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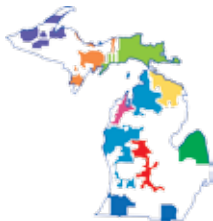
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Please notify your electric cooperative.
See page 4 for contact information.

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. 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?

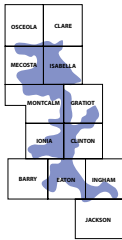
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Join the conversation at
facebook.com/HomeWorks.org

Electricity-Valuable AND A Bargain



Mark Kappler
General Manager

Even in today's shifting energy climate, electricity remains a good value.

Did you know that an average day's worth of electricity for a family home costs less than \$5? We don't often question the cost of a fast food meal, which may be more than that day's electric power. And yet, we frequently become upset if our electric bill is higher than usual, even if it's due to our own usage habits.

It makes sense; we have become increasingly reliant upon electricity. Electricity has, for many of us, gone from a luxury commodity—a choice—to a necessity and an expectation. We expect the lights to come on when we flip the switch, and we expect our power to stay on during the best *and* worst conditions. How else would we keep our food fresh, our homes cool in the summer or warm in the winter?

Value goes beyond cost: when you flip the switch at home, the lights should come on. We work hard to ensure you have electricity every hour of every day.

Even as we upgrade the distribution system to keep improving reliability, we face continual threats. Maybe an ice or wind storm. Maybe a neighbor forgets to call before he digs up his backyard. Maybe someone slides off the road and hits a utility pole.

We've experienced a lot together. Remember the Christmas 2013 ice storm, or the wind storm in April, just a few months later? Crews worked long hours for days on end to rebuild lines and restore power to every member.

But we're also always preparing for what may come, strengthening our lines and improving our processes so we can respond quickly. With 3,600 miles of electric distribution lines, we have a lot of ground to cover, and reliability doesn't come without its costs.

If at times it doesn't seem that electricity is affordable, remember—even as the demand for electricity grows and the cost of poles, wires, transformers, and equipment goes up—annual rate increases still remain low, especially when compared to other consumer goods such as medical care, education, gasoline and, yes, even fast food. Electricity is still a great bargain. ■

HomeWorks Gives \$2,500 to Jordan Lake Trail

HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative has donated \$2,500 to the Jordan Lake Trail, a local nonprofit organization that plans to construct a pedestrian biking and multi-use trail around Jordan Lake in the Lakewood School District in Barry and Ionia counties.

Portions of the trail will border scenic Jordan Lake, pass through wooded nature areas, farm land, and Veteran's Memorial Park. It will be available and beneficial to all ages, all economic levels, individuals, families and seniors alike, plus individuals with disabilities. The four-phase project is approximately 8 miles long and is estimated to cost \$3 million in its entirety. For more information, visit <http://www.jordanlaketrail.com/about.html>.

"HomeWorks Tri-County Electric's board of directors has chosen to support community projects like the Jordan Lake Trail with unclaimed member equity," explains Director Wayne Swiler



Bill and Sue Hudson and Carolyn Mayhew from Jordan Lake Trail accept the check from Director Wayne Swiler and General Manager Mark Kappler. Future trail users Emma, left, and Anna Twitchell join the presentation.

of Lake Odessa. "We make vigorous efforts to find members and repay their equity with capital credits, but it's not always possible to find people who have moved from the area. Those unclaimed funds add up after awhile, and we feel it's better to give it back to our communities." ■

Notice to Members of HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative

A Special Member Meeting is set for Oct. 26, 9 a.m., at the cooperative's Portland office

The board of directors will consider several changes to the cooperative's rates and tariffs at its meeting on Oct. 26, 2015, to be held at the cooperative office at 7973 E. Grand River Ave., Portland, MI. The meeting will start at 9 a.m. and is open to all members of HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative.

The session will begin with an opportunity for members to provide direct input to the board of directors, without filing a formal request under cooperative policy. Members are asked to come to the lobby by 9 a.m. and request to speak to the board; staff will direct interested members to the meeting room. Time constraints on each member's comments will be at the discretion of the board president, but members are asked to keep comments to less than 5 minutes.

The following items will be considered:

1. Establish the 2016 Power Supply Cost Recovery Factor, to be applied to the cooperative's retail member-customers' monthly kilowatt-hour use. The Power Supply Cost Recovery Factor represents the power supply costs as established by the cooperative in conjunction with Wolverine Power Cooperative. The factor is established annually, and reviewed monthly.
2. Revise the cooperative's Requirements for Pole Attachments tariff sheet from \$16.50 per attachment point per year to \$19 for 2016.
3. Revise the cooperative's miscellaneous billing fees, charges, and rates as needed.

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

Participation: Any interested member may attend and participate. The location of the board meeting site is accessible, including handicapped parking. Persons needing any accommodation to participate should contact HomeWorks Tri-County Electric at 800-562-8232 a week in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance. Comments may also be made before the meeting date by calling General Manager Mark Kappler at 517-647-1281, or by email at mkappler@homeworks.org.

Notice of the board meeting shall be sent to all members, as required by P.A. 167, by publication in *Michigan Country Lines*.

Balancing Temps in a Two-Story Home

By James Dulley

Even 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

Many 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 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 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 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
PHONE: 877.296.4319



Energy
Optimization



Tri-County Electric
Cooperative

SnapSHOT

Action/Sports



Capture your Favorite Moments and Share

1. Mindy Weber of Pewamo sent in this shot of Ciera Weber breaking a junior high school record while pole vaulting.
2. Debra Cook of Mount Pleasant shared this photo of sky divers at the Mount Pleasant Municipal Airport.
3. Emily Smith of Portland snapped this photo of Racheal Bugbee, a junior at Portland High School, enjoying Lake Michigan at the Silver Lake Sand Dunes on the 4th of July.
4. Sandi O'Neil of Caledonia, who is a member at Barryton, sent in this photo of her husband, Peter O'Neil, catching a 27-inch pike on Tubbs Lake.

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

Upcoming topics for 2016 include **"Best of Selfies,"** due **Nov. 16** for the January issue; **"Cute Pets,"** due **Dec. 15** for the February issue; and **"Winter Fun,"** due **Jan. 15** for the March 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.

Local Farmer Becomes Face of Farming and Ranching

By Kacey Hengesbach



Although very skilled in storytelling, Carla Wardin never expected that her stories would do more than entertain her family and friends. Now, as one of five farmers picked to travel around the country speaking on behalf of the entire farming and ranching community, she is very thankful for her storytelling skills.

Carla is the sixth generation to own the family farm, Evergreen Dairy in St. Johns, but after graduating from Michigan State University with an MA in English literature she never expected to find herself back on a farm. "I never wanted a job that depended upon the weather," she explained. Carla and her

"I have total confidence in my farm and I'm proud of what we do here. I'm putting myself out there so that people can ask questions and be informed about what farming is like, from a real farmer's point of view."



husband Kris, whom she met at MSU, both had jobs in marketing and they moved all over the country for work.

They were living in Connecticut when Carla's parents visited and mentioned they were going to begin selling off their cows to prepare for retirement. Kris suggested that he and Carla buy the farm from her parents and move back to Carla's hometown. The couple had always talked about owning their own business and, having grown up close to their relatives, they knew they would someday like their own children to grow up the same way. This was the perfect opportunity.

Shortly after moving home, they had their first children, twin boys Ty and Cole, as Kris began working full-time on the farm. Four years later, they had another son, Max.

Her parents helped the first year as Carla and Kris transitioned into their new roles as the sole owners of Evergreen Dairy. As she learned about farming, Carla

would tell stories of her experiences to her friends, many of whom had never been on a farm before. They enjoyed her stories so much they persuaded her to begin a blog which eventually began reaching people all over the world. Carla's blog, "Truth or



Carla in the classroom. As part of her role as a representative of the farming industry, Carla visits schools and teaches children about the importance of farms and dairy products.



Carla & her husband Kris in front of a wagon of preschoolers after the class got a tour of the farm. Evergreen Dairy hosts many farm tours throughout the year for classes and individuals who are curious about farming.

Dairy," (truthordairy.blogspot.com) entertainingly articulates the trials and triumphs of farming and raising three boys.

Carla was inspired to apply to the "Faces of Farming and Ranching" competition when U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance announced it last year. After being chosen as one of eight finalists in August of 2014, a video was made about her life on the farm and then voted for on Facebook. After being chosen as the "Faces of Farming and Ranching", she and the four other farmers received media training in Kansas.

This role has given Carla exciting opportunities for which she has been thankful, including meeting other farmers, giving talks throughout the Midwest, and being on radio shows. Carla enjoys being a reliable first-hand source to answer questions and dispel myths about modern farms, especially because of the negativity directed towards them.

"I think being the target of such negativity would be hard if you weren't confident that you were trying to do everything the right way, but I have total confidence in my farm and I'm proud of what we do here. I'm putting myself out there so that people can ask questions and be informed about what farming is like, from a real farmer's point of view," Carla says.

"We're happy people and we probably could have been happy doing anything, but I love the family aspect of the farm more than I anticipated. The boys love helping Kris, and as they get older we let them help more. I think it's a great way for them to see the work ethic that Kris has and to learn the value of hard work for themselves," she adds. ■



Chad Pastotnik Creates
Literary Beauty
The Handcrafted Way



Michigan's Bookmaker

By John Schneider

Chad 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.

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 to browse all of Pastotnik's titles. ■

Your Board in Action

Meeting at Portland, Aug. 24, your board of directors:

- Reviewed the 2014 key financial ratios with Aaron Stallings from the Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC).
- Re-seated Tri-County Electric People Fund directors Richard Palermo in District 1, MaryEllen Heffron in District 3, and Jerrilynn Strong in District 7.
- Looked at the proposed 2016 board meeting calendar and approved changes to three meeting dates from the fourth Monday, as prescribed in the bylaws.
- Discussed the 2015 Annual Meeting, held on Aug. 15, and read evaluation responses from 182 attendees.
- Went over the plans for a strategic planning session to follow the September board meeting.

- Read and approved Board Policy 312 – “Employee Discount and Purchase Program” with minor updates. The policy covers purchases of propane, satellite internet, and common inventory items.
- Learned there were 110 new members in July.
- Acknowledged the August 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 Oct. 26 and Nov. 23, both at Portland. Members who need directions to either office or wish to have items considered on the board agenda, should call 517-647-7554. ■

People Fund Update



Meeting Aug. 19, the Tri-County Electric People Fund board of directors made nine grants totaling \$12,694.03, including:

- \$3,000 to the Grand Ledge Emergency Assistance

Program, for emergency needs items such as food, prescriptions, or travel costs;

- \$1,000 to Montcalm County Great Start, in Stanton, to purchase books for young readers through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program;
- \$1,000 to Richland Township Library in Vestaburg for library books, including audiobooks and large print books;
- \$2,757.76 to Eagle Village in Hersey, to purchase two automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and two first aid kits for various activity centers on the residential campus;
- \$439.27 to a Clinton County family to help with housing expenses;
- \$1,957 to an Isabella County family to pay for water well repairs; and
- \$2,540 in total to three Montcalm County families to pay for repairs to screen and garage doors, and help with other housing expenses.

Grants are made possible by donations from co-op members or propane customers, who round up their monthly energy bills. The difference,

averaging less than \$6 per year, is granted to individuals and community groups in need throughout mid-Michigan.

“We truly appreciate each and every person who contributes,” says board chairman Richard Palermo. “Your small change adds up to make a real difference to our neighbors.”

“And while we wish we could help everyone, the need around us keeps growing, so we hope any member who isn’t rounding up each month will consider joining us.” ■

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, Mich. 48875, for an application form and grant guidelines, or visit homeworks.org.

Note: Applications must be received by Nov. 2 for the November board meeting, and by Dec. 7 for the December board meeting.



Renewable Energy Campers Visit Solar Garden

Nearly 50 teenagers attending the 4-H Renewable Energy Camp at Michigan State University this July stopped by to visit HomeWorks Tri-County Electric's Community Solar Garden at Portland. Energy Advisor Brandon Trierweiler led the tour, showing the teens how the Solar Garden works and the website that tracks its production (click on the

Solar Garden link at homeworks.org.) Trierweiler also described how farmers built the cooperative to serve rural families back in the 1930s, and explained the energy-efficient geothermal heating and cooling technology used at both of HomeWorks Tri-County's offices. ■

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH



Wish Upon a Star at Headlands International Dark Sky Park

By Emily Haines



Most 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.

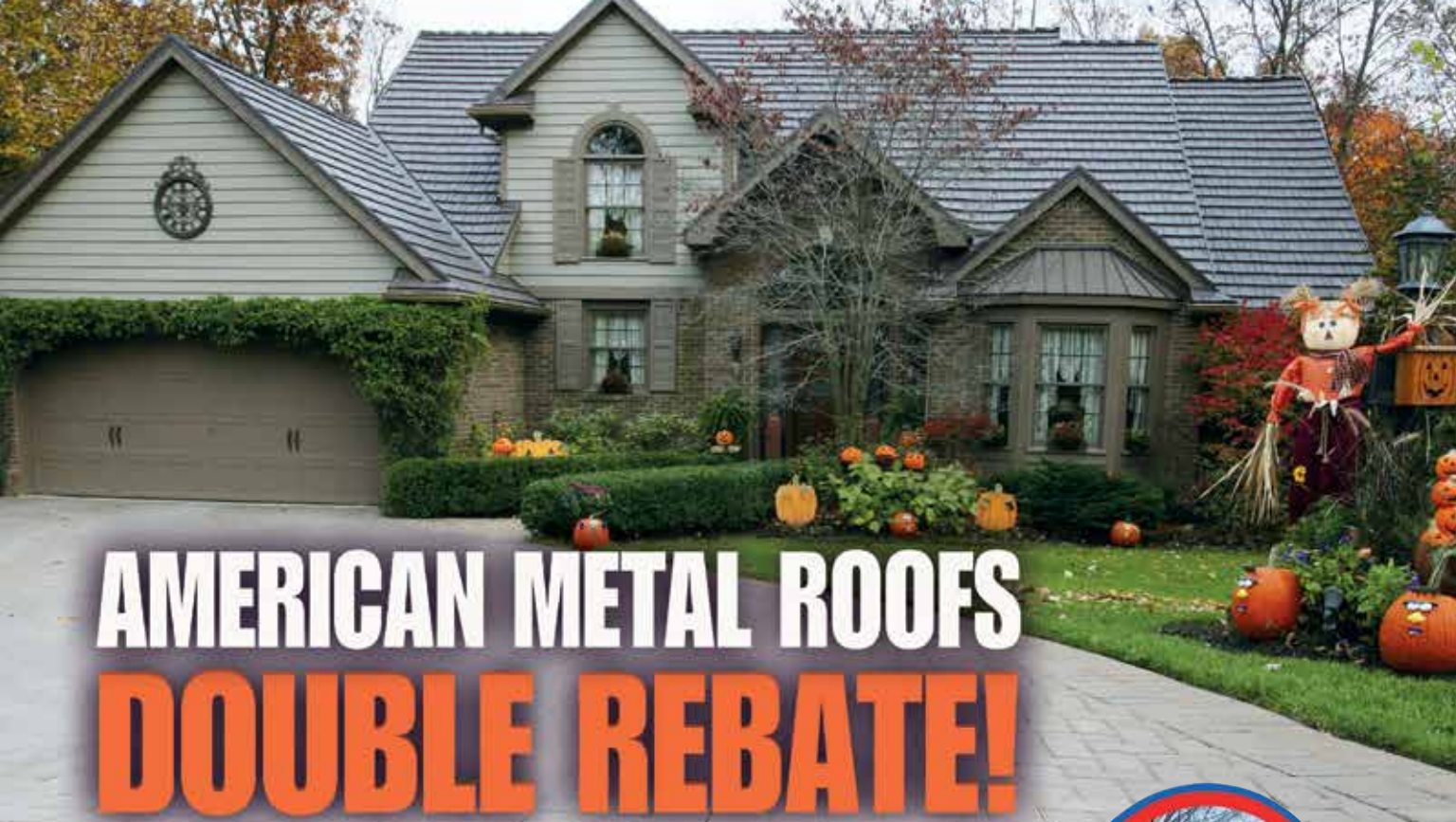
“Finding your way both on the earth and the sky is profoundly philosophical, as well as practical,” Adams explains. “We’ve lost our ability to navigate without the press of a button, and visiting the park allows you to learn to find your way again.” ■

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 for more information.



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