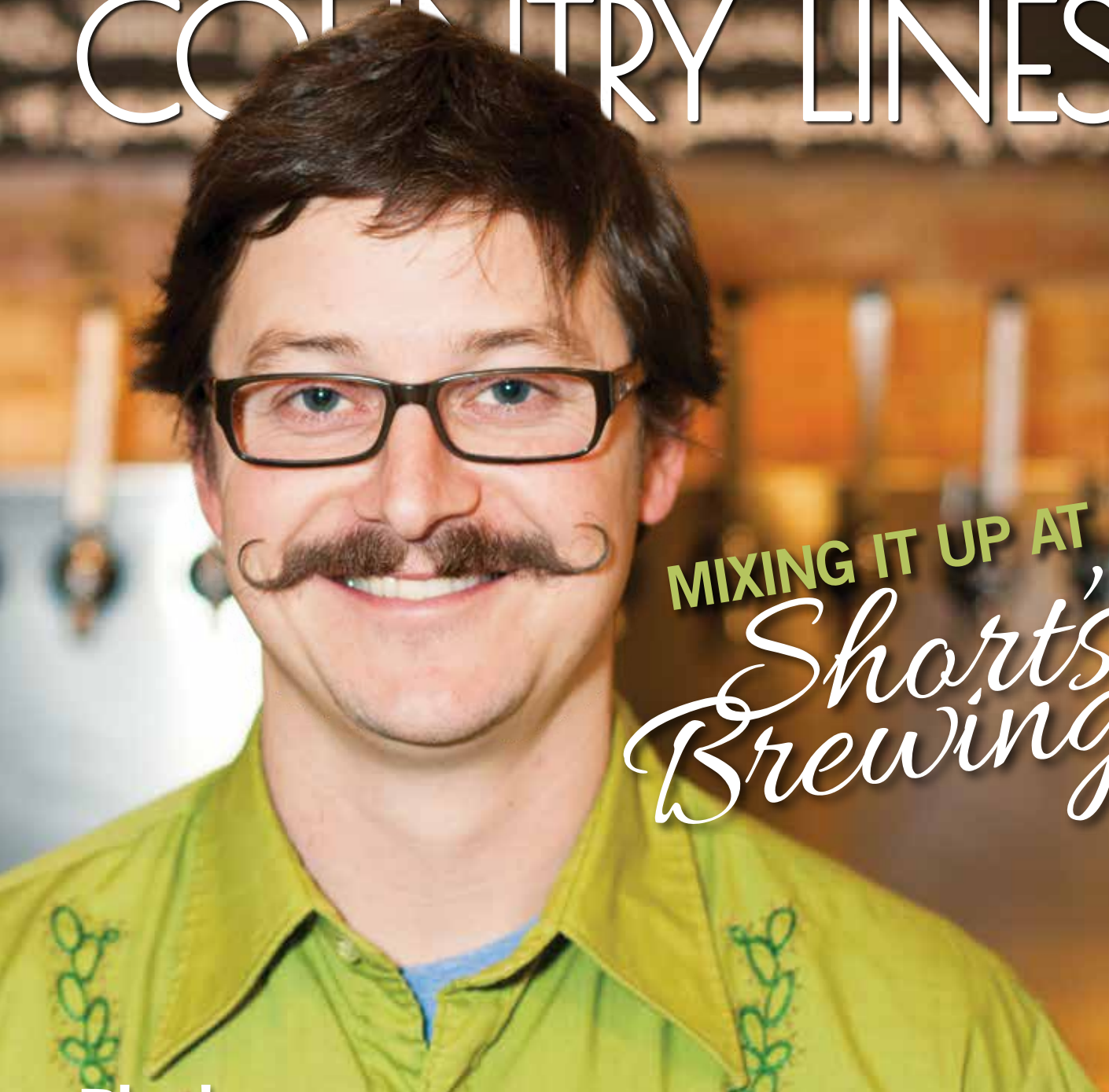


MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



MIXING IT UP AT
*Short's
Brewing*

Plus!

5 Co-op Members
Vote to Eliminate
Outage Credit

Board Member
Carl Morton Retires

8 Sunflower Power



WATERFURNACE HAS A SMARTER WAY TO LOWER YOUR BILLS THIS WINTER

You don't have to lower the thermostat to control your heating bills. WaterFurnace geothermal systems use the **clean, renewable energy** in your own backyard to **provide savings of up to 70% on heating, cooling and hot water.** And because WaterFurnace units don't use any fossil fuels or combustion, **the EPA calls it *the most environmentally friendly and cost effective way to condition our homes.**** Call your local WaterFurnace dealer to learn how WaterFurnace is good for the environment, your budget and the feeling in your toes.

YOUR LOCAL WATERFURNACE DEALERS

Bad Axe
B & D Htg
(989) 269-5280

Berrien Springs
WaterFurnace
Michiana
(269) 473-5667

Big Rapids
Stratz Htg & Clg
(231) 796-3717

Caro
AllTemp Comfort, Inc.
(866) 844-HEAT
4328

Carsonville
Certified Temperature
Innovations
(810) 300-7748

Clifford
Orton Refrig & Htg
(989) 761-7691

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

Grand Rapids
Total Comfort
Resource, LLC
(616) 406-3182

Hart/Ludington
Adams Htg & Clg
(231) 873-2665

Indian River
M & M Plbg & Htg
(231) 238-7201

Ionia
Home Experts
(800) 457-4554

Jackson
Comfort 1 Htg/
Lenawee Htg
(517) 764-1500

Kalkaska
Kalkaska Plbg & Htg
(231) 258-3588

Lapeer
Porter & Heckman
(800) 445-4328

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

Muskegon
Adams Htg & Clg
(231) 873-2665

Muskegon
Kiessel Geothermal
Htg & Clg
(231) 747-7509

Onaway
Standard Htg
(989) 733-8309

Palms
Lakeshore
Improvements
(989) 864-3833

Portland
ESI Htg & Clg
(517) 647-6906

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

Traverse City
D&W Mechanical
(231) 941-1215

UPPER PENINSULA
Manistique
Hoholik Enterprises
(906) 341-5065

Marquette
J Goods Plbg & Htg
(906) 235-5788

Marquette
Swick Plbg & Htg
(906) 228-3400

**Sault Ste Marie/
Kinross**
Great Lakes
Services Inc.
(906) 632-5543



visit us at waterfurnace.com



October 2014
Vol. 34, No. 9

Executive Editor
Casey Clark

Editor
Gail Knudtson

Publisher
Michigan Electric
Cooperative Association

Design and Layout
Ciesa Design

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.

Association officers are **Ken Swope**, Midwest Energy, chairman; **Robert Schallip**, Cloverland, 1st vice chairman; **Jon Zickert**, Cherryland, 2nd vice chairman; **Eric Baker**, Wolverine Power, secretary-treasurer; and **Tony Anderson**, Cherryland, past chairman. **Craig Borr** is president and CEO.

Unsolicited letters, photos and manuscripts are welcome. *Country Lines*, however, will not be responsible for their safe keeping or return.

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.



IN THIS ISSUE



6 HOME COOKING
Our Readers' Best Original Recipes
Christin McKamey & Our Readers



7 OUR ENERGY
When Do Appliance Upgrades Make Sense?
James Dullely



10 FEATURE
Mixing It Up At Short's Brewing Company
Howard Meyerson



13 SAFETY
Teaching Kids Electrical Safety



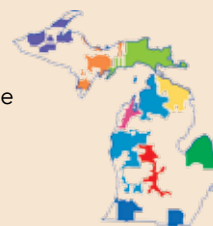
14 READERS' PAGE
Co-op Careers: There May Be A Job For You

ON THE COVER*

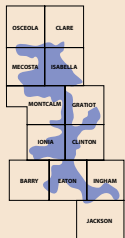
Joe Short is the founder of Short's Brewing Company, in Bellaire, MI, and likens brewing to being a chef. The beers he mixes up are creative in both their ingredients—from spruce tips to marshmallows—and names, like "Dr. Zeus" and "Stache Bender," whose artsy label depicts his mustachio.

Photo Courtesy—Michael Murphy IV Photography

**Some co-op editions have a different cover.*



Michigan's Electric
Cooperatives
countrylines.com



Tri-County Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Blanchard office:

3681 Costabella Avenue
Blanchard MI 49310
Open 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday-Friday

Portland office:

7973 E. Grand River Avenue
Portland, MI 48875
Open 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday-Friday

Electric bill/account questions:

517-647-7554 or 1-800-562-8232

Pay by phone, anytime:

1-877-999-3395

Service questions/outages:

517-647-7554 or 1-800-848-9333
(24 hours for emergency calls)

Tri-County Propane:

1-877-574-2740

High Speed Internet

1-800-668-8413

homeworks.org

E-mail: tricoenergy@homeworks.org

Board of Directors

District 1 — Philip Conklin

5130 W. Gresham Hwy., Charlotte, MI 48813
517-726-0127
pconklin@homeworks.org

District 2 — Wayne Swiler

Vice-Chairman
11750 Ainsworth Rd., Lake Odessa, MI 48849
616-374-3141
wswiler@homeworks.org

District 3 — Open seat (see p. 5)

District 4 — Kimber Hansen

6525 N. Wyman Rd., Edmore, MI 48829
989-506-5849
khansen@homeworks.org

District 5 — Cara Evans

Secretary-Treasurer
10180 Roosevelt Rd., Bannister, MI 48807
989-862-5590
cevens@homeworks.org

District 6 — Ed Oplinger

Chairman
10890 W. Weidman Road, Weidman, MI 48893
989-644-3079
eoplinger@homeworks.org

District 7 — Dean Floria

1163 Taft Rd., Remus, MI 49340
989-382-5230
dfloria@homeworks.org

Editor: Jayne Graham, CCC

Investing Today Develops Leaders for Tomorrow



Mark Kappler

General Manager

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the National Rural Electric Youth Tour.

Youth Tour was created 50 years ago by a rural electric co-op member from Texas—Lyndon B. Johnson. He thought bringing teen-aged student leaders to Washington, D.C., would be a great way to foster future leaders for cooperatives, and that's still our goal when we invest in our teenagers each year.

Here in Michigan, HomeWorks has been participating since the mid-1980s, and we have sent about 60 high school students from mid-

Michigan to the nation's capital over those years. Sometimes it's their first airplane flight, or their first significant trip away from their small town and family.

Tiffany Burton and Michaela Clark represented us this year, then came to the co-op's annual meeting to tell us about the experience. They were joined by 1995 Youth Tour alumnus Cary Dumas.

We had asked previous Youth Tour participants to update us on where they are now, and what impact the Youth Tour had on them, and we'll be sharing a few of those stories over the next few months in *Country Lines*.

They all remember the monuments and museums, but nearly everyone has said "meeting new people" and "seeing their world become bigger" made the biggest difference to them.

Investing in our future leaders is more important than ever. There are many challenges ahead for HomeWorks, and a committed, educated board of directors will be necessary to guide us through them, just as our past and current directors have brought your co-op to where it is today.

That same need exists in our businesses, communities, states, and even our nation. Where will we find those leaders?

Investing in teens now will help us develop the leaders we need tomorrow.

Thank-you for your investment in the future—for your continued support of programs like Youth Tour, our scholarships, and similar programs. ■

Mark Kappler
General Manager



Join the conversation at
facebook.com/HomeWorks.org



Members Vote to Eliminate Outage Credit

A record crowd of 178 delegates turned out for the 77th annual meeting of HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative, held Aug. 16 in Mt. Pleasant.

They voted unanimously to eliminate a customer outage service credit originally established by the Michigan Public Service Commission in 2004 as part of an electric service reliability program aimed at the state's two large investor-owned utilities.

The Michigan Legislature, with Public Act 167 of 2008, recognized the right of member-regulated cooperatives, such as HomeWorks, to opt-out of the service credit by vote of the members at the annual meeting.

General manager Mark Kappler said the service credit elimination was covered thoroughly for members in several venues: on the agenda of an Open Member Meeting in April, in notices published in *Country Lines* magazine before and after the meeting, and through discussion at all seven of the district membership meetings in May, as well as in his manager's column in the July-August issue of *Country Lines*.

He also pointed out that the co-op has not been asked to pay the service credit since its inception.

At its July meeting, the board of directors passed a resolution endorsing the member vote to opt-out. The resolution says, in part, "...in reviewing this standard, [we] believe that it does not accomplish its intended purpose at a member-owned electric cooperative because:

1. the focus of the Cooperative is member service, and there is no conflict between making a profit and providing outstanding service;
2. the Cooperative is operated on a not-for-profit basis, and any such credit paid would reduce margins available to be returned to members; and
3. should any member-owner believe their electric service is substandard, they have direct access to the Cooperative's management and any member of the board of directors. ■

Photo: Delegates, each representing 100 co-op members, raise their voting paddles in support of eliminating the MPSC's Customer Outage Service Credit.

Carl Morton Retires From Board After 36 Years



Carl Morton

Long-time director Carl Morton has retired from the HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative board, as of Sept. 1.

Morton has represented District 3 (most of Clinton County) since 1978, when he was first elected by neighbors as part of the "Eagle Uprising," at a time when the co-op's electric reliability was poor and its rates comparatively high. He then led board-driven efforts to improve the co-op's service and value, which continue to this day.

In 1985 he was elected board chairman, and in 1987 his fellow directors made him one of the co-op's two

representatives on the Wolverine Power Cooperative board, where he served 20 years, with eight as chairman. He also served on the board of the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association, and on the resolutions committee of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

To fill the remainder of Morton's term, which expires in 2015, a search and selection committee sent a letter to all members of the district listing the qualifications and seeking applications for an interim director. Serving on the committee, along with Morton, are board chairman Ed Oplinger, vice-chairman Wayne Swiler, and the district's three officers—chairman Jim Kus, vice-chairman Floyd Messer, and secretary Helen Goodknecht. ■

KITCHEN CREATIVITY

Looking to try something new? Co-op cooks share their custom creations.

Artichoke & Spinach Dip



2 8-oz. pkgs. light cream cheese
8 oz. pkg. light sour cream
1 c. parmesan cheese
2 small cans artichokes, diced
10 oz. pkg. frozen spinach
2 T. olive oil
1 T. marjoram flakes
½ T. red pepper flakes (dry)

Mix all ingredients and put into a 2 qt. crock pot on low. Stir often as it heats. Serve with tortilla chips.

Paula Miles, Lawton

Fiesta Lasagna (pictured)

1 lb. burger, browned	8 oz. sour cream
1 can corn	8 oz. cream cheese, softened
1 can black beans	1 pkg. lasagna noodles,
1 16-oz. can tomato sauce	tortillas or zucchini
1 can diced tomatoes	1 egg, lightly beaten
1 16-oz. can salsa	8 oz. shredded
1 small can sliced black olives	mozzarella cheese
1 envelope taco seasoning	16 oz. shredded cheddar cheese
3 T. fresh cilantro	Shredded lettuce

Brown burger. Add corn, black beans, tomatoes and tomato sauce, salsa, olives, taco seasoning and cilantro. Stir. In another bowl, mix together sour cream, egg, mozzarella, and cream cheese. Layer like lasagna in a 9"x13" pan, ending with cheddar cheese on top. Bake 30 minutes at 375°. Take out of oven, and add lettuce. Set for 10 minutes. Serve with sour cream.

Patsy Miller, Pickford

Golden Honey Glazed Chicken

3 ½ to 4 lbs. chicken, cut up 3 T. honey
½ c. Worcestershire®

Rinse chicken and pat dry. Place in a shallow pan, lined with foil. Mix Worcestershire® with honey. Baste chicken. Bake at 350° for 40 minutes, basting often.

Peggy Krentz, Alpena

Chocolate Mousse Cheesecake



1½ c. chocolate wafer crumbs, crushed
⅓ c. melted butter
¾ c. sugar, divided
16 oz. cream cheese
1 t. vanilla
3 eggs, unbeaten
2 squares dark baking chocolate, melted

Chocolate Mousse Topping:

½ c. butter	1 square dark baking chocolate, melted
8 oz. cream cheese, softened	1 c. heavy cream, whipped
¾ c. sugar	
1 t. vanilla	

Grease a 9" cheesecake pan. Mix crumbs with butter and ¼ c. sugar until crumbly; pack firmly onto bottom and up sides of pan. On low speed of mixer, beat cheese until smooth and fluffy. Gradually add vanilla, ½ c. sugar, eggs and melted chocolate, continuing to beat until creamy. Pour over crumb crust in pan. Bake at 325° for 45 minutes. Cool to room temperature. For mousse topping, cream butter and cheese together until fluffy; add sugar gradually, mixing well. Add melted chocolate and vanilla, and beat at high speed until fluffy. Fold in whipped cream; spread over chocolate cheesecake and chill at least 2 hours. Serves 10–12.

Janice Harvey, Charlevoix

SUBMIT YOUR RECIPE!

Thanks to all who send in recipes. Please send in your favorite **"Ethnic"** recipes by **Oct. 10** and your favorite **"Sandwiches"** recipes by **Nov. 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.

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)!

Find more of our readers' recipes at countrylines.com

When Do Appliance Upgrades Make Sense?

For major appliances, comparing the EnergyGuide label is the best way to find the cost of using them. Based on the purchase price, you can calculate which one provides the best return.

The most efficient one is not always the best buy from a payback standpoint, but there are other factors to consider. Some people are concerned about the environmental impact of appliances, so they are willing to spend extra for the most efficient models. Choosing an Energy Star® model is a good choice.

To do a proper payback analysis, you must determine the annual operating cost of using an appliance. You may have the old EnergyGuide label, or you may find it on the internet. But remember, these are only averages. If you are already energy conscious, your operating costs are likely on the low side, so savings from installing a new appliance will be lower than Guide figures.

The easiest way to calculate this cost is to download the “Save Energy, Save Money” app from TogetherWeSave.com, which offers several home appliance calculators to help compare the cost of different appliances sizes, styles and ages, and a “Home Tour” to learn about saving energy.

Another way is to find the wattage rating on the nameplate. Divide it by 1,000 and multiply the result by your \$/kwh electric rate to get the operating cost-per-hour. If the nameplate lists amperage, multiply it by 120 to figure the watts. For appliances with a thermostat, reduce the operating cost by about 50 percent.

The rate of efficiency improvements and meaningful new features in major appliances is slowing, so don't wait if you really need a new one. An exception is TVs, as their prices are constantly dropping, and features and quality improving.

In general though, keep older appliances about 10 years, or until they need expensive repairs. If you use them as seldom and as efficiently as possible, they will not cost a lot more to use than a newer one. Even for a refrigerator, which runs constantly, your usage habits can really influence electricity consumption.

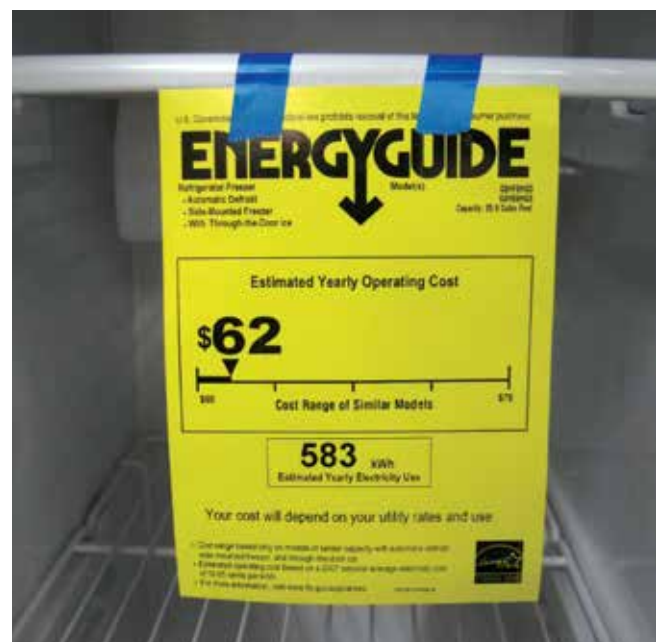
If you have a large family and do much laundry, that cost includes the water cost, and heating it. Upgrading your water heater, to perhaps a heat pump model, will reduce your dishwashing, bathing and laundry costs.

New front-loading washers are more energy efficient than top-loaders since they require less heated water (and less detergent). They also have a faster spin cycle, which extracts more water, so the dryer runs less.

For a new dishwasher, make sure it has a built-in water “pre-heater.” This allows you to set your water heater temperature lower without sacrificing the cleaning power of hotter water. Select a model with many cycles, so you can target the cycle length to each load's requirements.

Just like a house, a smaller refrigerator has less interior space to cool, so uses less electricity. Don't go to extremes on the small size, though. If you have to keep the door open to hunt for what you want, more energy is wasted than saved. Energy Star refrigerators use about one-half the energy of 10-year old models.

In new ranges, the energy efficiency of various models doesn't vary much. Convection ovens bake faster, so they use less electricity for some foods. Induction units lose less heat to the room air, so electricity use is somewhat less. The best way to save is to use the microwave or other small countertop appliances whenever possible. ■



Photos—James Dulley



Gift Seeds Grow Into Mighty Sunflowers

Whit Strimback, of Lake Odessa, shows off the sunflower plants (left) he and his wife, Donna, grew from the planter they received in mid-May at their district membership meeting. Whit, who is 5 feet 10 inches tall, says he measured the tallest plant on Aug. 15, and it was 10 feet 5 inches tall.

"Our great-grandchildren have shared the fun of planting and watching them grow each time they come over," Donna writes.

Help Members Find Unclaimed Checks

Some former HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative members were due to receive capital credits or inactive account refund checks, which remain uncashed.

We tried to deliver these checks by mail to the last address given to us by the person or business listed on this page. If

you know someone listed below, or have a current address at which we can contact them, please call HomeWorks at 517-647-7554 or 1-800-562-8232.

You can also email us at tricity@homeworks.org, or go online to homeworks.org and use the "Contact Us" link.

Eldon AbbeyThompsonville, MI
 Raymond G AmbColon, MI
 Orville E BaldwinWatervliet, MI
 Howard BanksColorado Springs, CO
 Morris E BaumanGrand Rapids, MI
 Lanny T BrownJackson, MI
 Wanda J BrownMount Pleasant, MI
 Craig L BurkVermontville, MI
 C & B Land Co.Charlotte, MI
 R Palmer CarrLansing, MI
 Robert CatlinKinard, FL
 Garold L ClouseDeland, FL
 George D ColeOxford, MI
 Ray Robert Culey IIMount Pleasant, MI
 Glenn EdwinsLake Odessa, MI
 Charles FahnestockCasco, MI
 Fred I Fisher SrMount Pleasant, MI
 Kris ForistOrleans, MI
 Laura R ForquerShepherd, MI
 Alice C FoxLansing, MI
 Bert W GibbonsBlanchard, MI
 Francis GuffeyStanton, MI
 George C HendersonMount Pleasant, MI
 Lewis A IrwinFarwell, MI
 William JankowskiThree Oaks, MI
 Margaret E JohnstonMount Pleasant, MI
 E Dale KnepperLansing, MI
 Lake Odessa Comm ChurchLake Odessa, MI
 Marvin J LawlessPortland, MI
 Delbert W MarekMorley, MI

Howard J Menzies Sr EstateBradenton, FL
 Rosalind MeyersRochester Hills, MI
 James W MuellerSaint Johns, MI
 Frances E Nims EstateSan Francisco, CA
 Bertha Nisonger EstateMount Pleasant, MI
 Kathleen OnstottIthaca, MI
 Grace ParrishCarson City, MI
 Dennis U PungWestphalia, MI
 Harold Rice EstateFerndale, MI
 Cedric W RootCharlotte, MI
 Gerald L RyalMulliken, MI
 Beverly E SchollaertVestaburg, MI
 Lloyd Sixberry EstateHastings, MI
 Barbara SmartBay City, MI
 Richard SmithHolt, MI
 Scott B StairCharlotte, MI
 Stephen L TiffanyHoward City, MI
 Kenneth M Warner EstateWyoming, MI
 Wayne A WheatonStanton, MI
 William J WilsonLansing, MI
 Steven L WingAlma, MI
 F Ileen WolfgangAfton, MI
 Helen F Young EstateLansing, MI
 Marvin E YoungMount Pleasant, MI



This list will be updated regularly and made available as a PDF file on our website, homeworks.org, or at our offices.



Garvey Centennial Farm Honored

Ann and Jim Garvey, of Charlotte, display the Michigan Centennial Farm sign for their family farm. The original 80 acres in Eaton Township were originally purchased in 1881 by brothers Patrick and James Garvey, great-great uncles of the current owners. Patrick, James and five other brothers and sisters emigrated to the U.S. in the early 1860s with their parents, Michael and Mary Garvey, leaving three sisters behind in Ireland. The current farm now includes 237 acres, raising corn and soybeans, and the Garveys are also working to improve the timber growing in wooded areas of the farm.

Youth Tour Alumni Look Back...

Nearly 60 mid-Michigan students have represented HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative on the National Rural Electric Youth Tour, held each June in Washington, D.C. We contacted quite a few of them to feature during our annual meeting in August, but their stories are too good to be told only once, so we'll feature a few of them over the coming months in *Country Lines*.



Eric Dumas, 1997

"Thank you for your continued support of the Youth Tour. It has truly made a difference in my life, and I know it will continue to do so for countless others. I'm currently living in St. Paul, MN, where my wife and I are both employed in full-time ministry with Saint

Paul's Outreach, Inc. We're a campus ministry organization that seeks to build strong Christian communities of faith on college campuses around the country.

I participated in the Youth Tour during the summer of 1997. My older brother, Cary, had participated the year before

and I was inspired by his testimony of the great experience he had on his first Youth Tour.

The Youth Tour itself was an amazing experience. I experienced for the first time the vastness of our society, government and history, and at the same time, the smallness of it all—that I had a place in this grand scheme and was called to play an important role—a role only I could fulfill. My eyes were opened to the plethora of opportunities set before me:

I owe to the Youth Tour, in large part, my desire and willingness to go to college out-of-state and far from home, to pursue bigger dreams than what I had originally anticipated. I made friendships that would last years, and had the blessing of a solid network of other like-minded young adults who would later help me discern my calling in life.

The lessons I learned and experiences I had stay with me for a lifetime!" ■



Students who are chosen for the Youth Tour experience first attend an in-state co-op leadership and learning event.



FEATURE

HOWARD MEYERSON

SHORT'S BREWING COMPANY

MIXING IT UP AT

*Short's
Brewing*



Joe Short thinks of beer brewing as a “noble profession”—one rooted in ancient history. The drink of royalty and the common man, beer and pubs have long brought people together.

“Beer has a fantastic history,” exclaims Short, the 35-year-old, mustachioed CEO and founder of Short’s Brewing Company, one of Michigan’s leading craft beer companies. “It’s a story that has been left out of most history books. Pubs have been meeting houses and where court has been held; their role has shaped our culture.”

Short’s Brewing now shapes the culture of Bellaire, a scenic northern village near Torch Lake. Its story begins with a 22-year-old Joe Short, a young man with a passion for brewing inventive beers and the courage to convert a 120-year-old hardware store into a brewhouse and restaurant, later building a production facility in Elk Rapids, all of which has made Bellaire a destination for craft beer lovers.

The company celebrated its 10th anniversary in April, and is the third largest craft beer producer in the state. Michigan’s beer sector generates over 64,000 jobs, ranking the state 10th nationally in related jobs, notes the National Beer Wholesalers Association and the Beer Institute. Beer distribution alone generates 5,000 jobs and \$1.9 billion in economic activity.

“Bells and Founders are number one and two in Michigan for beer sales, but they distribute to other states,” notes Short, who lives in Elk Rapids with his wife, Leah, and their two young sons. “We produced 193 barrels our first year, 23,000 barrels in 2013, and we will do 34,000 to 38,000 barrels this year.”

Short’s beers are known for unusual ingredients, from spruce tips to marshmallows, coffee and chocolate, or fruits and spices. It is distributed only in Michigan, an approach that allows Short and his staff to be creative and develop 30 to 40 different beers each year. National distribution, he says, would require narrowing the selection, a distasteful option for the Kalkaska County native who likens brewing to being a chef.

“It’s a form of cooking with limitless creative potential,” offers Short, who brewed his first batch at 19 years old



while living at his mother’s rural Rapid City home, where he grew up. It was an unsuccessful experiment, but it would lead him to learn more.

“That first batch was really bad,” Short says. “It was brown ale. But, I became a proficient home brewer and brewed a lot of beer while in college.”

Short got his first professional job brewing beer at age 21, while working at the former Traverse Brewing Company in Elk Rapids. That led to brewing for other Michigan companies and eventually back to the region where he grew up and longed to settle.

“I realized once I went to school (at Western Michigan University) that I wasn’t a city type. I need the woods and water, and Torch Lake is one of the most beautiful places you can live [near],” Short says.

His company makes over 200 beers (visit shortsbrewing.com). Most have wacky, clever names like Dirty Sturks, a double imperial stout, and Dr. Zeus, an India pale ale. Bellaire Brown is named for its home town. The brewery offers two “stache” beers as well, Hopstache and Stache Bender—a double-strength recipe. Both have bold citrus flavors and artsy labels depicting Short’s trademark mustache.

“The names for our beers come from all the people in the company,” Short explains. “Some refer to music or food or are experience-related. ‘Night Wheeler’ (a dark black lager) comes from when we go wakeboarding at midnight when the moon is out.

“We’re the Willy Wonka of the beer world. If you can dream it, there is a good chance we can make it.” ■

Your Board in Action

Meeting at Portland, Aug. 25, your board of directors:

- Re-appointed Jerry Supina, District 2; Lisa Johnson, District 4; Peggy Pirhonen, District 5; and Dick Donley, District 6; to three-year terms (expiring Sept. 30, 2017) on the Tri-County Electric People Fund Board of Directors.
- Reviewed the annual meeting, held Aug. 16 with a record of 178 delegates registered and nearly 400 total attendees. Member comments about the location, speakers, entertainment and meal were very positive.
- Named Cara Evans as secretary-treasurer, and Kimber Hansen to the board's audit committee.
- Revised the draft 2015 calendar for board meetings and other events, setting the January meeting forward one week and canceling the February meeting.
- Discussed the July–August safety report, listing employee training and several public and employee incidents.
- Read and approved the updated “Board Policy 207—Workplace Violence,” and “Board Policy 208—Sexual and Other Harassment.”
- Learned there were 133 new member applications in July. ■

Time Set Aside for Members to Comment Before Board Meetings

The first 15 minutes of every board meeting is available for members who wish to address the board of directors on any subject. Upcoming meetings are set for Oct. 27 at Blanchard, and Nov. 24 at Portland. Members who need directions to either office or wish to have items considered on the board agenda should call 517-647-7554.



Think LED bulbs are too expensive?

It pays to check again. In recent months the price of LED bulbs has decreased 50%. And with automatic, in-store **Energy Optimization rebates**, you'll save even more. For a list of participating LED retailers visit michigan-energy.org. Cash in today!

ENERGY TIP: ENERGY STAR® LED bulbs use 90% less energy than incandescents and last 20 times longer.

ONLINE: 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.

Teach Kids Well About Electrical Safety

We live surrounded by electricity, but forget how dangerous it can be. Many related fires, injuries and electrocutions can be prevented when we practice electrical safety, especially with kids.

Throughout the year, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric lineworkers use a portable display to teach school children about electrical safety, but as your child's most important teacher, you can help reinforce these lessons.

At an early age, teach your kids about the physical dangers of electrical components and how to handle electrical plugs, outlets, switches and other devices. Talking to them about electricity should include fun activities and basic facts—what electricity is, the need to respect it, and how to use it efficiently as they study, work and play.

Getting kids interested in these lessons isn't easy, however what they learn today can be a lifesaver if they encounter potential hazards, like downed power lines, play hide-and-seek behind metal electrical boxes, or try to climb a utility pole.

Some of the best teachable moments can occur around your home. Show kids how plugs work, and let them know that even if they are curious about the slits of an electrical outlet, *nothing* else should be placed inside. Each year about 2,400 kids go to the emergency room

with injuries caused by inserting paper clips, pens, screws, nails, forks, hair pins, coins and more, into electrical outlets. That's about seven kids daily who are injured from electric shock or burns.

Our reliance on gadgets has also left families at risk when they overcrowd outlets, use frayed wires, place devices near liquids, or leave electronics on for long periods. Some of the same tips can protect both kids and adults, so we should all set good examples for kids.

Supplement at-home lessons with resources, too. The Electrical Safety Foundational International (esfi.org) and Touchstone Energy (click "Kids Energy Zone" at touchstoneenergy.com) are among many national groups offering free kits, videos and interactive online tools that make practicing electrical safety fun. As your kids grow, keep teaching them about the power of electricity and how to use it safely. ■



Meeting Aug. 13, the Tri-County Electric People Fund board made 17 grants totaling \$22,945.51, including:

- \$2,500 – EightCAP Greenville Optimist Camp, for camp expenses for children;
- \$480 – First Baptist Church in Charlotte, for their Tide Me Over project (weekend food for school children);
- \$1,000 – Clinton County Historical Paine-Gillam-Scott Museum in St. Johns, for building maintenance;
- \$2,000 – St. Mary's SVDP in Charlotte, for rent and utility assistance;
- \$500 – Hope's Pantry in Stanton, for food pantry items;
- \$1,000 – Richland Township Library in Vestaburg, to purchase library books;
- \$2,500 – Habitat for Humanity of Clinton County, for office equipment;
- \$2,500 – Lakeview Ministerial Association, for food pantry items;
- \$2,000 – Faith United Methodist Church in Edmore, toward an emergency generator;
- \$1,200 – Project Starburst in Big Rapids, for food pantry items;
- \$740 – Pregnancy Services of Ionia County, to provide infant carseats;
- \$280 – Ashley Rescue, for emergency lights for the rehab unit;
- \$309 – Mecosta County family to pay dental bills;
- \$2,155.51 – Mecosta County family for housing expenses;
- \$681 – Ingham County family for medical expenses;
- \$2,500 – Mecosta County family for housing expenses; and
- \$600 – Ionia County family for medical bills. ■

Tri-County Electric People Fund How-Tos

How You Can Help Tri-County customers can opt in or out of the voluntary Operation Round Up program at any time. Just enclose a note with your bill payment, call us at 1-800-562-8232, or email tricoenergy@homeworks.org.

How to Apply for a People Fund Grant Write us at 7973 E. Grand River Avenue, Portland, MI 48875. We'll send you an application form, grant guidelines, and other helpful information. You'll also find information and application forms on our website at homeworks.org

Note: Applications must be received by Nov. 10 for the November meeting, and by Dec. 8 for the December meeting.

Jobs Are Opening in the ELECTRIC CO-OP NETWORK

October is **National Cooperative Month**, and this year, *Michigan Country Lines* is showcasing careers at electric co-ops. Read on to learn how these jobs vary and touch every aspect of business—and how you can find yourself in one of them.

The men and women who climb poles to work on power lines are the most visible electric utility employees, but it takes many others to keep the power flowing. From accounting to communications, engineering, human resources, and customer/member service, job opportunities are numerous and will increase as Baby Boomers retire in waves.

By 2017, 55 percent of electric co-op CEOs will be eligible for retirement, and that jumps to 75 percent in 10 years. Workers in other categories are also leaving in the next five years: 37 percent—senior managers, 31 percent—supervisors, 26 percent—system operations staff, 24 percent—engineers, 16 percent—skilled trades (lineworkers, equipment operators), 14 percent—information technology (IT).

This means new positions may be opening at a co-op near you. Co-ops are generally considered great places to work because people are valued over profits. Electric co-ops, specifically, are nonprofit businesses, which means they have to generate money in order to operate and meet financial lending requirements, but any extra revenue above expenses is returned to their member-owners as patronage “capital credits.”

It's common for employees to stay with a co-op (and in this industry) for 30 or 40 years because of its stability and good benefit offerings. Co-op employees often wear many hats within a single job description, and this gives them a real opportunity to build long-lasting relationships within the co-op and its network.

Preparing for the Tide to Turn

Retirements have already begun in earnest, and electric co-ops are planning to ensure that new employees are equipped to offer top-notch service. Decades of knowledge can't be replaced, but training provides a solid foundation.

To that end, training programs for lineworkers and other employees sponsored by or partnered with electric co-ops have popped up nationwide. In Michigan, there are at least six line technician programs. This means workers get proper training and start their new careers on solid footing, and co-ops get employees with a head start. And, it's one more venue for technical job training. The Michigan Electric Cooperative Association also offers in-state training for electric co-op employees.



Electric Cooperative Careers
There's a place for you in the co-op network.

It's also common to see new employees who spent time interning at their local electric co-op.

Electric Co-ops By the Numbers

The unique aspect about U.S. electric co-ops is that each one is an independent business, but they're all connected to a vast network serving 42 million people in 47 states. They serve 19 million businesses, homes, schools, churches, farms and other establishments in 2,500 of America's 3,141 counties. This means 900 electric co-ops nationwide employ 70,000 workers.

Much more goes on at these co-ops than just keeping the system running. Member services employees take phone calls and bill payments, and offer programs and services, such as home energy audits and scholarships for high school grads. Staking technicians and engineers plot where new power lines will be built, while purchasing employees keep equipment inventory and negotiate contracts. And, IT professionals are increasingly part of the landscape, as more digital technologies are integrated.

How to Find Co-op Jobs

Interested in joining the co-op family? National electric co-op career opportunities are available at TouchstoneEnergy.jobs, at cooperative.com, or by visiting Michigan co-op websites at countrylines.com and clicking on “Your Co-op” and choosing a co-op's name. ■

Manufacturer's Authorized Rebate

up to

\$5000 off*

your new American Metal Roof

Praying for a mild winter?

Insure lower energy costs for your CHURCH or home with an American Metal Roof

- Permanent/Lifetime Guarantee
- Many colors/styles to choose from
- Year round statewide installation
- Add beauty & value



Visit our showrooms:

FLINT

• 6140 Taylor Dr.

CHARLOTTE

• 1875 Lansing Rd.

*Order in the month of October and receive a Manufacturer's Authorized Rebate of up to \$5000 off your new American Metal Roof.

Ask about our
Do-It-Yourself
SEMINARS



Call today! 844.638.2576

844.METAL.ROOFS



facebook.com/AMRmichigan

Financing Available

AmericanMetalRoofs.com



**Tri-County Electric
Cooperative**

Worried about
rising propane
prices
nibbling away
at your
budget



**Relax...
we can help.**



- Guaranteed capped price for ALL customers (no charge to participate)
- NO add-on charges:
 - NO delivery fees
 - NO hazmat fees
 - NO fuel surcharges
 - NO compliance fees
- NO worries with Auto-fill (service available to qualified customers)

**Call today!
1-877-574-2740**



**Tri-County
Propane**