

Michigan

COUNTRY LINES

Fun Food *for* Kids



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MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Collections and Disconnects

Collection.” ”Disconnect.” If you ever spend time around an electric cooperative office, you will learn that these two words are far from our favorites. Nobody wants to be the proverbial “bad guy,” but every week somebody has to assume that role in order to collect money owed to the cooperative. As everyone knows, electricity is one of the few commodities that is used before it is paid for. Removing a meter from the home of a struggling family is not something we take lightly, and it definitely puts a dark cloud over our working-day world.

However, ultimately, we all have to make the best of a bad situation and do what is fair for all the co-op’s members. So, what can a member do when it gets tough to pay the electric bill? There are a few important items to remember.

The first priority is honesty. If you are in trouble or nearing trouble, it is vital to give us all the details. We can make payment arrangements that fit your needs. Your responsibility is simply to follow through on your promises. For example, if paying \$50 weekly will keep your lights on and help you catch up in a reasonable number of weeks, we can easily put an electronic note on your account and wait for you to send the money. But problems arise when such promises are not met. All too often, people make such promises and then “forget” to follow through. Obviously, this is a breach of trust we take seriously, and it often prevents us from making further arrangements and leaves a bad mark on your credit history at CEC.

Another important step is to not wait until the last minute. When things start to get tough, let us know that there may be trouble ahead. We can maybe set you up on budget payments or provide you some tips for reducing your monthly bill. We can also direct you to area agencies that may be able to help get you through

a temporary rough spot. Doing all these things in the last hour or two before disconnect is next to impossible.



Tony Anderson
General Manager

It helps to keep your phone number current with Cherryland’s office, as well. Prior to each disconnect, the member gets two billing notices and two phone calls. If we don’t have a working phone number, we can’t reach you in time to make arrangements. Then, we get a distressed phone call from somebody who is in the dark because the meter has been disconnected.

It is simply too late at that point.

Everyone should be aware that all phone calls into the cooperative office are recorded. This helps us keep track of the notes we put on your account and is extremely effective in settling the inevitable

Electricity is one of the few commodities that is used before it is paid for.

“I didn’t say that” disputes in disconnect situations. If you have a problem with an employee over the phone, the recordings are also a good way to resolve those misunderstandings.

Cherryland is *not* regulated by the Michigan Public Service Commission for rates and collection of past due amounts. If you think you have been treated unfairly or should get a better “deal,” you will be disappointed when you call the MPSC. However, we have a small team of employees that reviews such disputes in a timely matter.

Last, we do disconnect in all types of weather. Why? The main reason is that the bills would only get larger if we waited another month or two. Can we wait a day or two in severe weather? Yes. Should you rely on that? NO.

We are fully aware that “collection” and “disconnect” are *not* words that our members want to hear, either. However, by communicating early and often, we can make the best of a bad situation.



Participate at Cherryland Electric's Annual Meeting on June 14



It's time for Cherryland Electric Cooperative's 74th annual meeting.

The popular event at Wuerfel Park, home of the Traverse City Beach Bums minor league baseball team, attracts nearly 2,000 Cherryland members every year. This year's meeting is Thursday, June 14.

"Thanks to the cooperation of the Beach Bums owners, John and Leslye Wuerfel, we were able to push our business meeting back to 5 p.m. this year so more members can attend," said Cherryland general manager, Tony Anderson. "And since Wuerfel Park is a Cherryland member, it's a win-win situation for everyone."

Cherryland moved its annual meeting in 2008 from its headquarters in Grawn to Wuerfel Park.

"We used to attract about 350 members when we had the meeting at Cherryland," said Anderson. "We're attracting nearly six times as many members since we made the move to Wuerfel Park. That tells us our members really enjoy coming to this venue to combine learning more about Cherryland and attending a baseball game."

The gates will open at 3 p.m. and the business meeting will run from 5 to 6 p.m. At 6 p.m., the gates open to the general public and the Beach Bums' Frontier League home game that night will start at 7:05 p.m.

Between the business meeting and the game, there is time for fans to enjoy their free ballpark dinner—a hot dog, chips and soft drink—while watching batting practice and enjoying the atmosphere around the park.

Before the business meeting, Cherryland will also have tables set up to talk about things like the Cherryland Cares fund and day-to-day operations.

The Beach Bums also feature their mascots, Sunburn and Suntan, plus a pitching machine that measures how hard a baseball is thrown.

The gates to the ballpark will open at 3 p.m. for Cherryland members. If the past four years are any indication, most members will have voted for the board of directors by mail (ballot was included in the April issue of *Country Lines*). If not, they can vote when they enter the ballpark on June 14. As they pass through the line to the park, members will receive up to four tickets to the game and for the ballpark dinner.

There are two seats up for election this year—an "at-large" seat and the Grand Traverse/Kalkaska seat.

The business meeting will feature updates by General Manager Tony Anderson, board president Tom Van Pelt, and Wolverine Power Cooperative CEO Eric Baker. It will conclude with a random drawing for more than 20 prizes.

The Cooperative Intrigue

When asked what they enjoy most about their annual Youth Leadership Summit experience, participating teens invariably reply that they are most intrigued to learn about cooperatives. Given that the Summit agenda covers a wide variety of topics going well beyond cooperatives, and given that today's teens are caught up in a high-tech fast-paced world filled with so many cool things, their answer always leaves me a bit perplexed.



In its simplest form, a cooperative is not unlike a sole proprietorship or corporation. It is a business model that meets a need, provides something of value, and creates jobs.

Yet, if it is that straightforward, why do our Summit participants not feel equally intrigued with sole proprietorships or corporations? Why has the United Nations declared 2012 the International Year of the Cooperative? Obviously, the appeal of a cooperative runs much deeper.

Perhaps the cooperative business model is simply more personal. We live in a world of giants—big business, big media, and big government. These giants relentlessly attempt to control, manipulate and affect. It's a top-down world where we are left feeling marginalized and small.

Co-ops offer something different – a grass-roots, bottom-up approach to life. Members enjoy familiarity with other members who are often from the same neighborhoods, hang out with the same friends, and share the same interests. As members of a cooperative, we enjoy a personal identity and equality. Rather than small, we feel big. Perhaps, this same yearning for personalized community has fueled the popularity of Facebook and other on-line social media sites.

Co-ops promote community and social awareness. Their members are connected to a larger group. It's not just about "me." Cooperative symbolism frequently underscores this point. One of the first, if not *the* first, national symbol of the cooperative is known as the Co-op Twin Pines (pictured above). According to its creator, the pine tree is an ancient symbol of endurance and

abundance. The use of two pine trees symbolizes cooperation. Connecting the trunks to the outer ring (or roots) shows eternity and interdependence. Unlike the big corporations who want me to focus on my wants and needs, the cooperative spirit makes me want to look outward.

Cooperatives advance personal control and involvement. It is also worth noting that cooperatives most frequently form around basic human needs. Food, electricity, financing, housing and work cooperatives make up the bulk of cooperatives. Do we feel more secure when we exercise some degree of control and involvement in the fulfillment of our most basic human needs?

Throughout history, groups of disenfranchised people have used cooperatives to get in the game, so to speak. Electric cooperatives like Cherryland came about because rural families were left behind by the municipal and investor-owned utilities that could not justify the financial prospects of running power lines into the countryside.

This trend continues today worldwide. A thousand-fold are the stories of forgotten remote third-world villagers using the cooperative model to organize and more efficiently get their hand-crafted products into the global market. In many developing countries, women and minority groups have used cooperatives to gain a degree of respect, equality and social power they otherwise would not enjoy.

Equally fascinating is how we celebrate the cooperative model. As mentioned, 2012 has been declared the International Year of the Cooperative, and nations across the globe are promoting the adoption and celebrating the success of co-ops. October is national cooperative month here in the U.S. A city in Washington state holds an annual "Coopalooza" event, described as a celebration of community and co-ops. And on it goes.

In hindsight, it seems I may have underestimated the wisdom of our youth. The cooperative model is truly something more than a business model. It is at the very least, as our teens say, "intriguing."

Kevin Cragg is the member services manager at Cherryland Electric and oversees the Energy Optimization program





Two Teens Selected for D.C. trip

Cherryland members Sam Surgalski of Traverse City St. Francis and home-schooled Connor Bebb have been selected to represent the co-op on the annual Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., in June. They will leave Traverse City on June 16 and join other co-op students from around the state on an all-expense-paid week-long visit to see our nation's capital and make legislative visits.

Two other Cherryland members joined Sam and Connor at the co-op sponsored Youth Leadership Summit near Cadillac in April—Michelle Ravellette and Austin Mayer, both of Traverse City West Senior High School.



Radtke Wins \$4,000 Scholarship



Zach Radtke, a senior at Kingsley High School, has won Cherryland's 2012 high school scholarship worth \$4,000.

Radtke was selected over a field of 80 applicants representing 18 schools. He has a 3.42 grade point average, and plans on going into the field of orthotics and prosthetics. He plans

on spending his first two years at Northern Michigan College and his final four at Eastern Michigan University.

Zach is a member of the National Honor Society and has been named student of the year in biology, economics and physical science classes, as well as being a standout athlete at Kingsley. He has also been active in 4-H for 10 years, and received the Grand Champion Showman award at the Northwestern Michigan Fair in 2008 and 2011.

Cherryland also gives a \$500 adult scholarship for post-high school co-op members looking to further their education. This year's winner is Laura Steinberger of Traverse City, who attends the Great Lakes Maritime Academy.

Pay Your Electric Bill Online

Want to save money and pay your Cherryland Electric Cooperative bill online?

It's easy to do. You can set up your account to get only an email bill—no more paper bills!

To sign up, access your account on cherrylandelectric.com. It will prompt you immediately after you sign-in to make a decision on whether or not you want the paper bill to continue; if you do, check the box. If not, simply press "update."

Questions about online payment can be answered by Cherryland's Member Service Department at 486-9200.

What is Operation Round Up?

It's a voluntary program that allows us to round your Cherryland Electric Cooperative bill up to the nearest dollar and donate the difference to Cherryland Cares. This program provides much-needed funding to dozens of local nonprofit organizations.

Member Input Session Planned for June

Co-op members can address the Cherryland Electric Cooperative board of directors at 9 a.m. on Monday, June 18, at the company office in Grawn, 5930 U.S.-31 South. Members are asked to keep comments to less than 5 minutes. Member attendance at the board meeting is allowed for the public input portion of the meeting only.

After June, the next quarterly input meeting will be held in September.

Yes!

I want to help by joining Operation Round Up. Please "round-up" my bill to the next highest dollar each month (average of 50¢ per month).

Name (please print) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

To join, return this coupon to:

Nick Edson
Cherryland Electric Cooperative
P.O. Box 298
Grawn, MI 49637



Or email Nick at nicke@cecelec.com, or call 231-486-9222 or 800-442-8616, ext. 222.



Help a kid.



One Call 231-486-9214

or



One Click marathon4kids.com

helps



One Kid Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Michigan

WHAT IS IT? Marathon 4 Kids is a fundraiser developed by Cherryland General Manager Tony Anderson to raise money for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Michigan.

HOW DOES IT WORK? Tony's goal is to complete 50 marathons, one in each state. So far, he has run marathons in 20 states.

WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO? 100 percent of the money goes towards serving kids in northwest Michigan through Big Brothers Big Sisters.

MORE INFORMATION? Contact Tony at 231-486-9214 or marathon4kids@gmail.com, or visit marathon4kids.com.



Great Lakes Stainless, Inc.

Curiosity Creative



Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Michigan



THE BANK OF
northern michigan



The Gift

Just as I was recovering from a recent surgery that gave me a new aortic valve for my heart, I realized that I had been given a great gift.

That is, without the long-planned surgery, I wouldn't have been around much longer. As the third member of my family to have the same operation, I have been closely monitored the last five years by my doctors.

So, knowing that this April would be my surgery, I planned a week-long trip to Lakeland, FL, in March to follow our Detroit Tigers for a week. In my previous life as a sports editor, I had covered spring training many times.

But this one was special. Just Chris, my 28-year-old son, and I. We got to the park where the Tigers were playing just as the gates opened every day, and we immersed ourselves in baseball.

Ten days after getting back, I had my heart valve replaced. I won't go into great detail, other than to say my heart and lungs were hooked up to a machine to keep me breathing throughout the process. Then I was hooked up to a ventilator for five hours after the surgery.

Having been through this before with my brother and daughter, I knew what to expect. It took some of the anxiety out of the operation for me.

My recovery seemed to be going fine when my heart went into what they call a-fib. It wasn't beating regularly. So I stayed a few extra days in the hospital until my heart settled down. In all, I was in for eight days.

I was home for nine days and then developed a rapid heartbeat, which my home health nurse caught. Four more days in the hospital followed and my heart was "re-set" with the electric shock of paddles.

So, I was almost giddy about getting home and getting healthy again. But as I

got ready to come home, I realized I had been given a great gift—another chance to live.

Then, because of one of my nurses



Nick Edson

"...as I got ready to come home, I realized I had been given a great gift—another chance to live."

named Oksana, I realized that all of us are given great gifts. It's up to us how we use those gifts.

Oksana's story is amazing. She was born and raised in the Ukraine, speaking Russian. She had little hope of getting out of the country, so she became a teacher and a principal. After having her son Michael, she was sent back to the hospital four times to consider changing his name. She refused.

One day a relative suggested she get in a green card lottery to get out of the country. If she got it, it would be on short notice—a day—to say goodbye to her parents and the rest of her family. She was one of the green card lottery winners and soon after was on her way to the U.S.

Since that day, she has become an RN at Munson, teaches Russian at North Central Michigan College in Petoskey, is a master seamstress and a wonderful artist, painting breathtaking landscape scenes. We developed a great rapport at Munson. She wanted to know more about writing. I wanted to know more about her amazing story.

Then I realized Oksana had been given "The Gift" also. It was her son and her new life. And the beautiful thing is, she has made the most of it.

I hope I can do the same.

Watch for Signs of Heat Illnesses

Keep the fun in your summer by knowing how to recognize and prevent heat-related illnesses.

HEAT STROKE The most serious of heat illnesses, this can be deadly and swift. Your body temperature could rise to 106 degrees F or more in as few as 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke happens when your body temperature rises rapidly but cannot sweat quickly enough to cool itself. Symptoms include hot, dry skin or the opposite—profuse sweating, hallucinations, chills, throbbing headache, confusion or dizziness, and slurred speech.

When these symptoms occur, immediately call 911 and move the person to a shady area. Try misting the person with cold water, soaking his or her clothes, or fanning the body.

HEAT EXHAUSTION Heat exhaustion results from heavy sweating—extreme loss of salt and water. People prone to this include the elderly or those with high blood pressure or who work in hot conditions. Besides excessive sweating, symptoms include extreme weak-

ness or fatigue, dizziness, confusion, nausea, clammy skin, muscle cramps and shallow, rapid breathing.

Move the victim to a shaded or air-conditioned area, and have him or her drink cool, non-alcoholic beverages; a cool shower or bath is also recommended.

HEAT SYNCOPE Sunbathers may be prone to heat syncope, which is dizziness or fainting after lying (or standing) for long periods. Dehydration can contribute to heat syncope, so keep that water bottle handy when you go to the beach.

If you feel dizzy after lying for a long time, sit or lie back down in a cool place and sip on a cool beverage—water, sports drinks, or clear juice.

HEAT CRAMPS Folks who work or play sports in the heat may suffer from heat cramps, which result from low salt levels after heavy

sweating. The cramps are usually felt in the arms, legs or abdomen.

With these symptoms, stop what you're doing, sit in a cool place, and sip clear juice or a sports beverage. Take it easy for a few hours after the cramps are gone—if you return to your activity, the condition could transition to heat exhaustion or heat stroke. If you have heart problems, are on a low-sodium diet, or the cramps do not go away in an hour, call a doctor.

HEAT RASH Heavy sweating can cause a rash that looks like a red cluster of pimples or small blisters that usually show up on the neck or chest, groin, and crook of your elbow. You can't do much to treat this besides keeping the area dry and using baby powder to alleviate discomfort.

Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control

Pump Up Your Pool's Efficiency

Soak up these pool efficiency tips to save money while maintaining your personal oasis.

Each swimming pool is equipped with an energy guzzler: the pump. The bigger the pump, the higher the electric bill. Make sure your pool uses the smallest unit possible, and new products like variable-speed pumps offer a good way to save. A knowledgeable pool supply or service store can help choose a proper pump for your pool, while considering its size, filter and piping.

Greater savings can come from decreasing pump operation time, no matter the pump size. Keep drains clear of debris, or your pump will work harder to circulate water. Also, find a proper balance for backwashing the filter. Too much backwashing—filtering and disposing of dirty water—wastes water, while too little strains the pump.

These common myths lead to extra pump time (and wasted energy):

■ **I need to run my pump to keep chemicals mixed – FALSE.** Circulate while adding chemicals, and they will stay mixed. There's

no need to “re-mix” by recirculating the water each day.

■ **My pool will be dirty if I don't run my pump to constantly clean debris – FALSE.** Try running your pump for six hours or less a day (EnergySavers.gov). If the cleanliness is not to your liking, increase filtration time by 30-minute increments until you are satisfied. If six hours works well, try decreasing filtration time to find a balance with energy efficiency. To keep debris down without running the pump overtime, use a skimmer to manually clean the water. Also, try using a timer to run the filter for several short periods during the day rather than allowing debris to pile up after one long, continuous filtration.

■ **I need my pump to run continuously to keep algae at bay – FALSE.** Proper chemical balance and brushing down pool walls are the best algae fighters.

Make sure your pool isn't draining energy dollars needlessly by adjusting pump time



Source – Pentair Water Pool and Spa, Inc.

If you're thinking of updating your pool pump, learn about energy-efficient technology like a variable speed pump.

and investing a little legwork. You'll have a prime poolside spot to relax in afterward, and the relief you'll see on your power bill will be worth the effort.

Find more ways to save energy around your home at TogetherWeSave.com.

Sources: U.S. Department of Energy, Pentair Water Pool & Spa, Inc.

Kelly Trapnell writes on safety and energy efficiency issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

10 Simple Ways You Can Help Conserve Electricity During Peak Energy Periods

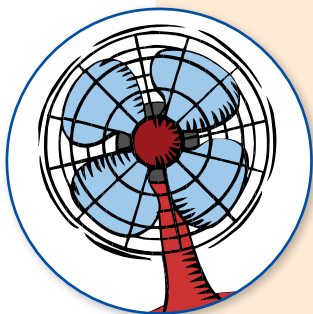
In the heat of summer, it's not uncommon for your co-op to experience peaks of high energy use. During these peaks, we ask that you do what you can to help conserve energy. You'll not only help your electric cooperative through the brief period of peak energy use, you'll also reduce your own consumption.



1 Set your thermostat at the highest comfortable temperature—76 degrees or higher—and keep it there. Each degree a thermostat is raised can save up to 4 percent of the cost of operating an air conditioner and help the power companies keep the electricity flowing. If you have window air conditioning units, keep them on the highest temperature setting.



2 Postpone the use of major appliances, such as clothes dryers and dishwashers, until late in the evening or early in the morning.



3 Turn off all unnecessary lights. Also check for any computers, TV sets, stereo equipment and other appliances that may be on but aren't in use. Not only do they use extra electricity, they add heat to the house and that makes your air conditioner work harder.

4 Close drapes and blinds on the sunny side of the house. The sun streaming in through a window can add considerable heat to a room and make it harder to cool.

5 Reduce the amount of space that must be cooled in your home by closing off rooms that aren't being used. If you have a den, a utility room or bedrooms that aren't in use, close the air conditioning vents in those rooms and shut the door. With window units, simply shut the doors to unused rooms or shut off any window air conditioners that are located in these rooms.

6 Keep the door to your refrigerator and freezer closed as much as possible. A refrigerator with the door standing open uses a lot more energy than the one with the door closed.

7 Make sure the filter on your air conditioner is clean. Good air flow is a key to keeping cool, so make sure your system isn't working harder than it has to. In addition, make sure vents are clear of furniture or other objects that might block air flow.

8 Use your microwave instead of a conventional oven—it uses up to 70 percent less energy and also releases far less heat into the kitchen.

9 If your water heater runs on electricity, limit your use of hot water so the unit doesn't run as often.

10 Use fans to keep air moving. Ceiling fans use about as much energy as a light bulb, which is far less than an air conditioner. With a fan, you can set the thermostat on your air conditioner to an even higher temperature and still stay comfortable.



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Here's What About 50¢ Will Get You...



About 50¢ a Month Makes a Difference to Your Northern Michigan Neighbors in Need.

So far, 4,000 of you have signed up for Operation Round Up, rounding your electric bill up to the next dollar. That generosity provided much-needed funding to dozens of local organizations in the last year. Plus, just for signing up you'll be entered to win \$50!

♥ Share the Love and Win \$50

Sign up at: facebook.com/cherrylandelectriccoop or on our website at: cherrylandelectric.com/cherrylandcares.



**I'm so glad we
have food tonight.**

Your donation
made the difference.
Thank you!

Cherryland Electric Cooperative 