

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

An underwater photograph of a shipwreck, likely the USS Mackinac, lying on the sandy bottom of Thunder Bay. A diver is visible in the lower right corner, providing a sense of scale. The water is clear and blue.

SUNKEN TREASURE

THUNDER BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

Plus!

Travel "Country Roads"
in Snap Shots

God's Helping Hands
Receives \$10,000

Gardner-Sagendorf
Farm History



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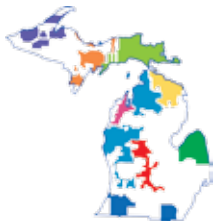
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countrylines.com

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POSTMASTER: SEND ALL UAA TO CFS.

Association officers are **Robert Schallip**, Cloverland Electric Cooperative, chairman; **Mark Kappler**, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric, vice chairman; and **Eric Baker**, Wolverine Power Cooperative, secretary-treasurer. **Craig Borr** is president and CEO.

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

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

IN THIS ISSUE

ON THE COVER*

The 4,300-square-mile Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, located on Lake Huron in Alpena, protects one of America's best-preserved and nationally-significant collections of shipwrecks.

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

Photo courtesy of NOAA Thunder Bay NMS

IN YOUR WORDS

Our new question of the month section of *Michigan Country Lines*. Let us know your answer and it may appear in the next month's issue or on your electric co-op's social media site. Please answer the question in your own words at <http://bit.ly/1MgI7W5>.

Now the question:

What in your life are you most thankful for?

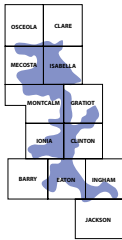
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Tri-County Electric Cooperative

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



Taking Electricity For Granted



Mark Kappler
General Manager

Most of us don't remember life before electricity, and the many conveniences it makes possible. We don't remember lighting candles or lanterns to extend the day beyond sunrise to sunset. We don't remember hours of back-breaking labor to pump water, wash clothes, or do farm chores to feed the family.

Did you know there are 1.2 billion people around the world who still live without the benefits of electric power? But we're doing something about it, one village at a time.

Over the past 50 years, since President John F. Kennedy signed the first USAID-NRECA agreement to use the cooperative model to electrify rural areas of developing countries, the NRECA International Foundation has provided access to safe, reliable and affordable electricity to 110 million people. NRECA is the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, assisting electric co-ops in 47 states with safety, communications, and legislative/regulatory programs.

For these women, men and children who have benefitted from our work, life has changed and improved in the form of better education, health, access to clean water, and economic opportunity. Agricultural productivity, millions of new jobs in micro and small enterprises, and higher incomes and quality of life for rural communities in more than 42 countries around the world are NRECA International's measurable outcomes.



The work is done by volunteer lineworkers and others who take time from their co-op jobs here in the U.S. And now it's Michigan's turn to become involved.

Two linemen from HomeWorks Tri-County will be part of a 10-man team, building a four-mile distribution line to connect the tiny mountain village of Buena Vista, Guatemala, to the electric grid. The villagers, who will become part of an electric cooperative in the region, are already clearing trees and setting poles—by hand—in the steep terrain.

Over three weeks in November, the Michigan team will build a single-phase distribution circuit, hang transformers, and install simple wiring (one light bulb and one outlet) in homes. They won't have bucket trucks or most of the modern tools that make these jobs much simpler here in the U.S.

HomeWorks Tri-County has supported NRECA International with small donations over the years, and we're excited to be part of this next step, putting boots on the ground where they're needed so badly. Our linemen will come back knowing they've changed these villagers' lives, and their own lives will be changed as well.

We take electricity for granted every day. Bringing electric power to a remote mountain village in Guatemala is a way to reach back to our roots and remember what life used to be like before farmers started working together in the 1930s to form electric co-ops in rural America. ■



Offices Closed Friday, Oct. 2

Our Blanchard and Portland offices will be closed Friday, Oct. 2, for all-employee training. Please call 1-800-848-9333 if you have a service issue; crews will be on-call.

Bill payments can be made by phone at 1-877-999-3395, or through SmartHub (click on My Account at homeworks.org, or download the free app for your iOS or Android device).



Area Students Visit Capitol

Bryce Thelen, left, of Westphalia, and Jordyn Rademacher of Fowler, represented HomeWorks Tri-County and Michigan at the National Rural Electric Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. During their June visit, they toured historical sites and met with members of Congress.

PORTABLE GENERATOR SAFETY TIPS



Always read the Owner's Manual and instructions for your generator. Do NOT cut corners when it comes to safety.

These tips are merely supplemental and are not intended to substitute reading of the Owner's Manual.

Carbon Monoxide and Ventilation

- Using a generator indoors **CAN KILL YOU IN MINUTES**. Exhaust contains carbon monoxide, a deadly poison gas you cannot see or smell.
- NEVER run a generator indoors or in partly enclosed areas, such as garages.
- ONLY use outdoors and far from windows, doors, vents, crawl spaces and in an area where adequate ventilation is available and will not accumulate deadly exhaust gas.
- Using a fan or opening doors and windows will not provide sufficient ventilation.
- It is recommended that you install battery operated carbon monoxide alarms/detectors indoors according to manufacturer's instructions/recommendations.

Gasoline, Fueling and Burn Safety

- If tank is over-filled, fuel can overflow onto a hot engine and cause fire or explosion.
- Do not overfill the fuel tank. Always allow room for fuel expansion.
- Never add fuel while unit is running or hot. Allow generator and engine to cool entirely before adding fuel.
- Never store a generator with fuel in the tank where gasoline vapors might reach an open flame, spark or pilot light.
- Many generator parts are hot enough to burn you during operation and while the generator is cooling after turning off. Avoid coming into contact with a hot generator.

Electrocution Hazard and Electrical Shock Hazards

- Connecting a portable electric generator directly to your household wiring can be deadly to you and others. A generator that is directly connected to your home's wiring can "back feed" onto the power lines connected to your home and injure neighbors or utility workers.
- Do not connect your generator directly to your home's wiring or into a regular household outlet.
- Always start or stop the generator only when no electrical loads are connected.
- Overloading your generator can seriously damage your valuable appliances and electronics. Do not overload the generator. Do not operate more appliances and equipment than the output rating of the generator. Prioritize your needs. A portable electric generator should be used only when necessary, and only to power essential equipment.
- Use the proper power cords. Plug individual appliances into the generator using heavy-duty, outdoor-rated cords with a wire gauge adequate for the appliance load. Overloaded cords can cause fires or equipment damage. Do not use extension cords with exposed wires or worn shielding.
- Do not operate the generator in wet conditions such as rain or snow.
- The generator must be properly grounded. If the generator is not grounded, you run the risk of electrocution. Check and adhere to all applicable federal, state and local regulations relating to grounding.

Generator Placement and Operation

- Allow at least five feet of clearance on all sides of the generator when operating.
- Generators can be used during a wide variety of weather temperatures, but should be protected from the elements when not in use to prevent shorting and rusting.
- Operate the generator only on level surfaces and where it will not be exposed to excessive moisture, dirt, dust or corrosive vapors.
- Inspect the generator regularly.
- Always disconnect the spark plug wire and place the wire where it cannot contact the spark plug to prevent accidental starting when setting up, transporting, adjusting or making repairs to the generator.

Source: American Red Cross with technical advice from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Fire Protection Association (publisher of the National Electric Code®) and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. ■



Maintain Your Home's Heating System Efficiency

By James Dulley

With the heating season soon upon us, make sure your heating system is running at its maximum efficiency. Doing a simple heating system tune-up yourself improves its efficiency, resulting in significant annual cost savings.

However, don't skip your regular professional maintenance calls just because you have done your own heating system mini-tune-up. There are many areas within a heating system that only a qualified technician can evaluate and adjust properly.

The first items to check are for safety. With a gas or propane furnace, put several drops of soapy water on any gas-line fittings you find. If the water bubbles at all, there are leaks. Leave your house *immediately* and call your gas company to have it repaired. With a heat pump, check to make sure the insulation on all of the external wiring looks correct. You can inspect potential 'bad spots'—damaged or frayed areas—more carefully once you turn the circuit breaker off.

Turn off the electric power to the heating unit at the circuit breaker panel. Remove its side cover to gain access to the blower. Using a vacuum cleaner brush attachment, clean any dust deposits off the blower. You may find bearing oil cups on the blower motor of older systems. Put a drop of oil in each cup.

Find the fan control switch and adjust the temperature setting lower. Common settings are on at 135 degrees and off at 100 degrees. Try using 110 and 90 degrees. This starts the blower sooner and

keeps it running longer as the heat exchanger heats up and then cools down.

Replace the cover and make sure all the cabinet screws are tight. Also, check the tightness of any cabinet screws you can find. Having the cabinet well-sealed improves efficiency by maintaining the proper air flow through the coils or over the heat exchanger surfaces. With a heat pump, also check the cabinet screws on the outdoor condenser unit.

Set up the thermostat so the furnace starts. Hold a stick of lighted incense near all the joints in the ductwork, both return and supply air ducts, to check for air leaks. If you find leaks, wipe dust off the surfaces and use mastic (a gooey, non-hardening material) around the leaking joints.

This is a good time to change your furnace filter or clean a central air cleaner element. Consider installing a more effective filter element than the low-cost fiberglass ones that many systems use. This may not help indoor air quality much, but it can keep the air-flow paths cleaner for more efficient heat transfer.

Check the accuracy of the wall thermostat. You may actually be keeping your house warmer than you realize. Tape a bulb thermometer on the wall next to your furnace. Check the thermometer reading when the furnace shuts off and note the difference between it and the thermostat setting. Now you will know where to set the thermostat to get the indoor temperature you desire. If it is inaccurate, replace it with a new electronic setback model. ■



SEAFOOD FAVORITES

Flavorful seafood recipes you will love!

Lobster Mac & Cheese

Doreen Zuznis, Clio

- kosher salt
- vegetable oil
- 1 lb. cavatappi (tubed corkscrew pasta)
- 1 qt. milk
- 8 T. (1 stick) unsalted butter, divided
- ½ c. all-purpose flour
- 12-oz. Gruyere cheese, grated (4 c.)
- 8-oz. extra-sharp cheddar, grated (2 c.)
- ½ t. freshly ground black pepper
- ½ t. nutmeg
- 1½ lb. cooked lobster meat (langostinos)

Preheat oven to 375°. Drizzle oil into a large pot of boiling salted water. Add pasta and cook according to the directions on the package, 6 to 8 minutes. Drain well. Meanwhile, heat the milk in a small saucepan, but don't boil it. In a large pot, melt 6 T. of butter and add the flour. Cook over low heat for 2 minutes, stirring with a whisk. Still whisking, add the hot milk and cook for a minute or two more, until thickened and smooth. Turn off the heat, add the Gruyere, Cheddar, 1 T. salt, the pepper, and nutmeg. Add the cooked macaroni and lobster meat and stir well. Place the mixture in a large casserole dish. Melt the remaining 2 T. of butter, combine them with the fresh bread crumbs, and sprinkle on the top. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until the sauce is bubbly and the macaroni is browned on the top.

Crab Casserole

Virginia Rubingh, Ellsworth

- ½ lb. fresh/frozen crab meat
- ½ c. sour cream
- 1 T. lemon juice
- pinch garlic salt
- 1¼ c. cheddar cheese, divided
- 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
- 2 T. Hellman's® mayonnaise
- 1¼ t. Worcestershire® sauce
- 1 T. milk

Mix all ingredients together in a casserole dish. Sprinkle half of the cheddar cheese on top. Bake at 325° for 25–30 minutes.

Seafood Pasta Salad

Betty Poradek, Stephenson

- 8-oz. pkg. imitation crab meat, cut up
- 8-oz. bag frozen mini shrimp, thawed (optional)
- ½ cup chopped celery
- 1–2 T. chopped green onion (including some tops)
- 1 can water chestnuts, chopped
- 8-oz. frozen peas, thawed
- 1 lb. bag rotini noodles, cooked
- dash dill weed
- 1½ c. Miracle Whip®
- 8-oz. sour cream

Mix all pasta together and chill for several hours. Keeps up to three days in fridge.

Dilly Fish

Gertrude Romanchuk, Traverse City

- fresh pan fish
- dill pickle juice
- instant potato flakes
- peanut oil

Wash fish and dry well with paper towels. Soak fish in dill pickle juice for 15–30 minutes. Roll in potato flakes and fry in peanut oil, turning once. Fry until golden brown. Very tasty!

SUBMIT YOUR RECIPE!

Thanks to all who send in recipes. Please send in your favorite "Easy Chicken" recipes by **Sept. 10**, "Chili" recipes by **Nov. 1** and "Gluten Free" recipes by **Dec. 1**.

Enter your recipe online at countrylines.com or send to (handprinted or typed on one side, please): *Country Lines* Recipes, 201 Townsend St., Suite 900, Lansing, MI 48933. 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)!

Dill Shrimp Salad (pictured)

Mary Babcock, Port Austin

- 4 c. cooked small shells or penne pasta
- 1 lb. cooked fresh shrimp, diced
- 1 c. frozen peas
- 1 c. small diced celery
- ½ c. chopped green onions, including tops
- ¼ c. minced fresh parsley
- 10 oz. plain Greek yogurt
- 1 c. mayonnaise
- ¼ c. fresh lemon juice
- 2 T. snipped fresh dill
- ½ t. salt
- ¼ t. white pepper

In a large bowl combine pasta, tuna, celery, onions, peas and parsley. In a small bowl combine yogurt, mayonnaise, lemon juice, dill, salt and pepper. Pour sauce over pasta, toss gently. Cover and refrigerate at least two hours. Serves 10.



People Fund Helps With Rent, Food, Personal Care

Meeting July 8, the Tri-County Electric People Fund board made seven grants totaling \$11,598, including:

- \$426 to the Ionia Community Library for their children's program;
- \$3,000 to St. Mary's SVDP, Charlotte, for rent and utility assistance;
- \$1,000 to the Friends of the Red Mill, Portland, for construction costs for a community building;
- \$1,200 to Project Starburst, Big Rapids, for personal care items;
- \$3,000 to CASA The Voice for Clinton County Children, St. Johns, for training costs and assistance for foster care children;
- \$1,000 to Hope's Pantry, Stanton, for food pantry items, and
- \$1,972 to an Ionia County family for roof repairs.

Since the People Fund was created in 1993, nearly \$2 million has been granted to families and organizations with special needs. These grants are made possible by members who allow us to "round up" their monthly energy bills to the next dollar.

Every penny donated by HomeWorks members and customers is put to good use in community projects. The administrative costs to run the People Fund are small, and are paid by HomeWorks Tri-County Electric as our contribution. ■

How to Apply for a Grant

The Tri-County Electric People Fund provides grants to individuals and organizations in the co-op's service area for food, shelter, clothing, health, and other humane needs, or for programs or services that benefit a significant segment of a community.

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

Note: Applications must be received by Sept. 21 for the September board meeting, or by Nov. 2 for the November meeting.



Rake in the Savings!

Did you know that heating and cooling accounts for more than half of the energy use in a typical U.S. home, making it the largest energy expense for most homes? **Rake in the savings** with these helpful energy savings tips this fall.

- **Install a programmable thermostat**
Through proper use of the pre-programmed settings, a programmable thermostat can save you up to 10 percent on your heating and cooling costs.
- **Clean / Change the air filter**
Lower your heating and cooling energy consumption by up to 15 percent by cleaning or replacing furnace filters.
- **Schedule a tune-up before you need one**
Schedule a tune-up with your heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) contractor. To find a qualified contractor nearest you, visit our website or call.

ONLINE: michigan-energy.org

PHONE: 877.296.4319

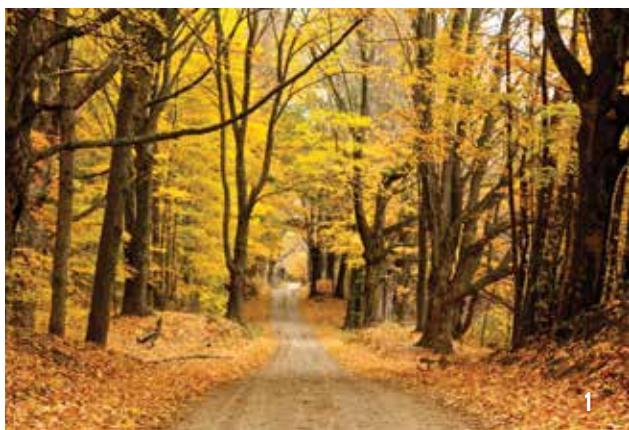


Energy
Optimization



Tri-County Electric
Cooperative

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.



Capture your Favorite Moments and Share

1. "My favorite country road in Isabella County is Littlefield Road, also known as Old State Road," says Christine Loose, of Lake, of this fall photo.
2. Chris Thelen, of Fowler, shares this shot of a country road near Fowler, at dusk.
3. Ronalda Keefer, of Mulliken, took this photo at the Tunnel of Trees near Cross Village.
4. Jerry Jackson, of Canadian Lakes, sent in this photo of an Amish horse and buggy on a Mecosta County road taken in May 2015.

See more amazing photos 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

"Michigan's Splendor," Deadline: **Sept. 17** (Nov/Dec. issue). Upcoming topics for 2016 include "**Best of Selfies**," due **Nov. 15** and "**Cute Pets**," due **Dec. 15**.

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.

Fuel Mix Report

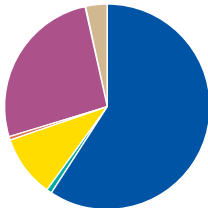
The fuel mix characteristics of HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Co-op as required by Public Act 141 of 2000 for the 12-month period ended 6/30/15.

COMPARISON OF FUEL SOURCES USED

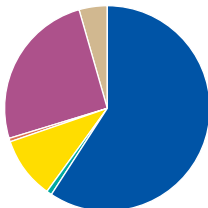
Regional average fuel mix used		
Your co-op's fuel mix		
FUEL SOURCE		
Coal	58.4%	60.4%
Oil	0.6%	0.7%
Gas	10.3%	8.9%
Hydroelectric	1.4%	0.5%
Nuclear	20.9%	24.6%
Renewable Fuels	8.4%	4.9%
Biofuel	0.9%	0.7%
Biomass	0.3%	0.4%
Solar	0.1%	0.1%
Solid Waste Incineration	0.0%	0.0%
Wind	6.7%	3.2%
Wood	0.4%	0.5%

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	5.1	7.6
Carbon Dioxide	1,559	2,170
Oxides of Nitrogen	1.7	2.0
High-level Nuclear Waste	0.0072	0.0083

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

HomeWorks Tri-County Electric purchases 100% of its electricity from Wolverine Power Cooperative, which provided this fuel mix and environmental data.

Your Board in Action

Meeting at Portland, June 22, your board of directors:

- Reviewed the annual IRS Form 990 tax filing, as required for non-profit organizations, and authorized staff to file the Form 990, as accepted.
- Heard a report on the cooperative's new "Pay As You Go" prepaid electricity service, which has been in a successful pilot test phase.
- Discussed the 2015 district membership meetings and a draft agenda for the Annual Meeting of the cooperative in August.
- Went over a draft agenda for a strategic planning work session, to be held in conjunction with the September board meeting.
- Authorized a contribution of \$2,000 to the CFC System Integrity Fund, to be paid out of the cooperative's 2015 capital credit retirement from CFC.
- Read and approved Board Policy 306 – "Workers' Compensation" and Board Policy 307 – "Employee Use of Cooperative Equipment," and approved moving both policies to the Employee Handbook. Learned there were no identity theft incidents reported during the past quarter, in a report required by Board Policy 316 – "Identity Theft."
- Learned there were 118 new members in May.
- Acknowledged the June safety report, listing employee training and minor employee and public incidents.

Meeting at Blanchard, July 27, your board of directors:

- Discussed the June 22 tornado at Portland and its effects on the cooperative and community.
- Reviewed a 10-year financial forecast and its assumptions as well as the projected rates and equity levels based on investment into plant.
- Heard updates from Craig Borr, CEO of the statewide association, on possible changes to energy policies being debated in Lansing, as well as on planning for Michigan electric co-ops' international outreach project in Guatemala.
- Renewed and updated the LIBOR Line of Credit authorization with banker CFC.
- Heard quarterly updates on the Energy Optimization program and the Tri-County Electric People Fund.
- Adopted a resolution authorizing the general manager to enter into a cooperative credit card program with banker CFC.
- Read and approved Board Policy 308 – "Family and Medical Leave" and Board Policy 309 – "Employee Voluntary Education and Training" with minor updates, and approved moving both policies to the Employee Handbook.
- Learned there were 122 new members in June.
- Acknowledged the July safety report, listing employee training and several employee and public incidents.

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 Sept. 28 at Canadian Lakes, and Oct. 26 at Portland. Members who need directions to either meeting or wish to have items considered on the board agenda should call 517-647-7554. ■

Portland Area Tornado Damages HomeWorks Office

An EF-1 tornado ripped through the town of Portland on June 22, damaging the property and facilities of the headquarters of HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Co-op, and causing major damage to about 11 other businesses, 70 homes, and four churches. About five people received minor injuries, with no fatalities.

The HomeWorks Tri-County office in Portland was damaged in several areas, but the co-op was still able to run operations from the building, and no employees were hurt. "We lost power to about 1,470 customers for a short time after the tornado, due to a high-line fuse in the Wolverine Power Cooperative

substation on our property, but that was minimal," reports general manager, Mark Kappler. "We also had a few outages on one of the substation feeders, but once those had been taken care of and the line patrolled for other issues, we were able to release our crews, and two contractor crews, to provide mutual aid to the City of Portland's electric department."

Among other damage, Tri-County lost the entrance gate, an overhead door to



the truck garage, and an Operations center window, and a propane shed was tossed around the yard. In the office area, wind tore many small pieces from the outside of the building, and its suction caused some damage to the roof and ceilings over a couple of offices. Initial estimates of damage were about \$100,000, and contractors have already been lined up for the repairs.

Many large trees were snapped off and one just missed hitting the Community Solar Garden. A family of raptors lost their home, leaving a young hawk clinging to a low branch while crews worked around it. "We made it a priority to take care of this baby, since its parents were lost to the storm," Kappler said. "We contacted area wildlife rescue groups and Chris Reed, Chris Teachout, and Jon Shattuck worked together to safely capture the hawk and get it to a raptor rescue center in Dewitt." ■



This young hawk lost its family and home when the tornado destroyed the woods on the west side of the co-op's property. Employees made sure it was safely captured and re-homed to a raptor rescue center.

Public Act 295: The Clean Renewable and Efficient Energy Act

2014 Annual Energy Optimization Report

HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative—MPSC Case Number U-17373

HomeWorks Tri-County contracted with the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association (MECA) to administer the Energy Optimization (EO) efforts in order to comply with PA-295. MECA filed a 4-year Energy Optimization plan with the MPSC on Aug. 1, 2011, as required by PA 295. This EO plan was approved by the MPSC on Nov. 10, 2011, and we began implementing the plan Jan. 1, 2012. The Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corporation (WECC) was selected to implement all Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Programs, and the Energy Optimization website michigan-energy.org. WECC has subcontracted with JACO, Michigan Energy Options, Franklin Energy, Morgan Marketing Partners, and Honeywell to assist with the implementation of the EO Programs. MECA contracted with KEMA as the independent 3rd party evaluation contractor for the certification of kWh savings.

In 2014, HomeWorks Tri-County collected \$535,849 through the Energy Optimization Surcharge and spent \$493,557 resulting in an over-collection of \$42,292 which will be applied towards the 2015 EO Program delivery expenses and goal achievement. HomeWorks Tri-County achieved 3,461 MWh of energy savings in 2014. For every dollar spent on energy efficiency programs, customers will save \$3.61 in avoided energy costs. The full report can be obtained at michigan-energy.org or <http://efile.mpsc.state.mi.us/efile>.

SUNKEN TREASURE

THUNDER BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

By Emily Haines

The eerie romance of a shipwreck is something that seems saved for epic adventure novels or blockbuster Hollywood movies. But just off the coast of Lake Huron, near unassuming Alpena, MI—is one of the most treacherous stretches of water in the Great Lakes—a place called Thunder Bay.

If the name itself sounds ominous, it's because Thunder Bay offers up unpredictable shifts in weather, alarming gales, fog banks and notoriously rocky shoals that play ghostly host to an area fittingly called—Shipwreck Alley. There lies the remains of over 200 ships, only about 100 that have been physically discovered. While it's difficult to imagine the friendly beaches of the Great Lakes as anything but welcoming, these deep and traitorous waters were once bustling byways for both recreational and business mariners, not all that ended at their intended destination.

"It's easy to stay motivated and excited in your work when you're dealing with such a robust historical landscape," said Stephanie Gandulla, maritime archeologist and media coordinator for Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary. "There are so many stories lying just below the surface of the Great Lakes."

Those stories just increased substantially as the marine sanctuary has grown from 448 square miles to a remarkable 4,300 miles as of last September. This means expanding both research and educational programs as well as a multi-year plan to "characterize" every known shipwreck in the sanctuary. Characterizing can mean a variety of informational components including having a site map, photography, data and sonar images, or even knowing the name and vessel information.

"It's no wonder our student programs appeal to our younger visitors," said Gandulla. "You don't have to be able to scuba dive 300 feet to have an interaction with maritime history. We provide and encourage hands-on experiences both in and on the water."

The experiences are anything from a class trip to the sanctuary's impressive Visitor's Center, with over 10,000 feet of exhibits, participating in a program on shipwreck archeology, or building underwater robotics. There are also glass bottom boat tours that allow visitors to view shipwrecks without ever getting their feet wet. Gandulla says it's not uncommon for students who have had a field trip in elementary or high school or invested themselves in a Shipwreck Alley class to later become a volunteer as an adult.



Twisted hull of the German freighter Nordmeer (1954–1966).



The bow of the schooner *E.B. Allen* (1864–1871).



The *Florida* (1889–1897) still sits upright with its package freight still inside.

While all of this is available in our state's backyard, people from around the world come to marvel at these maritime catacombs, as well.

"Beyond the rich and special maritime history of this area, it's also a remarkable place to vacation," said Gandulla. "We have world class recreational opportunities available to us in Michigan and we feel very strongly about sharing them with people from around the globe." ■



The Monohansett, lies only 18 feet below the water's surface.

Visit

If you're interested in a trip to the Visitor's Center, visit thunderbay.noaa.gov/visit. Or, to book a glass bottom boat tour go to alpenashipwrecktours.com/. For more information call 989-356-8805.

Project Shiphunt

On July 13, 2011, the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary (NMS) announced the discovery of two Great Lakes shipwrecks. The discoveries were part of Project Shiphunt, an exciting archaeological expedition, sponsored by Sony and the Intel Corp, that included five high school students from Saginaw. For more on the project, visit thunderbay.noaa.gov/shiphunt.html

Monohansett Site

For a sneak peek at the kind of discoveries you can expect, take a look at the Monohansett, a ship wrecked in 1907 that lies in three sections just 18 feet below water. thunderbay.noaa.gov/shipwrecks/monohansett.html

Photo below: With the hull broken just forward of the boiler house and the ship listing hard to port, the wreck of the Norman, which claimed the lives of three sailors, is an intense dive experience.

Photos by NOAA, Thunder Bay NMS

Gardner-Sagendorf Farm is Belvidere Township's History

The story of the Gardner-Sagendorf Centennial Farm is also the story of the creation of Belvidere Township in Montcalm County. Myrle Sagendorf, the current owner of the farm, has written a brief history of both to share with family and friends.

The farm was originally purchased July 1, 1864, by William Gardner, who was the second white man to settle with his family in the wilds of what would become Belvidere Township. Originally from the Finger Lakes area of New York state, he came to Michigan with a younger brother and ended up helping run a general store in Cascade. There he met and married Melissa Martha Strong, daughter of Jared and Jane Strong, some of the first non-natives to settle east of the Thornapple River in Cascade.

Both brothers decided to homestead further north; Daniel helped to settle the town of Stanton, running a general store and shingle mill there.

A few miles further north, William Gardner cut out his own road, zigzagging through the woods for 2½ miles to a spot near a spring in the middle of a forest,

then began to clear the land. Other settlers came to the area, including George Stephenson, William Taylor, John Hamell, George and William Wysel, and Sam Smith, and there were enough voters to create a township. Meeting at Gardner's home on April 1, 1867, they agreed to name the township "Belvidere" after the Illinois town where his brother lived. The voters also elected Gardner Justice of the Peace. Over the next 10 years, he also filled the offices of supervisor and treasurer, in turn.

William and Melissa had five children: Bertha, Jennie, Willie, Guian, and Ida Belle. Bertha married Willard Sagendorf in 1880, and they had six children: Clayton, Rada, Vernice, Ava, Nina Belle, and Wilfred J. "Pete", who married Nina Reynolds in 1921.

Pete and Nina had two children, Wilbur and Dorita, and after holding on to the farm through the Depression years, were able to expand and add a dairy operation.

When Wilbur married Myrle Christiansen, daughter of a Danish immigrant, Bertha wrote a letter to them recounting life during the early years on the Gardner place:

'How happy we were to be in our home again! There were four of us: me (Bertha) 7, Jenny 5, Willie 4, and baby Guian, one-year-old. We had no neighbors closer than 2½ miles but we were never lonely. Bears, deer, and wolves very plentiful. On moonlit nights we could see wolves skipping about, and our first corn crop was shared with the bears who could tear the shocks apart. Then sometimes the deer would get some after the bears were satisfied. But try hard as they could by watching nights, the men could never catch them at it. They thought they must have smelled them!



Above: Wilbur and Dorita Sagendorf in front of the windmill and back porch.

Right: Wilbur and Myrle Sagendorf's Belvidere Township home. The pudding stone in the photo was removed from the ground where William Gardner built his log cabin, and is considered the Sagendorf "family stone" on which five generations of children have enjoyed playing. The stone will be passed on to Wilbur and Myrle's granddaughter Laura and her husband Jarot, who live east of Blanchard.





Wilfred "Pete" and Nina Sagendorf, the parents of Myrle's husband, Wilbur.

'Our friends were also Indians. Every fall for some years, there was a party of them who camped on the creek running through our place. They would come and put up their teepees made of poles and hunt and fish in the lakes nearby. My father was a good friend of the Indians, saying they had been treated unfairly. They came to the house very often to get something to eat, and though we had little ourselves, they were never turned away.

'We never went hungry as many of the new settlers did through the first years. We only had dry bread for days at a time but it was always good bread. Sometimes we children sprinkled salt on it for a change.

'It was in Civil War times and everything was so high. Flour was \$18 to \$20 a barrel. Pa used to shave shingles evenings and when he got a load ready, he would get my uncle, who had a yoke of oxen, to take it to Stanton and a man bought it and took it to Ionia for flour.

'One barrel of flour was wormy and every bit of it had to be sifted very carefully. Another was full of weevils, little reddish bugs, but we still had to use it for it was so far to Ionia and the price was so terrible that we could not waste any of it. Tea was \$2.00 and coarse brown sugar was 18 to 20 cents per pound. But we never thought of complaining!'

Wilbur and Myrle inherited the farm in 1977, and built the current home. They had four children, Wendell, Karen, Sue and René. Wendell's daughter, Laura (Jarot) Karcher of Blanchard, shared Myrle's written history, which was supplemented by Michael Johnson, son of Wilbur's sister Dorita. ■



God's Helping Hands Receives \$10,000 Gift

A \$10,000 gift was presented to God's Helping Hands by HomeWorks Tri-County director, Dean Floria of Remus and general manager, Mark Kappler.

"We were pleased to have this opportunity to support an organization like God's Helping Hands. Our rural communities need these services and this gift will help God's Helping Hands stock its pantry and serve our neighbors," said Floria, who represents Mecosta and Osceola counties on the HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative board.

The gift was made possible by a \$5,000 matching grant from one of the cooperative's lenders, CoBank, as part of CoBank's Sharing Success program. This \$3 million charitable fund was designed to benefit cooperatives and the charitable groups they support throughout rural America.

God's Helping Hands of Mecosta County, located two miles west of Remus, is a community coalition dedicated to helping the poor and the needy through emergency food services. The Food Pantry is sustained by nine churches in eastern Mecosta County. Their Resale Store, which provides 72 percent of the funding for God's Helping Hands, is open to all, but pricing is kept low to serve low-income families.

Displaying the grant check were, from left, Randy Pyatt, director of God's Helping Hands; Ray Simon, one of the original founders; HomeWorks Tri-County director Dean Floria; Felix Younger, deputy director of God's Helping Hands; and Mark Kappler, HomeWorks Tri-County general manager.

(Photo by Kacey Hengesbach)

Communicating in the Age of the Emoji

By Jack O'Malley

A few years ago my son stood before a display of old rotary phones in an antique store, puzzled by the seemingly ancient devices. "How did people text with those?" he asked. I chuckled before the thought occurred to me. An entire generation now exists who've never known life without mobile phones, text messages, Google or social media.

In today's world of technology a new digital language based on acronyms and emojis has emerged, allowing people to communicate instantly with little more than a few letters and characters. In the old days, we huddled around the handset during a long-distance call, everyone listening and talking at the same time because the calls were too expensive for everyone to have a separate turn talking. I guess I'm officially an old fogie! LOL

Mobile phones have become such an essential part of our lives, we have a hard time functioning without one. Like an extra appendage, we rely on a cell's convenience, intelligence and sheer ability to do almost anything. Want to play Scrabble? Download the app. Want to enhance a photo? Download an app. Want to check Facebook? Download the app. Want to shop? Download an app. There are apps (short for "applications," programs designed specifically for use on portable devices) for everything. Just ask my wife. She'll tell you. SMH (that's **s**haking **m**y **h**ead for all you rookies out there.)

Our reliance on digital technology can only be ascertained when we forget our cell. Ever reached for your phone to make a quick call or send a text



only to realize you left your cell on the charger at home? Panic ensues. I've actually broken into a sweat and driven an hour round trip just to have my phone on hand! :)



Jack O'Malley

Times have sure changed since I was a lad. These kids might run circles around me when it comes to their smart phones, but I had something they didn't. The most popular rotary phone ever made, an original Fisher-Price Chatter Telephone toy. And let me tell you, it was GR8! ■



«« Where in Michigan is This?

Every co-op member who identifies the correct location of the photo at left by **Oct. 10** will be entered in a drawing to win a \$50 electricity credit 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*, 201 Townsend St., Suite 900, Lansing, MI 48933. Include the name on your account, address, phone number, and name of your co-op.

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