

# MICHIGAN COUNTY LINES



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**4** Tree Clearing Means  
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**8** PIE&G Partners With  
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Charity Donation

**12** PIE&G Special Board  
Meeting March 24



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

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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 OUR ENERGY**  
New Alpine Natural Gas Plant  
Touch-Control Kitchen Faucets  
*James Dulley*



**7 HOME COOKING**  
Soup Recipes For The Soul  
*Christin McKamey & Our Readers*



**10 FEATURE**  
Basketball Madness: U.P. Companies Make Most Basketball Flooring  
*Steve Grinczel*



**13 SAFETY**  
Stay Clear!  
A Downed Power Line May Not Be A Dead Line



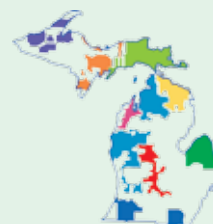
**14 READERS' PAGE**  
Jack's Journal: Thumbs Up  
Call For ArtPrize® Entrants

## ON THE COVER\*

Upper Peninsula native Tom Izzo coaches the MSU Spartans basketball team. The flooring they—and most teams nationwide—play on is made in the U.P.

Photo—Matthew Mitchell

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



Michigan's Electric  
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## PRESIDENT & CEO

### Brian J. Burns

bburns@pieg.com

# Why Your Co-op Clears Vegetation

**Y**our co-op leadership team recognizes that reliable electricity is not just a luxury, it's an expectation. That's why your electric co-op considers its prime objective to be providing you with a reliable and safe electric distribution system. However, many members may not be aware that trees can be a major obstacle to good electric service. To improve your service experience, Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op (PIE&G) has an aggressive, proactive overhead line clearance program that's proven to significantly reduce outage hours related to tree interference with our distribution system.

## What We Do and Why

PIE&G's line clearance standard is to obtain and maintain a ground-to-sky clearance of 15 -20 feet, free from all obstructions, on each side of the power line. Where our facilities cross private property, an easement gives us the right to use that property to maintain our right-of-way. An easement can be written and recorded, meaning it is signed and on file at the county Register of Deeds office where the service is located. An easement may also be unwritten or "prescriptive", where the land has been used for utility purposes in a continuous and open manner for the statutory period of 15 years under Michigan law.

PIE&G's line clearing program (also called "Vegetation Management"), consists of two approaches: mechanical clearing and herbicide application.

## 2015 Mechanical Clearing Plan

Mechanical clearing is scheduled to begin between February and December. PIE&G's licensed contractors will be cutting approximately 287 miles of overhead line at various locations throughout our nine county service territory. Members who may be in proximity to areas designated for mechanical clearing will be notified by mail prior to the onset of work in that area. PIE&G will determine if there are trees in



Before and after shots of a line circuit. A newly cleared right-of-way can look extreme at first, but as the growth returns the landscape regains its natural beauty.



The ground-to-sky approach to line clearance helps to make sure that trees don't form a canopy over the lines.

your maintained lawn area that should be trimmed or cut. A representative from one of our contracted crews will attempt to contact you in person before the work is started.

## 2015 Herbicide Application

The schedule for herbicide application is set to occur between April and October. PIE&G has hired professional, licensed contractors to treat approximately 365 miles of line throughout its service territory with state-approved herbicide. PIE&G will notify members whose service is near the designated areas by mail prior to the onset of work. Herbicide is not applied to mowed lawn areas. Herbicide effectively controls tall-growing trees and bushes while promoting low-growing plants such as grasses, wildflowers and shrubs that are beneficial to wildlife. It offers long-term results in a more cost effective way, and is endorsed by a number of environmental,

forestry and wildlife providers as offering benefits to many wildlife species.

## Jobsite Cleanup

Our contract crews dispose of trimmed branches and limbs in the most economic and practical manner possible. It is customary during regular line clearing activity that crews will remove branches and limbs within maintained or landscaped areas, and leave the wood for use by the property owner. In unmaintained areas, crews will leave wood, branches and limbs for use by the property owner to decompose naturally. PIE&G does not remove stumps after tree removal. During emergency power restoration activities, crews clear trees off and away from our lines in order to make repairs. PIE&G does not return to remove wood, branches and limbs that were removed during outage restoration efforts.

## Our Commitment to Safety

Safety is a top priority for PIE&G. Although Mother Nature provides an amazing setting for our enjoyment of outdoor activities, it's best to keep your activities away from overhead power lines. If you see a downed power line due to a fallen tree or branch, stay away and immediately call PIE&G to report it. Never attempt to remove branches or trim trees that are near power lines to avoid contact. Any tree in close proximity to a power line can present a safety hazard.

## Service Line Trimming

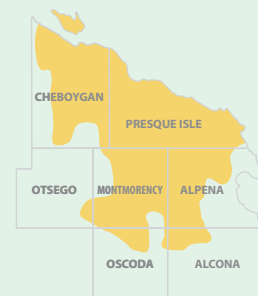
PIE&G will trim along the service line running from the transformer to your home when a tree is in contact with the power line. We do not remove trees located near service lines. If you plan to have a tree removed from your property, contact us several days in advance so we can schedule a crew to visit, de-energize and drop the line so you can have the tree safely removed. PIE&G will need at least two days prior notice.

## Plan Ahead

Trees and power lines do not mix, so careful planning is important before you begin any landscape plan or outdoor project. Trees grow quickly so the seedling you plant today may well reach heights exceeding 30-50 feet in a few years. Avoid planting trees beneath overhead utility lines or near your service line. Look around and note what's overhead, on the ground, and underground before beginning any outdoor work project. ■

## For More Information

For more information about PIE&G's line clearance procedures, contact our Member Services Department at 1-800-423-6634.



## Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op

**19831 M-68 Hwy.,  
P.O. Box 308  
Onaway, 49765**

Business Office & Billing:  
**989-733-8515**  
Toll-free:  
**800-423-6634**

Gas Emergency Toll-Free:  
**800-655-8565**

**pieg.com**

Most PIE&G natural gas rates and charges are not regulated by the Michigan Public Service Commission.

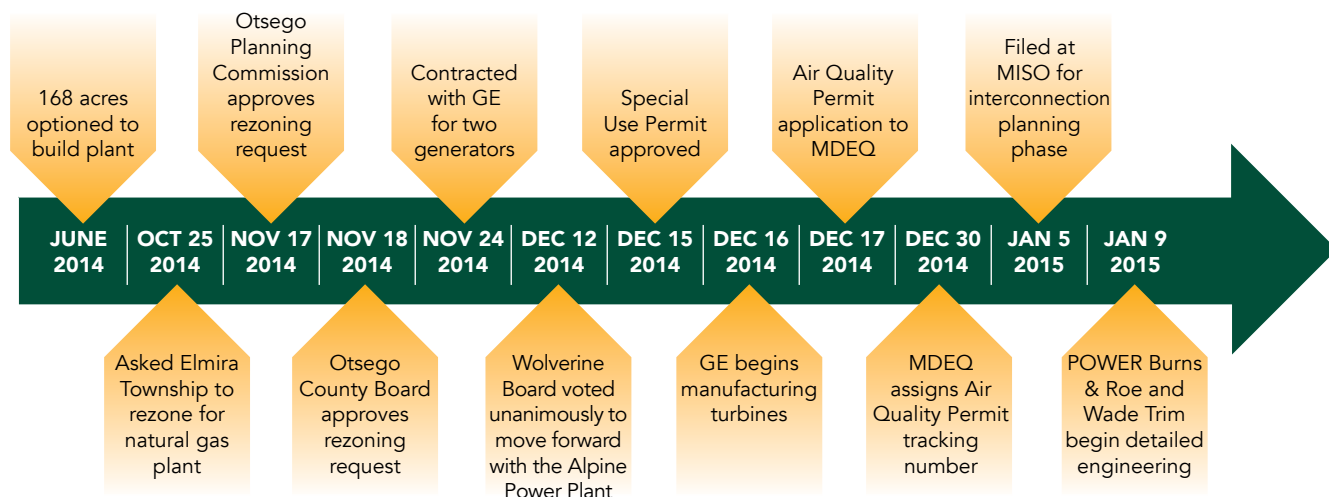
Your Touchstone Energy<sup>®</sup>  
Cooperative 

# Your Board In Action

## At their recent meetings, the PIE&G Board of Directors:

- Authorized quarterly write-offs for uncollectible debt in the amount of \$19,996.98.
- Reviewed report by CFO Sobeck regarding management of the co-op's long-term debt portfolio pursuant to Board Policy #201 – Debt Portfolio Management.
- Authorized management to borrow up to \$2 million of long-term debt in the year 2015.
- Amended Board Policy #204 – Financial Policy – to reflect stated goal of 40 percent member equity contribution toward new electric service requests less than 1,000 feet.
- Accepted team reports of CFO Sobeck, manager of operations and engineering Szymoniak, manager of information systems Kieliszewski and CEO Burns.
- Set its next member regulation meeting for March 24, 2015, at 9 a.m. at PIE&G headquarters in Onaway. ■

## Wolverine Power Moves Forward With Natural Gas Plant



**W**olverine Power Supply Cooperative Inc., of Cadillac, is moving forward with a new 432 megawatt natural gas-fueled electric power plant, located in Elmira Township, near Gaylord. The Alpine Power Plant will use natural gas to generate electricity during times of peak demand and to compliment the ever-increasing amount of intermittent renewable energy in our state, like wind and solar. The Alpine Power Plant is scheduled to be completed by Spring 2016.

“The members of the planning commissions and boards of Elmira Township and Otsego County have voted unanimously to approve our applications, sending the message that this project is widely supported,” said Ken Bradstreet, project spokesman. Visit [alpinecleanenergy.com](http://alpinecleanenergy.com) to learn more and keep updated on this project. ■

## New Touch-Control Faucets Save Water, Energy

**T**he right kitchen faucet can have a strong impact on your water and energy savings.

Today, one-handle faucets are common, as their size and shape impact water use, but the newest, most efficient models can be controlled by the wave or touch of a hand. By not adjusting a handle, water is not wasted by readjusting the temperature. This provides a lot of savings—especially when washing dishes by hand.

A standard faucet uses more water and energy when washing dishes by hand than running a properly-loaded, efficient dishwasher. With a touch-control faucet, hand-washing dishes can be more efficient than a dishwasher. Also, fewer germs are spread because the faucet is touched less often with dirty hands, and the attractive finish lasts longer.

There are two “no-hands” models. One senses touch from your body (hand, forearm, elbow). For example, when rinsing dishes, you can hold several plates in each hand and tap anywhere on the faucet with your arm to control the water flow.

The other model has a sensor on top (a hand-wave controls it), and another on the faucet neck that triggers when your hands are in hand-washing position.

Tall faucet spouts with a pull-down sprayer are also efficient. Depending on under-cabinet clearance, pick the

tallest that fits, as the height is handy when rinsing a large pot. Choosing one with a pause button also lets you temporarily stop the flow without waving or touching the fixture.

Whichever faucet you have, never ignore a dripping one, since even a slow leak increases energy costs. After heating and cooling, heating water is the greatest energy user, but cold water also uses a lot of energy to purify, pump and treat.

Companies offering touch-control faucets include: American Standard, 800-442-1902, [americanstandard-us.com](http://americanstandard-us.com); Delta Faucet, 800-345-3358, [deltafaucet.com](http://deltafaucet.com); Kohler, 800-456-4537, [kohler.com](http://kohler.com); Moen, 800-289-6636, [moen.com](http://moen.com); and Pfister, 800-732-8238, [pfisterfaucets.com](http://pfisterfaucets.com). ■



Photo—Moen

—James Dulley



## SOUP FOR THE SOUL

In a slow cooker or on the stove, these soups are the ultimate in comfort food.

### Easy Taco Soup (pictured)

1½-2 lbs. ground beef  
1 large onion, diced  
2 15.5-oz. cans pink or red kidney beans  
15.5-oz. can pinto or chili beans  
15.5-oz. can shoe peg corn (or whole kernel corn)  
14.5-oz. can diced tomatoes and green chilies  
2 14.5-oz. cans, any brand, Mexican-style tomatoes  
4.5-oz. can diced green chilies  
4.6-oz. can black olives, drained and sliced  
1¼-oz. pkg. taco seasoning mix  
1-oz. pkg. ranch salad dressing mix

#### For Garnish:

tortilla chips  
sour cream  
grated cheese

chopped green onions  
sliced black olives

Brown the ground beef with onions. Drain excess fat, then transfer to large crock pot or large pot on stove. Add beans, corn, tomatoes, olives, chilies, taco seasoning and ranch dressing mix. You may need to add ½ c. of water for desired consistency. In the crockpot, cook on low for 6 hours. On the stovetop, simmer on low about 1 hour. Break the tortilla chips and put in bottom of bowls and cover with soup. Top with your choice of garnishes.

Melody Brown, Big Bay

### Butternut Cheesy Bacon Chowder—Gluten Free

4 c. chicken broth  
1 butternut squash, roughly 3–4 c.  
1 c. diced onion  
1 c. diced celery  
1 ½ t. salt  
¼ t. black pepper  
2 c. bacon or diced ham, cooked  
2 c. shredded sharp cheddar  
1 ½ c. heavy whipping cream  
fresh chives, optional

Combine first six ingredients and cook until vegetables are tender. While vegetables are cooking, fry your meat of choice and drain. Using a blender, purée the vegetables and return them to the pot (an immersion blender works best). Add meat, cheese and heavy cream to the cooked vegetables. Heat through for about 5 minutes, but do not boil. Garnish with fresh chives, if desired.

Anna Kinsey, LeRoy

### Mushroom Barley Soup

1½ lbs. cubed beef  
1 T. vegetable oil  
2 c. finely chopped onion  
1 c. diced carrots  
½ c. diced celery  
4-oz. can mushrooms, undrained  
1 garlic clove, minced  
14.5-oz. can beef broth  
14.5-oz. can chicken broth  
2 c. water  
½ c. pearl barley  
1 t. salt  
½ t. pepper  
3 T. chopped parsley, for garnish



In a soup pot, brown meat in oil. Remove meat with a slotted spoon and set aside. Sauté onion, carrot and celery in drippings until tender, about 5 minutes. Add meat back into pan along with all other ingredients; bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 1½ to 2 hours or until barley and meat are tender. Stir in parsley.

Geraldine Rutkowski, Ubly

### SUBMIT YOUR RECIPE!

Thanks to all who send in recipes. Please send in your favorite **"Camping"** recipes by **April 1** and your favorite **"Burgers/All American"** by **May 1**.

**Enter your recipe online** at [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) or send to (handprinted or typed on one side, please): Country Lines Recipes, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, MI 48864. Please note the co-op from which you receive your electric service.

Contributors whose recipes we print in 2015 will be entered in a drawing and Country Lines will pay the winner's January 2016 electric bill (up to \$200)!

Visit [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) for more reader recipes!

Photos—831 Creative



## Fuel Mix Report

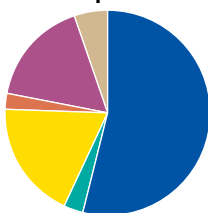
The fuel mix characteristics of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op as required by Public Act 141 of 2000 for the 12-month period ended 12/31/14.

### COMPARISON OF FUEL SOURCES USED

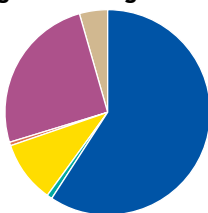
Regional average fuel mix used		
Your co-op's fuel mix		
FUEL SOURCE		
Coal	53.6%	60.4%
Oil	3.5%	0.7%
Gas	18.4%	8.9%
Hydroelectric	3.2%	0.5%
Nuclear	16.0%	24.6%
Renewable Fuels	5.3%	4.9%
Biofuel	0.5%	0.7%
Biomass	0.1%	0.4%
Solar	0.0%	0.1%
Solid Waste Incineration	0.0%	0.0%
Wind	4.6%	3.2%
Wood	0.1%	0.5%

NOTE: Biomass above excludes wood; solid waste incineration includes landfill gas, and wind includes a long-term renewable purchase power contract in Wolverine's mix.

Your Co-op's Fuel Mix



Regional Average Fuel Mix



### EMISSIONS AND WASTE COMPARISON

TYPE OF EMISSION/WASTE	lbs/MWh	
	Your Co-op	Regional Average*
Sulfur Dioxide	4.2	7.6
Carbon Dioxide	1,470	2,170
Oxides of Nitrogen	1.5	2.0
High-level Nuclear Waste	0.0054	0.0083

\*Regional average information was obtained from MPSC website and is for the twelve-month period ending 12/31/14.

Presque Isle Electric & Gas purchases 100% of its electricity from Wolverine Power Cooperative, which provided this fuel mix and environmental data.

## PIE&G and CoBank Partner in \$10,000 Grant to Charity

The Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op board of directors recently approved participation in CoBank's "Sharing Success" program, a \$3 million charitable fund designed to benefit cooperatives and the charitable groups they support throughout rural America. Under the program, CoBank matches contributions by its cooperative customers to the non-profit organizations of their choice on a dollar-for-dollar basis up to \$5,000.

CoBank requires that the charitable organization is established as a non-profit under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Service code.

At the direction of the board, CEO Brian Burns determined which local organizations provided services directly to PIE&G members, while meeting CoBank's program requirements. In December 2014, the Montmorency County Commission on Aging (MCCOA) was chosen to receive a \$5000 contribution from PIE&G, and was recommended to CoBank for matching funds from the 2014 Sharing Success program. CoBank approved the matching \$5,000 contribution.

"Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op values our partnership with the communities we serve. Our corporate mission includes improving the quality of life for our members through the use of a cooperative business model. This contribution to the Montmorency County Council on Aging is a perfect example of how PIE&G fulfills its mission," Burns said. "In this case, we've been able to leverage our relationship with a business partner from another part of the country to increase the power of our local giving to provide services our members desperately need. I'm grateful for that."

According to MCCOA's Executive Director Rogers, the funding will be used to improve the medical transportation program for seniors in Montmorency County. Currently, volunteers donate their time but are reimbursed by the client for the cost of gasoline. The combined grant will allow MCCOA to expand the program to more seniors who are unable to afford the fuel reimbursement. ■



## Attention Graduating Seniors!

The Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op Communities First Fund has been awarding scholarships to graduating high school seniors since 1999. The scholarship program has been expanded to include **ALL** accredited colleges or universities in Michigan. The award is \$1,000 and is payable upon successful completion of the first term.

Eligibility requirements and applications are available online at [pieg.com](http://pieg.com) or by calling 1-800-423-6634. Completed applications with supporting documentation are **due by the last business day of March 2015**. Scholarships will be awarded by June 1.



**STATE OF MICHIGAN**  
**BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**  
**NOTICE OF HEARING FOR THE MICHIGAN REGULATED GAS DIVISION**  
**CUSTOMERS OF PRESQUE ISLE ELECTRIC & GAS CO-OP CASE NO. U-17695**

- Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op requests Michigan Public Service Commission authority to implement a gas cost recovery (GCR) plan and a uniform GCR factor of \$0.4829 per hundred cubic feet (CCF) for the period of April 1, 2015 through March 31, 2016, plus additional amounts contingent on future events for its Regulated Gas Division customers.
- The information below describes how a person may participate in this case.
- You may call or write Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op, 19831 M-68, P.O. Box 308, Onaway, Michigan 49765, (800) 423-6634 for a free copy of its application. Any person may review the application at the offices of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op. The first public hearing in these matters will be held:

**DATE/TIME:** Wednesday, March 25, 2015, at 9:00 a.m.

This hearing will be a prehearing conference to set future hearing dates and decide other procedural matters.

**BEFORE:** Administrative Law Judge Mark E. Cummins

**LOCATION:** Michigan Public Service Commission, 7109 West Saginaw Highway, Lansing, Michigan

**PARTICIPATION:** Any interested person may attend and participate. The hearing site is accessible, including handicapped parking. Persons needing any accommodation to participate should contact the Commission's Executive Secretary at (517) 284-8090 in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance.

The Michigan Public Service Commission (Commission) will hold a public hearing to consider Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op's (Presque Isle) December 23, 2014 application for approval of a gas cost recovery (GCR) plan and gas cost recovery factor of \$0.4829 per CCF for the period of April 1, 2015 through March 31, 2016, plus additional amounts contingent on future events for its Regulated Gas Division customers. Presque Isle's requested contingent GCR factor ceiling prices would be calculated using a Quarterly Adjustment Process, which could potentially increase the GCR factor, as described in its application, to reflect increases in the price of gas on the New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX).

All documents filed in this case shall be submitted electronically through the Commission's E-Dockets website at: [michigan.gov/mpscedockets](http://michigan.gov/mpscedockets). Requirements and instructions for filing can be found in the User Manual on the E-Dockets help page. Documents may also be submitted, in Word or PDF format, as an attachment to an email sent to: [mpscedockets@michigan.gov](mailto:mpscedockets@michigan.gov). If you require assistance prior to e-filing, contact Commission staff at (517) 284-8090 or by email at: [mpscedockets@michigan.gov](mailto:mpscedockets@michigan.gov).

Any person wishing to intervene and become a party to the case shall electronically file a petition to intervene with this Commission by March 18, 2015. (Petitions to intervene may also be filed using the traditional paper format.) The proof of service shall indicate service upon Presque Isle's attorney, Shaun M. Johnson, Dykema Gossett PLLC, Capitol View, 201 Townsend Street, Suite 900, Lansing, Michigan 48933.

Any person wishing to appear at the hearing to make a statement of position without becoming a party to the case may participate by filing an appearance. To file an appearance, the individual must attend the hearing and advise the presiding administrative law judge of his or her wish to make a statement of position. All information submitted to the Commission in this matter becomes public information, thus available on the Michigan Public Service Commission's website, and subject to disclosure. Please do not include information you wish to remain private.

Requests for adjournment must be made pursuant to the Michigan Administrative Hearing System's Administrative Hearing Rules R 792.10422 and R 792.10432. Requests for further information on adjournment should be directed to (517) 284-8130.

A copy of Presque Isle's request may be reviewed on the Commission's website at: [michigan.gov/mpscedockets](http://michigan.gov/mpscedockets) and at the office of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op. For more information on how to participate in a case, you may contact the Commission at the above address or by telephone at (517) 284-8090.

Jurisdiction is pursuant to 1909 PA 300, as amended, MCL 462.2 et seq.; 1919 PA 419, as amended, MCL 460.54 et seq.; 1939 PA 3, as amended, MCL 460.1 et seq.; 1982 PA 304, as amended, MCL 460.6h et seq.; 1969 PA 306, as amended, MCL 24.201 et seq.; and the Michigan Administrative Hearing System's Administrative Hearing Rules, 2015 AC, R 792.10401 et seq.

January 20, 2015





# BASKETBALL MADNESS

'Floored' By Michigan Companies

O'Reilly

O'Reilly

AUTO PARTS

O'Reilly

AUTO PARTS

O'Reilly

AUTO PARTS



**T**om Izzo surveys the basketball court in Michigan State University's Breslin Center and still relishes what that court represents. Fifteen years earlier, Izzo led the Spartans to the NCAA championship on that very floor in Indianapolis.

After beating Florida, MSU purchased the portable court for its own use from Horner Flooring Co. Inc., which has manufactured sports flooring in Dollar Bay, MI, since 1891, the year Dr. James Naismith invented basketball.

"You wouldn't put the U.P. and basketball together for being famous," Izzo says. "But when you think about it, it makes some sense."

The Upper Peninsula has been the center of the athletic flooring universe for over 100 years. And, Izzo's one NCAA title, six Final Four appearances, 11 Big Ten regular season and tournament crowns, 17 consecutive NCAA Tournament bids and eight National Coach of the Year awards make the Iron Mountain native one of Michigan's most prominent sports figures. So, it all makes perfect sense.

Michigan State's journey to the 2009 Final Four at Ford Field in Detroit and most recent national semifinal appearance the following year back in Indianapolis, ended on courts made by Connor Sport Court International Inc., located in the heart of Iron County. Connor Sport has been in business since 1872 and in 2005 was named the official supplier of courts for the men's and women's Final Fours.

Both U.P. companies have amassed an astounding list of venues they have equipped—from high schools and colleges and professional facilities to the Olympics.

During the Spartans' last practice before defeating the Gators on the Horner floor that momentous

Monday night in April 2000, Izzo commiserated with his equally renowned boyhood rival, former Iron Mountain High School and Northern Michigan University teammate and best friend, Steve Mariucci, who at the time was the head coach of the San Francisco 49ers.

"We were laughing about it, saying me, you and this floor were made up in the U.P.," Izzo says. "I always knew about the floor companies up there and there's no question that when I'm watching a Final Four or an NBA event, I take a lot of pride in it, being a Hooper."

Proximity to a select variety of hard maple trees, which thrive in the U.P. climate, is the reason Michigan has become the world leader in athletic flooring.

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"Hard maple trees obviously grow south of there, as well, but when you go that far north the growing season is real short," says Jason Gasperich, Connor Sports' sustainability director. "So, what happens is you end up with a very tight-grained, dense hardwood."

The old-growth forests have been replanted numerous times by an industry that has been at the forefront of renewable resource development. Some 40 different sawmills supply the lumber and a minimum of 30 trees—roughly



Photos—Matthew Mitchell

25 years old and up—will be used to make the court on which the Final Four will be played at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, April 4–6.

Michigan State's court has been taken apart and put back together countless times between non-sporting events, such as commencement exercises and concerts.

According to MSU Deputy Athletics Director Greg Ianni, who oversees the Spartans' athletic facilities, Horner has taken the floor back to the U.P. to be refurbished on numerous occasions, though it is nearing the end of its life expectancy.

After the surface is replaced in the next year or so, parts of it will be put on permanent display, others stored in the school's archives, and "pieces will be made available to our fan base," Ianni says. "The quality of the court has been terrific, and the irony of the fact that this floor was built in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan where our head basketball coach came from, is quite unique." ■



Steve Grinczel is the online columnist for MSU's athletics website, [MSUSpartans.com](http://MSUSpartans.com), and the co-host of the "Griff & Grinz" sports radio talk show on WQTX-FM (92.1).

He covered the Spartans for 24 years for Booth Newspapers of Michigan and lives in Haslett, MI.



## Notice to Members of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op

### A special Board Meeting is set for March 24, 9 a.m., at the cooperative's Onaway office

The board of directors will consider changes to the cooperative's rates and tariffs at its meeting on March 24, 2015, to be held at 19831 M68 Highway, Onaway, Michigan. The meeting will start at 9 a.m. and is open to all members of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op.

The session will begin with an opportunity for members to provide direct input to the board of directors. Members are asked to come to the lobby by 8:45 a.m. and request to speak to the board; staff will direct interested members to the meeting room. Time constraints on each member's comments will be at the discretion of the board president, but members are asked to keep comments to less than five minutes.

#### The following items will be discussed:

1. Reconciliation of the 2014 Power Supply Cost Recovery Factor collections. The Power Supply Cost Recovery Factor is applied to Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op's retail member-consumers' monthly kilowatt-hour use. It represents power supply costs as established by the cooperative in conjunction with Wolverine Power Cooperative. The factor is established annually and reviewed monthly;
2. Review and approval of the 2014 Electric Times Interest Earned Ratio (TIER) analysis;
3. Consider revisions to the cooperative's Aid to Construction Fees and Policies;
4. Consider revisions to the cooperative's Special Charges;
5. Revise the cooperative's load management tariff sheets D-7.00 Controlled Water Heating Service Schedule CWH, D-8.00 Controlled Heating Service Schedule CH and D-9.00 Partial Controlled Heating Service Schedule PCH;
6. Create a new Efficient Electric Heating Tariff; and
7. Consider revisions to the cooperative's billing rules.

Notices of changes or additions to the cooperative's rates or service rules shall be sent to all members, as required by P.A. 167, by first class mail or by publication in *Michigan Country Lines* at least 30 days prior to their effective date.

**Participation:** Any interested member may attend and participate. Persons needing any accommodation to participate should contact Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op at 800-423-6634 a week in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance. Comments may also be made before the meeting date by calling CEO Brian Burns at 800-423-6634, or by email at [bburns@pieg.com](mailto:bburns@pieg.com).



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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).

## POP QUIZ:

Do you know what to do if a power line falls on your vehicle?

**Do not drive away or get out.** Stay inside until utility workers say it's okay. Warn others to stay away. If you must leave the vehicle – only in case of fire – jump free without touching the ground and auto at the same time, keeping both feet together, and hop to safety. A live wire touching the ground causes electricity to fan out, and walking or running allows one foot to move from one voltage zone to another. This makes your body the electricity's path, and electrocution results.

### Other safety tips:

Never drive over a downed line. It could cause poles or other equipment to come crashing down.

Never touch a downed line or a person or object that is touching it! You could be injured or killed, too.

**Call 911 immediately to report a downed line, then call your electric co-op or the local utility.**

## Wolverine Signs 20-Year Purchase Power Agreement for 114 Megawatts of Wind Energy

**H**arnessing energy from the wind is one clean and efficient way to generate power. Wolverine Power Supply Cooperative, Inc. (Wolverine), a generation and transmission electric cooperative in Cadillac, MI, recently increased its renewable energy portfolio by signing a 20-year Purchase Power Agreement (PPA) with Renewable Energy Systems Americas Inc. (RES Americas) for 114 megawatts of wind energy.

Known as the Deerfield Wind Energy Project, this development will be located on 20,000 acres in Huron County, in the Thumb of the Lower Peninsula. Wolverine will receive the entire output of the 114-megawatt project, expected to be approximately 400,000 megawatt hours annually.

“Wolverine is very pleased to be adding competitively priced wind energy to its power supply portfolio for its members,” said Eric Baker, president and CEO of Wolverine. “This PPA not only further diversifies

Wolverine’s overall energy portfolio, it also positions Wolverine and its members to meet Michigan’s Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) requirement of 10 percent renewable power supply by 2015.”

In 2008, Michigan passed a law establishing the RPS, requiring Michigan electric providers to attain a retail supply portfolio that includes at least 10 percent renewable energy by 2015. With the addition of wind energy from the Deerfield Wind Energy Project, Wolverine more than meets this requirement.

RES Americas is a leader in the development, engineering, and construction of wind, solar, transmission, and energy storage projects in North America. They will be constructing and operating the project, which will provide up to 200 jobs during peak construction and up to six permanent jobs at the completion of the project. ■



## Calling All ArtPrize Artists in Michigan!

We would like to spotlight Michigan artists who participated in 2014, or are entering the 2015 ArtPrize® competition, in the July/August issue of *Country Lines*.

For 19 days, 3 square miles of downtown Grand Rapids becomes an open canvas of art. Artists from around the world enter the contest, and viewing their work is free and open to the public.

If you are an electric co-op member who participated in the 2014 ArtPrize event, or you are entering in 2015, please send your contact information by e-mail to Christine Dorr at [cdorr@meca.coop](mailto:cdorr@meca.coop) or by mail to *Country Lines*, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, MI 48864. The deadline is April 20.

**ArtPrize 2015 will take place  
Sept. 23–Oct. 11**

**For more information about the  
event, please visit [Artprize.org](http://Artprize.org)** ■



Photo courtesy of ArtPrize 2015. Photo credit: Brian Kelly.



Photo—Kathryne Winkler

## Thumbs Up For The Thumb!

**Quick! Name your favorite part of our state.** Many will say the U.P., Leelanau County, or Grand Traverse Bay. My hunch is some will say, “the Thumb.” We wouldn’t be the Mitten State without a thumb, so let’s pay it some homage...

Phil Parrot, a Thumb native and owner of Parrot’s Tours ([parrottstours.com](http://parrottstours.com) or 810-376-9245), in Deckerville, sends vacationers to destinations worldwide, but he’s often asked about the Thumb area by other travel professionals. Parrot’s ready response is, “There’s the Upper Peninsula, Leelanau Peninsula, and Old Mission Peninsula, but the Thumb is Michigan’s undiscovered peninsula.”

Comprised of Huron, Tuscola, Sanilac, Lapeer and St. Clair counties, it boasts 150 miles of shoreline, 2,100 miles of rivers and streams, 51,000 acres of public recreation land, 49,000 acres of state game/wildlife areas, and many annual festivals and events.

Tour the Lake Huron and Saginaw Bay shoreline along M-25 with 160 miles of quaint towns and four lighthouses. The village of Sebawaing claims bragging rights as the “Sugar Beet Capital of the World” by hosting an annual Sugar Festival with a parade, carnival and entertainment tent. Caseville, near the Thumb’s tip on sandy Saginaw Bay, hosts the well-known Cheeseburger Festival every August. Algonac sits on the largest fresh-water delta in the world, with canals and an impressive 1,800 feet of boardwalk that credit its nickname as “The Venice of Michigan.”

And, visitors will want to explore the Sanilac Petroglyphs Historic State Park. The great Thumb fire of 1881, Parrot says, burned over 1 million acres and revealed prehistoric rock carvings made 300 to 1,000 years ago.

Seek a pleasant place by visiting it and giving a thumbs up for “the Thumb”! ■



**Jack O'Malley**



The January Mystery Photo Contest winner is Laura Neuman, of Mackinaw City, a Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op member who correctly identified the “snow people” figures in front of the tourist information building in Paradise, MI.



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