

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

MICHIGAN'S Iron Man

Plus!

4 Join Us At Your District Meeting

5 Board Elections In Districts 3, 6

8b \$2.4 Million Capital Credit Retirement

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geothermal dealer makes a
commitment to you...



THEY MAKE A COMMITMENT TO US.

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POSTMASTER: SEND ALL UAA TO CFS.

Letters to the editor should be sent to Country Lines, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, MI 48864. 517-913-3531. E-mail: 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.

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



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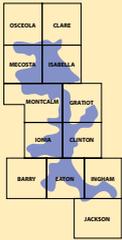
ON THE COVER*

Tom Moran, of Moran Iron Works in Onaway, MI. When he's not busy building ships, turbine components or customizing industrial and commercial fabrication jobs, Moran creates large-scale art projects for the community.

*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

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Join the conversation at
facebook.com/HomeWorks.org

Co-op Membership Highlighted in May



Mark Kappler
General Manager

Several cooperative principles are being highlighted at HomeWorks Tri-County Electric.

To start with, your board of directors authorized a \$2.4 million capital credit refund, and nearly every active member will receive a bill credit or check with their share of this refund. Read more about capital credits, and why they're important to cooperative owners, on page 8b.

(co-op principle #3 – members' economic participation)

Next, two districts are holding board seat elections. You can read about the candidates,

who happen to be the incumbent directors, on the opposite page.

If you are a member in District 3 (most of Clinton County) or District 6 (Clare and Isabella counties), you'll have the opportunity to vote at your district meeting. If you can't attend, we encourage you to use the absentee ballot request form provided, so you can take part in the election process. *(co-op principle #2 – democratic member control)*

And, starting May 11, HomeWorks staff and I will bring supper, and an update on the co-op's operations, to each of our seven districts, and we invite you to join us when we're in your neighborhood. Watch your mailbox for your invitation with all the details. We try to keep the meeting brief, but interesting and informative, so that you can stay up-to-date on HomeWorks. *(co-op principle #5 – education and information)*

We're also repeating the food drive that was so successful two years ago. At each district, a local food pantry will collect your donations to help serve families in your area. *(co-op principle #7 – concern for community)*

We look forward to seeing you at your district membership meeting, if your schedule permits. ■

This year's dates and locations are:

May 11 – District 5
Fulton Middle School Gym

May 12 – District 1
St. Mary's Church Hall,
Charlotte

May 13 – District 7
St. Michael's School, Remus

May 14 – District 3 (Election)
Eagle Park Hall

May 18 – District 4
Vestaburg Middle School

May 19 – District 6 (Election)
Beal City High School

May 20 – District 2
St. Edward's Church Hall,
Lake Odessa

Pohl, Oplinger Seek Re-Election

DISTRICT 3 Clinton County, except for Bingham, Duplain and Greenbush townships



Luke Pohl (incumbent)

Luke Pohl is owner of Pohl's Travel Plaza north of Grand Ledge, and coaches boys' varsity basketball at Pewamo-Westphalia Schools. He and his wife, Janet, have three sons, Gavin, Austin, and Landon.

He has been a member of HomeWorks Tri-County Electric since 1981, and was appointed to the board in September 2014 when longtime director Carl Morton retired.

He is president and co-founder of Austin's House in Westphalia, and belongs to St. Mary's Catholic Church, where he is an usher and previously chaired the parish finance committee. He also served as a director of Westphalia Broadband, chairing the board for 10 years, and formerly owned Pohl Oil and Propane Company. He graduated from Central Michigan University in 1980 with a bachelor's degree in Industrial Education.

"I have a lot of experience in the business world," he points out. "I also understand the costs families face in today's environment, and will work to keep our members' energy affordable, with exceptional service."



Absentee Ballot Request

Voting for board candidates takes place at the District 3 and 6 meetings in 2015. If you are unable to attend your district meeting, request an absentee ballot by filling out and mailing this form to HomeWorks Tri-County Electric, 7973 E. Grand River Ave., Portland, MI 48875. Your request must be received on or before June 1, and your completed ballot returned by June 15.

Name _____ Daytime phone _____

Mailing Address _____

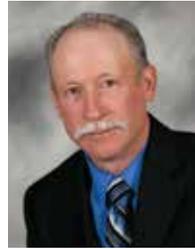
City, _____ State _____ ZIP _____

I certify that I am a member of HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative, and I am unable to attend the (check one) District 3 District 6 annual membership meeting in order to vote in the scheduled board of directors election. I hereby request you send one mail ballot to the above listed address for my use.

Signature _____

Date _____

DISTRICT 6 Clare, Isabella counties



Ed Oplinger (incumbent)

Ed Oplinger is a full-time farmer of beef cattle, hogs, and cash crops in the Weidman area. He and his wife, Sandy, have three grown children and three grandchildren. His granddaughter will be the 6th generation of the family to be involved with the farm.

He has been a member of the cooperative since 1977, was elected to the board in 2009, and is currently chairman of the board of directors for both HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative and its subsidiary, Tri-Co Services, Inc. He completed board training to earn the Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership certificates through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. He currently serves as a trustee on the Sherman Township board.

A 1972 graduate of Chippewa Hills High School, he served as the state vice president of Future Farmers of America in 1972-73. He was Mecosta County Fair beef superintendent from 1993-2009, and has served as president of the Michigan High School Rodeo Competition. He has also served on the Isabella County Soil Conservation District board (1978-90); Barryton Co-op board (1989-93) and the Chippewa Hills school board (1991-95), including a term as secretary.

"This board is probably the most important board I've been on in my life, because of the impact reliable and affordable electricity has on businesses and our communities," he says.

Efficient Indoor LIGHTING For Your Home



People often wonder which type of lighting to use in their home with all the choices on the market today. It is important to know the differences between the options available.

The wattage of a light bulb refers to how much electricity it consumes, not how much light it produces. The amount of light is measured in units called lumens. A 60-watt incandescent light bulb produces about 800 lumens of light and a 100-watt bulb about 1,600 lumens.

Today, your primary choices of bulb are halogen, CFLs (compact fluorescent lights) and LEDs (light emitting diodes), which are listed in order of increasing efficiency. For many home applications, LEDs are the best choice even though they cost more initially.

- **Halogen bulbs** are basically incandescent bulbs with halogen gas around the filament to improve efficiency enough to meet efficiency standards.
- **CFLs** are much more efficient, using only about 25 percent as much electricity as incandescent bulbs to produce the same amount of light—and they last 10 times longer.
- **CFLs** can produce true full-spectrum (simulates natural sunlight) light quality and can be purchased with warm white, cool white and daylight color temperatures. Daylight lamps have an even higher color temperature, and they produce more accurate colors and are good for tasks such as reading and painting.
- **LEDs** are the newest and most efficient light source available and provide an excellent payback. A 12-watt LED produces as much light as a 60-watt incandescent bulb. The LED bulb should also last a minimum of 20,000 hours. Most are dimmable, work well at cold temperatures and reach full brightness immediately. LEDs gradually get dimmer over time. When a LED is rated for 20,000 hours, its output will stay above 70 percent of its original brightness for that time.

If you have been using incandescent bulbs, you are probably accustomed to a yellowish light quality. This is called the “color temperature” of a bulb. Incandescent bulbs are in the 2700-degree K range. The whiter “daylight” LEDs and CFLs are in the 4,000- to 5,000-degree K range. Most people grow accustomed to the whiter light and prefer it. The color temperature is listed on the packaging.

CRI (color rendering index) is another quality of the light bulb to consider. A higher CRI makes objects in a room look more like they would look under natural sunlight. A CRI above 80 is considered adequate for homes, but 90 or above makes everything look better and doesn’t cost much more.

There are four general types of lighting uses—ambient, accent, decorative and task. Ambient lighting is for general illumination with comfortable brightness. Accent lighting can create a mood in the room or highlight areas or objects. Decorative lighting is when the light itself is the object, such as a chandelier. Task lighting is for reading or doing a specific activity.

For effective lighting, install several grouped circuits with dimmers to control and vary the lighting schemes. For example, choose high-CRI bulbs over a dining table to enhance the appearance of food. An overhead high color-temperature bulb above a chair would be good for reading or other tasks.

For existing rooms, where it may not be easy to rewire or add circuits, switch to LEDs in most fixtures, and install dimmer wall switches.

The goal for lighting efficiency is to use as little lighting as needed. Where you do not have a wall switch, such as with a table lamp, install a three-way socket and use a new three-way LED. Add a four-bulb lighting kit to a ceiling fan with a switch to allow you to switch on fewer than all four lights.

No matter which type of bulb or light fixture you choose, start saving by turning lights off when you leave a room. ■



HOMEMADE PIZZAS

Delicious And Easy Pizza Recipes

Pesto Salad Pizza *(pictured)*

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 2 c. basil | red peppers, sliced |
| ½ c. parmesan cheese | goat cheese and/or feta |
| ¼ c. olive oil | and/or mozzarella |
| 2 cloves garlic | mixed greens |
| flour tortillas | balsamic vinegar |
| onions, sliced | |

Preheat oven to 400°. Put basil, parmesan, olive oil and garlic in a food processor and blend. Line a baking pan with foil. Place tortilla shell on pan and smear with pesto. Add onions, peppers, and cheese of choice. Bake for 10 minutes. Add mixed greens to top of tortilla pizza. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar. Enjoy!

Janice Clarkson, Granger

Mexican Pizza

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 pizza dough | 1 T. chili powder |
| 12-oz. ground turkey or beef | 1 can (16-oz.) refried beans |
| 1 small onion, sliced | salsa |
| 3 t. ground garlic | 1–2 c. shredded Mexican cheese |
| 2 t. ground cumin | |



Spread pizza dough on sprayed pizza pan. Bake at 375° for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, cook the meat. Drain. Add onion and spices. When pizza crust has cooked, spread the refried beans over it. Then layer the meat, salsa and cheese. Return to oven; bake for 10 more minutes. Options:

sour cream, shredded lettuce, sliced black olives. Any of the ingredients can be altered for individual taste.

Dianne Compo, Brimley

Cool Veggie Pizza Appetizer

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 2 8-oz. cans refrigerated crescent dinner rolls | 1¼ t. onion salt |
| 2 8-oz. pkgs. Philadelphia brand cream cheese, softened | 1 c. broccoli flowerets |
| 1 c. Miracle Whip salad dressing | 1 c. chopped, seeded tomato |
| 1½ t. dill weed | 1 c. chopped green bell pepper |
| | ¼ c. chopped onion |
| | ½ c. olive slices (optional) |

Heat oven to 375°F. Press dough onto bottom and sides of 15x10x1 inch baking pan. Bake 11–13 minutes or until golden brown; cool. Mix cream cheese, salad dressing, dill and onion salt until well blended. Spread on crust. Top with remaining ingredients. Refrigerate. Cut into squares. Makes 24.

Beatrice Richard, Posen

SUBMIT YOUR RECIPE!

Thanks to all who send in recipes. Please send in your favorite “Fresh Seafood” recipes by **July 1**.

Enter your recipe online at 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)!

Photos—831 Creative



Delicious And Easy Pizza Recipes

Apple, Goat Cheese & Pecan Pizza *(pictured)*

- 1 pizza crust
- 3 c. thinly sliced Fuji apples
(about 8-oz.)
- 1 c. (4-oz.) crumbled
goat cheese
- 2 t. chopped thyme
- 1 T. olive oil
- 2 t. Dijon mustard
- 1 t. fresh lemon juice
- 1 1/2 t. honey
- 3 T. chopped pecans, toasted



Preheat oven to 450°. Place pizza crust in a baking sheet coated with cooking spray. Arrange apple slices evenly over pizza crust, top with cheese. Sprinkle thyme evenly over cheese. Bake at 450° for 8 minutes or until cheese melts and begins to brown. Combine oil and next 3 ingredients (through honey) in a medium bowl, stirring with whisk. Sprinkle pecans evenly over pizza; top with oil/honey mixture. Enjoy!

Shannon Powers, Middleville

Upside Down Pizza

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1 T. oil | 8 oz. can mushrooms,
drained |
| 10-oz. jar spaghetti sauce | 1 c. milk |
| 6 T. grated parmesan
cheese, divided | 1 c. flour |
| 8 oz. pkg. shredded
mozzarella cheese | 1 t. onion salt |
| | 2 eggs |

Grease a 9x13 inch baking dish with 1 T. oil. Spread with spaghetti sauce. Sprinkle with 3 T. grated parmesan cheese, mozzarella cheese and drained mushrooms. Set aside. In a blender, combine milk, flour, onion salt, eggs, and blend for 1 minute. Pour evenly over mushroom layer. Dust with remaining grated parmesan cheese. Bake in center of oven at 450° for 15 minutes. Turn heat to 400° and bake another 10 minutes. Serves 8.

Virginia Hosmer, Plymouth

Breakfast Pizza

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 2 T. butter | 4 eggs |
| 3 c. frozen shredded hash
brown potatoes | cubed ham or sausage |
| salt and pepper, to taste | shredded cheese |

Melt butter in a 9-10 inch skillet. Add hash browns. Salt and pepper to taste. Cover and cook 15 minutes. Beat eggs, pour over hash browns, and sprinkle with cubed ham or sausage. Cover and cook 10 minutes. Sprinkle with shredded cheese. Cover until cheese is melted. Cut into wedges to serve. Serves 6.

Mary Ellen Wynes, Mt. Pleasant

COOKING FROM THE HEART

A cookbook produced by HomeWorks Tri-County member-consumers for the benefit of mid-Michigan families and organizations in need.



ON SALE IN AUGUST 2015

Submit your recipe to

HomeWorks by May 31 in any of several ways:

- At our annual district meetings in May
- At the Blanchard or Portland office
- Mail to: People Fund Cookbook, 7973 E. Grand River Ave., Portland, MI 48875
- Email to: tschneider@homeworks.org

Make sure the recipe is legible and complete, with full instructions. Include your name, town, and a daytime phone number where we can reach you if we have questions.

Categories include Appetizers; Soups, Salads, and Sauces; Casseroles; Meats and Main Dishes; Cakes, Cookies, and Desserts; Breads, Rolls, and Pastries; and Miscellaneous.

Visit countrylines.com for more reader recipes!

Country Lines, Your Partner In Communication



For over 35 years, our co-op members have received *Michigan Country Lines* because it is the most effective and economical way to share information with our members. This is our most empowering communication tool to keep members up-to-date about everything going on within their electric co-op.

Each issue contains information about our services, director elections, member meetings, and the staff and management decisions you need to know about as an owner of the co-op.

The magazine also includes legal notices that would otherwise have to be placed in local media at a substantial cost. And, sending *Michigan Country Lines* to you helps the co-op fulfill one of its important principles—to educate and communicate openly with its members.

The board of directors authorizes the co-op to subscribe to *Michigan Country Lines* on your behalf at an average cost of \$3.63 per year, paid as part of your electric bill. The current magazine cost is 49 cents per copy—the same cost as a first-class stamp. *Michigan Country Lines* is published for us, at cost, by the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association (MECA) in Okemos. As always, we welcome and value your comments.

Notice to Members of HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative

Case No. U-15822 2013 Renewable Energy Plan Annual Report Summary

The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) requires all Michigan electric utilities to get approximately 2 percent of their power supply from renewable sources by 2012 and increasing to 10 percent by 2015.

Under this requirement, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative submits an annual report to the MPSC regarding its Renewable Energy Plan. HomeWorks acquired 10,257 renewable energy credits and 360 incentive credits from its wholesale power supplier, Wolverine Power Cooperative, Inc. Wolverine will continue to generate renewable energy and bank unused renewable energy credits for future use and compliance with statutory renewable portfolio standard requirements on behalf of all of its members.

A full copy of the cooperative's Renewable Energy Plan annual report that was filed with the MPSC is available on the cooperative's website at homeworks.org or by request at any of the cooperative's offices.

STATE OF MICHIGAN BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT Case No. U-16598

On January 27, 2015, in Case No. U-15825 et al, the Michigan Public Service Commission (Commission) ordered Tri-County Electric Cooperative d/b/a HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative to file a renewable energy plan on or before May 12, 2015 to comply with the "Clean, Renewable and Efficient Energy Act" (2008 PA 295, MCL 460.1001, et seq.) and MPSC order in Case No. U-15800 dated December 4, 2008. On April 13, 2015, Tri-County Electric Cooperative d/b/a HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative filed its Notice of Intent to File Application For a Renewable Energy Plan with the Commission.

Any interested person may review the filed Renewable Energy Plan on or after May 12, 2015 on the MPSC website under Case No. U-16598 at: www.michigan.gov/mpscdockets, or at the office of the Commission's Executive Secretary, 7109 West Saginaw, Lansing, Michigan, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, or at the offices of Tri-County Electric Cooperative d/b/a HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative, 7973 E. Grand River Avenue, Portland, Michigan.

Written and electronic comments may be filed with the Commission and must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 12, 2015. Written comments should be sent to the: Executive Secretary, Michigan Public Service Commission, P.O. Box 30221, Lansing, Michigan 48909, with a copy mailed to Tri-County Electric Cooperative d/b/a HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative, 7973 E. Grand River Avenue, Portland, Michigan 48875. Electronic comments may be e-mailed to: mpscdockets@michigan.gov. All comments should reference Case No. U-16598. Comments received in this matter become public information, posted on the Commission's website, and subject to disclosure. Please do not include information you wish to remain private.

The Commission will review the renewable energy plan together with any filed comments and provide a response within 60 days of the filing of the application indicating any revisions that should be made. If the Commission suggests revisions, the Cooperative will file a revised RPS plan no later than 75 days after the filing of the application. A Commission order will be issued on or before the 90th day following the filing of the application.

Any proposed Renewable Energy Plan Charges may not exceed \$3 per meter per month for residential customers, \$16.58 per meter per month for commercial secondary customers or \$187.50 per meter per month for commercial primary or industrial customers.

HOMEWORKS TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Watch May Bill for Your Capital Credit Allocation, Refund

HomeWorks Tri-County Electric member-owners will see the benefit of cooperative principle #3—Member Economic Participation—on their May energy bills.

The board of directors authorized an allocation and retirement of capital credits after the audit was approved in March.

First, because we operate on a nonprofit basis, margins will be allocated back to members based on their energy purchases during 2014. This includes the co-op's margins of \$1,222,902; a \$200,000 dividend paid to the co-op by its subsidiary, Tri-Co Services; and \$2,040,075, representing HomeWorks Tri-County's share of Wolverine Power Cooperative's 2014 margins.

These allocations are *not* cash—they are an accounting of your share of ownership in the cooperative. The

amounts allocated to your membership for 2014 will be printed in the top right message area of your energy bill.

Your bill will also show your total unretired capital credit allocations, which will be retired at a future date as determined by your co-op's board of directors.

Retiring Capital Credits

Retiring capital credits is a way of ensuring each generation of members provides its own equity.

The board's philosophy is to pay most of a retirement from the oldest capital credits on account, and a smaller percentage from the most recent year.

We believe this achieves the purpose of recycling the cooperative's capital, while also giving our newest members a chance to see one of the most fundamental cooperative principles in action.

This year's general retirement totals \$2,416,000, of which \$1,325,000 retires capital credits allocated by Tri-County Electric in 1987 through 1989, and 2014. Also being retired are \$1,091,000 in power supply capital credits from 1989 through 1996, and 2014.

For most members, your retirement will be paid as a credit applied to your May energy bill. It will show as a line item under "Other Charges and Credits."

The board also set aside funds for retiring capital credits to members' estates, on a first-come, first-served basis. Estate retirements will include both Tri-County Electric and Wolverine Power capital credits. For more information about estate retirements, call Member Services at 1-800-562-8232.

How Capital Credits Work

John and Mary Doe are HomeWorks members. This is how their capital credits work:

1. John and Mary Doe use electricity at their home, for comfort and convenience.

2. John and Mary pay their electric bills each month. HomeWorks tracks their energy use and totals the revenue received from the Does.

3. HomeWorks' fiscal year ends in December. Final financial obligations for the year are met; staff closes the books, which are then audited.

4. Income received over and above expenses (margins, or profit) is determined.



5. After the audit, the Board of Directors approves allocation of the year's margins to John and Mary, and the rest of HomeWorks' members, as capital credits. Until retired, they become members' equity in HomeWorks.

6. The board of directors may authorize a cash retirement of a portion of the capital credits to members, determining the total amount to pay, from which years of service, and how they will be paid.

7. John and Mary receive their April energy bill, due in May, and notice the capital credit allocation notice in the top right message area. If their capital credit retirement is less than \$200, it will appear as a line item credit on their energy bill.

- This \$2.4 million retirement is our largest ever, topping the \$1.6 million retirement in 2013.
- With this year's retirement, HomeWorks Tri-County has returned \$14.4 million back to its member-owners.

What are Capital Credits?

How is HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative different from other utilities?

HomeWorks is a cooperative, owned by its members—the people and businesses who receive electric service.

Co-ops are one of three types of electric utilities in Michigan. Municipal utilities, such as the Lansing Board of Water and Light, are owned by the taxpayers of the city. Investor-owned utilities (IOUs) are owned by stockholders earning a return on their investments. Most IOU customers are not stockholders, or owners, of the IOUs.

The fact that our members and our owners are the same distinguishes cooperatives from other types of electric utilities.

How does HomeWorks raise capital for operations and improvements?

Cooperatives usually obtain capital in two ways: borrowing from a lender, or retaining capital supplied by their member-owners through the electric rates.

When do member-owners supply capital to a cooperative like HomeWorks?

HomeWorks is operated on a not-for-profit basis. Margins that remain after paying all operating expenses from annual utility revenue are allocated to member-owners' capital credit accounts. These capital credits reduce the need for borrowed funds and the interest costs of borrowing.

Can I cash in my capital credits account, or have all my capital credits returned now?

No, the allocation statement on your May bill is simply a report of your ongoing investment in HomeWorks. The board of directors establishes policies regarding retirement of capital credits as cash, based on several financial indicators, including the co-op's overall equity level and its ability to meet our banker's lending requirements.

The board's goal is to retire capital credits on a 25-year cycle, with most of each annual retirement paying the oldest credits on account first. An exception is that payments may be made, upon request and at net present value, to the estates of deceased members.

Billing Period	METER READINGS				MULTIPLIER	ENERGY USED	ENERGY UNIT	RATE PER UNIT	CHARGE
04/01/15 TO 05/01/15	BEGIN	TYPE	END	TYPE					
ENERGY	39414	REG	40725	REG	1	1311	KWH	0.12285	161.06
POWER SUPPLY COST RECOVERY						1311		0.00192	2.52
AVAILABILITY CHARGE									\$14.00
ENERGY OPTIMIZATION SURCHARGE						1311		0.00173	2.27
MI SALES TAX									\$7.01
TOTAL CURRENT CHARGES WITHOUT OPERATION ROUNDUP									\$186.86
OTHER CHARGES AND CREDITS									
CAPITAL CREDIT REFUND									\$-13.85
WATER HT CONT PAYT									\$4.50
LM AMT									\$-4.50
TOTAL AMOUNT									\$173.21
OPERATION ROUNDUP VOLUNTARY OPTION									\$0.79

Do I accumulate shares of stock in HomeWorks that can be bought or sold?

No, capital credits are not issued or traded like publicly traded stock.

Do my capital credits earn interest or dividends?

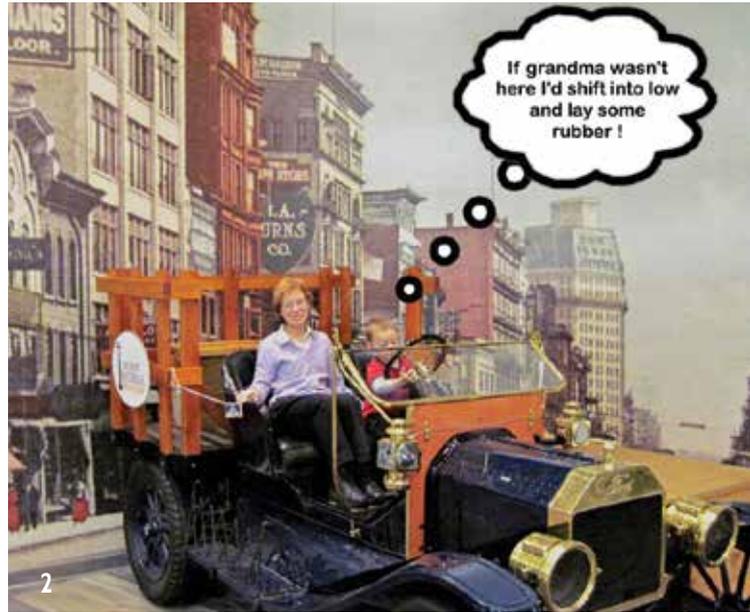
No; if that were the case, higher electric rates would be needed to fund the interest or dividends.

Does the size of my capital credit account affect my voting rights in board of directors elections?

No, in a cooperative each member has one vote. A joint membership, for example a husband and wife, still has just one vote, although either spouse may cast the vote.

Are capital credits paid out to members when they move away from HomeWorks' service area?

No, members who move from our service area are not entitled to receive their capital credits until a general retirement is made for the year or years in which they received service. Members who move should remember to keep HomeWorks informed of their current address so future payments can reach them.



Capture your favorite moments and share!

1. "Trusty Rusty" is what Jerry Jackson, a member at Canadian Lakes, MI, calls this vintage automobile. He took the photo at the Stockbridge, centennial celebration (year unknown.) The auto is not restored, but well taken care of by its owner, who is also unknown.
2. Richard Perry of Lake Isabella has already captioned this photo of a 1913-14 Ford truck, with passengers Jeanne Perry and her grandson, Tyler Reich.
3. Sophie Partlow, an 11-year Portland Middle School student, is gearing up for the 2015 go-kart season. She's been racing since she was 8 and last year took second in her class. "She just got her kart back with a new paint job, and she was excited to get the feel of the new frame, etc.," says mom Hope Partlow of Portland, who sent in the photo.

See more Snapshots at:
facebook.com/HomeWorks.org

Submit Your Photo!

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

Upcoming SnapShot contests

- "America the Beautiful", Deadline: May 16 (July/August issue)
- "Country Roads", Deadline: July 15 (September issue)

Go to homeworks.org/content/snapshots to submit your high resolution digital photos and see additional themes. It's fast and easy. To send by mail: Include your name, address, phone number, photographer's name, and details about your photo. Mail to Attn: *Country Lines* Snapshots, 7973 E. Grand River, Portland, MI 48875. Photos will not be returned. Do not send color laser prints or professional studio photos.



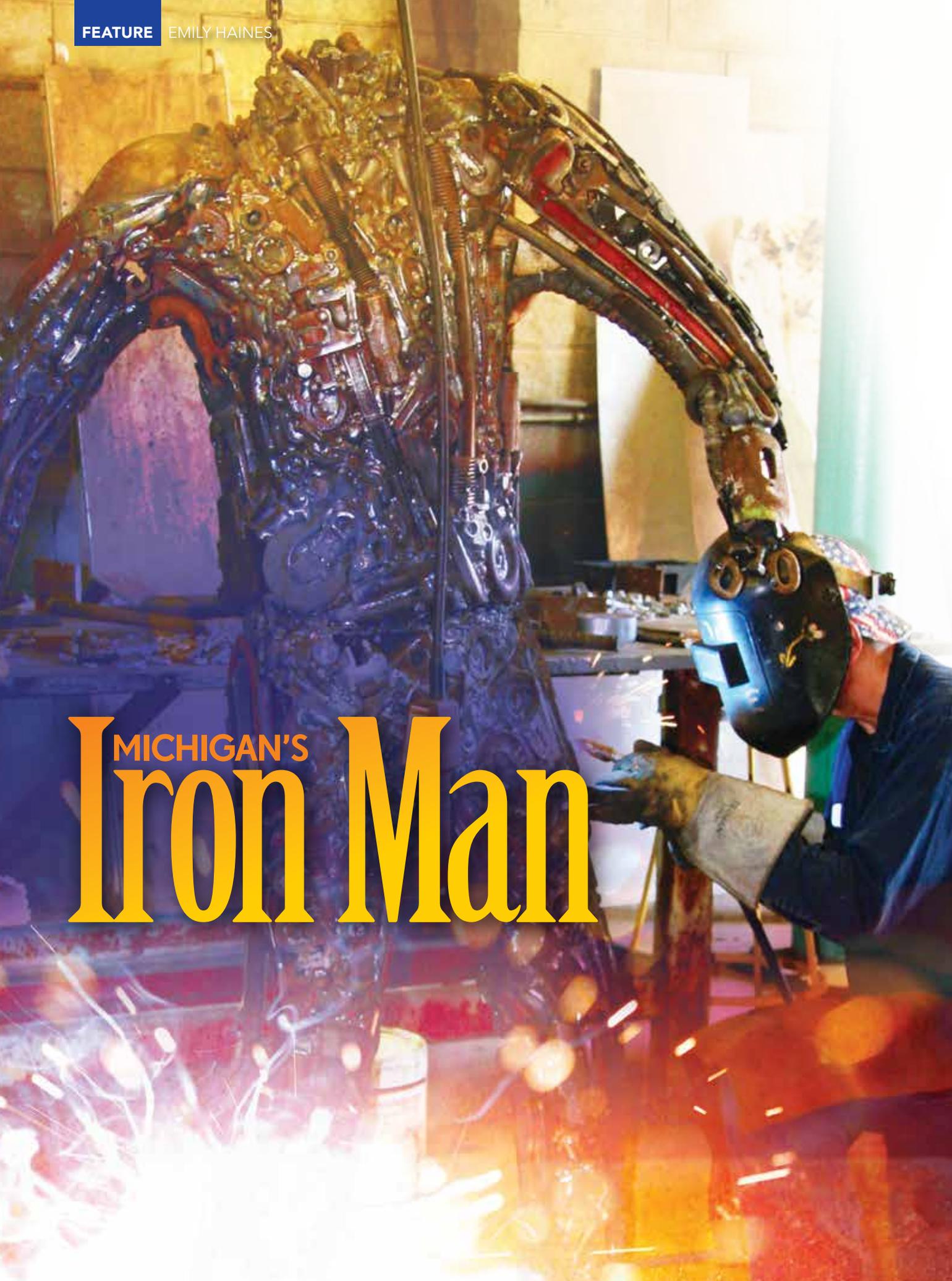
People Fund Assists Lakeview Food Pantry

Customer service representative Stacey Brown, at right, presented a check to, from left, Pastor Dave Hansen, Deacon Rick Dubridge, and Pastor Steve Voelker from the Lakeview Ministerial Association. The \$2,500 grant will purchase food pantry items.



Ashley High School Receives Touchstone Energy Grant

Ashley High School received a \$2,500 grant to purchase tools and supplies for their Industrial Education classes. Here, from left, Tom Spooner, Randy Moore, Zach Kremer, and Caleb Beebe display some of the new tools and storage racks they've made. Principal Tracy Gevenda and instructor Gene Gutierrez both said the classes help students with math and arts requirements; in addition, students are using their skills and supplies to create needed toys and shelves for around the school.



MICHIGAN'S Iron Man

While he makes his living from his 37-year-old business, Moran Iron Works, Tom Moran has had a second career as a teacher. His first student? Tom Moran.

The son of a career lumberjack, Moran always had an interest in metalwork, but with college an unlikely possibility and his high school no longer able to support metals classes, he used some of the abandoned tools in his shop class to teach himself how to weld.

“I started tinkering with some tools and working on broken chairs in classrooms,” says Moran. “Then, it was fixing trailers for teachers. By the time I graduated, I’d become the unofficial school repairman.”

After graduation, Moran worked in the logging business with his father and at night made his own tools, practiced his craft and eventually started his own business. The land where he first built, an abandoned dairy farm in Oneway, MI, has since undergone 29 additions.

As his business grew, he was faced with the challenge of finding qualified welders and metalworkers in northeast Michigan.

“While we’re in love with northeast Michigan, it’s hard to recruit skilled tradespeople in this area of the state,” he explains. “We found the best way to make sure that we had a qualified workforce was to create our own training program,” Moran says. “We started evening classes for people with potential and interest. Some were folks we knew we’d be hiring and others were members of our community, like farmers or loggers, who wanted to be more self-sufficient.”

The training program is now a full-time school that is staffed by Moran Iron Works employees—10 full- and part-time teachers.

While Moran provides plenty of opportunities to teach his beloved trade, he’s humble and certain there is always more to learn.

Moran Iron Works has recently embarked on a large-scale project with



Tom Moran of
Moran Iron Works.

moraniron.com

Shepler’s Mackinac Island Ferry, to build their most recent ship—an 85-foot, all-aluminum ferry christened “Miss Margy” that is thought to be the first ever built entirely in Michigan. While Moran Iron has worked on many ship extensions, retro-fittings and conversions, this is the first vessel they’ve built from start to finish.

“Every project is unique and there is always something to learn,” Moran says. “With a project of this scale and scope, where you’re integrating several complex systems, you’re going to run into challenges. But in the end, the old lesson of ‘a job well planned is a job well done’ had really seen us through. Ship building is an art. The teams at Moran Iron have really turned it into an art and a science.”

When he’s not busy building ships, turbine components or customizing industrial and commercial fabrication jobs, Moran creates large-scale art projects for the annual Fourth of July parade in Oneway and as donations for area fundraisers.

“Maybe the art has gotten out of hand over 45 years,” Moran jokes. “Every year I say I’ll do something smaller and easier, but it hasn’t really gone that way.”

Maybe that’s the next lesson for Moran, but for now—the bigger the better. ■



Time Set Aside for Members to Comment Before Board Meetings

The first 15 minutes of every board meeting are available for members who wish to address the board of directors on any subject. The next meetings are set for May 18 and June 22 at Portland. Members who need directions to either office or wish to have items considered on the board agenda should call 517-647-7554.

How to Apply for a People Fund Grant

Write to 7973 E. Grand River Avenue, Portland, Mich. 48875, for an application form and grant guidelines, or visit homeworks.org.

Note: Applications must be received by May 18 to be considered at the May meeting, and by June 29 for the July meeting.

Meeting at Portland March 23, your board of directors:

- Reviewed the 2014 audit report with the independent auditor, Eide Bailly.
- Read and approved Board Policy 402 – “Allocation of Non-Operating Income from Subsidiary”; Board Policy 403 – “Long Range Financial Management Plan”; and Board Policy 404 – “Retirement of Capital Credits.” Learned there were no identity theft incidents reported during the past quarter, in a report required by Board Policy 316 – “Identity Theft.”
- Authorized staff to allocate the cooperative’s 2014 margins, totaling \$1,222,902 along with a \$200,000 dividend from Tri-Co Services, and \$2,040,075 in Wolverine Power Cooperative margins, to members based on their energy purchases during the year.
- Further authorized staff to make a general retirement of \$1,325,000 in cooperative capital credits and the \$200,000 dividend from Tri-Co Services) from 1987–1989 and 2014; and \$1,091,000 in Wolverine capital credits from 1989–1996 and 2014, to members as credits on the May energy bills, as well as retiring up to \$220,000 in cooperative and Wolverine capital credits to estates at present worth value.
- Learned incumbent directors Luke Pohl of Westphalia (District 3) and Ed Oplinger of Weidman (District 6) have been nominated for re-election to their board seats this May.
- Learned there were 83 new members since January.
- Acknowledged the February and March safety reports, listing employee training and minor employee and public incidents. ■



SAY GOODBYE

Make the call and save

If you have a refrigerator or freezer that is 10, 20 or even 30 years old, **now** is the time to recycle it.

Use Homeworks Tri-County Electric Cooperative’s Appliance Recycling program, a service that hauls away your appliance for FREE.

PLUS you get a \$50 rebate for participating!

ENERGY TIP: After making the call for your free pick-up, purchase a new ENERGY STAR refrigerator or chest freezer and receive a \$25 rebate for your smart decision.



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.

ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG



For your safety and for the protection of underground utility lines, always follow these steps before starting any digging project.

1. Contact MISS DIG at 811 or missdig.org
2. Wait 3 days for utility owners to mark their lines
3. Respect the marks
4. Dig with care

**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

visit missdig.org for more information

Slow Down, Go Around Roadside Utility Workers

Summer travel, which lines up so neatly with utility construction and maintenance season, is just around the corner.

And Joe McElroy, safety director for the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association (MECA), is bracing for the almost daily reports of heart-stopping near-misses as electric equipment operators, lineworkers, groundmen and meter readers tackle projects in the rights-of-way they share with streets, roads and highways.

"It's one of the biggest concerns I have as a safety provider," McElroy says. And, protecting lineworkers by training them to do these jobs safely is getting harder. "Distracted drivers, primarily from mobile devices, are making roadway work zones more dangerous. Most any utility worker can tell you about a near-miss event. We are now encouraging work zones to be set up with an unoccupied buffer vehicle parked behind our bucket trucks to help absorb a crash."

During McElroy's 10 years at MECA, no co-op crew member has been killed in a traffic incident while on the job, but he recalls many suspected distracted-driver accidents and near-misses. "At safety meetings, operations personnel can usually recall an incident that has occurred within the past few weeks."

Last spring, McElroy joined utility reps, legislators, union leaders and Transportation Department and Public Service Commission officials, as Gov. Rick Snyder proclaimed May 22 as "Roadside Safety Awareness Day."

"Roadside safety awareness starts with us letting motorists and pedestrians know they are entering a work zone," McElroy says. "Orange signs, cones and amber lights should be enough for people to understand they are approaching an active worksite, but even with all the proper safety equipment in place, incidents still happen."

Roadside accidents annually kill 100 Michigan police officers, firefighters, and line or sanitation workers. Another 20,000 such public servants are injured by vehicles while doing their jobs.

McElroy is also quick to recommend stiffer penalties for these incidents and fatalities, and says a consistent national approach is needed. "And, I have encouraged our co-ops to use local law enforcement to help out in high-traffic areas or where visibility can be an issue. Drivers are accustomed to seeing our signs and cones, so they still speed or become

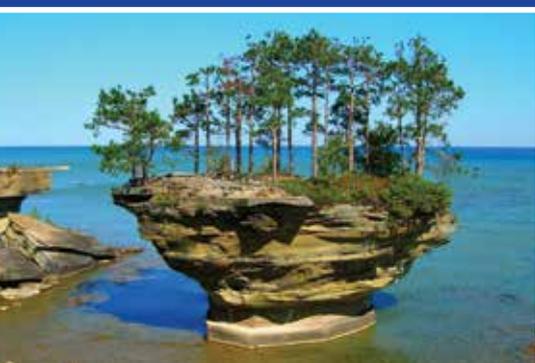


distracted. Once law enforcement is present, they seem to get it."

Meanwhile, McElroy drills co-op and municipal utility crews how to properly set up a safety perimeter. "Their situational awareness also has to be keen in the work zone, and those of us in the utility safety field have to raise awareness of these dangers."

Please "Slow Down, Go Around, and Watch Out" for folks who serve us by working near the roadways. ■

– Reprinted in part from RE Magazine



«« Do You Know Where This Is?

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

We do not accept Mystery Photo guesses by phone. Enter your guess at countrylines.com or send by mail to: *Country Lines* Mystery Photo, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, 48864. Include the name on your account, 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 July/August 2015 issue.

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Tri-County Electric Cooperative



Watch your mailbox for your personal invitation.

Knowing more about your electric cooperative helps you stay involved, and that helps us run HomeWorks Tri-County Electric for the benefit of you and your neighbors.

Our annual membership meetings start at 6 p.m., after a light supper of pulled pork sandwiches and ice cream. Following a short business meeting, there will be a brief update on what's happening at the electric utility YOU own. **You'll have a chance to ask questions and win prizes**, such as energy certificates worth \$10, \$25, or even \$50, and one lucky member will leave each meeting with a Grand Prize of an RCA 32-inch flatscreen TV/DVD combo.

Bring your kids, too. Besides enjoying a free meal, all youths ages 5–16 have a chance to win an iPod Touch. And, everyone goes home with a special thank-you gift.

Watch your mailbox for your family's personal invitation. See you there!

This year's dates and locations are:

May 11 – District 5
Fulton Middle School Gym

May 12 – District 1
St. Mary's Church Hall, Charlotte

May 13 – District 7
St. Michael's School, Remus

May 14 – District 3 (Election)
Eagle Park Hall

May 18 – District 4
Vestaburg Middle School

May 19 – District 6 (Election)
Beal City High School

May 20 – District 2
St. Edward's Church Hall,
Lake Odessa