh parsley, coarsely chopped
1/4 c. fresh basil, coarsely chopped
fresh cilantro, dill and oregano, to taste
1/2 c. olive oil

Combine lemon juice, crushed red pepper, black pepper and salt. Add garlic and fresh herbs; whisk in olive oil. Stir well before using.

Mary Ellen Wynes, Mt. Pleasant

Pineapple Salsa

1 20-oz. can pineapple tidbits
1/2 c. finely chopped red bell pepper
1/2 c. finely chopped green bell pepper
1 T. chopped green onion
2 t. chopped fresh cilantro or parsley
2 t. chopped jalapeño chilies
1 t. grated lime peel

Drain pineapple and reserve 1/4 cup juice. Combine pineapple, reserved juice, bell peppers, onion, cilantro, chilies and lime peel in a small bowl. Serve at room temperature or slightly chilled over grilled chicken breasts or fish filets, with tortilla chips, or on tacos or quesadillas.

Paula Brousseau, Bellaire

Mozzarella and Tomato Salad

8 ozs. mozzarella cheese, cut in 1/4-inch pieces
2 Roma tomatoes, finely chopped
2 T. olive oil
2-3 cloves garlic, minced
2-3 T. fresh basil or flat leaf Italian parsley, chopped

Combine ingredients and refrigerate. Bring to room temperature before serving.

Laura Foley, Comins



► **Send in your recipes!** If published, you'll receive a kitchen gadget. Send in: **LAMB & VEAL recipes by Oct. 10.** Mail to: Country Lines Recipes, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, MI 48864; or email recipes@countrylines.com.

Fresh Herb Flavor Guide

BASIL: Fragrant and spicy, almost peppery. Great with tomatoes, vegetables, poultry, grilled pizza, salads. It's best used as whole leaves or torn. Smaller leaves at top of bunch are the sweetest.

CHIVES: Subtle onion flavor with grass-like leaves. Great with egg dishes, soups, sauces, baked potatoes, fish. Snip with scissors for best results. Chive flowers make a pretty garnish.

CILANTRO: A lively flavor; soapy, some say; looks similar to flat-leaf parsley. Great with Asian, Mexican and Indian dishes; mix in salsas and chutneys. Leaves become bitter after plant flowers. Dried seeds are the spice coriander.

DILL: Fresh and grassy; feathery leaves used in pickle brine. Great with tuna salad, omelets, vegetables, seafood dishes, yogurt dressing for cucumbers, herb vinegars. Use fresh or add to hot food just before serving.

MINT: Cool; brightens up both savory and sweet dishes. Great with beverages, jellies, sauces, marinades for meat and vegetables; often tossed with buttered peas. The most popular variety is spearmint. To dry, hang in a dark place with low humidity.

OREGANO: Earthy; balances acidic tomatoes—hence common on pizza. Great with lamb, beef, eggs, beans, eggplant. Closely related to marjoram (but more pungent).

PARSLEY: Peppery and fresh; curly parsley is milder than flat-leaf Italian. Great with salads, vegetables (especially potatoes), pasta. Either variety is a breath freshener.

ROSEMARY: Pungent aroma and pine flavor. Great with Mediterranean dishes, lamb, poultry, fish, breads; add sprigs or finely chopped leaves to long-cooking stews. When grilling, sturdier stems make good skewers; branches can be a basting brush.


SAGE: Very aromatic and woody. Great with fresh sausage, holiday stuffing for turkey, rich meats like pork, goose and duck. Deep-fried sage is a lovely garnish.

THYME: Minty and citrusy. Great with Mediterranean dishes, stews, eggs, seafood, poultry; toss sprigs into boiling water to flavor steamed rice.

Source: goodhousekeeping.com

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The 'Quirky' Timberdoodle



Photo - iStockphoto.com

Saving habitat is key to halting the woodcock's decline.

The “Timberdoodle” season opens on Sept. 24, a fact not lost on most upland bird hunters.

The upland aspen coverts and wetland tag alder edges of northern Michigan have long been the places to seek woodcock. If you do, remember an old “timberdoodler’s” hunting advice.

“If you are hunting ‘timberdoodles’ and don’t get some mud on your shoes, you’re hunting in the wrong places.”

That’s sage advice to remember in woodcock season. The key is that, like any other critter, a woodcock has to eat. If you want to find deer, you look for acorns; if grouse are on the agenda, look for gray dogwood, wild berries and seeds; and for woodcock you need moist soils because that is where to find earthworms, the prime food for this long-billed, stub-tailed little shorebird that deserted the marshy beach edges for northern woodlands.

Woodcock numbers over their range have been declining. Most studies, including the impact of hunting on their populations, show clearly that it is loss of habitat, human land-use shifts, and lack of consistent habitat management, especially on private forestlands, that are the major reasons for this decline—not hunting.

Still, the fall upland game season will draw hunters to the northern coverts to seek this ‘quirky’ bird in those certain habitats. If they have moist spoils or are close to wet areas, these are prime places to look up

Mr. Woodcock.

When we say ‘quirky bird,’ we do not mispeak. Woodcock come equipped with some built-in survival abilities, thanks to whatever divine engineer designed their needs for food and survival.

First, that long bill; it comes with a special tip that can grip like pliers to pull up a worm in a wrap-around motion. The long bill plunges deep into the soil to grab its dinner, and it knows just where to stab the earth thanks to an upside down brain that puts its ears closer to the ground—great for detecting worm or grub movements.

Its tail is short and stubby, with a small ring of white tip marks on the feathers. But it makes up for its short, squat body with ultra-wide wings able to reach speeds that often fool gunners.

Even its voice is quirky—a nasal “peent” like a tree frog with a sore throat.

The ‘timberdoodle’ alarm system is built for survival. When a potential danger or predator comes near, it does one of two things. Sits tight and lets the markings of its camouflage feathering blend in the brushy autumn ground cover. This ability to blend in is one the hunter knows well. Birds hit and fallen to that ground cover are hard to spot. Many a hunter has stood over a downed woodcock and not been able to

make it out from the leafy ground debris. Most serious woodcock hunters usually have a bird dog that does the finding and retrieving for them. (The dog also finds and points

live birds when they are still sitting tight.)

Secondly, when flushed, woodcock can almost seem to hover and fly forward or backward like a helicopter, but when it is ready to escape it can suddenly fly at full-flank speed straight out before towering up and over the tree line cover. This ability to toss a whole bag of fight tricks at a hunter has made shintangle chumps out of skeet range champs.

Maintaining the habitat of the woodcock is vital, and not just on public lands. Too many acres of good habitat are lost to “benign management”—that is, no management at all—on private lands. So, enrolling the private woodlands owner in efforts to maintain and improve woodcock habitat may be even more important than on public lands.

Michigan’s woodcock hunting season length and daily bag limits have gradually been reduced by the Fish and Wildlife Service, as this bird is a migratory species and subject to federal game law.

This year, the Michigan woodcock hunter has a 45-day season which runs to Nov. 7, with a three-bird daily limit, six in possession after opening day.

While the season is short, it is regarded by many upland hunters as the most challenging of game birds just because this ‘quirky’ little bird always seems to stay a few tricks ahead of hunters on most days afield. In the end, it is the challenge of woodcock hunting that brings the uplander back year after year, not the number of birds in the bag.



Seek these types of habitats as you hunt:

- ▲ Aspen stands near moist lands.
- ▲ Under tall bracken fern in areas of large-bole aspens and close to opening edges.
- ▲ In tag alder thickets along creeks and wetlands.

Don Ingle is an avid outdoorsman and award-winning outdoors writer that submits regularly for Country Lines.



Safe Shopping Online

Like many consumers today, you probably do some shopping online. Every year, online sales increase dramatically. During the 2010 Christmas shopping season, internet-related sales grew 15.4 percent from the same time period in 2009—reaching an astonishing \$36.4 billion. While shopping from the convenience of home can save time, money and gas, there are some important things to consider:

✓ **Know your retailer.** It's always safer to shop with merchants you know. If you want to buy from a website that's new to you, do an online search for that merchant and "complaints" to check for negative chatter about the seller.

✓ **Use secure websites.** When placing your order on the merchant's website, make sure that there is an "s" at the beginning of the web address: For example, the URL should begin "https://" instead of just "http://." Also, be sure to look for a padlock icon in the upper or lower right-hand portion of your

computer screen. Both of these mean that the site you are visiting uses a high level of security to protect your personal information.

✓ **Credit cards give you greater protection than cash and debit cards.** If you are not charged the correct amount for your purchase, or do not receive the merchandise you ordered, you can dispute the transaction under the terms of the Fair Credit Billing Act if you've used a credit card.

✓ **Choose your password carefully.** Most websites require you to use a password to access your personal information and place orders. Be sure to create a password that is not easy for others to guess—and use a combination of letters, numbers, and, if possible, symbols such as "*" and "%" to make it more difficult for your information to be accessed by others.

✓ **Check the merchant's privacy policy.** This will tell you how they plan to use your information—including whether they will share it with others. You may wish to avoid



Online shopping can be convenient and fun, but it's important to stay safe while you're looking for goods.

sellers that do not have a privacy policy, as you have no way of knowing what they'll do with your data.

✓ **Always print and keep the receipt from your transaction.** It contains all of the information from your order, including what you bought, the price you paid, and any order or confirmation number. This is vital if you need to follow up with the merchant or dispute your transaction.

Shopping online is easy and convenient—but by taking some simple precautions, it can also be *safe*.

—Doreen Friel

Source: About.com

Facts About Mercury in CFLs

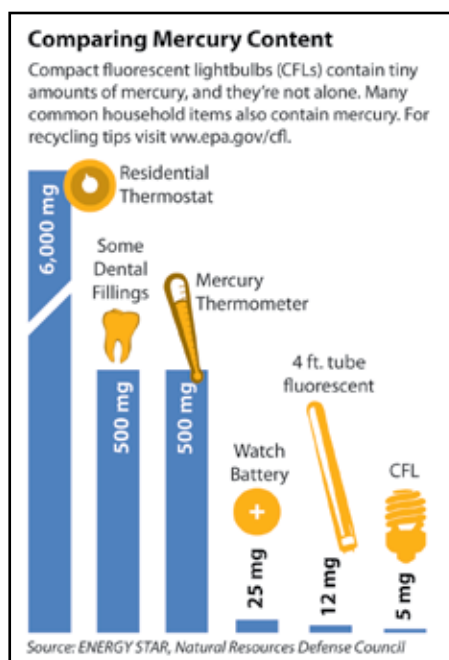
If you read the fine print on the package or find the notice on the base of a CFL bulb, you'll see that it contains mercury.

While that may raise an alarm in your mind, there's no need to worry. The amount of mercury inside the glass tubes of an average CFL is minuscule—about the equivalent to the tip of a ballpoint pen, and it's especially small when compared to other items you may have around your home. The amount of mercury in a CFL runs about 4-5 milligrams (mg), while a glass fever thermometer contains 500 mg, and an old-style thermostat could contain up to 3,000 mg.

CFLs are safe to handle and use in your home, and they release no mercury when in operation. Even if you break a CFL, the amount of mercury that may become airborne poses a very low risk of exposure, says Energy Star®. (To prevent breakage, carefully unpack a CFL, and always screw and unscrew the bulb by its base.) When CFLs burn out or break, the best course of action is to recycle them.

While CFLs fall into the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) category of household hazardous waste (HHW), there's no federal or Michigan requirement that

the bulbs be recycled. Some hardware stores and other retailers may have CFL recycling buckets on hand. And, you may be able to dispose of CFLs during your community's annual hazardous waste collection event. Your electric co-op may also accept CFLs



for recycling.

To find out if there's a facility or store near you that accepts CFLs, go to the Earth 911 website at earth911.org, or call 800-CLEANUP. Be sure to call the facility or store that's listed before you make the trip, to ensure that it allows homeowners or apartment dwellers to drop off CFLs.

If one of these recycling options is not available to you, you may put burned-out or broken CFLs with your regular trash—but in no case should you burn or incinerate them. Here's what the EPA says about properly disposing of CFLs.

▶ **Burned-out CFLs:** Put the CFL in a sealed plastic bag, and place it with your regular trash.

▶ **Broken CFLs:** If you break a CFL, open nearby windows to disperse any vapor that may escape, and carefully sweep up the glass shards. (Don't use your hands!) Wipe the area with a damp paper towel to remove glass fragments; don't use a vacuum cleaner. Put the fragments, the base of the bulb, and the paper towel in a sealed plastic bag, and place it with your regular trash.

CFLs will help you cut your utility bills and reduce the need for electricity production. However, to create the maximum benefit for the environment, recycling burned-out and broken CFLs makes sense.

Pumping Up Efficiency

A variety of heat pumps, from geothermal to standard air-source models, are available to efficiently heat and cool your home.

Heat pumps are becoming a more common alternative to central air conditioners no matter what type of existing heating system you have. This is because a heat pump can also heat, as well as cool, your house efficiently. The cost of electricity for heating and cooling a house, although it gradually increases as most prices do over time, is much less volatile than natural gas, oil or propane.

A geothermal heat pump is one of the most energy-efficient heating and cooling systems for any climate. Even though it provides a good long-term payback over its life on the investment, particularly in very hot or cold climates, the initial installation costs are considerably higher than for standard air-source models. Also, depending upon the yard and soil type, it may not be applicable for every house.

A standard air-source heat pump is basically a central air conditioner with a few extra parts. The outdoor unit looks exactly the same as a central air conditioner. It is called a heat pump because it literally pumps heat out of your house (cooling mode) or into your house (heating mode) to or from the outdoor air around the outdoor compressor/condenser unit.

During the summer, in the cooling mode, it draws heat from the indoor air as it passes through the indoor evaporator coils. Through a refrigeration cycle identical to an air conditioner, it expels this heat outdoors. The cooling efficiency is rated by its SEER (seasonal energy efficiency ratio). A heat pump's cooling efficiency is only slightly less than its similar central air conditioner model.

In winter, a reversing valve inside the heat pump outdoor unit switches position. This reverses the flow of the refrigerant throughout the entire system. Instead of running the cool refrigerant through the indoor coil, it runs the hot refrigerant indoors.

The cold refrigerant is run outdoors, where it draws heat from the outside. Since the refrigerant is colder than the outdoor air, it absorbs heat even though the outdoor air may feel cold to you. Heating efficiency is rated by



This heat pump uses a modulating rotary compressor in a stainless steel exterior condenser unit.

HSPF (heating seasonal performance factor).

As it gets colder outdoors, it becomes more difficult for the heat pump to draw heat from the cold outdoor air just as the heating needs of your house increase. At a certain point, the heat pump can no longer provide enough heat to keep your house warm, and the backup heating source comes on. Depending upon the type of backup heat and relative energy costs, your heating/cooling contractor can set the temperature at which the backup takes over.

There are many new developments in standard air-source heat pumps. The modulating, multistage output rotary compressor design, which was first introduced in central air conditioners, is now available in heat pumps. This design produces extremely high efficiencies for both heating and cooling (HSPF=10, SEER=22). You can get \$2 to \$3 worth of heat for each \$1 on your utility bills.

This heat pump uses a rotary compressor with inverter technology to vary its heating or cooling output from about one-third to full capacity output. This not only saves electricity, but produces great comfort, quiet operation, and even room temperatures. Two-stage heat pumps also improve efficiency and comfort over standard single-stage models.

Another new two-stage heat pump design couples a solar panel with the outdoor unit. On a sunny day, this solar panel produces

enough electricity to operate the condenser fan for up to 8 percent electricity savings. When it is not sunny or at night, the outdoor condenser fan runs on electricity like any other heat pump.

A standard low-cost, single-stage heat pump with a scroll compressor will still be efficient and provide comfort, especially when it is coupled with a variable-speed blower.

Even if your indoor air handler seems to be working well, it should be replaced with one compatible with the new efficient outdoor unit. At the very least, the indoor evaporator coil should be replaced with a matching one.

No matter what type of new heat pump you select, make sure your duct system is compatible with it. There should typically be from 400 to 500 CFM (cubic feet per minute) of air flow per ton of cooling through the unit for the best efficiency. Your old duct system may have to be modified.

Have a question for Jim? Send inquiries to James Dulley, Michigan Country Lines, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244, or visit dulley.com.

James Dulley is a nationally recognized mechanical engineer writing about home energy issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



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Bone Up on Bone Health

Poor bone health has become a widespread health problem, but healthy diets and active lifestyles from an early age can help change this scenario.

Instead of enjoying their “golden years,” many seniors face curtailed activities and bouts with fractures. “More than half of Americans over the age of 50 develop osteoporosis, and it’s four times more common in women than men,” stresses Dr. J. Edward Puzas, PhD, a professor of orthopedics at the University of Rochester Medical Center in New York. “Once your bones become thinner and more fragile, you’re more apt to suffer fractures. If you’re elderly, this can be fatal.”

Osteoporosis is linked to a lack of dietary



Regular exercise from an early age promotes bone health.

calcium, which is critical to bone health. The average American consumes far less calcium than needed. Exercise is also essential to keeping strong bones.

Calcium is used by the body to form and maintain healthy bone tissue, and because 90 percent of our adult bone mass is already formed by 17, healthy diets and active life-

styles are important at an early age. Kids need about 1,500 mg of calcium per day. From about age 17, the process of maintaining healthy bones begins, and calcium intake should be a minimum of 1,000 mg per day through age 50. Calcium needs return to 1,500 mg per day for ages 50 and older, especially for post-menopausal women.

Various foods are high in calcium, such as dairy products—skim and 2 percent milk are just as rich in calcium as regular milk—deep green, leafy vegetables, soy, tofu and almonds. Certain items, such as some orange juices, cereal and bread, are now also fortified with calcium.

To determine how many milligrams per serving is in an item, find calcium listed on the food label, and add a zero to the daily value percentage. Many people turn to supplements to ensure enough calcium consumption, but a balanced diet is best for overall health. Supplements must have added vitamin D, as this aids your body in getting the calcium to your bones.

Exercise is the second key to bone health because it causes new bone tissue to grow and makes bones stronger. During weight-bearing exercise, muscles push and pull against the attached bones, strengthening them. Walking or running and weight training are great for bone health, too. Adults need 30 minutes of exercise daily, while kids need 60 minutes each day.

No matter what age, taking steps to achieve a well-balanced diet and active lifestyle are essential to healthy bones and an all-around healthy body.

—Holly Israel

Sources: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; National Institute of Child Health & Human Development; Health.com

Time to Get Moving

Walk off health worries? Dance away from disease? According to the Harvard School of Public Health, exercise can help you maintain a healthy weight, lower stress and prevent chronic problems like heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis and certain types of cancer.

Despite these benefits, only 30 percent of Americans engage in regular physical activity, while 40 percent almost never exercise. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends healthy adults fit in at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity five days a week.

This includes brisk walking—ideal since it requires no equipment, specific time or place, and can be done at each individual’s pace—as well as chopping wood, mowing the lawn with a push mower, or even dancing. In a workplace setting, use stairs instead of the elevator, park your car further away from the entrance, or take a walk for 20-30 minutes during a lunch hour.

For a more vigorous approach, work out for at least 20 minutes three days per week. A “vigorous” workout should result in a higher



heart rate, rapid breathing, and conversation occurring in shorter sentences. Jogging is a good example of a more vigorous activity.

Pump it Up

As you age, strength training helps you maintain the ability to perform everyday tasks such as climbing stairs, carrying your own groceries, etc. Get guidance from an expert in this area.

Flexibility training is the final component to any exercise routine. Stretching for 5 minutes before and after workouts reduces soreness and injury, and aids in preserving the range of movement needed to function normally.

If your present lifestyle is sedentary, begin exercising slowly and gradually increase the duration of your workouts. The health benefits will be noticeable. Remember that some movement is better than none, and more is even better!

Editor’s Note: Before beginning any exercise regimen, please consult a physician.

STATE OF MICHIGAN

BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF HEARING FOR THE CUSTOMERS OF

**CLOVERLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, GREAT LAKES ENERGY COOPERATIVE, MIDWEST ENERGY COOPERATIVE,
ONTONAGON COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ASSOCIATION, PRESQUE ISLE ELECTRIC & GAS CO-OP, and
THUMB ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

CASE NOS. U-16681, U-16682, U-16683, U-16684, U-16685, and U-16686

- The Michigan Public Service Commission will review Cloverland Electric Cooperative's, Great Lakes Energy Cooperative's, Midwest Energy Cooperative's, Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association's, Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-Op's, and Thumb Electric Cooperative's (the Cooperatives) plan to meet the energy optimization requirements in compliance with Public Act 295 of 2008 and the Michigan Public Service Commission Orders in Case No. U-15800, dated December 4, 2008 and the above captioned cases, dated March 17, 2011.
- The information below describes how a person may participate in this case.
- You may call or write the Cooperatives' attorney, Mr. Shaun M. Johnson, at Dykema Gossett PLLC, Capitol View, 201 Townsend Street, Suite 900, Lansing, MI 48933, Phone: 517.374.9100 for a free copy of the application. Any person may review the application at Dykema's offices or at the respective offices of the Cooperatives.

- The second public hearing in this matter will be held:

DATE/TIME: September 27, 2011, at 10 a.m. This hearing will be a prehearing conference to set future hearing dates and decide other procedural matters.

BEFORE: Administrative Law Judge Theresa A. Sheets

LOCATION: Michigan Public Service Commission, 6545 Mercantile Way, Suite 7, Lansing, Michigan

PARTICIPATION: Any interested person may attend and participate. The hearing site is accessible, including handicapped parking. Persons needing any accommodation to participate should contact the Commission's Executive Secretary at (517) 241-6160 in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance.

The Michigan Public Service Commission (Commission) will hold a public hearing to consider the joint application of the above named cooperatives to meet their energy optimization requirements, including energy optimization surcharges to be filed by August 1, 2011, in accordance Public Act 295 of 2008, and the December 4, 2008 and March 17, 2011 Commission orders in Case Nos. U-15800 and the captioned cases listed above, respectively.

All documents filed in this case shall be submitted electronically through the Commission's E-Dockets website at: michigan.gov/mpscedockets. Requirements and instructions for filing can be found in the User Manual on the E-Dockets help page. Documents may also be submitted, in Word or PDF format, as an attachment to an email sent to: mpscedockets@michigan.gov. If you require assistance prior to e-filing, contact Commission staff at (517) 241-6180 or by email at: mpscedockets@michigan.gov.

Any person wishing to intervene and become a party to the case shall electronically file a petition to intervene with this Commission by September 26, 2011. (Interested persons may elect to file using the traditional paper format.) The proof of service shall indicate service upon the Cooperatives' attorney, Shaun M. Johnson, at Dykema Gossett PLLC, Capitol View, 201 Townsend Street, Suite 900, Lansing, Michigan 48933.

Any person wishing to make a statement of position without becoming a party to the case, may participate by filing an appearance. To file an appearance, the individual must attend the hearing and advise the presiding administrative law judge of his or her wish to make a statement of position. All information submitted to the Commission in this matter will become public information: available on the Michigan Public Service Commission's website, and subject to disclosure.

Requests for adjournment must be made pursuant to the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure R 460.17315 and R 460.17335. Requests for further information on adjournment should be directed to (517) 241-6060.

A copy of the Cooperatives' request may be reviewed on the Commission's website at: michigan.gov/mpscedockets, and at the office of Dykema Gossett PLLC, Capitol View, 201 Townsend Street, Suite 900, Lansing, MI; or at the respective Cooperatives' offices. For more information on how to participate in a case, you may contact the Commission at the above address or by telephone at (517) 241-6180.

Jurisdiction is pursuant to 1909 PA 106, as amended, MCL 460.551 et seq.; 1919 PA 419, as amended, MCL 460.54 et seq.; 1939 PA 3, as amended, MCL 460.1 et seq.; 1969 PA 306, as amended, MCL 24.201 et seq.; 2008 PA 295, MCL 460.1001 et seq., and the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, as amended, 1999 AC, R 460.17101 et seq.

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MECOSTA COUNTY – 100-ft. waterfront home on 27-acre lake, 2-bedroom, 2 1/2-bath. Also guest cabin, garages. \$127,000. mls# 851-95. 989-775-1358.

HOME ON MUNISING BAY – 1315 Lake St., Munising, MI. 810-376-0030.

LOT ON ST. JOSEPH RIVER – South of Three Rivers, restricted subdivision. 269-279-5838.

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Notice to Large Commercial and Industrial Members

Public Act 295 allows for large Commercial and Industrial (C&I) accounts to self-direct their own Energy Optimization Plans. For this year, a C&I member must have at least 1 megawatt (MW) of annual peak demand in 2010 (or 5 MW in aggregate) to qualify.

Details can be found at:

michigan.gov/mpsc/0,1607,7-159-52495_54478---,00.html or call your electric co-op for more information.

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"This picture was taken on a 'walking street'—a street that doesn't allow bikes, cars, etc., and is solely for shopping. I am with American friends who lived in Chengdu (minus the two Chinese students from my father's school). I am the one with the glasses and red shirt."



"We found this rock dragon while rowing a boat on a large lake at a park in the countryside."

No Place Like Home

I moved to China with my family for two years because my father got a job teaching English at a university in Chengdu. **Brianna Ecklid**

You'll miss it here!" someone shouted as I rushed to throw the last of my luggage into the van. "Doubt it," I mumbled under my breath. I was 16 and on my way to a new adventure. There is no way I will miss this small town in the eastern U.P. I slung myself into the empty seat, turned on my music, and looked one last time at the home I had lived in for the past 13 years. I was moving to China—to a city of 12 million people—and I wasn't coming back.

For two years I lived in Chengdu, China. The city is loud, dirty and culturally shocking. I would be a liar if I said I didn't like it there. There are many advantages to city life: information is easier to come by, and art, culture and the availability of goods are just a few more of the upsides of city living. Plus, I was living in a culture and country not my own. It made for a very educational experience. Most 16-year-old girls are worried about high school dances and boys. I was concerned with a new language, new food, and how to avoid getting hit by a taxi while crossing the street.

This new city had rules that didn't exist in Gladstone, MI: I was no longer allowed to walk alone at night; I had to constantly lock the doors and be careful of pickpockets and thieves. In Gladstone, the only noises heard in the morning were birds or children. But in Chengdu,

the city constantly buzzes with sound. In the morning, I could hear the sounds of people exercising and selling their goods. At night, fireworks (which people loved to set off when the sun went down) and car alarms carried through the air. Everything shuts down in Gladstone around 6 p.m., but in Chengdu one could easily find a place to eat at 2 a.m.!

In Chengdu, I was surrounded by grey concrete and smog. Without the trees and lakes of home, it did feel claustrophobic at times. So, there were days when homesickness set in. I missed the lakes, bright sunshine and, crazily enough, the snow. While in Gladstone, I never had to travel too far to be lost in the countryside. It took hours to get away from Chengdu and its people. I missed the ability to be alone in nature.

Even with the homesickness, I honestly did not think I missed the U.P. too much. I didn't want to leave my new friends and life, and certainly did not want to come back to a "boring" place. I felt really bummed out as I packed my suitcases to come back to the states for a summer visit.

One 12-hour plane ride later, I was in loud, colorful, annoying Chicago. I grumbled my way through customs and waited to get on a tiny plane that only sat about 40 people. The plane took off and I stared at the buildings and people below. Then, something caught my eye—the huge and lovely Lake Michigan. I sat up a

bit more to get a better view. I forgot how stunning, big and blue the lake is. From my vantage point in the sky it looked calm and glassy. I thought about how often I walked to the beach every summer, and then about not being able to swim in China because the water was too polluted. About an hour later, the plane landed at K.I. Sawyer airport. Unlike O'Hare airport, where the plane docked at a terminal and I simply strolled into the building, I stepped onto the tarmac where the warm June air brushed my face and the sun shined proudly. Breathing in deeply and long, I took in the smells of sweet grass, flowers and clean air from the land I once rejected. After spending months living in a city where ash and smog made my asthma a nightmare, it was freeing to take in air as it is supposed to be, and smiling, I looked at all the glorious, proud trees. A warm feeling of happiness came over me while a spring found its way into my step.

I spent a long time thinking that I hated a place only to learn that I actually loved it. I've been to the other side of the world and met many people and experienced new places and exciting things. And, while I have seen beauty everywhere I went, I can say with certainty that no place is as gorgeous, clean or free as Michigan's Upper Peninsula. It took two trips around the world for me to realize that I am very proud to call this place home.

Brianna Ecklid, now a 22-year-old, returned to her hometown of Gladstone and completed a degree in journalism. She enjoys gardening, knitting and baking, and her family is a member of a U.P. electric co-op.

STATE OF MICHIGAN

BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF HEARING FOR THE CUSTOMERS OF ONTONAGON COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ASSOCIATION CASE NO. U-16329

- Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association requests Michigan Public Service Commission approval to reconcile its renewable energy plan costs and revenues for the period ended December 31, 2010.
- The information below describes how a person may participate in this case.
- You may call or write Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association, 500 J.K. Paul Street, Ontonagon, Michigan 49953, (906) 884-4151 for a free copy of its application. Any person may review the application at the offices of Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association.
- The first public hearing in this matter will be held:

DATE/TIME: September 27, 2011, at 9 a.m. This hearing will be a prehearing conference to set future hearing dates and decide other procedural matters.

BEFORE: Administrative Law Judge Mark E. Cummins

LOCATION: Michigan Public Service Commission, 6545 Mercantile Way, Suite 7, Lansing, Michigan
The Mercantile Way building sustained flood damage and remains closed until further notice. Please consult the Michigan Public Service Commission website at: michigan.gov/mpsc for updates on hearing locations.

PARTICIPATION: Any interested person may attend and participate. The hearing site is accessible, including handicapped parking. Persons needing any accommodation to participate should contact the Commission's Executive Secretary at (517) 241-6160 in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance.

The Michigan Public Service Commission (Commission) will hold a public hearing to consider the July 26, 2011 application of Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association (Ontonagon) to reconcile its renewable energy plan costs associated with the plan approved in Case No. U-15819, for the period ended December 31, 2010. Ontonagon's application states that its renewable energy plan included no request for a renewable energy surcharge, no surcharge was approved, and none was charged to Ontonagon's customers in 2010. Ontonagon's application states there are neither revenues nor expenditures to reconcile.

All documents filed in this case shall be submitted electronically through the Commission's E-Dockets website at: michigan.gov/mpscdockets. Requirements and instructions for filing can be found in the User Manual on the E-Dockets help page. Documents may also be submitted, in Word or PDF format, as an attachment to an email sent to: mpscdockets@michigan.gov. If you require assistance prior to e-filing, contact Commission staff at (517) 241-6180 or by email at: mpscdockets@michigan.gov.

Any person wishing to intervene and become a party to the case shall electronically file a petition to intervene with this Commission by September 20, 2011. (Interested persons may elect to file using the traditional paper format.) The proof of service shall indicate service upon Ontonagon's attorney, Shaun M. Johnson, at Dykema Gossett PLLC, Capitol View, 201 Townsend Street, Suite 900, Lansing, Michigan 48933.

Any person wishing to make a statement of position without becoming a party to the case may participate by filing an appearance. To file an appearance, the individual must attend the hearing and advise the presiding administrative law judge of his or her wish to make a statement of position. All information submitted to the Commission in this matter will become public information: available on the Michigan Public Service Commission's website, and subject to disclosure.

Requests for adjournment must be made pursuant to the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure R 460.17315 and R 460.17335. Requests for further information on adjournment should be directed to (517) 241-6060.

A copy of Ontonagon's request may be reviewed on the Commission's website at: michigan.gov/mpscdockets, and at the office of Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association, 500 J.K. Paul Street, Ontonagon, MI. For more information on how to participate in a case, you may contact the Commission at the above address or by telephone at (517) 241-6180.

Jurisdiction is pursuant to 1909 PA 106, as amended, MCL 460.551 et seq.; 1919 PA 419, as amended, MCL 460.54 et seq.; 1939 PA 3, as amended, MCL 460.1 et seq.; 1982 PA 304, as amended, MCL 460.6h et seq.; 1969 PA 306, as amended, MCL 24.201 et seq.; 2008 PA 295, MCL 460.1001 et seq.; and the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, as amended, 1999 AC, R 460.17101 et seq.

Road Trippin'

We're taking a trip. A great American road trip. The kind every family yearns to go on at least once. The kind Simon and Garfunkel sang about in "America" (after hitchhiking from Saginaw). Except this time, Barbara and I are going out west alone.

We tried once, in 1991, to make the trip with our boys, Dan and Jon, then 12 and 10. For once, we were prepared. The Voyager minivan was packed for fishing, camping and hiking, and intermittent motel stops were scheduled as a reprise from mosquitos and dirt. We made it all the way to Newton, IA, the first day. We went to sleep there with dreams of sleeping under the stars in Rocky Mountain National Park the next night.

In the early morning, Dan woke feverish, so stiff-jointed he couldn't walk, achy all over and puffed up. The symptoms were very similar to what, a decade later, would be called West Nile Virus, a mosquito-borne virus that can be fatal to humans and horses. We were scared. With help from the motel folks, we contacted the Children's Center at the University of Iowa Medical Center and then drove 85 miles back east to check Dan in. The doctors and nurses there were outstanding. Every infectious-disease specialist on staff examined him. Finally, they admitted they were stumped but were convinced whatever he had wasn't fatal.

We stayed overnight in a local hotel, ate pizza and watched "The Hunt for Red October" on HBO. We returned to the hospital in the morning. Then and there the doctors killed our great adventure. Although they didn't know what was wrong with Dan, he was too sick to go camping away from medical care. They told us to go home, and that's where we spent the rest of our three-week vacation. With school and sports competing for time, we never again got a chance to put together a vacation this long. After several months, Dan recovered fully ("We think," we tease him).

Just a few weeks after we came home, a newspaper told of a virus outbreak among

children in Texas that presented symptoms similar to Dan's, and was given the name Palomino Virus. Barbara shared the news clipping with the doctors at UI. We speculated that Dan may have come into contact with the virus from a Texas student attending Michigan State University's summer camp for kids the week before we left on our trip. We'll never know for sure, but we'll always feel warmly toward the folks in Iowa—even when they play the Spartans—for their care and kindness.

That virus must have done something to Dan, because he now lives in Texas and has cowboy boots.

We've taken other family trips, but not all together to the West Coast. Jon lived in San Diego for awhile; I helped move him in a quick road trip a few years ago, and we flew to visit him there. But Barbara and I have not yet taken that quintessential American western road trip together. I think we should go while we can.

Our mid-point goal is Yosemite National Park, where we hope to avoid being swept over a waterfall. On the way out, we'll see Mt. Rushmore, Yellowstone National Park, the California coastline, and wine country. We'll visit friends and family scattered along the way, including my mom and dad, who just moved into a new assisted care home in Minnesota.

After Yosemite, we'll head south to San Diego and then east to Phoenix. More family. The next leg of the trip will most likely be through magnificent southern Utah, which Barbara has not seen, then east through Colorado and the Nebraska flatlands, up to Chicago to see Jon, and back home to Mason. Or, maybe we'll drive all the way to Austin to see Dan and friends before swinging north.

This trip will be different in one important way: technology. We'll have GPS, cell phones, ebooks and an iPod loaded with traveling music. They didn't exist in 1991.

Much of this trip goes through electric co-op country, wide-open spaces where there are few people, but plenty of cattle



Yosemite Falls

Photo - iStockphoto.com/Mardav

and crops. After working for Michigan electric co-ops for 30 years, I should feel right at home. Maybe we'll bring along a co-op directory just in case something goes wrong.

In case you're thinking we should spend our travel time in Michigan, I'll say that we're familiar with every nook and cranny in the state. It's time for something new. When we return, Michigan's attractions, like Mackinac Island, Pictured Rocks and Sleeping Bear Dunes, will still be among our favorite places.

Which reminds me of a newly married couple from England we met last year on Mackinac. They drove 15 hours from Philadelphia so the bride could spend one night in the Grand Hotel, where the movie "Somewhere in Time" takes place. That's a serious travel commitment.

Are we pushing it to try doing this in three weeks? If we can't, I will feel like a real wimp after reading that a 68-year-old woman and her husband just biked over 2,300 miles in 41 days from Texas to Michigan to attend her 50th high school reunion.

If you have any suggestions for our trip, like places to see, great restaurants or bakeries, let us know (mike.f.buda@gmail.com). We'll add you to our email list for travel updates.

Thanks for joining us.

Mike Buda is editor emeritus of Country Lines. Email Mike at mbuda@countrylines.com or comment on his columns at countrylines.com/column/ramblings





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(231) 627-7533

Carsonville
Certified Temperature Innovations
(810) 300-7748

DeWitt
S & J Htg & Clg
(517) 669-3705

Gaylord
Family Htg & Clg
(989) 732-8099

Grand Rapids
Montgomery Htg & Clg
(616) 459-0261

Hart
Adams Htg & Clg
(231) 873-2665

Harbor Springs
Ballard's and Great Lakes
Plumbing & Heating
(231) 526-6859

Ionia
Home Experts
(800) 457-4554

Kalamazoo
E M Sergeant
(800) 530-1363

Lapeer
Porter & Heckman
(810) 664-8576

Michigan Center
Comfort 1 Heating /
Lenawee Heating
(517) 764-1500

Mount Pleasant
Walton's Htg & Clg
(989) 772-4822

Muskegon
Geofurnace Htg & Clg
(800) 922-3045

Petoskey
Ballard's and Great Lakes
Plumbing & Heating
(231) 347-3900

Palms
Lakeshore Improvements
(989) 864-3833

Traverse City
Geofurnace Htg & Clg
(231) 943-1000

D&W Mechanical
(231) 941-1215

Webberville
Applegate Home Comfort
(800) 377-2272



waterfurnace.com
(800) GEO-SAVE





**Ontonagon County Rural
Electrification Association**

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We're All About You.

October is National Cooperative Month! Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit utilities owned by those who receive their services. Our philosophy is simple, and defined by the following principles.

Open Membership | Member Control | Economic Participation

Independence | Education & Training | Cooperation | Concern for Community



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