

Midwest Energy Cooperative

October 2015

# MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



## Michigan's Bookmaker

Chad Pastotnik Creates Literary  
Beauty The Handcrafted Way

**Plus!**

A Tribute To A  
Leader And A Friend

"GIG" Things Happening  
In Southwest Michigan

Midwest Propane Fuels  
The Fight For Cancer Care



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[countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com)

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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?

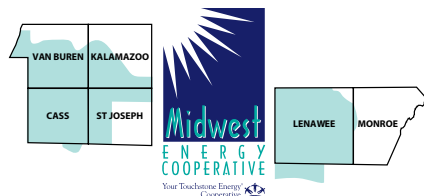
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*Midwest Energy Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

# A Tribute To a Co-op Leader and Friend



Bob Hance (R) and Ken Swope attended many legislative meetings together on behalf of Midwest members.

Every year on my birthday and Midwest service anniversary, I receive a heartfelt email from Ken Swope wishing me a great day and thanking me for what I do. Many of our team members get similar wishes. It's just the way Ken rolls—always thinking about and bringing out the best in others through his words, encouragement and example.

Ken was a member of the Midwest Energy Cooperative Board of Directors, faithfully representing and serving his southeast Michigan district for 25 years. He resigned from the board in August following many years of increasingly serious health issues. His commitment to his district and the Midwest membership as a whole was extraordinary. In fact, he attended his last official board meeting in July just hours after being released from the hospital.

Ken first became involved with the co-op family in 1990, when he was elected to the Southeastern Energy Cooperative board. He was part of the leadership recommending the merger that ultimately formed today's Midwest Energy Cooperative, and was one of two directors selected to represent southeast Michigan on the combined board. He saw and provided exemplary leadership through that merger, several challenging business launches and closures, a CEO transition, and a major power supply transition. He also represented Midwest in key industry partnerships on statewide and regional levels.

It's an impressive biography of service, but doesn't begin to capture the essence of the man. Ken brought a unique spirit to the board table, and to every encounter. In our years of working together, I rarely saw him without a smile. Most often that smile simply reflected his wonderful outlook on life, but those who know him well understand that it sometimes meant he was up to no good! Behind that mild-mannered, loving "grandpa" exterior is a man with an outrageously funny side who could disarm you on a dime with a perfectly-timed joke or comment. In his 25 years of service to Midwest, Ken brought wisdom to chaos, laughter to the mundane, and faithful service to those who entrusted him.

We will fill his seat, but we will never fill the void.

There are people you meet that leave an indelible mark on your heart, and Ken is one of those people in my life. I am honored to have served together with him on behalf of the Midwest membership for more than 13 years. He was my boss, my mentor and my coach. But above all, he was my friend. ■

# 'GIG' Things Happening In Southwest Michigan

Rural portions of Edwardsburg and Schoolcraft, along with other parts of southwest Michigan, recently joined the big cities of Atlanta, Charlotte and Kansas City in having gigabit speed internet service available.

Midwest Connections launched a fiber internet service in 2014, offering the first true broadband experience to homes and businesses in rural southwest Michigan. TeamFiber is now delivering internet with download speeds up to 100 megabits per second (Mbps) to more than 700 subscribers, helping to bridge the communication gap that impacts many people living and working in rural America.



Joe Alford, installation and maintenance technician for Midwest Connections, connects fiber cable to the Optical Network Terminal.

"Most of our subscribers have only had access to dial-up, satellite and DSL services previously, and now have access to the best technology with some of the highest speed offerings in the broadband marketplace," says Bob Hance, president/CEO of Midwest Energy Cooperative. "Fiber internet is literally changing the social, economic and educational landscape of our rural area, and the gigabit offering is just one more competitive leg up for southwest Michigan."

Midwest Connections is an unregulated service of Midwest Energy Cooperative. The fiber internet offering is a by-product of the co-op's commitment to invest in its electric distribution system for future utility benefit.

"Technology is changing at a fast and furious pace, and we need to be prepared as the electric utility to deliver the products and services that our members want and need," Hance explains. "We don't know what's coming, but we do know that the next generation of energy efficiency, safety and reliability standards will require robust, two-way communications across the electric grid."

"By today's standards, fiber is the ultimate communications platform and will provide us with better information and data to serve our electric members. At the same time, it will allow us to offer

a true high-speed voice and data solution for those who choose to subscribe to that service."

While Hance believes few users currently need gigabit service, he is confident that the need will grow as technology changes. "There's a lot of anecdotal data showing that households are increasingly using more bandwidth, primarily for video, and higher speeds will be necessary to maximize that experience. The demand for speed will only continue to increase as we bring more technology into our homes and businesses, and we're now equipped to bring our subscribers the speeds they need for the applications they use."

"Broadband internet is no longer a luxury; it's a necessity," Hance says. "Today's story is so much like the electrification of rural America in the 1930s. Incumbents won't come in to the rural space, so the rural space is taking care of its own."

"We've talked to our members for years about the need, and it's so gratifying that we're now in a position to answer that call in a meaningful way. Fiber internet is a game-changer for rural America, and we're honored to be the solution provider and lead the charge to affect change."

For more information, visit [TeamFiber.com](http://TeamFiber.com). ■



# 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!

**T**urn 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







# BE PREPARED

**B**efore Mother Nature rears her ugly head with seasonal storms, take time to think through what you need in the event of an extended power outage.

Following are suggested items to keep on hand and easily accessible in the event of a power outage.

Everyone should consider the unique needs of their own family in order to create an emergency kit that provides for individual circumstances.

- **Water** – At least one gallon per person, per day for drinking and sanitation. If you have pets, have extra available.
- **Food** – At least a three-day supply of non-perishable food, focusing on items that can be eaten without being cooked. Don't forget a hand-operated can opener.
- **Flashlights** – and fresh batteries.
- **Telephone** – Make sure it's corded. Cordless phones will not work when your power is out.
- **Communications** – Battery-powered radio and/or television. Midwest Energy works with regional news media to provide regular updates about major power outages.
- **Clock** – Battery-powered or wind-up.
- **First-aid kit** – and hand sanitizer. Fill prescriptions and have any needed medical supplies on hand.
- **Extra blankets.**
- **Candles and matches.**
- **Personal sanitation** – Moist wipes, garbage bags and plastic ties.
- **Wrench or pliers** – to turn off utilities.

## Learning more about current outages

We strive to provide timely and useful information during major outage situations. During any major outage or emergency situation, we provide regular updates to local media outlets to keep you informed about outage numbers and locations. The same update information is posted on the red emergency banner across the top of our homepage at TeamMidwest.com, and shared via our Facebook and Twitter accounts. Get quick access to our social media sites by clicking on the individual icons found at the top right side of our homepage.

Our Outage Central map, also available via our homepage and in the SmartHub app, provides a quick snapshot of outages by zip code. ■

## Convenient Outage Reporting

Midwest offers easy and convenient ways to report your power outage. Please do not use e-mail or social media such as Facebook or Twitter to report your outage as these platforms are not staffed 24/7.

### Online and Mobile

**Power Tools:** When you're in the dark and trying to report your power outage, there's nothing more frustrating than a fast busy signal or sitting in a crowded phone queue waiting for the next available customer care representative.



SmartHub® offers a set of Power Tools, allowing you to report your outage from the convenience of your computer or mobile device. Log-in to your account to report your outage through the online portal at our website, use the free SmartHub app available through your iTunes or Google Play store, or text your outage from your cell phone. A short registration process is required for new users of these convenient platforms. Learn more by clicking on the Power Tools ad at TeamMidwest.com.

**Telephone:** The telephone system at your co-op is equipped with an automatic outage reporting system, an easy and efficient way to report your outage. Dial 800-492-5989 and follow the prompts to report your outage. We must have an up-to-date telephone number on your account for you to use this system. Please call 800-492-5989 to update your information.

We have a limited number of incoming lines that are more than adequate for regular business operations, but may become overly taxed in a major outage situation. If you receive a fast busy signal, it means more members are attempting to call than our incoming phone line capacity. In this event, please hang up and try again later, or use an alternative method of outage reporting.



# Midwest In the Community

Neighbor helping neighbor—that's how your Team Midwest family approaches daily work and efforts to give back. We live, work and serve right here in your local community, and strive to actively live our Community value in meaningful and impacting ways. Here are just a few of our recent efforts to strengthen and support our communities.



These twins celebrated their 12th birthday with a morning hot air balloon ride.



## 'Fueling the Fight' for cancer care

Midwest Propane donated \$9,000 to the West Michigan Cancer Center following our 2015 Fueling the Fight campaign. Now in its third year of the campaign, a total of over \$40,000 has been raised to support cancer care and services in Michigan.

More than \$4,000 of the total was raised through the inaugural Fueling the Fight Family Movie Night on Aug. 27. Hundreds of local individuals joined us for a picture-perfect evening under the stars at the Cass County Council on Aging to watch the Disney/Pixar family favorite movie "UP" on a giant outdoor screen. The movie was free, and attendees were encouraged to donate cash to support the beneficiary. The event also featured tethered hot air balloon rides in the eight-story Touchstone Energy Balloon, raffle prizes, and food prepared by Smokin' Good BBQ.

"This was a very successful first-time event, and we're thrilled with the results," says Patty Nowlin, director of community relations. "We raised a lot of money to support a great organization, and provided a fun venue for families to come together and create wonderful memories."

Added to the proceeds from the movie night event, Midwest Propane donated one penny per gallon of gas delivered in August, the highest delivery month of the year. In total, 454,804 gallons were delivered.



Kailub Pupos, a sixth grade student at Morenci Middle School, holds the winning check outside of Family Counseling & Children's Services, the pantry partner for his food drive video.



Food supplies at Eleanor's Pantry will be a little more plentiful thanks to the \$1000 donation from Team Midwest.

## 'Feed the Need' summer food drive

Nine southern Michigan food pantry programs have a few more items on the shelf this fall thanks to a summer effort facilitated by Team Midwest and supported by hundreds of Facebook fans and followers.

Early in the summer we launched the inaugural Feed the Need Food Drive Contest, inviting local individuals and organizations to organize a food drive and create a short video nominating their favorite food pantry for a \$1,000 donation. The goal was to generate donations and awareness to support local programs during the summer months when the need is so great. Videos were posted on our Facebook contest page, and the two receiving the most likes were each presented with checks for \$1,000.

Nine videos were submitted, and in August we recognized and presented checks to Family Counseling & Children's Services, which supports the Catherine Cobb Domestic Violence Shelter in Adrian, nominated by Kailub Pupos; and Eleanor's Pantry in Paw Paw, nominated by Pat McKinney. The other seven pantries received \$100 contributions to support their important work.

In total, the nine food pantries received more than \$7,700 in cash donations and 3,000 pounds of food through the food drive and awards. Thanks to all who helped "Feed the Need!" ■



Chad Pastotnik Creates  
Literary Beauty  
The Handcrafted Way





# Michigan's Bookmaker

By John Schneider

**C**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. ■

# Preferred Contractors Meet Cooperative Quality Standards



Choosing qualified and reputable contractors can be difficult. As a service to our members, we have compiled a list of Midwest Energy Cooperative preferred heating and cooling contractors. As part of the qualification process, we researched, interviewed and checked references on a regional pool of contractors, and included on our final list only those that we feel confident will provide the level of service that you have come to know and expect from your cooperative.

Please feel free to contact any of these contractors with confidence if you are interested in more information about their services.

## **American Performance Heating & Cooling**

47317 Destiny Avenue  
Paw Paw, MI 49079  
877-865-8801 or 269-720-0803  
performancegeothermal.com  
*Sales & service of all types of heating & cooling systems, including geothermal*

## **Bartholomew Heating & Cooling, Inc.**

3025 Emerald Drive  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001  
269-381-9045  
TotalComfortPros.com  
*Sales & service of all types of heating & cooling systems, including geothermal; home performance contractor*

## **Bel-Aire Heating & Air Conditioning**

781 Lenox Road  
Portage, MI 49024  
888-Bel-Aire (235-2473)  
belaire.com  
*Sales & service of all types of heating & cooling systems, including geothermal*

## **Comfort One Heating & Cooling**

200 5th Street  
Michigan Center, MI 49254  
517-764-1500  
or  
7250 West US Hwy 223  
Adrian, MI 49221  
517-263-3040  
*Sales & service of all types of heating & cooling systems, including geothermal*

## **Crystal Valley Comfort**

800 S. CR 37  
Middlebury, IN 46540  
574-825-2611 or 269-273-6975  
crystalvalleycomfort.com  
*Sales & service of all types of heating & cooling systems, including geothermal*

## **Haven Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc.**

10420 M-140, Suite 12  
South Haven, MI 49090  
269-637-1400  
havenheating.com  
*Sales & service of all types of heating & cooling systems, including geothermal*

## **HIS Servant Heating & Cooling, Inc.**

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Hudson, MI 49247  
888-789-9339 or 517-286-6929  
hisservantheatingandcooling.com  
*Sales & service of all types of heating & cooling systems*

## **Shoemaker Heating & Plumbing**

5310 US Hwy 223  
Palmyra, MI 49268  
517-263-9940  
yourbryantman.com  
*Sales & service of all types of heating & cooling systems, including geothermal & generators*

## **Service First LLC**

5605 Bent Oak Hwy  
Adrian, MI 49221  
517-263-9194  
*Sales & service of all types of heating & cooling systems, including geothermal*

## **Sun Services Inc.**

26 Longmeadow Lane  
Niles, MI 49120  
269-684-3898  
sunservices.us  
*Sales & service of all types of heating & cooling systems, including geothermal*

## **The Furnace Guy Heating & Cooling**

6053 S. 4th Street  
Kalamazoo, MI 49009  
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thefurnaceguyinc.com  
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## **Van Kal Heating and Cooling**

647 N. State Street  
Gobles, MI 49055  
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vankalheatingandcooling.com  
*Sales & service of all types of heating & cooling systems, including geothermal*

## **WaterFurnace Michiana**

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Berrien Springs, MI 49103  
269-473-5667  
waterfurnace.com  
*Sales & service of geothermal*

## **Whitcher Plumbing & Heating**

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Adrian, MI 49221  
517-265-1389  
whitcherplumbing.com  
*Sales & service of all types of heating & cooling systems, including geothermal*





## Promoting a Culture of Community Safety

**W**e tend to take our energy supply for granted, until it's not there. However, it's critical to always be mindful of your energy services as there are inherent safety concerns involved with the flow of electric current and gas.

As a regional provider of electricity and propane, Team Midwest is strongly committed to creating a culture of safety, both for employees and the community. We offer safety programs for schools, churches, civic groups, emergency response teams and other groups and organizations. Programs are free, adaptable for various audiences and timelines, and can be conducted in your facility or ours.

We have two interactive programs that carry a strong message about respecting electricity. The "Hot Line Demonstration" features a trailer setup, including poles and power lines that carry

7,200 volts of electricity. The program shows how different elements are affected by electrical contact, and can be adapted for nearly any audience. We also offer "Hazard Hamlet", a portable model that highlights electrical safety concerns in everyday situations. "Hazard Hamlet" is more suitable for a younger audience.

For more information about our electric and propane safety programs, or to schedule a presentation, please contact the community relations office at 800-492-5989, or email [pr@teammidwest.com](mailto:pr@teammidwest.com). ■

Photo above: Midwest Energy crews provide hotline demonstration training programs to hundreds of school-age kids every year.



Emergency responders learn how to safely deal with a propane tank fire through Midwest Propane training programs.

### Midwest Energy is Looking For Members of the National Guard

Midwest Energy Cooperative is proud to recognize its men and women who have served in the U.S. National Guard! We are looking for co-op members who are currently or formerly served in the National Guard to feature in an amazing *Michigan Country Lines* story about Camp Grayling.

Please submit your name, phone number and email to Nicole Barfell at 269-445-1112 or email [pr@teammidwest.com](mailto:pr@teammidwest.com) by Oct. 12, to be considered for inclusion in this upcoming November/December issue story.

# 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.” ■

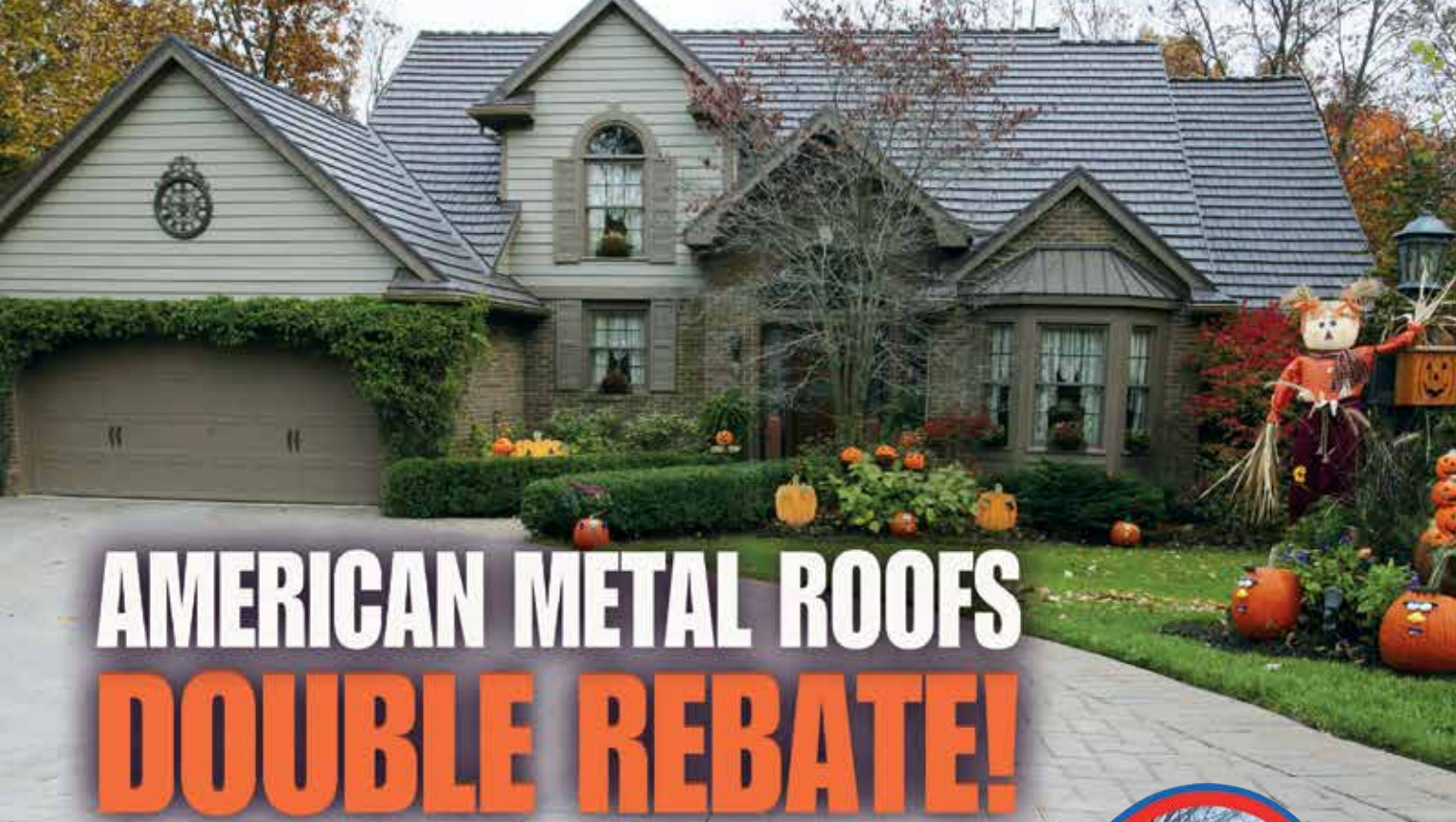
## Planning a visit to Headlands?

**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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