

# MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

**IT'S NATIONAL  
COOPERATIVE MONTH!**

**THANKS FOR BEING A MEMBER.**



**Plus!**

Free Energy-Saving Gifts

Automated Metering Benefits

How Your Co-op  
Restores Power



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*and it isn't just corn.*

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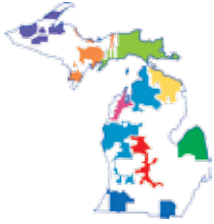
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\$600 value



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1. Get a FREE Symphony with select geothermal packages. Promotion ends December 18th, 2015.



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

# IN THIS ISSUE

## ON THE COVER\*

Chad Pastotnik, proprietor of Deep Wood Press in Mancelona, MI, has garnered prestigious international acclaim for his handcrafted publications. Pastotnik prints for New York's Museum of Modern Art, numerous state archives and university special collections from Ann Arbor, Michigan, to Auckland, New Zealand.

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

## IN YOUR WORDS

This is 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 at [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com). Submissions are due November 12.

**Now the question:**

If you could win a 'life-time supply' of anything what would you want it to be?

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# Co-ops Enrich Our Lives



**Steve Boeckman**  
Great Lakes Energy  
President/CEO

Co-ops, like Great Lakes Energy, come in all shapes and sizes. I grew up in a small town in Wisconsin where dairy farming was a big part of the local economy. My grandparents were farmers and growing up I remember hearing references to “the co-op”. They weren’t talking about the electric co-op, but rather the local farmer’s feed co-op. It was a central part of their livelihood, like it is in many small farming families, and just one example of a co-op.

Cooperatives are still a big part of all our lives. For example, you may use a pre-school co-op for childcare, buy groceries from a food co-op or bank at a credit union, also a co-op.

As a consumer of electricity, you’re a member of your local electric co-op—Great Lakes Energy.

As a co-op member you receive a share of the profits when Great Lakes Energy’s financial conditions allow. Great Lakes Energy is not-for-profit which means we don’t return dividends to shareholders. Our rates are based on our actual costs to serve you with reliable energy. Since 2003, we’ve returned more than \$41 million in profits to our members. These profits are returned as a capital credit refund on your December bill. Capital credit refunds are one of the most tangible benefits you receive as a member of GLE.

Being a member of a co-op also means you have a say in governance. Great Lakes Energy’s board of directors is elected by the co-op’s members. Each board member also receives electricity from the co-op. Watch for more information next April on the 2016 director election.

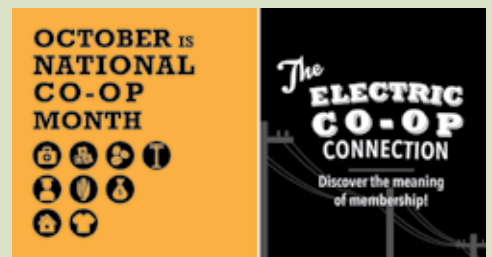
This month and every October we celebrate National Cooperative Month. It’s a time for co-ops across the country to celebrate their unique way of doing business.

For GLE, it’s a time to thank our members for their service. ■

## Thanks For Being A Member!

Stop into one of our offices in October to receive a free energy saving gift and Energy Optimization information. Plus, sign up to win one of three great prizes:

- 1st prize:** 32" LED Energy Star-rated TV
- 2nd prize:** \$100 worth of LED lights
- 3rd prize:** \$50 worth of LED lights



LED lights are compliments of Petoskey Home Depot. One giveaway and one entry per account. Giveaways available while supplies last.

# Help Yourself by Helping ACRE

**Y**ou invest in Great Lakes Energy and receive safe and reliable service in return. There's another investment—and it's strictly voluntary—that also helps preserve the co-op service you value. It's called the ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action® program.

The Action Committee for Rural Electrification (ACRE) is the political action committee of the nation's electric cooperatives. Co-ops formed ACRE, their own political action group, in the early 1970s. Electric co-ops, like many other industries, rely on support from political leaders to ensure programs that benefit our industry and our members remain intact.

Now, ACRE membership is available to GLE's residential and seasonal members. Contributing to ACRE is completely voluntary. It's supported by co-op employees, board members and even co-op members across the country. In fact, 100 percent of GLE's board of directors contributed to ACRE this year. No money from your bill is contributed to ACRE.

What's the connection between electric co-ops and political action committees? Electric co-ops were born in politics when President Roosevelt formed the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) in the mid-1930s. The REA still exists today as the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) and is vital to the continuation of low-interest financing for rural utilities. Contributions from ACRE to legislators have helped keep RUS in existence and strengthen legislative support for many other programs important to electric co-ops and their members.

The ACRE program works to support candidates for the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives who understand and support electric cooperatives and their members. Plus, nearly 50 percent of all ACRE contributions come back to the state level and are used to support local candidates and legislators.

An ACRE enrollment card was included with your September bill\*.

For more information on the ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action® program call 1-888-485-2537, ext. 8957, or e-mail: [glenergy@glenergy.com](mailto:glenergy@glenergy.com). ■

*Contributions to ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action® are not tax deductible. All contributions to ACRE are voluntary and will be used for political purposes. Contribution guidelines are suggestions only. You may contribute more or less than the recommended amount. You may refuse to contribute without reprisal. No corporate checks or contributions accepted. Only residential and seasonal members are eligible.*

*\*Residential and seasonal accounts only.*

## Quick Facts About



- ACRE is bi-partisan
- Funds are contributed to federal and state legislators who support electric cooperatives
- Participation is voluntary
- No rate dollars are contributed
- GLE employees and board members participate
- The average contribution is \$56/year
- Nearly 9,000 co-op members participate nationwide

## Tell Us How We're Doing!

### You Could Win a \$25 Gift of Energy

We'd like to hear from you. Have you had a positive interaction with a GLE employee either on the phone or in-person? Tell us about it and you could win a \$25 gift of energy.

Contact us with specific details of the interaction, including the employee name, by phone, mail or email. You can even post the comment through a form on our website or on our Facebook page. We'll print your great comments in our employee newsletter. Employees who are recognized will be entered in a quarterly, random prize drawing. Plus, we'll award the member who submits the feedback for the winning employee a \$25 gift of energy!

We appreciate your feedback! We also welcome any suggestions or concerns with our service so we can work with you to resolve your issue as quickly as possible.

## Contact us with your feedback today.

Please be specific and include the employee name.

888-GT-LAKES

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# Balancing Temps in a Two-Story Home

By James Dulley

**E**ven with the newest heat pump systems there can still be problems keeping all the rooms in your home comfortable. Someone is always too hot or too cold, particularly in a two-story home. Unless you install an expensive zone-control system with multiple thermostats, your heat pump can only respond to the temperature of the room where the wall thermostat is located.

Numerous factors determine how much heating or cooling is used. These can include the number and orientation of the windows, what floor the room is located on, activity level and the length of the duct leading to it.

There may also be differences in the energy efficiency of various rooms, which cause the temperature difference. Leaky windows are a common problem. When using an air-conditioning system, place an air deflector over the register to help distribute cool air.

Check your home's attic insulation, especially if it is the blown-in type. The insulation can shift, and some rooms can have 2 feet of insulation while others only have 2 inches. This will affect room temperature.

Standard sheet metal ductwork often has many leaky spots, so some of the heated or cooled air leaving the heat pump never makes it to the rooms in your home. The joints between the duct segments are the most common areas that leak. Use a high-quality duct tape to wrap all of the joints, and this may take care of most of the problem.

Each room should have a return air register, particularly bedrooms where the doors may be closed at night.



Check the ducts near the heat pump. If you see short handles on each one, they are for controlling dampers inside the ducts. Partially close the dampers in the ducts leading to the rooms which are getting too much heating or cooling to force more to the problem rooms.

Don't try closing the damper in the room's floor or wall registers. They typically are leaky, so the air flow will not be reduced by much. Also, the ducts inside the walls are probably leaky and you may have no access to seal them, so conditioned air is lost inside the exterior walls.

If these methods do not provide adequate temperature balancing, consider installing duct booster fans. These small fans mount in the ducts to the problem rooms and force more air to them.

The fans sense when the main blower turns on, and automatically run at the same time. Others have built-in thermostats to determine when they run. The fan can be wired into your blower switch to turn on with the heat pump.

A simple do-it-yourself option is to install a small register booster fan. This fan mounts over the register cover and plugs into a standard wall outlet. The fan uses about 30 watts of electricity, and some are adjustable to turn on only when more cooling or heating is needed in that particular room.

Setting the thermostat to "continuous fan" may also help, but note that it will increase your electric bill. The fan setting is most helpful if your new heat pump has a variable-speed blower that can continuously run on a low speed. These motors are also more efficient than a standard blower motor. ■



## Use Your Space Heater Safely

**M**any people use space heaters for winter warmth, but they can be dangerous if used improperly.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that 25,000 home fires every year are associated with space heaters, causing over 300 deaths. An additional 6,000 people annually go to the hospital for related burns.

These fires are caused by contact with or nearness to the heating elements, flammable fuels used in the heaters, defective wiring, and carbon monoxide poisoning caused by improper venting or incomplete fuel combustion. ■

### Here are tips for using an electric space heater safely:

- Keep it at least 3 feet from flammables, such as curtains, clothing, furniture or bedspreads.
- Select a model with an automatic shut-off, in case it tips.
- Buy one that is certified by an independent testing lab, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- Buy the right size to handle the area to be heated.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Keep kids and pets at a safe distance.
- Never leave it unattended, or sleep with it on.
- Never use or store flammable liquids near it.
- Do not use it in a bathroom—a high-moisture area can cause damage.
- Keep it away from water to prevent electrocution.
- Check the cord for fraying and cracks, and do not use an extension cord to run it.
- Be sure the plug fits snugly in the outlet. (The cord and plug may feel warm when operating, but it shouldn't feel hot. If it does, unplug it and have a repair person check for problems.)
- Do not try to repair a broken heater yourself—go to a qualified appliance service center.

Visit [cpsc.gov](https://www.cpsc.gov) for more safety tips on space heaters and ones that use wood or kerosene.



## Pretzel Rods

*Fred Black, Sandusky*

- 1 lb. dark chocolate
- 50 large pretzel rods
- different colored sugars

Pour colored sugar on wax or parchment paper. Melt chocolate and pour into a tall glass. Hold onto end of pretzel and dip  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the pretzel into the melted chocolate. Roll the pretzels in the sugar and put on plate to cool.

Photos—831 Creative

# CANDY

Irresistible recipes perfect for entertaining crowds or giving as gifts.



## Luau Bark (pictured)

Deborah Black, Sandusky

- 1 lb. white chocolate
- ¾ c. chopped pecans
- ¾ c. toasted coconut
- ½ c. miniature marshmallows
- ½ c. chopped dried cherries
- ½ c. chopped dried pineapple

Melt the chocolate in a double boiler. Add all ingredients and stir in. Spread on parchment paper in 11x14-inch rectangle pan. Cut into squares when set. When cool, break apart.



## Saltine Cracker Candy with Toasted Pecans

Mary Ann Schultz, Scottville

- 35 saltine crackers
- 1 c. butter, cubed
- 1 c. packed brown sugar
- 2 c. (12-oz.) semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 c. toasted pecans (see below)\*

Preheat oven to 350°. Line a 15x10x1-inch baking pan with foil; grease foil. Arrange saltines in a single layer on foil. In a large heavy saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Stir in brown sugar. Bring to a boil; cook and stir 3–4 minutes, or until sugar has dissolved. Spread mixture evenly over saltine crackers. Bake 8–10 minutes, or until bubbly. Immediately sprinkle with chocolate chips. Allow chips to soften for a few minutes, then spread over top. Sprinkle with pecans. Cool slightly. Refrigerate, uncovered 1 hour or until set. Break into pieces. Store in an airtight container in refrigerator.

\*To toast nuts: Spread pecans in a 15x10x1-inch baking pan. Bake at 350° for 5–10 minutes, or until lightly browned, stirring occasionally.

## Easy Pralines

Faye Adkins, Tecumseh

- 1 pkg. butterscotch pudding powder (not instant)
- 1 c. granulated sugar
- ½ c. brown sugar
- ½ c. evaporated milk
- 1 T. butter
- 1½ c. broken pecans

To a heavy 2 quart saucepan over low heat, add pudding mix, granulated sugar, brown sugar, evaporated milk and butter. Stir and cook until sugar dissolves. Add pecans. Cook and stir to a full boil. Boil slowly 3–5 minutes, stirring often, until candy reaches soft ball stage. To test readiness, drop a small piece of the mixture in a bowl of cold water. If it forms into a soft, flexible ball, it is ready. Take off heat. Beat until candy thickens but still looks shiny. Drop quickly with a tablespoon onto waxed paper to form 2-inch patties. Allow 1 spoonful for each. Let stand until firm. Makes 24.

## Rocky Road Candy

Mákara Garcia, Baldwin

- 1 pkg. (6-oz.) semi-sweet chocolate pieces
- 1 square (1-oz.) unsweetened chocolate
- 1 T. butter
- 2¼ c. powdered sugar
- ½ t. salt
- 1 t. vanilla
- 2 c. salted peanuts
- 2 c. miniature marshmallows

Melt chocolate pieces, unsweetened chocolate and butter in a large saucepan over low heat, stirring until smooth. Remove from heat. Mix in sugar, salt and vanilla. Blend in chocolate mixture and stir in peanuts and marshmallows. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto waxed paper. Chill for 2 hours or until firm. Store in refrigerator and remove just before serving. Makes about 4 dozen candies.

## SUBMIT YOUR RECIPE!

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

Enter your recipe online at [countrylines.com](http://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)!

# Save Energy and Protect Against Vampires!

Turn off the lights in your computer or TV room, and you'll probably see "eyes" peering through the darkness. All of those glowing LEDs, clocks and power switches are sneaky electronic vampires, feeding on your home's energy as your utility bills rise. While you can't completely slay those thirsty vampires you can manage them with a smart power strip.

## What is a smart power strip?

Smart power strips are similar to conventional power strips. However, smart strips sense when a main or master electronic device (TV, computer) is turned off, and will automatically shut down other devices associated with it (DVD player, gaming devices, cable/satellite boxes, printer.) By completely shutting down those devices, the phantom load (vampire) is gone and you will not use extra energy.



## About your smart power strip.

- **Energy savings:** Your smart power strip can reduce your home's energy use by 5 to 10 percent. It only uses 1 watt of electricity when turned on, and 0 watts when the green control outlets are off.
- **Money savings:** \$10 rebate available when you buy ENERGY STAR® smart power strips. Visit [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org) for information on how to receive your mail-in rebate.
- **Handy:** A lighted power switch and built-in filters prevent you from accidentally turning things off.

Please visit [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org) for more information, or call 877.296.4319 with any questions. ■

*Slay*  
**ENERGY  
VAMPIRES!**



## Beware of energy vampires lurking in your home!

Did you know many electrical gadgets and appliances use energy even when turned off? Stop energy vampires with a smart power strip.

**ENERGY TIP:** A smart power strip can reduce your home's energy use by 5-10%. It uses 1 watt of electricity when turned on and 0 watts when the green control outlets are off.

ONLINE: [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org)  
PHONE: 877.296.4319



# Talented Members Share 'Sunrise and Sunset' Photos



1



2



3



4



5



6



7

1. There is nothing better than watching the sunset from the top of a Jeep.  
By Michelle Lyon, Hart
2. Sunset of Lake Michigan beach near Montague. By Gina Lorenson, Irons
3. Overlooking Placid Lake in Kalkaska. One of the most beautiful sunrises I have ever seen in my 60+ years of life.  
By Mary Shaner, Kalkaska
4. Sunset over Fayette in October.  
By Linda Jensen, Ewart
5. My husband and I saw this from our living room window. It was the most brilliant sunset we had ever seen.  
By Janice Harver, Charlevoix
6. Moon setting over Boyne Highlands in the light of the morning sunrise.  
By Gail Ives, Harbor Springs
7. Sunset over the Grand Canyon, South rim.  
By Tammy Melvin, Hamilton

See more amazing photos at  
[facebook.com/greatlakesenergy](https://www.facebook.com/greatlakesenergy)

## Enter the 'Pay My Bill' Photo Contest!

Great Lakes Energy members whose photos we print in *Country Lines* will be entered in a drawing and one lucky member will win a credit (up to \$200) on their December 2015 energy bill. Upcoming topics for 2016 include **"Best of Selfies,"** due **Nov. 15** for the January issue; **"Cute Pets,"** due **Dec. 15** for the February issue; and **"Winter Fun,"** due **Jan. 15** for the March issue.

Visit [gtlakes.com/photocontest](http://gtlakes.com/photocontest) to submit your high resolution digital photo, read contest rules and see upcoming themes for 2016. To send by mail: Include your name, address, phone number, photographer's name, topic and details about your photo to: *Country Lines* Best Shots, P.O. Box 70, Boyne City, MI 49712. Photos will not be returned. Do not send color laser prints or professional studio photos. We look forward to seeing your best shot!

# A Refrigerator Note Could Save a Life

A note on the refrigerator could be a lifesaver for senior citizens in Mecosta, Osceola and Lake counties who participate in the File of Life program.

Recognizing the high percentage of elderly in their service area, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is working with area emergency agencies and other senior citizen assistance groups to make the File of Life available to senior citizens in the three counties who could benefit by this service.

"The File of Life provides a substantial preventive step that residents can take to help prevent tragedy should a medical emergency occur in their home," explains RSVP Director Sandy Dalrymple. "Medics who arrive at a home where the victim is unable to effectively communicate can quickly obtain the personal medical information they need."

That information includes the person's name, emergency medical contacts, insurance policy and health problems, medications, doctor's name and health care proxy. The information appears on a card contained in a red plastic pocket labeled "FILE OF LIFE" held by a magnet to the refrigerator. A decal on



RSVP volunteers (L to R) Betty Kenward and Lois Ingraham hold the File of Life cards available to senior citizens in Mecosta, Osceola and Lake counties.

the homeowner's door or window alerts emergency personal to look for the card when they get inside.

An \$880 Great Lakes Energy People Fund grant awarded to the RSVP group helped make the File of Life program possible.

The RSVP program is sponsored by the Mecosta County Council on Aging. Senior citizens who would like more information on File of Life can call 231-796-4848. ■

## YOUR SMALL CHANGE MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE



Bellaire Public Library  
Children's Literacy Station Computer

Can you give a few cents a month to help your community? The People Fund program works because there is power in numbers. A contribution of less than \$1 each month adds up fast when thousands of Great Lakes Energy members get involved.

The needs of our local communities continue to grow, and you have the power to give the People Fund a bigger role in meeting those needs. We round up your electric bill to the next dollar and the amount, which averaged just 49 cents a month in 2014, goes into the People Fund. There are no administrative costs. All donations are returned to our local communities.

### We Need Your Help!

Enroll in the People Fund today: 1-888-485-2537 • [gtlakes.com](http://gtlakes.com)



# Enjoy The Outdoors and Save Money

Take advantage of local recreational opportunities this fall and receive discounts, too, with the Co-op Connections® card available free to Great Lakes Energy members.



Here are just a few of the many discounts available:

- **Pine River Paddlesport Center, Wellston** – 10 percent off canoe, kayak, raft and mountain bike rental, rock climbing and camping.
- **The Links at Bowen Lake Golf Course, Gowen** – buy one, get one free—golf carts mandatory.
- **Sandy's Stables, Mancelona** – \$2 off 1 hour trail ride.

Take advantage of the savings through the Co-op Connections program. Find bargains online or use your Co-op Connections card at participating businesses that offer savings on dining, auto repair, fast food takeouts, baked goods, hotels, gifts, car

rentals and more. Valuable offers from national merchants are available, too.

In addition, save up to 85 percent on prescription drugs and refills at participating retailers. Other healthy savings discounts are available, too. Visit [healthysavings.coop](http://healthysavings.coop) for more information.

Visit [connections.coop](http://connections.coop) to view all discounts available. Or, use the Co-op Connections mobile app. Visit the App Store and search for Co-op Connections.

Don't have a card or Internet access to the list of discounts? Simply call us at 888-485-2537, ext. 8957, and start saving today. ■

## Business Owners Benefit, Too

Promote your business and discount offers to our members at NO COST in our magazine, bill inserts, website and other advertising when you join Co-op Connections.

The program is designed to benefit local businesses and offers added benefits to GLE members. For details, visit [gtlakes.com/products-services/co-op-connections/](http://gtlakes.com/products-services/co-op-connections/)

# Connect Your Generator Safely

Ensure the wiring of a portable generator is done correctly to avoid electrical hazards that could result in a fatality and property damage.

Never connect a generator directly to the home's wiring or into a regular household outlet.

A meter base equipped with a transfer switch for safely operating a portable generator in an emergency can be purchased from Great Lakes Energy for \$350.

A transfer switch prevents a generator from back-feeding electricity into the power line and potentially electrocuting lineworkers working to restore your service and neighbors who may assume the downed power line in their yard is dead.

The switch eliminates the risk of damage to your generator and appliances that could occur if power from your electric cooperative and generator were to both enter the home at the same time.

## Hire a Professional

The meter base and generator should be wired by a licensed electrician. A professional can help size a portable generator to meet your emergency needs and will wire it correctly for your safety.

The specially-adapted meter base is rated for a 200-amp service with a 100-amp maximum for the generator input. The top of the meter base is locked and the bottom area is left accessible for wiring in the portable generator.

For more details, contact us at 888-485-2537. ■



Great Lakes Energy's Dave Matz flips the transfer switch on the meter base for safely operating a portable generator.



Chad Pastotnik Creates  
Literary Beauty  
The Handcrafted Way



# Michigan's Bookmaker

By John Schneider

Had Pastotnik's alchemy is half art, half toil. The fine-bookmaker must baby ancient machines, negotiate literary translations, conduct workshops, and fulfill international speaking engagements.

In a recent blog, Pastotnik, who runs Deep Wood Press out of his home in the woods near Mancelona, wrote: "Sometimes running a business and being an artist have nothing to do with actually making art."

Nonetheless, the alchemy works. Four-hundred-year-old printing and binding techniques weave their magic. Pastotnik's lead becomes pure gold.

"I make books the old-fashioned way," Pastotnik says. But not quite. His limited edition fine-press creations are world-renowned and sell for up to \$3,000 each. That was the price tag on a one-of-a-kind deluxe edition of Pastotnik's treatment of Joseph Conrad's famous novel, "*Heart of Darkness*." Typically, Pastotnik's books cost between \$100 and \$1,000.

Pastotnik's type is hand-set, or cast on a linotype machine, from molten lead. His pages are printed on obsolete cylinder presses. He uses wood engravings and linoleum cuts. His handmade cotton paper is tucked into luxurious bindings of fine leather and exotic cloth. The finished product: "A piece of art that functions as a book." By Pastotnik's estimate, only 50 to 70 other people in the U.S. do what he does.

Pastotnik is grateful that his ancient equipment (one of his presses was built in 1911) is surprisingly reliable: "Fortunately, it's built much better than most things are nowadays."

Born in Cadillac, Pastotnik made his escape from northern Michigan as a young man.

"I couldn't wait to leave," he says. "Then, I couldn't wait to get back."

On a fly-fishing trip to Antrim County around 1990, Pastotnik came upon a small fishing cabin on the Cedar River that was for sale. The bucolic setting struck a chord. He moved in. In 1992, the cabin became the home of Deep Wood Press. Pastotnik studied printmaking at Grand Valley State University. His first venture into hand-made books came in Chicago. Pastotnik says, "I get to share my wonderful life with my wife, Kathryn, and our two children. Being able to raise a family in such an amazing environment is something we're thankful for every day."

Pastotnik confesses that he loves fly-fishing as much as making books. Some recent titles ("*The Trout in Winter*," by Jerry Dennis, for example) reflect a blending of the two passions. "It's a good excuse for business meetings on the stream," he says.

Among Pastotnik's other recent books: "*The Intruder*," by Robert Traver (the pen name of John Voelker, the Upper Peninsula author of "*Anatomy of a Murder*") and "*There Be Monsters*," written by Pastotnik, who calls it "a little fable about how to walk in the woods."

In 2010, Pastotnik won the prestigious Carl Hertzog Award for "*Heart of Darkness*," and he's featured in the PBS television series, "*A Craftsman's Legacy*," as "*The Bookmaker*," Episode 11. It aired last fall, but you can find it at [craftsmanslegacy.com/Home](http://craftsmanslegacy.com/Home).

Pastotnik hopes his works of art aren't handled with white gloves and parked in display cases, however, "I would certainly hope," he says, "my books get read."

Visit [deepwoodpress.com](http://deepwoodpress.com) to browse all of Pastotnik's titles. ■

# Automated Meters Benefit GLE Members

**F**or over 11 years, Great Lakes Energy has used a technology called automated meter reading (AMR) to better serve its members.

The automated meters on GLE members' homes are different because they send electric use readings over the power line instead of using radio transmission or wireless technology. They do not produce radiation or emit radio frequencies.

Great Lakes Energy's automated meter doesn't control appliances and can't send electric use data or price signals instantly back to you. What it can do is make life easier for GLE members.

"There is no doubt that the AMR technology we use has revolutionized our service and business for the better—the benefits are real and numerous," says Elton Veenstra, the co-op's distribution systems technology manager.

For one, you don't have to trudge out to read the meter—especially in the snow. Before AMR, especially in the rural areas served by the co-op, manual meter reads really increased costs, and member readings or estimates often led to large bills when an actual meter-read occurred. "AMR solves all of these issues," Veenstra says.

In addition to improved billing accuracy, there are other advantages to AMR.

## Helps Restore Power

"We can send a signal to the automated meters in any given area that prompts them to send a return signal," Veenstra explains. "Those that fail to reply are likely at homes without power, and these locations are relayed to nearby crews who make the repairs before moving on to the next area." This helps restore power to some homes before the owners are even aware of the outage. "Without AMR, restoration after a big storm would take significantly longer," Veenstra says.

The system also provides voltage data that helps engineers prioritize improvements and predict where outages may occur.

## Take Control of Your Own Data

Using the detailed energy use data available through automated meters, GLE members can log-in to their account online and view their monthly and daily kWh use. They can see if the temperature influenced their monthly consumption by viewing the average highs and lows for each month and day.

Online kWh use records are especially helpful for frequent travelers or seasonal residents who can quickly see if any power is being used in their house while they're away.

## Help With High Bills

Co-op staff can use the data to help you check on or resolve high bill problems, too. "Meter readings available by the day or hour can pinpoint when most of the usage occurred," Veenstra says, "and this information helps determine what caused the higher usage."

One elderly GLE member couldn't understand why her electric bill suddenly doubled. By working with the member and studying a graph of her 24-hour power use, a GLE technical support rep was able to determine that her well pump was running continuously. The GLE member was grateful stating she would never have located the problem without her co-op's help.

The AMR technology is another way Great Lakes Energy looks out for you. ■



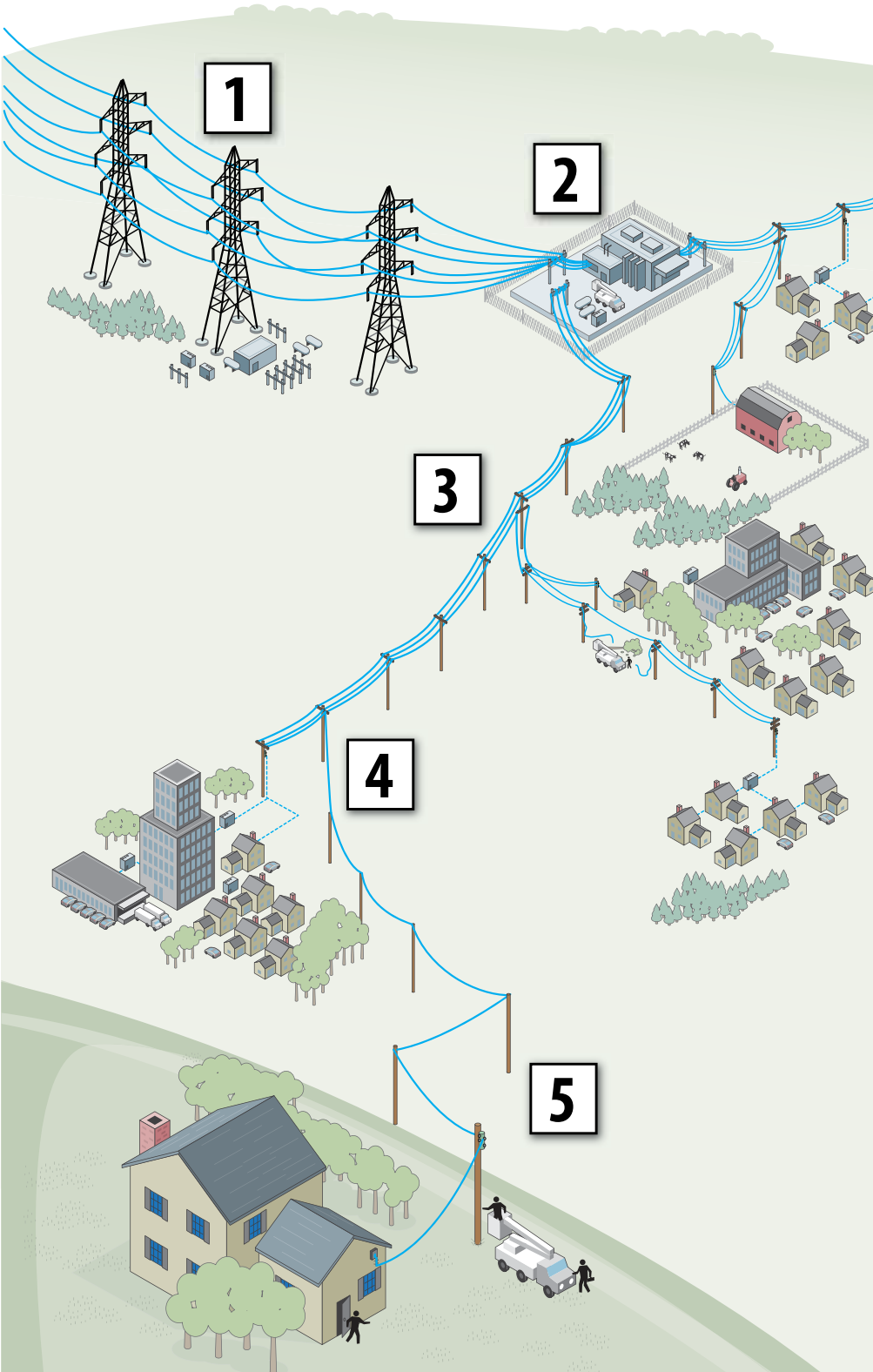
## Quick Facts On Automated Meters:

- **You don't have to 'read the meter'**
- **Can help save money and energy**
- **Online access to electric history**
- **Faster outage response**
- **Shorter outage times**
- **Accurate billing/no estimated bills**
- **Safe Powerline Carrier Technology**



# Powering up at Great Lakes Energy

When electricity goes out, most of us expect power will be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm, like the one in August, causes widespread damage, longer outages may result. The numbers below show the route electricity takes to reach your home. It's the same route our repair crews follow to restore service safely to the greatest number of Great Lakes Energy members in the shortest time possible. In a big storm, damage at all five points in the delivery system is possible.



## 1 High-Voltage Transmission Lines

Transmission line sections that supply power to transmission substations (and an estimated 10,000–20,000 GLE members per section) rarely fail. But when damaged, these facilities must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

## 2 Distribution Substation

Each substation serves an estimated 1,000–5,000 GLE members. When a major outage occurs, line crews inspect substations to determine if problems stem from transmission lines feeding into the substation, the substation itself, or if problems exist down the line.

## 3 Main Distribution Lines

If additional problems remain, main lines from the substation are checked. Each line serves an estimated 500–2,000 members.

## 4 Tap Lines

If local outages persist, tap lines that branch off the main lines are inspected next. Each tap line feeds power to an estimated 15–250 members.

## 5 Individual Homes

If your home remains without power, the service line between a transformer and your residence may need to be repaired. Small, scattered individual outages (normally groups of less than 10 members) are repaired after problems in the areas above are corrected.

# Wish Upon a Star at Headlands International Dark Sky Park

By Emily Haines



**M**ost of us have had the magical moment as a child of wishing on the first star in the night sky. But what if those moments weren't reserved for children in their backyards?

Those inspiring moments happen 24 hours a day, 365 days a year at the Headlands International Dark Sky Park in Mackinaw City, MI.

The only designated dark sky park in Michigan and one of the first 10 in the United States, Headlands is over 550 acres of wooded area and more than 2 miles of undeveloped Lake Michigan shoreline on the Mackinaw Straits. This protected area ensures not only the quality and safety of the land, water and air in the area, but of a resource that is often overlooked just above us—the night sky.

A “dark park” designation ensures light levels over the area never interrupt the natural darkness of the sky or impede the view of the stars and their celestial companions.

Headlands’ program director, as well as star lore historian and storyteller, Mary Stewart Adams encourages visitors to get in touch with their inner compass and explorer.

“Finding your way both on the earth and the sky is profoundly philosophical, as well as practical,” Adams explains. “We’ve lost our ability to navigate without the press of a button, and visiting the park allows you to learn to find your way again.” ■

## Planning a visit to Headlands?

Follow these simple tips to make it a memorable trip.

- **Do research:** Check what you can expect seasonally in the sky to get your bearings.
- **Come early:** Get familiar and take in the sunset.
- **Lights out:** No artificial lights. If you need a flashlight, wrap a red bandana around it with tape.
- **Bug off:** Bring bug spray to keep away unwanted pests.
- **No camping:** While you're welcome and encouraged to stay out all night, no tents or camping equipment are allowed. Bring along a chair or sleeping bag to keep comfy and warm.
- **New moon:** Best time to see the wonders of the night sky are at the new moon (in October, that's the 12th).

Visit [midarkskypark.org](http://midarkskypark.org) for more information.



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