

# Michigan

## COUNTRY LINES



### Shaggy's Company Skis to Success

1.



### ABANDONS ALL-OF-THE ABOVE

The Administration is reversing course: ditching our **All-of-the-Above** energy strategy for an **All-But-One** approach that bans new coal plants.

2.



### TECHNOLOGY GAMBLE

New regulations essentially require technology that's **not commercially viable and prohibitively expensive**—leading to higher bills down the line.

# TOP 4 FACTS

ABOUT THE EPA'S NEW CLIMATE REGULATIONS

3.



### LIMITS ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, DOMESTIC ENERGY

By banning new coal plants, Americans forfeit a **236-year domestic source of energy** with a historically stable price.

4.



### HISTORY REPEATS: ALL-BUT-ONE DOESN'T WORK

A 1978 mandate prevented use of natural gas & forced utilities into coal or nuclear—**before common sense prevailed and it was repealed 9 years later.**

**COOPERATIVE**  
  
**ACTION NETWORK**

Visit **ACTION.COOP** today to send a message to the EPA

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# Michigan

## COUNTRY LINES

### IN THIS ISSUE

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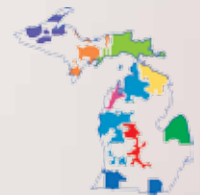
Change of Address: Please notify your electric cooperative. See page 4 for contact information.



#### ON THE COVER

John (L-R), Shari and Jeff Thompson have made over 1,000 pairs of skis at their family shop, Shaggy's Copper Country Skis, in Boyne City. Featured are their "Brockway" model, and the best-selling "Tubby" (red) all-mountain ski. They have also started making skateboards, and are members of Great Lakes Energy Cooperative.

Photo - Roger Boettcher, Leavenworth Photographics



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**MANAGER'S MESSAGE**

# We Need an All-of-the-Above Energy Strategy

Electric co-ops are disappointed—but not surprised—that in September the Obama Administration officially abandoned an “all-of-the-above” energy strategy for a new, “all-but-one” approach that effectively removes coal from the nation’s fuel mix.

The policy, proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), sets stringent limits on carbon dioxide emissions from future coal or natural gas plants. Trouble is, the new standards are impossible to meet with existing technology.

For several years, co-ops have tested carbon capture and storage (CCS) as a way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Unfortunately, the technology doesn’t make financial sense. It has never been used on a commercial scale at a power plant over a prolonged period to demonstrate its viability or cost. In a 2012 Congressional Budget Office report, engineers estimate it would increase the cost of producing electricity from coal-based plants by 75 percent.

A switch to an all-but-one energy approach would limit Americans’ access to a plentiful and affordable resource. I don’t think we should gamble with the economic well-being of future generations and our nation’s economy.

Already worried about making ends meet, many of Alger Delta Cooperative’s consumer-members cannot afford the significant increases in electric bills that this policy would trigger.

Historically, the price of coal remains affordable and relatively stable. The U.S. Energy Information Agency reports the U.S. has 236 years remaining of



**Tom Harrell**  
Chief Executive Officer

recoverable coal reserves. Coal generates 37 percent of the nation’s electricity—our biggest energy source by far.

It seems the Administration is letting history repeat itself. We saw this all-but-one game in 1978 when Congress passed the ill-conceived Power Plant and Industrial Fuel Use Act. Never heard of it? Few have, but for several years the government

banned natural gas for power generation. Yes, natural gas—the fuel source being sold to the nation today as a cleaner fuel option. With gas off the table, electric co-ops were forced to choose between building coal or nuclear plants.

Back then, co-ops were in the midst of a major power plant building cycle.



With few options, they invested heavily in coal-based generating plants in the late 1970s and early ’80s. Thankfully Congress repealed its mistake, but not for nine years.

Let’s not repeat past mistakes. Stand with us as we fight to keep electric bills affordable. Raise your voice through the Cooperative Action Network at [www.action.coop](http://www.action.coop) (also see information on p. 2). Tell the EPA we need an all-of-the-above energy strategy.

## Oberg Completes Director Training

**R**on Oberg, District 9 director (Hiawatha/Maple Ridge) for Alger Delta Cooperative Electric Association, has successfully completed director training sponsored by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). The training was held in Traverse City, with other attendees from across the nation who received their Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) certification at the end of five long and very intensive days.



Ron Oberg

To receive certification, directors must complete the following courses: "Director Duties and Liabilities," "Understanding the Electric Business," "Board Roles and Relationships," "Strategic Planning," and "Financial Decision Making."

Oberg believes the NRECA courses are excellent and provide new directors with a

proper amount of knowledge to become a competent member on a co-op's board of directors. "As the eyes and ears of the member-owners, I believe it is imperative to obtain as much training as possible in order to be a responsible and capable representative of the individuals who own the cooperative," Oberg said.

He praised the NRECA instructors, who were all highly knowledgeable and presented the course material in a way that kept the attendees engaged and interested in learning. "The days were long, and the amount of learning material presented was enormous, but the quality of instructors made it worthwhile," Oberg adds.

Alger Delta has a nine-member board of directors. Six board members have earned the CCD, and several are working to complete their Board Leadership Certificate.

## Want to Serve on Your Electric Co-op's Board?

**A**lger Delta Cooperative will be holding elections in three of its nine districts in 2014. Districts 5 (Gourley, LaBranche, Cornell); 7 (Stonington); and 8 (Isabella) will each elect a board representative to the board of directors. District meetings will be held in May.

Serving on the board of directors is a time-consuming but rewarding pursuit, and members should be aware of the qualifications and responsibilities associated with the position.

To qualify, a person must take electric service in the district they seek to represent, must be a member in good standing; be at least 18 years old; and must not be employed by or have a financial interest in a competing business. Candidates are nominated by completing and submitting a nomination petition.

Directors are charged with the responsibility of overseeing the cooperative, including strategic planning, exercising fiduciary responsibility, setting policy and direction, corporate duties, governance, and other tasks relating to co-op operations. Board members are expected to prepare in advance and personally attend the monthly board meetings, which are held on the third Wednesday of each month at the cooperative's office in Gladstone. Directors are also required to attend the annual meeting, which is held on

the third Wednesday in June.

Board members are also assigned to serve on at least one committee. The standing committees include Policy, Employee Relations, Finance & Rates, and Executive. Committees meet two times each year and sometimes more often, as necessary.

In addition to regular board meetings and committees, directors participate in state, regional and national events related to the electric business. These may be business, training or political in nature, and often require advance preparation, such as reading briefing materials or researching issues. These meetings may range from one half-day to five days for travel and participation. Directors are also required to complete Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) training within their first term. Finally, directors must represent Alger Delta in their community and elsewhere, which sometimes includes making public presentations.

Directors are elected for a three-year term and receive compensation for their work, including reasonable and customary expense reimbursement. Visit [algerdelta.com](http://algerdelta.com) for more information about serving on your co-op's board (see Article III in the bylaws) or to obtain a nominating petition. If you don't have computer access and would like to receive a copy of the bylaws or petition, call 906-428-4141.

## Rates & Special Charges

Alger Delta Cooperative is a nonprofit electric utility. We work hard to provide electric service at the lowest cost consistent with safe delivery and sound management of your co-op. Alger Delta's Rates and Special Charges are designed to cover the actual cost of providing energy or the associated service, and are authorized by the board of directors and other regulators. Unless otherwise noted, the Rates and Special Charges shown below were authorized in August 2010 and took effect in October 2010. Rates and Special Charges are subject to change.

### Rates – Energy and Capacity

Monthly Service Charge (Residential / Seasonal / Small Commercial) .....	\$25
Energy Rate per kWh (Residential / Seasonal) .....	\$0.149
Energy Rate per kWh (Small Commercial) .....	\$0.147
Demand Charge per kW (Large Power) ....	\$11
Energy Rate per kWh (Large Power) ....	\$0.116

### Special Charges

Charge for Special Svcs at Member's request	
During regular work hours	
(per hour) .....	\$100
During non-regular work hours	
(per hour) .....	\$150
Meter Reading Charge .....	\$50
Meter Test Charge (waived if meter is out of limits) .....	\$75
Disconnect Charge (at source)	
During regular work hours .....	\$100
Outside regular work hours .....	\$300
Reconnect Charge (at source)	
During regular work hours .....	\$100
Outside regular work hours .....	\$300
Collection Charge for non-payment .....	\$50
NSF or Returned Check handling charge .....	\$50
Connections outside regular working hours .....	\$300
Meter Tampering / Energy Theft Investigation Charge (Dec. 2010) .....	\$500
Duplicate Bill Preparation (Jan. 2013) .....	\$10
<b>Line Extensions / Construction Services</b>	
Application Fee .....	\$250
Re-application Fee .....	\$250
Overhead Facilities	
Connection Charge .....	\$100
Extension charge–secondary .. Actual cost	
Extension charge–primary .....	Actual cost
Meter pole .....	Actual cost
Underground Facilities	
Connection Charge .....	\$100
Extension charge–secondary .. Actual cost	
Extension charge–primary .....	Actual cost
Primary cut in fee (Underground only) ..	\$1,200
Overhead to underground transition	
pole–primary .....	\$500
Overhead to underground transition pole–secondary .....	\$150
Frost charge (Applies to construction between Nov. 1 – Apr. 30) .....	\$1,200

# Cooking For One

Cooking for one?

These single-serving recipes will help you save time and energy, are easy to prepare, and sized perfectly for just you!

## Burrata Caprese with Balsamic Glaze

1 small loaf of french bread, cut into 1-inch slices, toasted

7-8 grape tomatoes, cut in half

3-4 large basil leaves

1 container burrata (mozzarella filled with cream) or mozzarella cheese

### Balsamic glaze:

1½ c. balsamic vinegar

½ t. honey

On a plate, arrange bread, tomatoes, basil, and burrata. For glaze, bring balsamic vinegar to a boil in a small saucepan. Reduce to a simmer, and cook until thick and syrupy. Remove from heat and stir in honey. Let cool completely before serving (it will thicken as it sets). You can also use store-bought balsamic glaze which is much easier. On each piece of

bread, spread the burrata. Add the balsamic glaze, a piece of basil, and top with 2 tomato halves. This is a quick, healthy meal that is perfect for one person. No cooking required.

Christin McKamey

## Grilled Chicken Nachos

1 oz. baked tortilla chips

¼ c. drained, low sodium black beans, heated

4 oz. grilled lean boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into small cubes

2 T. salsa con queso

3 T. chopped tomato

2 T. thinly sliced jalapeño pepper

Lay chips on plate. Top them evenly with the beans followed by the grilled chicken. Drizzle the salsa evenly over the top. Top with the tomato and jalapeño slices and serve. Serves 1.

Lorraine Green, South Boardman

## Apple Crisp for One

1 T. quick cooking oats

1 T. brown sugar

½ T. flour

dash of cinnamon

dash of nutmeg

dash of salt

½ T. margarine

1 c. sliced, peeled apples

Combine oats, brown sugar, flour, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt. Cut in margarine with fork until crumbly. Set aside. Place apples in small microwave-safe dish. Top with oat mixture. Microwave on full power, uncovered, 2-4 minutes or until apples are tender, rotating dish once. Serve with frozen yogurt or ice cream, if desired.

Barb Spencer, Petoskey

## Curried Chickpea Stew

1 t. olive oil

1 c. onion, diced

1½ c. carrots, diced

2 cloves garlic, finely dice

1½ -2 T. curry (depending on taste)

1 14.5-oz. can diced tomatoes

1 16-oz. can chickpeas

1½ c. water

1 cube chicken or vegetable bouillon

1 whole chicken breast cut into ½-inch pieces

1 T. butter

1 t. sugar

In a 4½-quart stock pot, add ½ c. water, carrots and onions. Simmer until carrots are tender. Add more water if needed, remove carrots and onions. Add olive oil and curry, and heat for 30 seconds or until bubbles appear. Add garlic, remaining water, tomatoes (juice and all), drained chickpeas, chicken



and bouillon cube. Stir until bouillon cube is dissolved. Simmer until chickpeas are tender. Add more water, if needed. Stir vigorously to thicken. Remove from heat, add sugar and butter, stir to dissolve sugar. Garnish with Greek yogurt (optional). This is a delicious, one-pot meal.

Jeff Ullen, Bellaire

Photography by: 831 Creative

## Recipe Contest Winner!



Chris McAfee

Congratulations to Chris McAfee of Pointe Aux Pins on Bois Blanc Island. Her name was drawn from all readers whose recipes we printed in 2013 and *Country Lines* magazine will pay her

January electric bill as a prize.

Chris and her family have been members of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op since the co-op brought electricity to the Island in 1964. She loves her piece of paradise with lots of wonderful people, miles of ATV trails, beautiful woods, and the surrounding crystal-clear water of Lake Huron.

**Submit your recipe!** Thanks to all who send in recipes! Please send in your favorite "Easter" recipes by **Jan. 10** and "Hawaiian Luau" recipes by **March 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](http://veggiechick.com), for healthy, vegetarian recipes and info!

# HYDROPOWER

## TIME-TESTED RENEWABLE ENERGY

This is fifth in a series on how electricity is generated. The first (January) was about coal, the second about new nuclear options (June), the third about wind (July-August), and the fourth about natural gas (October). Watch future issues for stories about other fuel sources.

**E**nergy from flowing water has been harnessed and used for over 2,000 years, beginning with the ancient Greeks using water wheels to grind wheat. In the 1880s, converting a rush of water into electricity became a reality in the United States.

Today, hydropower provides about 80,000 megawatts (MW) of capacity in the United States—enough to power over 25 million average homes—and accounts for about 75 percent of all renewable electricity used by co-ops.

But how does it work? Simply, hydropower converts the natural energy of moving water to mechanical energy, using a turbine that is attached to a generator. With these highly efficient turbine-generators doing the job formerly performed by water wheels, electricity flows in a number of ways:

**Impoundment:** When most people think of hydropower, dams come to mind. By plugging a river and amassing water in a reservoir, its flow (and the resulting electricity) can be better controlled and generated as needed.

**Diversion:** Water is channeled away from a river, typically near natural falls, down to generators at the falls' base. This can be done without any visible impact to a river's natural course. In fact, this kind of generation was used to bring electricity to Buffalo NY, from Niagara Falls in the late 1800s.

**Pumped storage:** This method essentially uses off-peak electricity to make electricity for use during times of high consumption. Two reservoirs are filled, one typically uphill from the other, with an electric pump/

generator in between. At night, when demand is low and electricity less expensive, water from the lower reservoir is pumped uphill. During the day, when demand for power increases, that water is released down through the generator to make electricity.

Over 600 electric co-ops across the country buy power from 134 federally-owned and operated dams, most of which were built between the late 1930s and early '60s. Despite the incredible importance of these resources, maintenance has lagged in recent years and created room for improvement.

Electric co-ops are making efforts to address this problem, advocating that the government set aside funds to repair and maintain the dams and turbines. Researchers are also looking to create more efficient and fish-friendly ways to generate hydropower. Careful studies of aquatic environments have given dam operators a better idea of how to simulate a natural river downstream.

A 2012 report from the U.S. Depart-

ment of Energy (DOE) revealed many of the nation's dams hold untapped power. Roughly 2,500 provide conventional and pumped-storage hydropower in the United States. But the vast majority of dams—some 80,000, ranging from 4 to 770-foot-high—are non-powered. The DOE analyzed 54,391 of them.

Locks and dams on the Ohio, Mississippi, Alabama and Arkansas rivers—facilities owned and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers—offer the most untapped potential. The top 10 sites alone could provide about 3,000 MW.

“Many of these dams could be converted to generate electricity with minimal impact to critical species, habitats, parks or wilderness areas,” the DOE report states.

Co-ops' efforts in pushing for increased maintenance and technology development will ensure that hydropower remains a reliable, affordable, renewable resource for decades to come.



Cloverland Electric Cooperative's hydroelectric plant in Sault Ste. Marie generates between 25 and 30 megawatts of electricity. Clean, renewable hydro makes up nearly 35 percent of the co-op's fuel mix. To see a recent chart showing what your electric co-op's fuel mix is, visit [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) and click on the co-op name and then click the Sept. 2013 issue.

Photo Courtesy - Cloverland Electric Co-op

# Stay Safe and Warm!

**Never** place a space heater close to a water source. While there are waterproof electric heaters, many models are not intended for use in bathrooms, so be sure to check the manufacturer's safety instructions.

Source – SafeElectricity.org

## Tips for Using Space Heaters, Electric Blankets

**D**on't let your efforts to stay warm put your safety at risk. Space heaters and electric blankets can be efficient ways to warm up, but they can also be dangerous. We encourage you to understand the dangers of heating devices before you use them.

"Space heaters and electric blankets are not appropriate for all people or all situations," explains Molly Hall, executive director of the Energy Education Council. "However, in the right circumstances, space heating can save energy and money."

Try these tips for using space heaters and electric blankets safely:

- Choose a unit with a safety certification (look for the UL®, ETL, or CSA mark, which means the product has been safety-tested).
- One of the biggest causes of fires is the most easily avoidable. Many fires start when flammable products are placed too close to heating devices. Keep space heaters at least 3 feet from blankets, clothing, paper and other flammables.
- Place space heaters out of high-traffic areas and on a level, hard, nonflammable floor surface—NOT on carpets, furniture, or countertops.
- Never allow pets to sleep on top of electric blankets, and the wires should never be bent or tucked under a mattress.
- Do not try to warm your entire home with space heaters. They are useful in small areas, such as a study or living room. For large areas, however, your heating system will do the job more efficiently.
- Read and follow all safety instructions for each unit.
- Cords should not be frayed, brittle or cracked, and the blanket should not have any charred or dark areas.
- Turn them off when not in use.
- Look for a space heater that has guards from heating elements and automatically shuts off if tipped over.

Visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org) to learn more about avoiding all electrical hazards.

## Good Service Depends On Good Information

**A**ccording to the Pew Research Center, over 90 percent of American adults own cell phones. As far back as 2011, researchers determined that the number of active mobile phones exceeded the U.S. population. Today, over 35 percent of American households are "wireless only," and use mobile phones for much more than voice communication. Mobile phone users send and receive over 183 *billion* text messages—per month.

If your household is also in the wireless category, it's very important to contact Alger Delta with your new phone number, email address and other contact information. A database review reveals that many of our members have not updated their contact information, especially phone numbers, in quite a while. It's important for Alger Delta be able to contact you both for routine business issues and in case of an emergency or power outage.

Please call 906-428-4141, fill out the information box on your bill, or email [admin@algerdelta.com](mailto:admin@algerdelta.com) to ensure we have your most current information (please write "info update" in the subject line).



### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Photo – blindbuilders.com

Properly installed shades can be one of the most effective ways to improve windows' energy efficiency. Lower them during summer; in winter, raise during the day and lower at night on south-facing windows. Dual shades, with reflective white coating on one side and a heat-absorbing dark color on the other, can be reversed with the seasons and save even more energy. Learn more at [EnergySavers.gov](http://EnergySavers.gov).

Source – U.S. Department of Energy



# Bluegill Bob

**T**here are a lot of ways to make a name for yourself as an angler: catching record fish, winning fishing tournaments, designing productive lures, even writing about the experience.

But Bob Miskowski didn't do it any of those ways. Miskowski became one of Michigan's legendary anglers simply by catching fish.

A 70-year-old retired maintenance man who lives in rural Lenawee County, Miskowski is known statewide by the "Bluegill Bob" moniker that he was given by a Department of Natural Resources fisheries biologist over 20 years ago. And though he's carried the nickname around for so long, he's still surprised when another angler pulls up to him on the lake and asks: "Are you Bluegill Bob?"

Miskowski says his first recollections of fishing are as a 6-year-old accompanying his father on the ice. His predilection for

ing for everything from suckers to salmon, Miskowski seems to always gravitate back to bluegills.

"You can always catch bluegills," he explains. "You may not catch a lot of them, but you always catch some—always. With bass or pike or walleye, you can fish all day long sometimes and get skunked, but with bluegills, that just doesn't happen.

"They're fun to catch, too. They fight as well as any fish in the lake. And they're good eating—ask anybody."

Miskowski begins the season as soon



**You can always catch bluegills.**

**You may not catch a lot of them, but you always catch some—always.**

piscatorial pursuits is in his genes, he says.

"My father taught me everything I know," he says, proudly. "He was a heckuva fisherman, and so were his brothers."

Truth is, Miskowski started picking up tips from other anglers, fishing magazines, and even developed a different style of fishing than the rest of his family while he was still in single digits. He has refined his style over the years, until he established his reputation as one of the best bluegill fishermen anywhere.

First, he said, he started using simple flies instead of the standard hooks and worms used among panfish anglers. Instead of a bobber, he uses a heavier plastic practice plug, which, while still floating, allows him to cast much further distances than a lightweight bobber. As a result, it covers more water and presents his bait to more fish. While the heavier float doesn't submerge like a light cork when a fish bites, he just watches for any unusual motion and then sets the hook.

Although he's spent plenty of time fish-

ing as the ice is off the lake. He concentrates on shallow, dark-bottomed backwaters—often canals off the main lake—where the water warms up fastest. He starts with just the bobber and an unweighted fly, which sinks slowly in the cold water. If it's not working, he adds a tiny bit of bait—usually a spike (fly larva) or wax worm (bee moth larva). As the season progresses and the fish move a little deeper, he adds some lead wire to the chenille body of his hand-tied flies so they'll sink faster and get down to the strike zone more quickly.

Miskowski maintains this same presentation until the bluegills go on the beds, then, when the sunfish become more aggressive, switches from insect larva to red worms—the bait he'll stay with all summer until the water begins to cool again in the fall.

Once ice fishing season arrives, Miskowski is really in his element. He's designed his own lightweight combination seat-and-gear box that has become known as a "Bobby

Box," in which he carries a lantern for keeping his hands warm. Miskowski dislikes ice shanties or shelters—"I want to be out on the ice and be able to pick up and go and where I can move around," he says. That's a big part of his strategy; he begins the day by drilling a number of holes and rarely spends more than a couple of fishless minutes at one before he moves on.

It's a fairly rare day that Miskowski doesn't bring back his limit of fish for the fryer. It used to be a rare day that he didn't fish, too, though he admits that as the aches and pains of advancing age make their presence known, he's down to fishing three or four days a week now—anytime the water is open or the ice isn't unsafe.

"I used to fish every day, and sometimes twice a day, except on Sunday," adds Miskowski, a deeply religious Christian, who signs off on the telephone with "God bless." "On Sunday," he says, "I go to church."

*Bob Gwizdz is an avid outdoor writer featured in many hunting and fishing publications.*



# Shaggy's Company Skis to Success

Like most kids, Jeff and Jonathon Thompson loved taking things apart and putting them back together, never thinking that their inquisitiveness might lead to a new family business.

They were teenagers when they first built a surfboard with the help of their dad, John. That winter, Jeff wanted to build a "ski bike" by cutting apart an old pair of Dynastar skis to attach to a bike frame. Noticing how

they were built in layers, the boys decided to build a pair of skis, too.

That was 2005, and that first pair of skis was not a successful start.

"We built them in a barn that was about 40 degrees, and discovered that it needs to be warmer for skis to cure in a press. My brother brought them to the U.P. for a race that winter right after they were made, and they de-laminated before we got them on

the slopes," laughs Jeff

Previously, the family had a successful construction business, building as many as 300 homes in some years before the economic downturn. "We had vacationed in the Boyne City area for years, and as the ski business started picking up and the building business slowing down, we decided to make the move from South Lyon, where we had lived for years," John adds. ●●●●●●●●●●



John (L) and Jeff Thompson, of Shaggy's Copper Country Skis, prepare materials that will be pressed into skis, including an ash wood core, Durasurf 4001 base, triaxial fiber glass, damping rubber strips, steel edges, ABS sidewalls, Durasurf tip/tail spacer, and a graphic topsheet.



If you want to demo a pair of Shaggy's skis, the Thompsons and their reps will be visiting Michigan ski areas this winter (check the schedule at [sccskis.com](http://sccskis.com) or call 231-459-4323), or stop by their Boyne City shop.



After stone grinding, Shari Thompson applies hot wax to a new pair of skis. The Thompsons are members of Great Lakes Energy Cooperative.

Carving a turn on a Shaggy's dropdeck longboard.



Fast forward to 2013, and you find what started as a hobby is now a full-time business called Shaggy's Copper Country Skis.

"This year we will probably make around 200 pairs of skis," John notes proudly. "We've produced over 1,000 skis since that first mistake."

The Shaggy's company is staffed by Jeff, John and wife Shari, who does the bookkeeping, ordering materials and sales. Brother Jonathon has moved to Colorado in another line of business. John and Shari have been married for nearly 35 years.

"One of the reasons we chose to move up here, in addition to having wonderful testing facilities in nearby Boyne Mountain and Nubs Nob, is that the heart of our ski – ash and beech wood – is milled just down the road at Metalski Lumber," John explains.

Each ski takes eight to 10 hours to construct and fine-tune before it's ready to sell. The company offers 10 different pairs of skis, ranging from \$595 to around \$795.

Jeff, 23, recently graduated from Michigan Tech with a mechanical engineering degree and is applying that knowledge of how a ski performs physically and geometrically to making a top ski for Midwestern and Michigan users. "Our all-mountain ski has a tighter turning radius that works well on our conditions, but it's a great ski for the mountains, too," he says. "The Tubby, one of our best-selling skis, floats well in powder and softer spring snow conditions but provides a good ride on hardpack, as well."

The Shaggy's Copper Country Skis name was Jeff's idea. Their great uncle, Shaggy Lehto, was a blacksmith who lived in the Keweenaw Peninsula and had a hobby building hand-carved skis. "He made a pair for dad's mom that's a family heirloom, and I thought, 'what a great name for the company,'" Jeff recalls. "It's uniquely Michigan."



Besides skis, Shaggy's has started making longboards (skateboards). Here, Jeff Thompson mills out the shape of a longboard deck.

# Energy-saving Resolutions for 2014

A new year is an opportunity to assess different aspects of your life and determine how you can make positive changes. Unfortunately, resolutions can be tough to keep. So, why not try a new one this year that's easy and painless? Saving energy is simple and rewarding—and, any amount you save counts. Here are four simple tips from Alger Delta Cooperative's Energy Optimization program to help you save energy—now and throughout the year.

## 1. Set, program, relax: Use a programmable thermostat.

A programmable thermostat automatically controls your home's indoor temperature based on your schedule. In the winter, it is not necessary to keep an optimal heating temperature on weekdays when you're away or at work. Just input the time you typically leave and return, set the temperatures accordingly, and your home will be nice and cozy by the time you arrive, saving you energy and money.

**Results:** Save up to 10 percent on your heating and cooling costs per year.

*Energy Optimization rebate: \$20—any model.*

## 2. Open up and let the light in.

Window treatments are an unexpected energy saver. In these colder months, keep your blinds open during the day. This allows sunlight to enter your home and warm things up. After the sun sets, close your drapes to keep out the cold and hold onto some of the warmth generated during the day.

**Results:** Energy savings will gradually add up over time. Most importantly, your home will feel more comfortable.

## 3. Same features, less energy: Switch to energy-efficient products.

Shop the ENERGY STAR® label for guaranteed product performance and quality. ENERGY STAR products—from refrigerators to TVs and lightbulbs—are backed with third-party testing, have the same features as standard models, and use significantly less energy.

**Results:** Expected energy savings range from 15 to 75 percent per year.

*Energy Optimization rebates: \$10-\$50—choose from over 20 high-performing energy-saving products. Find details at michigan-energy.org.*

## 4. Dive in: Easy water-saving options.

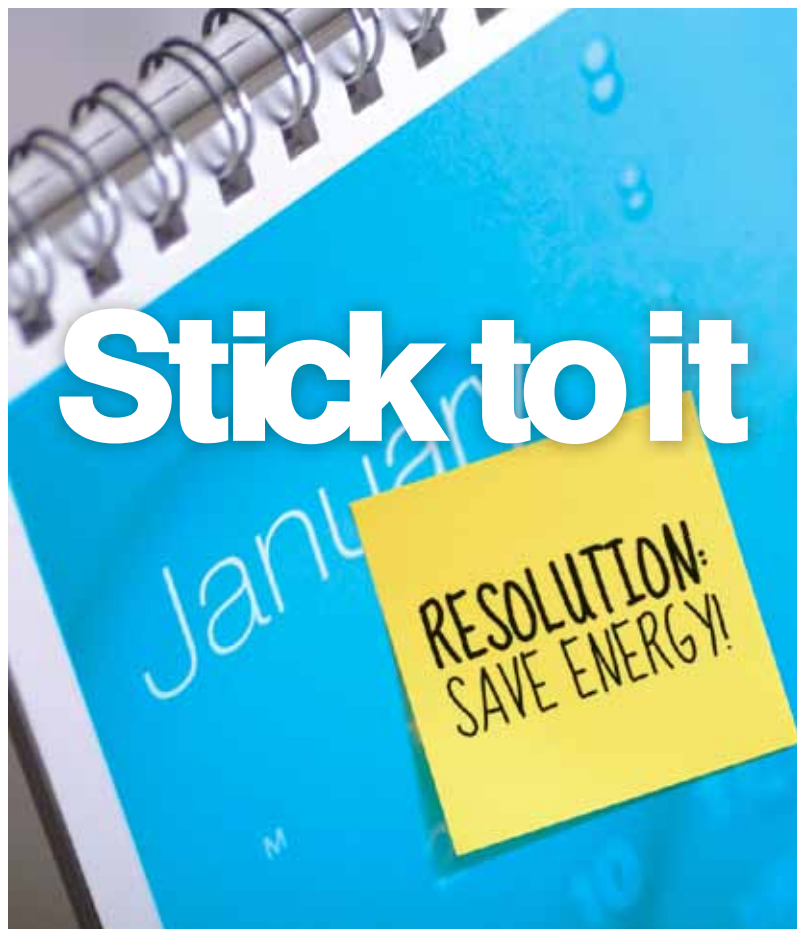
Whenever you use water, you also use energy to pump and heat the water. Making energy-saving adjustments can be simple: 1) Turn your water heater down to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. 2) Install water-saving retrofit devices, such as faucet aerators and low-flow showerheads. For recommended models that don't sacrifice water pressure, visit michigan-energy.org.

**Results:** Save energy, and thousands of gallons of water.

*Energy Optimization rebates: \$10 per low-flow faucet aerator.*

### Got the energy-saving bug?

View more energy-saving opportunities and current rebate offers at michigan-energy.org or call 877-296-4319 for details.



# Stick to it

## Resolve to save energy in 2014

Want a New Year's resolution that's fast and easy? Save more energy at home and at work. Why?

**It's painless, doesn't involve exercise, and still makes you feel good!** With the help of the

Energy Optimization program, it's easy to kick-start savings with rebates for energy-efficient lighting, appliances, furnaces, thermostats, and more.

**ENERGY TIP: Take advantage of the sun's heat.**

**Even in the winter, opening your drapes during the day can allow enough radiant heat into your home to allow you to lower your thermostat settings.**

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.

# Home Safety Calendar



Use this handy calendar to help keep your home safe all year long. Visit <http://virtualhome.esfi.org> to learn more about home electrical safety.

## JANUARY

- Test GFCIs & AFCIs
- Test smoke & CO alarms
- Inspect electrical/appliance cords for damage
- Check and replace furnace filters

## FEBRUARY

- Test GFCIs & AFCIs
- Test smoke & CO alarms
- Inspect electrical/appliance cords for damage
- Vacuum refrigerator coils

## MARCH

- Test GFCIs & AFCIs
- Test smoke & CO alarms
- Inspect electrical/appliance cords for damage
- Replace smoke/CO alarm batteries if not done in the past 12 months

## APRIL

- Test GFCIs & AFCIs
- Test smoke & CO alarms
- Inspect electrical/appliance cords for damage
- Check and replace furnace filters

## MAY

- Test GFCIs & AFCIs
- Test smoke & CO alarms
- Inspect electrical/appliance cords for damage
- Vacuum refrigerator coils
- Clean air conditioners or schedule annual inspection

## JUNE

- Test GFCIs & AFCIs
- Test smoke & CO alarms
- Inspect electrical/appliance cords for damage
- Dust light fixtures and lamps
- Schedule annual inspection of gas-powered dryer

## JULY

- Test GFCIs & AFCIs
- Test smoke & CO alarms
- Inspect electrical/appliance cords for damage
- Check and replace air conditioning filters

## AUGUST

- Test GFCIs & AFCIs
- Test smoke & CO alarms
- Inspect electrical/appliance cords for damage
- Vacuum refrigerator coils

## SEPTEMBER

- Test GFCIs & AFCIs
- Test smoke & CO alarms
- Inspect electrical/appliance cords for damage
- Schedule annual furnace cleaning and inspection

## OCTOBER

- Test GFCIs & AFCIs
- Test smoke & CO alarms
- Inspect electrical/appliance cords for damage
- Check and replace furnace filters

## NOVEMBER

- Test GFCIs & AFCIs
- Test smoke & CO alarms
- Inspect electrical/appliance cords for damage
- Vacuum refrigerator coils

## DECEMBER

- Test GFCIs & AFCIs
- Test smoke & CO alarms
- Inspect electrical/appliance cords for damage
- Dust light fixtures and lamps

# Embrace Change

Last summer, a dog walked into the Bay Pines Veterinary Clinic, near Harbor Springs. He must have been amazed when the staff knew him by name. "Are you Bandit?" they asked. "THE Bandit?" His Australian Shepherd tailless butt wagged with delight as he hobbled to meet their outstretched hands.

How did they know Bandit? It turns out that everyone in the clinic reads *Michigan Country Lines* and remembered him from a column I wrote over two years ago. That's the kind of community this magazine was meant to build when it began 33 years ago.

Then, every town of decent size had a printer who crafted posters, flyers, school programs, and the weekly newspaper (a local Facebook, Twitter and Craigslist rolled



Sadly, Bandit has been diagnosed with bone cancer, so this will be his last winter.

business because they couldn't adapt to the changes computers have brought to printing and publishing.

But, *Country Lines* is adapting and changing in ways that will pave the way for greater integration between print, online and social

into one). I wrote for those printers, before I became *Country Lines*' first editor.

Many of those printers, including the one in which *Country Lines* was born, no longer exist.

They went out of

media communications. These changes embrace all the ways we communicate today, and will help *Country Lines* build a stronger co-op community.

I'm proud to have been part of this magazine, and I loved working on it. It was never a job. We won a few awards along the way, and it became one of the best-read of similar publications across the country. Thank you for reading it and letting me know what you thought.

Even though this is my last *Country Lines* column, I intend to keep writing, but where I will publish is uncertain. Send me an email at [mike.f.buda@gmail.com](mailto:mike.f.buda@gmail.com) or "friend" me on Facebook if you want to know where to find my ramblings



Mike Buda is the creator and editor emeritus of *Michigan Country Lines*.



## Michigan Heritage Quilt Finds a Permanent Home

Created from 36 winning squares in a *Country Lines* quilt contest held in 2002, the Michigan Heritage Quilt depicts personal memories, traditions and images from across our beautiful state, and the Eastern Upper Peninsula History Consortium has become its permanent home.

The Consortium represents 22 E.U.P. museums, and while the Pickford Area Historical Museum will be the quilt's official caretaker, it will rotate for display among all member museums.

Many thanks to readers who sent in their ideas on where the quilt should live. For more information on the quilt or the E.U.P. Consortium, contact the Pickford Area Historical Society, 175 E. Main St., P.O. Box 572, Pickford, MI 49774, or call 906-647-1372.

Pictured above with the quilt are (L-R) Mary June, Consortium treasurer; Dianne Schmitigal, Pickford Area Historical Society president; and Susan James, vice president of the Chippewa County Historical Society.



### ◀ DO YOU KNOW WHERE THIS IS?

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

**We do not accept Mystery Photo guesses by phone!** Email [mysteryphoto@countrylines.com](mailto:mysteryphoto@countrylines.com); enter your guess at [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com); or send by mail to *Country Lines Mystery Photo*, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, 48864. Include your name, address, phone number and name of

your co-op. Only those sending complete information will be entered in the drawing. The winner will be announced in the March 2014 issue.

The Nov./Dec. 2013 contest winner is Bill Pioszak of St. Johns, who correctly identified the photo as the Cairn Monument on Cairn Hwy, north of Kewadin, marking the 45th parallel.



Nov/Dec photo

## LETTERS

### Raw Egg Recipes

I have been meaning to write and tell you that pasteurized raw eggs can be found in grocery dairy and egg sections. These are safer for recipes calling for raw eggs. Maybe you can pass that along to the lady who wrote about them in the July/Aug. 2013 issue.

I also want to comment on the diabetic recipes (Oct.). Thinking regarding diabetics and sugar has greatly changed. They are no longer limited to sugar-free substitutes for their sweetening choices. The focus is now on balancing diet with assorted proteins, fats and carbs, eating smaller portions throughout the day, and counting carbs.

As a nurse, I try to pass along information people can use. The danger of sugar substitutes is they can make diabetics think such foods are good for them or don't need to be limited or counted. Managing diabetes is a lifelong, critical process that's so much more than removing sugar from the diet.

— Laura Tomell, Tecumseh  
Midwest Energy

### Mystery Photo

The Nov-Dec mystery photo (at left) was built as a WPA project. It has a representative stone from each of Michigan's counties.

My sister-in-law's father (a stone mason in Traverse City) helped build it, so I make sure whenever any of his great-grandchildren are here that they stop to see it.

— Peg Gage, Free Soil  
Great Lakes Energy

If the only thing bigger than your propane bill is your propane tank...



## Switch to a WaterFurnace geothermal comfort system.

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