

# Michigan

## COUNTRY LINES

Get your kicks on  
**Michigan's**



**"SPLITTIN' THE MITTEN!"**

**5** District Elections  
Approved

**8** Your Co-op Pays  
Taxes, Too

**9** Meals On Wheels  
Keeps Rolling

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April 2014  
Vol. 34, No. 4

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Publisher  
Michigan Electric  
Cooperative  
Association

# Michigan

## COUNTRY LINES

### IN THIS ISSUE

Michigan Country Lines, USPS-591-710, is published monthly, except August and December, with periodicals postage paid at Okemos, MI, and additional offices. It is the official publication of the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, MI 48864.

Subscriptions are authorized for members of Alger Delta, Cherryland, Cloverland, Great Lakes, HomeWorks Tri-County, Midwest Energy, Ontonagon, Presque Isle, and Thumb electric cooperatives by their boards of directors. Subscriptions for nonmembers are \$6 per year.

POSTMASTER: SEND ALL UAA TO CFS.

Letters to the editor should be sent to Country Lines, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, MI 48864. Phone 517-913-3531. Email: [gknudtson@meca.coop](mailto:gknudtson@meca.coop).

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The appearance of advertising does not constitute an endorsement of the products or services advertised.

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



6

#### HOME COOKING

Easter-perfect and Spring Brunch Recipes

*Christin McKamey & Our Readers*



7

#### OUR ENERGY

How to Improve the Efficiency of Older Doors

*James Dulle*



10

#### FEATURE

Get Your Kicks on Michigan's Route 66

*Howard Meyerson*



13

#### SAFETY

Protect Your Electronics From Power Surges



14

#### READERS' PAGE

Got Toast? Trenary Toast From the U.P.

*Linda Sirois*

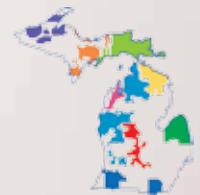


#### ON THE COVER\*

HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative members John and Becky Schlatter have cruised Michigan's own Route 66 and written a book about it called, "Splittin' the Mitten: Get Your Kicks on Michigan's Route 66." Enjoy part of their ride on pages 10-11.

Photos Courtesy – John & Becky Schlatter

\*Some co-op editions have a different cover



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# Co-op Voting Changes Coming

**T**hank you to all Great Lakes Energy members who took time to vote recently on establishing election districts for the board of directors.

Voter turnout was higher than normal, with more members taking an interest in the governance of their consumer-owned business.

Each year there will be an election in three of the nine newly-created districts to fill three openings on the board. The first district election will be this summer. Mail-in ballots will go out with the July/August issue of *Michigan Country Lines* to members in District 3 (Antrim County), District 4 (Otsego, Montmorency, Oscoda and Crawford counties), and District 5 (Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Manistee, Missaukee and Wexford counties).

If you live in any of these counties, you will vote for one candidate to represent your district on the board.

This new process is similar to the way state and federal legislators are elected. Directors will now be spread throughout our large 26-county service area. Districts 8 and 9 do not currently have a director, but will start with the election in 2016. In fact, District 9 has not had a director for many years. Establishing districts also ensures that you will have a local board member to call on if

the need arises. Your local director can help refer you to the correct person at Great Lakes Energy or may share your idea or concern with the entire board.

Each director is elected to represent and recognize the needs of members. Directors work with management to ensure that we continue to improve in areas that are most important to our members.

They understand that keeping the lights on involves wisely investing in reliability improvements that benefit the greatest number of members. One example is the work done in the last 10 years to correct problems with our main distribution lines. The lines in greatest need of improvement that serve the most members were addressed first. As a result, most of our main lines are now more reliable, which benefits thousands of members throughout our

service area. The fewer members served by our smaller tap lines benefit, too, because they also depend on the main lines to deliver power to them.

Great Lakes Energy directors will continue looking for ways to maintain levels of good service and reliability. You can do your part by providing member feedback and taking part in upcoming elections.

You're a member, and your vote counts. That's part of the cooperative difference.



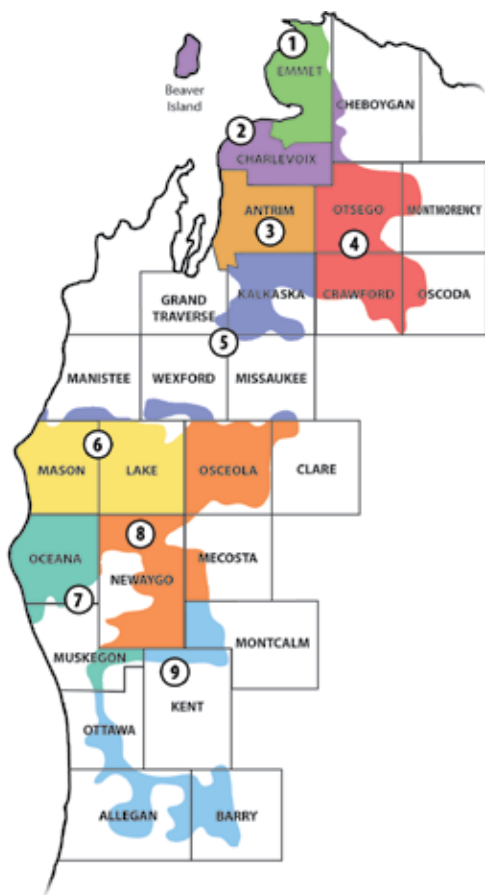
Steve Boeckman  
Great Lakes Energy  
President/CEO



## Keeping Our Members Safe

Great Lakes Energy's power line safety demonstrations show how we look out for our members by bringing our electrical safety message to them. We even roast a hot dog on the power line, as shown in this picture.

If you know schools or organizations serving Great Lakes Energy members who could benefit from these safety presentations, invite them to find more information on our website at [gtlakes.com/your-community/electricalsafety-demonstrations/](http://gtlakes.com/your-community/electricalsafety-demonstrations/). They may also call us at 888-485-2537, ext. 8957.



## Director Election Districts Approved

By a 5,996 yes to 858 no vote, Great Lakes Energy (GLE) members approved bylaws changes that replace voting at-large for directors with electing directors by district.

The change will allow GLE's large 26-county service area to be more equally and locally represented by the nine members who serve on the cooperative's board of directors.

The transition to districts begins this year with the election of directors in districts 3, 4 and 5. In 2015, members in districts 1, 2 and 7 will elect directors. Members in districts 6, 8 and 9 will elect directors in 2016. By the end of the 2016 election, there will be one director in each of the nine newly-created election districts.

Terms will be equally staggered, with three directors up for re-election each year. Each director serves a three-year term.

With the new election process, Great Lakes Energy members will elect a director from their district once every three years. Members who have electric accounts in more

than one district will only be allowed to vote in one district.

Currently, districts 6 and 7 each have two directors and districts 8 and 9 have none. In 2016, directors Robert Thurow and Richard Walsworth will retire from the board, which leaves one director each in districts 6 and 7. Their vacancies will be filled by directors who will be elected in 2016 in districts 8 and 9.

Find your county below to determine the district you are in:

- District 1:** Emmet
- District 2:** Charlevoix, Cheboygan
- District 3:** Antrim
- District 4:** Otsego, Montmorency, Oscoda, Crawford
- District 5:** Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Manistee, Missaukee, Wexford
- District 6:** Mason, Lake
- District 7:** Oceana, Muskegon
- District 8:** Osceola, Clare, Newaygo, Mecosta
- District 9:** Ottawa, Kent, Montcalm, Allegan, Barry

## Three Openings on Your Co-op's Board

Nominating petitions are available in three districts for Great Lakes Energy (GLE) members who wish to seek election to the cooperative's board of directors.

Co-op members recently approved bylaws amendments (see related article on this page) that replace voting at-large for directors with director district elections. The change becomes effective with this year's election.

Three board positions, each for three years, will need to be filled. Qualifying GLE members who reside in districts 3, 4 or 5 can seek election to the board this year.

Counties by district are:

**District 3** – Antrim

**District 4** – Otsego, Montmorency, Oscoda, Crawford

**District 5** – Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Manistee, Missaukee, Wexford

The terms of directors Richard (Ric) Evans of Ellsworth, Dale Farrier of Kalkaska and Larry Monshor of Gaylord expire this year. They reside in District 3 (Evans), District 4 (Monshor) and District



**Richard  
Evans**



**Larry  
Monshor**



**Dale  
Farrier**

5 (Farrier).

Great Lakes Energy members in each of the three districts will elect one candidate from their district to fill the three positions on the board. Mail-in ballots will be sent with the July/August 2014 issue of *Michigan Country Lines*. Winners will be announced Aug. 27 at the GLE annual business meeting.

To get their names on the ballot, qualifying member-owners of the electric co-op who maintain a primary residence within its service area must file a nominating petition with the co-op secretary.

Petitions must be signed by at least 50 active GLE members within the candidate's

district. Cosigners of a joint membership count as one signature. For the signature to be valid, complete information about the member must be provided. The cooperative will verify the member information. Incomplete petitions will not be counted. All petitions must be signed no more than 90 days prior to submission to the cooperative.

Petition circulators are advised, but not required, to collect well over 50 signatures because some may not be valid.

Signed petitions returned by mail or in person must be received in the co-op's Boyne City office no earlier than *Thursday, May 29, 2014*, and no later than *Friday, June 13, 2014*.

Petitions can be mailed to: Secretary of the Cooperative, Great Lakes Energy, P.O. Box 70, Boyne City, MI 49712. They also can be dropped off at the Boyne City office during normal business hours, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Petition forms are available by contacting 888-485-2537, ext. 1331.

### Best Deviled Eggs Ever (pictured)

Fresh eggs (amount you want to serve)  
 Marzetti's® coleslaw dressing  
 Salt and pepper  
 Paprika  
 Dash of Tabasco® sauce  
 2 T. or more minced capers

Place eggs in a pot and just cover with cold water. Bring to boiling, then shut off heat and cover with lid. Set timer for 15 minutes. Remove and cool eggs, shell and cut in half. Remove yolks and mix in bowl with Marzetti's slaw dressing, salt, pepper, hot sauce, and minced capers to taste, until the mixture is spoonable. Spoon mixture into chilled egg halves, sprinkle with paprika and serve on lettuce leaf.

—Pamela Newcomb, Charlevoix

### Raisin Sauce for Ham

2 T. horseradish, drained  
 1 T. cornstarch  
 ½ t. dry mustard  
 10 oz. jar red currant jelly  
 ½ c. golden raisins

Since Easter dinner usually means HAM, here's a family recipe that we always make when we have ham...it's DELICIOUS! Heat all ingredients over medium heat. Stir constantly until mixture comes to a boil for 1 minute. Remove from heat and cover...serve!

—Marilyn Van Laan, Traverse City

### Mrs. Appleyard's Patrician Potatoes

4 c. cooked mashed potatoes  
 3 c. cream style cottage cheese  
 ¾ c. commercial sour cream  
 1 ½ T. finely grated onion  
 ⅛ t. white pepper  
 1 t. salt (optional)  
 melted butter  
 ½ c. chopped almonds (optional)

Mash potatoes thoroughly. Add cottage cheese and sour cream. Blend. Add onion, white pepper and salt. Mix well. Spoon into a shallow, buttered 2-quart casserole. Brush surface with melted butter. Bake 350° for ½ hour. Sprinkle with almonds. 8 servings. This was my mom's recipe. We always have it with ham at Easter and Christmas.

—Diane Russell, Traverse City

### P.B. Graham Eggs

½ c. shortening  
 2 c. powdered sugar  
 ¾ c. creamy peanut butter  
 1 c. graham cracker crumbs  
 ½ c. semi-sweet chocolate chips  
 ½ c. graham cracker crumbs, crushed



### These are perfect for spring brunch, too!

peanuts or chocolate sprinkles

Combine shortening, powdered sugar and peanut butter in a large bowl. Beat at low speed of electric mixer until well blended. Stir in 1 c. crumbs and chocolate chips. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour. Form dough into 1-inch eggs. Roll in ½ c. crumbs, peanuts or sprinkles for a fancier cookie egg. Makes about 3 dozen eggs.

—Lorraine Green, South Boardman

### Carrot Cake

4 egg whites  
 1 ¼ c. apple sauce  
 1 c. white sugar  
 1 c. brown sugar  
 2 t. vanilla extract  
 2 c. all-purpose flour  
 2 t. baking soda  
 2 t. baking powder  
 ½ t salt  
 2 t. ground cinnamon  
 ½ t. nutmeg  
 3 c. grated carrots

### Frosting:

½ c. butter, softened, or Earth Balance®, made of all vegetable oils  
 8 oz. light cream cheese, softened  
 3 c. confectioner's sugar  
 1 t. vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease and flour a 9x13-inch pan. In a large bowl, beat together eggs, oil, white sugar and vanilla. Mix in flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, nutmeg,

and cinnamon. Stir in carrots. Pour into prepared pan. Bake in preheated oven 40–45 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack and cool completely. To make frosting: In a medium bowl, combine butter, cream cheese, confectioners' sugar and vanilla. Beat until the mixture is smooth and creamy. Frost the cooled cake.

—Christin McKamey, Royal Oak

### Photography - 831 Creative

**Submit your recipe!** Thanks to all who send in recipes. Please send in your favorite "Make-Ahead Holiday" recipes by **Sept. 10.**

Mail (handwritten or typed on one side, please) to: *Country Lines* Recipes, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, MI 48864; or email [recipes@countrylines.com](mailto:recipes@countrylines.com). Contributors whose recipes we print in 2014 will be entered in a drawing and *Country Lines* will pay the winner's January 2015 electric bill (up to \$200)!



Visit recipe editor Christin McKamey's website, **veggiechick.com**, for healthy, vegetarian recipes and info!

# Improving the Efficiency of Older Doors

**E**nergy losses from inefficient entry doors can account for a significant part of your monthly utility bills. When leaky doors create drafts, people tend to set the furnace thermostat higher, which wastes even more energy.

There are ways to improve the efficiency of old doors, but don't eliminate the possibility of installing new ones. The cost of some well-insulated steel and fiberglass doors, especially those for a back door without glass, are very reasonable. And, a pre-hung door in its own frame is not difficult to install yourself.

Before deciding, carefully inspect the old doors. If they are in very bad condition, it will be difficult to improve their efficiency by a meaningful amount. First, make sure the wood door is not rotting, and then place a long straight edge across it to see if it is badly warped.

With metal doors, the most common problem is rust, not warping. Check along the bottom by the weather stripping on either side. Rainwater tends to collect there, and it is not always painted well. Try to determine why the water is collecting. If you find small holes rusted through, they can be repaired with car body filler and then painted.

If the doors are reasonably sound, check for the location of air leaks. At night, have someone shine a flashlight from outdoors around the seals while you check for light coming indoors. This will highlight significant leaks. On a windy day, move a stick of lighted incense around the seals and watch the smoke trail to locate minor leaky areas. Check the astragal (a half-round overlap that acts as a seal) between double doors.

Often with wood doors, especially ones with compression weather stripping, the main problem is simply the latch plate is not holding the door tightly closed against the weather stripping.

One solution is to reposition the latch plate, which requires filling in the old screw holes and drilling new ones. Chisel away some of the wood in the latch plate recess. Or, install an adjustable latch plate that you can reposition for summer and winter as the door and frame expand and contract from temperature and humidity.

Steel doors should feature magnetic weather stripping, so this is not a major issue because the stripping is drawn against the door edge. Just make sure the door surface and the weather stripping are clean and smooth. Paint on the door edge can also come



A new brass bottom seal and threshold save energy and are more attractive.

This replacement door threshold is made of durable aluminum and can be adjusted up and down.



LEFT: A door's threshold can be raised or lowered with a screwdriver so the weather stripping seals tightly. RIGHT: Stepped teeth in this strike plate allow the door to fit tightly. Notice the small dab of expandable foam insulation inside.

loose and create gaps that leak air.

Also check the condition of door hinges, and replace them if needed. If the hinges and pins are worn, the door will not hang square in the opening and not seal properly. There are many different hinge sizes, so take an old one with to the store for an exact match. Don't just buy the cheapest ones, because there are many to choose from and quality varies.

It is almost certain the door seal on the bottom is worn, but if not, adjust the floor threshold higher. There are several height adjustment screws across the threshold, but they may be filled in with dirt, so poke around to find them. If the seal itself is bad, there are many generic replacement seals you can install.

Another option is an add-on retractable threshold seal, which is effective if carpeting is near the door. This seal is mounted on the inside surface of the lower door edge and is easy to adjust and install. When the door opens, a pin against the door frame is released and the seal automatically lifts to

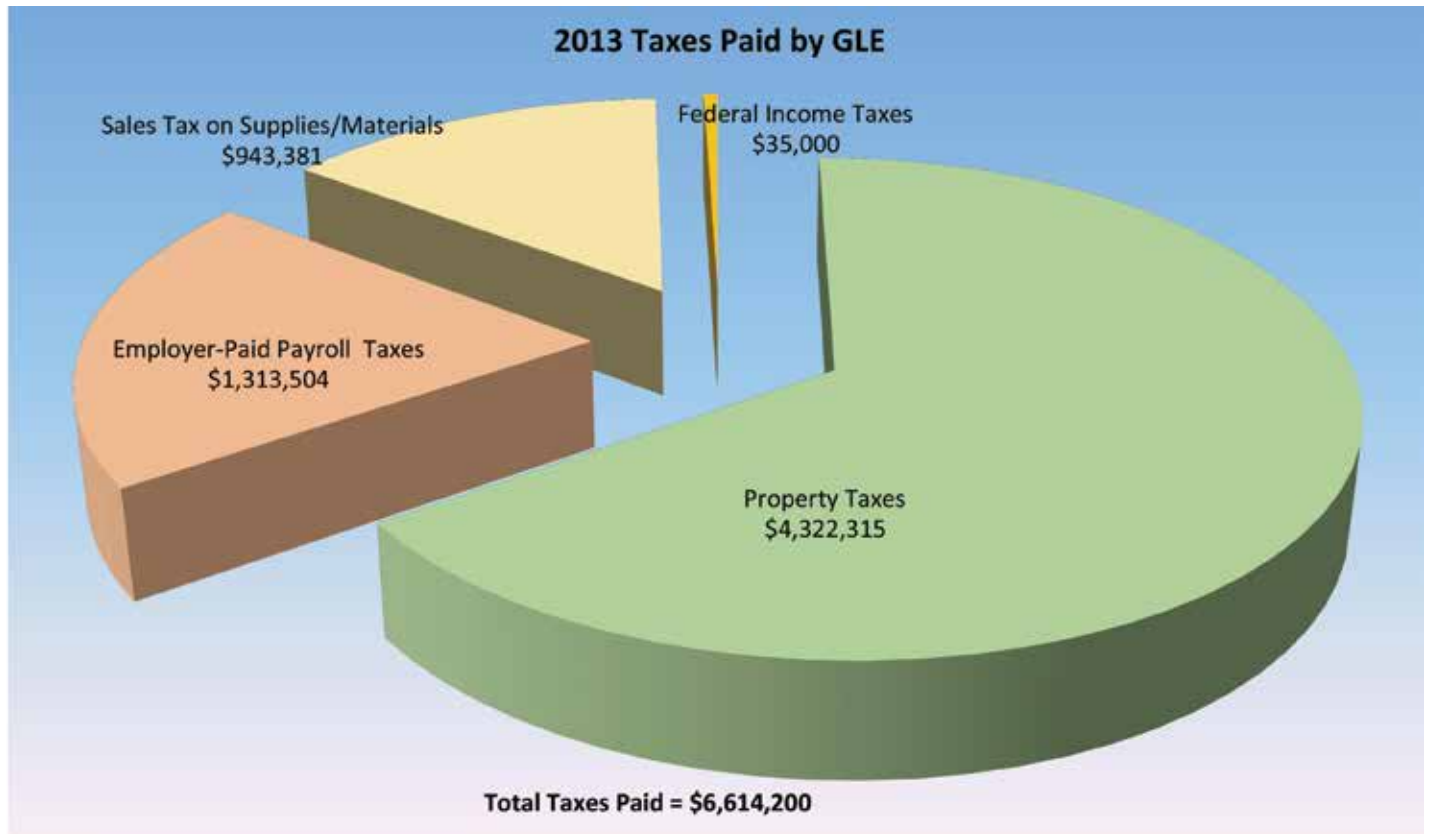
clear the carpeting.

Companies offering door improvement products include Duck Brand, 800-321-0253, [duckbrand.com](http://duckbrand.com); M-D Building Products, 800-654-8454, [mdteam.com](http://mdteam.com); Pemko Manufacturing, 800-283-9988, [pemko.com](http://pemko.com), and Thermwell, 800-526-5265, [frostking.com](http://frostking.com). Also visit [dulley.com](http://dulley.com) for more information.



Replaceable vinyl weather stripping seals well on the door's hinge side because it gets compressed, with little rubbing and wear.

# Your Co-op Pays Taxes, Too



Just like its members, Great Lakes Energy (GLE) pays taxes, too. In 2013, the cooperative paid over \$6.6 million in various taxes, which amounts to nearly \$4.50 of the \$32.21 monthly charge billed to residential and seasonal members. It's one of the fixed costs of operating a member-owned business that is devoted to providing its members with reliable, affordable and efficient electric service.

The biggest share (over \$4.3 million) is

property taxes paid last year to over 250 townships and other local government units within GLE's 26-county service area. The bulk of it is personal property taxes levied on over 14,000 miles of power line and distribution system equipment required to bring power to over 120,000 GLE members. In addition, the co-op owns buildings and land at nine locations that are taxed.

Employee payroll taxes paid by GLE for its share of FICA (social security) and

federal unemployment taxes totaled over \$1.3 million.

Sales tax on office supplies, computer equipment, distribution system materials (poles, wires, etc.) and other materials and supplies purchased by the co-op totaled \$943,381. This figure does not include the sales tax levied on your bill, which is collected and sent to the State of Michigan.

Great Lakes Energy also pays federal income taxes that amounted to \$35,000 last year.

## Historic Centennial Farms Honored

Congratulations to the following Great Lakes Energy members whose farms have received state historic designation.

Agnes Newlin and Herbert, August and Peter Kailing own a farm in Newaygo County that received state Centennial Farm certification. Also certified was John Markey's farm in Oceana County. Receiving state sesquicentennial (150 years) certification was Edward Woodworth's farm in Oceana County.

Great Lakes Energy is a sponsor of the Michigan Centennial Farm Program that honors co-op members whose farms have been owned and operated by the same family for 100 or 150 years. Once a farm is certified through the program, the owners receive a certificate and a display marker for their farm.

Great Lakes Energy members can request an application or receive more information about the program by contacting The Historical Society of Michigan, 517-324-1828, or by visiting the "Programs" section of their website, [centennialfarms.org](http://centennialfarms.org).





# 'Meals On Wheels' Keeps Rolling

Thanks to community support, the "Meals on Wheels" program is rolling on to help senior citizens in Emmet County, including a \$2,000 grant from the Great Lakes Energy People Fund.

In order to preserve Meals on Wheels operating funds for feeding seniors, the Friendship Centers of Emmet County (FCEC) relied on partial funding from the People Fund and other community organizations to replace an aging delivery vehicle with a new one.

"A safe and reliable fleet of delivery vehicles is vital to the stability of the Meals on Wheels program, and vehicle replacement is possible only through the acquisition of external grants," explains Sue Engel, FCEC executive director. "FCEC is very grateful for the generous support of the GLE People Fund."

Four drivers cover over 260 miles each weekday, delivering hot meals to the homes of about 170 seniors. They also check up on the people they visit.

"A person hungers for more than just food - social interaction and feelings of safety are just as vital," Engel adds. "For many clients, Meals on Wheels is the only option they have for a well-balanced diet and daily human contact."

Qualifying seniors receive hot meals Monday through Friday, as well as frozen meals for weekends and holidays. Menus are monitored by a registered dietician through the Area Agency on Aging to ensure compliance with vitamin and mineral requirements.

As mandated by federal guidelines, meals are provided on a donation basis, and no senior is denied service because of an inability to contribute.

Permanently homebound seniors can remain on the meal program indefinitely, and other seniors temporarily incapacitated due to illness, injury or other medical reasons can receive hot meals until they're fully recovered.

Each year, over 275 seniors benefit from the program, which the FCEC has operated for more than 20 years.

For more details, contact the FCEC at 231-347-3211 or 888-347-0369.



An average of 170 Emmet County senior citizens, including Dennis, shown here, have hot meals delivered each weekday through the "Meals on Wheels" program.

your small change  
makes a **BIG**  
difference



Can you give a few cents a month to help your community? The People Fund program works because there is power in numbers. A contribution of less than \$1 each month adds up fast when thousands of Great Lakes Energy members get involved.

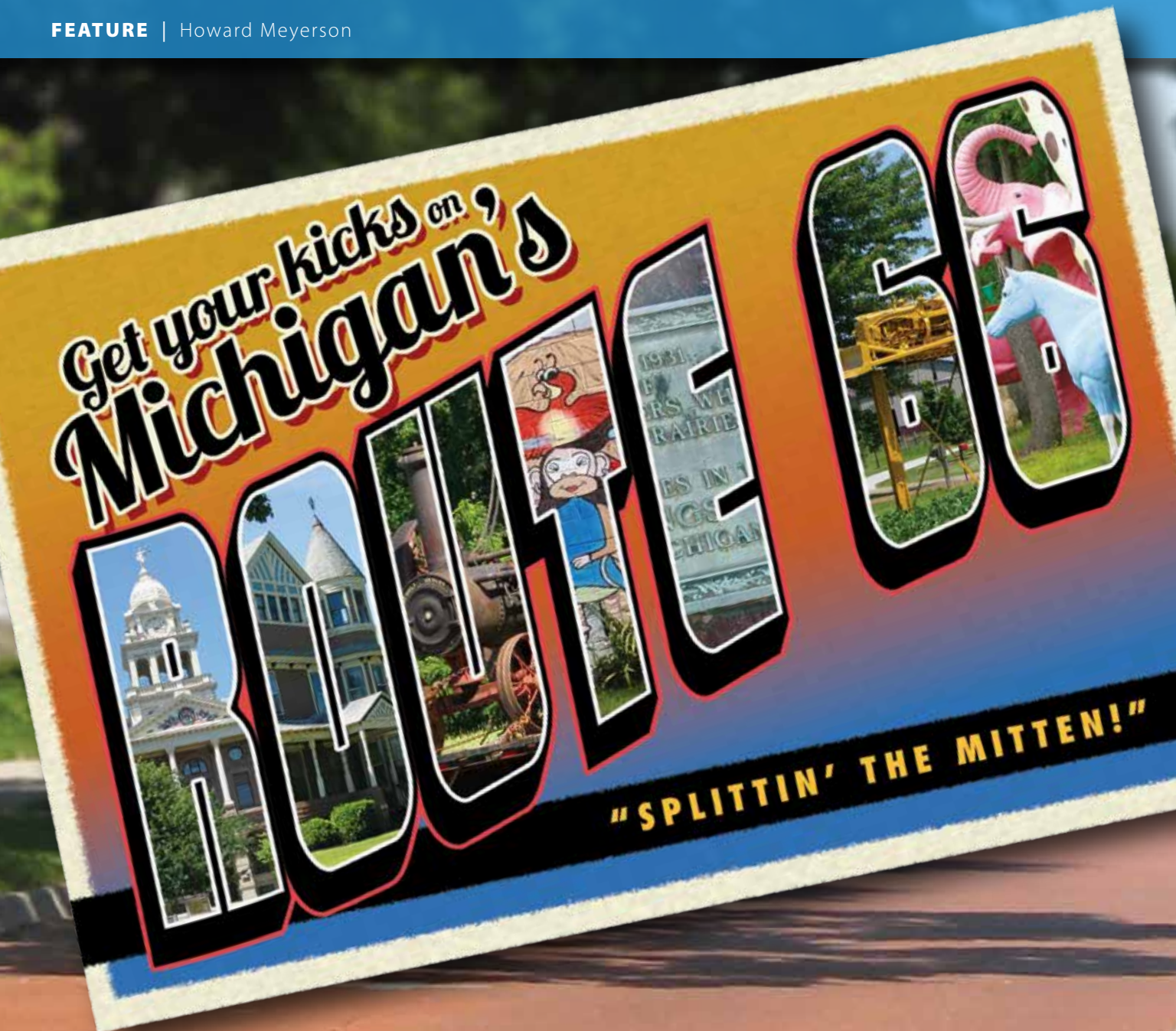
The needs of our local communities continue to grow, and you have the power to give the People Fund a bigger role in meeting those needs. We round up your electric bill to the next dollar and the amount, which averaged just 44 cents a month in 2013, goes into the People Fund. There are no administrative costs. All donations are returned to our local communities.

**We Need Your Help!**

Enroll in the People Fund today

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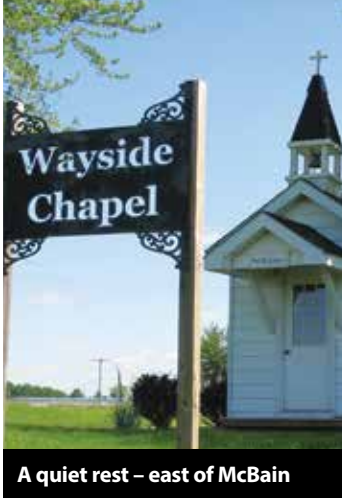


Jazz pianist Nat King Cole immortalized driving the open road with his 1946 hit song, “Route 66,” a swinging rendition about traveling the fabled route from Chicago, Ill., to Los Angeles, Calif. But authors John and Becky Schlatter, think the Michigan highway that bears the same name is just as appealing and has its own quaint charms. To prove it, they take readers for a 237-mile ride from Sturgis to Charlevoix in a new book called “Splittin’ the Mitten: Get Your Kicks on Michigan’s Route 66.”

“To say it’s just as scenic as the route from Chicago to L.A., might be a bit of hyperbole, but beauty is in the eye of the beholder,” notes John Schlatter, a retired corporate communications professional and HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Co-op member. “But when you drive [Michigan’s] Route 66 and see a field of sunflowers in late summer, or cows grazing in a field and modern wind turbines in the distance,



**John and Becky Schlatter are the authors of a new book that travels some sites along Michigan's Route 66**



**A quiet rest – east of McBain**



**Robinson Scenic Gardens – Kalkaska/Mancelona**



**Hot Spot Tanning & Hair Salon – Remus**



**Visiting 'Back to the Bricks' car show – Flint**



**Drink from an artesian well – Barryton**



Photos courtesy of John and Becky Schlatter

or a pretty old church, those are all very scenic in their own way.”

The Schlatters’ book, with 250 photographs, is an account of their trip through our rural heartland. It’s a route full of history, small towns and farm life—the backbone of our mitten state. Theirs is a story of pastures and cows, grange halls where farmers meet, ice cream parlors where families gather, and the overlay of modern times and change.

“We thought this might be a fun project,” shares Becky Schlatter, who refers to herself as a “Michigan girl” and Flint native. “I get excited by stuff like this.”

The Schlatters spent five days touring M-66. Gathering material for their book required driving it twice and three shorter trips to shoot photos. One of Becky’s favorite stops is Mancelona, where a downtown mural depicts the life of author Ernest Hemmingway. Other favorite stops are Ionia’s brick-lined Main Street and Charlevoix’s “two waterfronts” and unique old homes.

“The worst part of the trip was not being able to stop and talk to people at length,” says John, a Mississippi native who retired

from Bechtel Corp in 2012 after years of moving around the country. “If we had, it would have taken three years to get it done.”

John admits he didn’t know much about Michigan until 2007. That’s when the couple bought their Chippewa Lake cabin in Mecosta County. It’s not far from M-66, a route they use to come and go.

“As a kid growing up in the south, all I knew about Michigan was Bo Schembechler, Detroit car factories, and Motown,” John exclaims. “When I got here I was amazed by how rural the state is, which is why we like Route 66.

“I can’t say that there was an ‘aha!’ moment when I knew to write the book, but I am old enough to remember the ‘Route 66’ television show from the 1960s,” he adds. “We saw signs at Barryton saying, ‘Thanks for Visiting’ and ‘Route 66 Keep on Cruising,’ and realized we’re not the only ones who think Route 66 is pretty cool.”



*Find “Splittin’ The Mitten: Get Your Kicks on Route 66” on Amazon.com (paperback listed at \$12.47; e-book is \$2.99); at the Old Pioneer Store and Emporium (231-796-2502 or oldpioneerstore.com) in Big Rapids; or order through Charlevoix’s Round Lake Bookstore (231-547-2699).*

# Save by Upgrading With ENERGY STAR Products

**W**ish you could replace that old, malfunctioning, energy-wasting refrigerator or dishwasher, but don't know where to start – or if you can afford it? If so, a smart way to search is by looking for appliances with the ENERGY STAR® label. ENERGY STAR products are more energy-efficient than other models, and Great Lakes Energy's Energy Optimization (EO) program offers many rebates to help offset the initial purchase price.

## What is ENERGY STAR?

Established over 20 years ago by the U.S. Department of Energy, it is now an international standard for energy-efficient consumer products. The ENERGY STAR label can be found on hundreds of items, including lightbulbs, electronics, major appliances, and even certified homes and buildings – as long as the product or dwelling meets stringent energy efficiency requirements. Over 4.5 billion ENERGY STAR products have been sold in the past 20 years.

To qualify for the ENERGY STAR rating, a product must contribute significant energy savings, deliver features and performance that customers demand, and back up energy savings claims with testing. In short, it is a trusted brand for quality products that use significantly less energy than minimum federal standards require. These products offer the same features you're used to, but can use up to 75 percent less energy than standard models.

## Rebates

While ENERGY STAR products often cost a bit more, the initial investment is almost always recouped in the long-term savings. Additionally, rebates available through your electric co-op's Energy Optimization program (see chart) can help offset up-front costs!

## Did You Know?

You can buy new ENERGY STAR appliances at whatever store you wish. After your purchase, fill out the rebate form, available at [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org), and mail, fax or email it back to the Energy Optimization

ENERGY STAR Product/Appliance	Rebate Amount
Compact Fluorescent Light (CFL) bulbs	Varies by retailer via in-store mark-down
LED light bulbs	Varies by retailer via in-store mark-down
Ceiling fan	\$15
CFL fixture	\$15
LED downlight kit	\$20
Room air conditioner	\$25
Dehumidifier	\$25
Dishwasher	\$25
Clothes washer	\$25
Clothes dryer	\$25
Refrigerator	\$25
Chest freezer	\$25
TV (21"-50")	\$25
TV (51"+)	\$50

program to receive your check. Please visit [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org) for information, or call 877-296-4319 with any questions.



**Tune In**  
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Is squinting at a small, fuzzy screen bringing you down? Invest in a new flat screen TV to save your eyes and your wallet! Energy Optimization rebates (up to \$50!) are now available for ENERGY STAR® TVs 21" and larger. And that's not all— your efficient TV will save you energy for years to come.

**ENERGY TIP: Use the sleep timer feature to automatically turn off the TV after you fall asleep.**

ONLINE: [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org)  
PHONE: 877.296.4319



Energy Optimization programs and incentives are applicable to Michigan service locations only. Other restrictions may apply. For a complete list of participating utilities, visit [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org).

# Protect Your Equipment Against Power Surges

**P**ower surges cause millions of dollars in damage each year to TVs, computers, stereos, or anything plugged into an outlet. Here are some keys to choosing the best surge protection.

“A surge is a boost in the electrical charge over a power line,” explains Joe McElroy, safety director for the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association. “This can be caused by lightning, but it’s more commonly caused by motor-driven electrical devices, such as air conditioners and refrigerators, that require a lot of energy for starting and stopping compressors. Surges can also be caused by faulty wiring.”

Frequent, small power surges shorten the life of appliances and electronics, and come in all shapes and sizes. “The most extreme is a lightning strike, because it can destroy equipment and sometimes set your house on fire, but less severe ones are rooted in many different causes,” adds Alan Shedd, residential/commercial energy programs director for Touchstone Energy®

Cooperatives, the national brand for America’s electric co-ops. Surge severity depends on the voltage, current, and how long the event lasts. Most surges are very short, but can happen through any wire connected to your equipment.

A surge protection device mounted at the main electrical panel protects equipment from surges coming through entry ports such as outside electric, telephone, and cable TV or satellite dish lines.

Point-of-use devices do not suppress or arrest a surge, but divert it to the ground. They’re made to protect sensitive electronics, like a computer, and resemble a regular plug strip. But don’t assume your plug strip offers surge protection unless it specifically says



A surge protection device can be mounted at the base of your main electrical panel.

so. “My computer is plugged into an uninterruptible power supply with surge protection,” Shedd notes. Installing special surge protection electrical outlets can also help, especially near places like kitchen countertops.

The best protection is two-tiered. A service entrance device reduces surges to a level that protects large appliances (stove or clothes dryer), while point-of-use protectors defend sensitive electronics.

Be cautious when shopping for protection devices, as some claim to save energy, but this is generally false, Shedd says. “Surge protection is a valuable tool for protecting your home or business, but not for saving energy.”

## STAY CLEAR!

**DID YOU KNOW ...**  
a downed power line can be energized by someone who is operating an improperly-wired portable generator?

It’s just another reason why you should always stay clear of a downed power line. It’s also a good reason why portable generators should be correctly wired for the protection of your family, neighbors and Great Lakes Energy lineworkers.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



# Got Toast? Trenary Toast is a Beloved Treat



**M**y grandmother always had Trenary Toast in her house - my brothers and sisters and I grew up on it," said the woman on the phone, as she ordered bags of the toast for her brother and sister-in-law's 70th wedding anniversary.

As she hangs up the phone, Maureen Webber, owner of the Trenary Home Bakery, laughs and says, "I hear these stories from people all the time." And, even though Webber bought the shop back in 2011, the U.P. native still loves being what she calls the "new face" behind Trenary Toast, Inc.

The bakery, located just moments off U.S.-41 on M-67 in Trenary, specializes in "from scratch" traditional Finnish breads from original family recipes passed down over the last century. Old Country Rye, a dense Scandinavian bread, is especially popular.

Their best seller, however, is the iconic Trenary Toast, which is distributed regionally and has been shipped to every state. Trenary Toast starts out as a sweet bread which is baked, sliced, coated, then baked again.

"That's what gives it that famous 'crunch' and dunk-a-bility," Maureen explains. "Trenary Toast is unique because we're the only toast that has the cinnamon sugar on the top-we hand-coat it."

Next door to the bakery is the Trenary Toast Café, which serves breakfast sandwiches, subs, pizza bread, coffee, and, in the summer, hand-dipped Jilbert's ice cream. Their giant cinnamon rolls and cinnamon bread are available exclusively in the Café. Webber also stocks local gift items, such as maple syrup, "Yooper" shirts, sweatshirts, and Saykly's candy, which is homemade in Escanaba, Mich.

"Last summer, a lady came from Washington State to see where Trenary Toast was made because it was on her bucket list," Maureen smiles. "How great is that?"

— Linda Sirois



**Have A Story Idea?** *Michigan Country Lines* is always looking for unique stories about Michigan people, places and things. If you have a story idea for us to consider, please email [gknudtson@meca.coop](mailto:gknudtson@meca.coop) with a short paragraph describing the story and why you think Michiganders would like to read about it. Include your name, address, and note which electric co-op you belong to.

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