

# MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

## CAMP GRAYLING

Michigan Is Home To  
World-Class Training Center

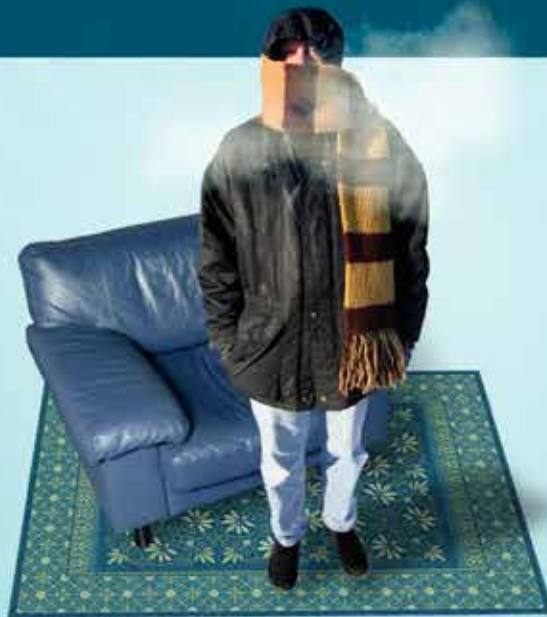
### Plus!

Why We Plan Outages

Memory Makers At  
Point Iroquois Lighthouse

Michigan's Bookmaker

THE 30% FEDERAL TAX CREDIT EXPIRES AT THE END OF 2016



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#### Change of Address:

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

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## ON THE COVER\*

Camp Grayling Joint Maneuver Training Center is the largest National Guard training center in the country, and is a member of Great Lakes Energy Cooperative.

Pictured from left to right are Brigadier General John Slocum, 127th wing commander; Brigadier General Michael Stone, assistant adjutant general for installations; Brigadier General Leonard Isabelle, commander Michigan Air National Guard; Gov. Rick Snyder; Major General Gregory Vadnais, the adjutant general of Michigan; and Lieutenant General Raimonds Graube, chief of defense for the Country of Latvia.

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

Photos courtesy of the Michigan National Guard

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## OTHER INFORMATION

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*Ontonagon County REA is an equal  
opportunity provider and employer.*



# Why We Plan Outages



**Debbie Miles**  
General Manager

**H**ave you ever received a notification from the folks here at Ontonagon REA informing you of a "planned outage?" You may have wondered, "What is a planned outage?" and "Why does my electric utility need to perform one?" Occasionally, the equipment we use to bring power to your home needs to be replaced, repaired or updated. When this happens, as a way to keep our crews and you safe, we plan an interruption to electric service.

We do our best to plan these outages during times when you will be least inconvenienced, so we often perform planned outages during school and business hours. We also try to avoid planning these outages during winter or summer months. We understand these are peak times of the year when you depend on running your heating and cooling units the most.

While they may sound slightly inconvenient, planned outages are actually beneficial to you, our members. Regular system upgrades are necessary for optimal performance, and they increase reliability. Repairing and upgrading our equipment is also critical to maintaining public safety. If older lines need to be replaced, we plan for it, repair or replace it, and this keeps everyone safe.

Planned outages also allow us to keep you informed of when and how long you will be without power. We give you as much notification as possible before an outage, so you can be prepared. Here at Ontonagon REA, we want to make sure we are doing everything we can to keep you safe and to keep our system running smoothly. So, the next time you hear about a planned outage, know that it is one of the best ways we can provide you with quality electric service. ■

# 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.





# Home Heating Assistance Programs • 2015–2016 Season

**Program:** Winter Protection Plan  
**Contact:** Your Local Utility Company

Income Guidelines 2015–2016	
# in Household	150% Poverty Guide Maximum Income
1	\$17,655
2	23,895
3	30,135
4	36,375
5	42,615
6	48,855
7	55,095
8	61,335

Add \$6,240 for each additional member.

*Note: All customers 65+ are eligible regardless of income. Customers are responsible for all electricity and natural gas used. At the end of the protection period, participants must make arrangements with their utility company to pay off any money owed before the next heating season.*

**Program:** Home Heating Credit  
**Contact:** Mich. Dept. of Treasury

# Exemp.	Max. Income	# Exemp.	Max. Income
1	\$12,956	4	26,699
2	17,528	5	31,270
3	22,099	6	35,842

Add \$4,457 for each exemption over 6.

**Program:** Earned Income Credit  
**Contact:** U.S. Treasury Dept., Internal Revenue Service [irs.gov/EITC](http://irs.gov/EITC)  
 Michigan Dept. of Treasury [michigan.gov/treasury](http://michigan.gov/treasury)

The **Winter Protection Plan** protects eligible senior and low-income customers from service shut-offs and high utility bill payments during the winter months (Nov. 1–March 31). You may enroll between Nov. 1 and March 31. If you are an eligible low-income customer, your utility service will remain on from Nov. 1 through March 31, if you:

- pay at least 7% of your estimated annual bill each month, and
- make equal monthly payments between the date you apply and the start of the next heating season on any past due bills.

When the protection period ends (March 31), from April 1 through Oct. 31, you must begin to pay the full monthly bill, plus part of the amount you owe from the winter months when you did not pay the full bill. **Participation does not relieve customers from the responsibility of paying for electricity and natural gas usage, but does prevent shut-off during winter months.** You qualify for the plan if you meet at least one of the following requirements:

- are age 65 or older,
- receive Department of Human Services cash assistance, including SSI,
- receive Food Assistance,
- receive Medicaid, or
- household income is at or below the 150% of poverty level shown in the Income Guidelines chart at left.

Senior citizen customers (65 or older) who participate in the Winter Protection Plan are not required to make specific payments to ensure that their service will not be shut off between Nov. 1 and March 31. However, seniors are encouraged to pay whatever they can during the winter so they will not have large, unmanageable bills when the protection ends.

You can apply for a **Home Heating Credit** for the **2015** tax year if you meet the income guidelines listed at left, or you qualify based on alternate guidelines including household income, exemptions, and heating costs. Additional exemptions are available for seniors, disabled claimants, or claimants with 5% or more of their income from unemployment compensation.

If you qualify, you may receive assistance to help pay for your winter heating bills. **Forms are available mid- to late-January wherever tax forms are provided, or from the Michigan Dept. of Treasury (517-636-4486, or [michigan.gov/treasury](http://michigan.gov/treasury)).** The Home Heating Credit claim form must be filed with the Michigan Dept. of Treasury **no later than Sept. 30 each year.**

The **Earned Income Credit (EIC)** is a refundable federal income tax credit for low-income working individuals and families who meet certain requirements and file a tax return. Those who qualify will owe less in taxes and may get a refund. Even a person who does not generally owe income tax may qualify for the EIC, but must file a tax return to do so. If married, you must file jointly to qualify. File Form 1040 or 1040A and attach the EIC.

You may claim a **Michigan earned income tax credit** for tax year **2015** equal to a percentage of the federal earned income tax credit for which you are eligible. Visit the website or see the **2015** MI tax booklet for details.

**Program:** Crisis Assistance Program  
**Contact:** Local Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHS) [michigan.gov/mdhs](http://michigan.gov/mdhs)

**State Emergency Relief Program (SER):** [michigan.gov/mdhhs](http://michigan.gov/mdhhs) You do not have to be a DHHS client to apply for help with a past due bill, shutoff notice or the need for deliverable fuel through the SER. This program, available Nov. 1–May 31, provides most of its utility assistance during this crisis season. However, limited assistance is available outside the crisis season. If you receive a DHHS cash grant, you may vendor part of it towards heat and electric bills. Contact your local DHHS or call the Home Heating Hotline, 855-275-6424.

**Program:** Low-Income Home Weatherization  
**Contact:** Local Community Action Agency

You may be able to receive help with weatherizing your home to reduce energy use if you meet low-income eligibility guidelines (200% of poverty guidelines shown above) and funding is available. **Weatherization** may include caulking, weatherstripping, and insulation. Contact your local Community Action Agency for details. Visit [mcaaa.org](http://mcaaa.org) to find one in your area.

**Program:** United Way  
**Contact:** Call 2-1-1 or [UWmich.org/2-1-1](http://UWmich.org/2-1-1)

2-1-1 is a free phone service operating 24 hours daily to provide information about help that may be available in a particular area with utilities and other needs. Learn more at [UWmich.org/2-1-1](http://UWmich.org/2-1-1).

**Program:** Medical Emergency Protection  
**Contact:** Local Utility Company

You are protected from service shut-off for nonpayment of your natural gas and/or electric bill for up to 21 days, possibly extended to 63 days, if you have a proven **medical emergency**. You must provide written proof from a doctor, public health or social services official that a medical emergency exists. Contact your gas or electric utility for details.

**Program:** Shut-off Protection for Military Active Duty  
**Contact:** Local Utility Company

If you or your spouse has been called into **active military duty** you may apply for shut-off protection from your electric or natural gas service for up to 90 days. You may request extensions. You must still pay, but contact your utility company and they will help you set up a payment plan.

**Program:** Michigan Veterans Trust Fund Emergency Grant Program  
**Contact:** MI Veterans Trust Fund

The Trust Fund provides temporary assistance to veterans and their families facing a financial emergency or hardship including the need for energy assistance. Michigan Veterans Trust Fund at (517) 284-5299 or [michiganveterans.com](http://michiganveterans.com)

**Program:** MI Energy Assistance Program  
**Contact:** Utility or 2-1-1 in late November

Agency assistance through MEAP, which includes services that will enable participants to become self-sufficient, including assisting participants in paying their energy bills on time, budgeting for and contributing to their ability to provide for energy expenses, and being energy efficient. Shut-off protection is provided Nov. 1–April 15 for all residential customers (regardless of income.)



# Top 10 Rules for Kids About Electrical Safety

**E**lectricity is a dynamic power source. Many home electrical fires, injuries and electrocutions can be prevented when we understand and practice electrical safety. This is especially true for our youngest co-op members. Remember the rules for using electricity the right way.

## 1. **DON'T plug a bunch of stuff into one outlet or extension cord.**

It could damage the electrical system in your house or even cause a fire. Show children how plugs work, and let them know that even if they are curious about the slits of an electrical outlet, *nothing* else should be placed inside.

Our reliance on electronics and gadgets is a risk when family members overcrowd electrical outlets, continue to use frayed wires, place devices near liquids or leave electronics on for long periods of time.

## 2. **Make sure all electric cords are tucked away, neat and tidy.**

Pets might chew on electrical cords, and people might trip and fall.

## 3. **DON'T ever climb the fence around an electrical substation.**

If a ball or pet gets inside the fence, contact your local electric utility for assistance—they'll come and get it out for you.

## 4. **DON'T yank an electrical cord from the wall.**

Pulling on a cord can damage the appliance, plug or outlet.

## 5. **Fly your kite far away from power lines or substations.**

Fly kites and model airplanes in large open areas like a park or a field, safely away from trees and overhead power lines. If a kite gets stuck in a tree that's near power lines, don't climb up to get it. Contact your local electric cooperative for assistance. The kite and the string may conduct electricity—sending it right through you to the ground.

## 6. **Ask a grown-up for help** when you need to use something that uses electricity.

## 7. **DO look up and look out for power lines before you climb a tree.**

The electricity can go right through the tree branch—and right through you!

## 8. **Have a grown-up put safety caps on all unused electrical outlets.**

Covering outlets will also help save energy by stopping cold drafts.

## 9. **Remind your mom or dad to watch out for power lines** when they're using a ladder, chainsaw or other outdoor equipment.

## 10. **Keep electrical stuff far away from water.**

Water and electricity never mix. Use caution before plugging in a radio, CD player, or any electrical gadget outdoors, and keep all electrical appliances at least 10 feet away from hot tubs, pools, ponds, puddles and wet surfaces.



# EASY CHICKEN

Quick to prep and easy to make no-fail chicken recipes.



## Salsa Chicken

*Renee Possett, Middleville*

- 2 lbs. fresh or frozen chicken breasts
- 1 can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 16-oz. jar salsa
- 1 15-oz. can corn, drained
- ½ of 1.25-oz. pkg. taco seasoning

Place chicken in the bottom of a crockpot. Sprinkle taco seasoning onto chicken. Pour salsa, then beans, then corn, over the chicken. Turn crockpot on high and leave for about 6 to 8 hours on low. Shred chicken and place on tortillas, taco shells or tortilla chips for nachos. Serve with shredded cheese, sour cream, shredded lettuce, taco sauce or more salsa.



## Chicken Spinach Pasta (pictured)

Renee Coyer, Cooks

- 8 oz. rotini or penne pasta
- 10-oz. pkg. frozen spinach, rinsed and dried (fresh works fine too)
- 2 T. flour
- ¼ t. salt
- ¼ t. paprika (optional)
- 8 oz. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into thin strips
- 2 T. olive oil
- ½ c. Italian salad dressing (Kraft Zesty is our choice!)
- ½ c. chicken broth
- ½ c. finely chopped onion
- 2 T. lemon juice
- 2 T. dry sherry (can be omitted)
- ¼ c. shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1 c. chef style mozzarella cheese (or six-cheese Italian)

Cook pasta until nearly done. Stir in spinach, cook additional 1 minute. Drain and set aside. Combine flour, salt and paprika in a plastic bag. Add chicken strips and shake to coat evenly. Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add chicken. Cook chicken 4 minutes or until no longer pink. Add dressing, broth, onion, lemon juice, sherry and remaining flour mixture; cook and stir over medium heat for 5 minutes or until hot and bubbly. Add drained pasta and spinach to skillet. Toss and heat through. Remove from heat; stir in Parmesan cheese and ½ c. mozzarella. Transfer to plates and top with remaining cheese.

## Oven BBQ Chicken

Linda Ackerman, Thompsonville

- 1 whole chicken, cut up
- 1 c. ketchup
- 1 stick butter
- ½ c. cider vinegar
- ¼ c. Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ c. brown sugar
- 2 T. yellow mustard
- juice from 2 lemons
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 2 t. salt
- 1 t. coarse-ground black pepper
- ½ t. cayenne pepper

### Optional:

- 1 green pepper, seeded and cut into strips
- 1 carrot, peeled and cut into chunks

Combine all ingredients except chicken (and pepper, carrot if using) in saucepan, stirring to combine. Bring to a boil and let simmer, covered, 5–10 minutes. Place chicken (and pepper, carrot) in oven pan. Pour sauce over. Cover with foil. Bake at 350° for 1½ hours. Serve over rice. Serves 4.



## Artichoke Chicken

Marie Mercier, Tustin

- 4 boneless/skinless chicken breast halves
- 14-oz. can artichoke hearts, well drained and chopped
- ¾ c. grated Parmesan cheese
- ¾ c. mayonnaise
- dash garlic powder

In a bowl combine artichoke hearts, cheese, mayonnaise and garlic powder. Place chicken in greased 7"x11" pan. Spread with artichoke mixture. Bake uncovered at 375° for 30–35 minutes or until chicken juices run clear.

## SUBMIT YOUR RECIPE!

Thanks to all who send in recipes. Please send in your favorite "Gluten Free" recipes by **Dec. 1**, "Pasta" recipes by **Jan. 1** and "Side Dish" recipes by **Feb. 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)!



# The Memory Makers

By Yvonne Whitman



'Santa and Mrs. Claus' in front of the lighthouse fireplace. Their costumes were made by Gilly's sister, Patricia Knecht, who was the head seamstress for the movie 'Somewhere in Time'.

Visitors to the historic Point Iroquois Lighthouse often find themselves being welcomed, depending upon the time of year, by a lighthouse keeper donning a historic costume or, during a very special season, by a lighthouse-keeping Santa Claus! Volunteers Ron "Gilly" and Karen Gilmore have been happily greeting visitors while also maintaining and living at the Point Iroquois lighthouse since 2013, when they were chosen by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) as keepers of this national treasure.

The 65-foot tower and lighthouse have stood watch for more than 160 years over the entrance where Lake Superior rushes into the St. Mary's River and on to the Soo Locks—a passage that must be navigated by every ship traveling the St. Lawrence Seaway, the world's busiest inland waterway. While the lighthouse is a local, state and national treasure, the true pride and joy of the establishment are Gilly and Karen. For over 30 years, the USFS has provided a one-of-a-kind program for any U.S. lighthouse wherein individuals can volunteer for a year to act as caretakers. This involves not only living at the lighthouse, but maintaining the grounds and greeting visitors. Community volunteers for over 40 years and recently retired, the couple was, according to Karen, "Trying to figure out what to do next. Then we





Gilly takes a batch of cinnamon rolls out of the oven. Every Saturday he bakes about 15 dozen of these from scratch using “Grandma Emma’s” recipe. He gives the rolls to lighthouse visitors that day. Visit [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) to get a copy of this amazing recipe.



‘Gilly’ Gilmore in his lighthouse keeper ‘dress whites’ ready to greet visitors.

heard about the lighthouse caretaker program. With our background in community service it was a perfect fit.”

The Gilmores’ duties include cleaning the buildings, stocking the gift shop, flower gardening, lawn care, snow removal and general upkeep. From May to October, they also greet tourist buses three days of the week. Each time, Gilly dons either his lightkeeper dress blues or whites, boards the bus and offers visitors a brief history of the lighthouse. While all of this may sound like a considerable amount of work for a retired couple, the Gilmores don’t see it that way. “The joys of working here far outweigh the physical demands of caring for the lighthouse,” Gilly states. “We’d stay forever if they would let us,” Karen echoes. “We love it.”

In 2015, the Gilmores’ dedication and volunteerism was recognized when they received the prestigious “Volunteer of the Year for Leadership” award from the USFS, beating out nominees from 22 states. “What it really comes down to is their dedication,” explains their supervisor, District Ranger Robert West. “The physical aspect of what they do at the lighthouse is really just a reflection of how much they care. It is really rare to find such a good fit.”



Karen (left) and ‘Gilly’ Gilmore with granddaughter Anika Mousseau in front of the lighthouse. Anika, who lives in Fort Wayne, IN, spends two months of the summer at the lighthouse volunteering with her grandparents.

Every lighthouse caretaker brings something unique to the position, but the Gilmores may have brought the most magical touch to the environment. After acting as Santa and Mrs. Claus for community events and organizations for over 35 years, they were happy to bring the tradition to Point Iroquois. This holiday season, children can visit with the lighthouse Santa and Mrs. Claus from the weekend after Thanksgiving until the weekend before Christmas. The lighthouse gets decked out in holiday lights and decorations, and children will find Santa seated in front of the fireplace, ready to greet visitors from 12–2 p.m. on these weekends.

When asked which aspect of life at Point Iroquois is most meaningful to them, Gilly sums up their feelings easily. “We are memory makers for people. And that is the greatest joy we get from being here.” ■

**The museum and gift shop are open from May 15 through Oct. 15. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., daily.**

**Call the Lighthouse at 906-437-5272 for additional information.**

# 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.



Photo credit: Suncourt



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. ■



# LEDs for the Holidays

By Tom Tate



“LED, LED, LED” (imagine this being chanted the way “USA” is at the Olympics). While LEDs won’t necessarily anchor a relay to victory, they are most certainly the current champions when it comes to energy-efficient lighting. So, let’s discuss using LEDs for your holiday decorating enjoyment.

The first incarnations of LEDs generated less than appealing garish blues, greens and reds, but quickly softened into a more eye-pleasing spectrum. Today, LEDs are the undisputed champs of holiday lighting.

You could literally wrap your home in LED light strings, become visible to the International Space Station and still have a pleasantly manageable power bill at the end of it all. Now, there is no reason to let concerns over the cost of operation limit your decorating genius.

LEDs are also showing up in other forms and places. They are available in clear tubes that you can wrap around objects for extra interest (the tubes glow), and many yard figures are constructed with these as the main structural element. Imagine the possibilities!

If that isn’t enough for your holiday pleasure, how about *wearing* some holiday LED bling? Yes, the

ever-so-popular holiday tie with tiny lights that illuminate has been around for years. But, combine the advances in LEDs with conductive paints and micro controllers like the Arduino or Raspberry Pi and you can create some truly memorable fashions for the holidays. Just imagine the sensation you can cause at the office holiday party arriving in a coat of many, many colors. You could even spell out special holiday greetings with the proper display or simply glow all night long.

Don’t worry about needing clunky power supplies or treacherous extension cords to keep your fashion style illuminated. These displays sip electricity from batteries like a fine wine. Just be sure to turn yourself off before driving home.

Two of my favorite sources for such goodies are [sparkfun.com](http://sparkfun.com) and [adafruit.com](http://adafruit.com) (click the “wearables” link on both sites).

You have worked hard all year to reduce your energy consumption to save money and slim down your carbon footprint. Now you can reward yourself with a splendid holiday display while still being miserly with power use. ■

# CAMP GRAYLING

## Michigan Is Home To World-Class Training Center

By Kath Usitalo

**N**orthern Michigan is a destination for outdoor lovers—paddlers, campers, fishermen and cross-country skiers—and for military convoys carrying camo-clad soldiers to the largest National Guard training facility in the U.S.

Camp Grayling Joint Maneuver Training Center's 147,000 acres sprawl across Crawford, Kalkaska and Otsego counties, neighboring Hartwick Pines State Park, the AuSable River, and Lake Margrethe. Since 1913, when lumber baron Rasmus Hanson donated 13,000 acres for a state military training grounds, the base has grown into a year-round facility with a \$30 million impact on the community. It is utilized by the Army and Air Force National Guard, all branches of the military, FBI, local law enforcement agencies, Department of Homeland Security and foreign military units.

The 24,000 personnel who trained there this year tallied 358,000 man-days (one soldier on the ground for one day), a 62 percent increase over 2014. It's a goal of Maj. Gen. Gregory Vadnais, Michigan's adjutant general and director of Military and Veteran Affairs, to raise that throughput by marketing Camp Grayling and improving its assets to meet changing demands.

Vadnais, a Lansing native with a bachelor's degree in sociology/psychology from Central Michigan University, has seen the Guard's role evolve since he started his career with the military in 1970. "The National Guard's mission is to fight our nation's wars—we are

the operational reserve of the United States military—defend the homeland and build a global partnership, something we've been doing for 23 years," he says. Michigan's State Partnership Program partners with Latvia and Liberia, as well as Canada, Denmark, Hungary, Poland and Estonia, and all sent military personnel to Camp Grayling for training this year.

The Michigan National Guard operates a counterdrug team and responds to national disasters like Hurricane Katrina, where Vadnais was Joint Task Force-Cyclone commander. The Guard's peacekeeping role has grown, and since



Maj. Gen. Gregory Vadnais, Michigan's adjutant general and director of Military and Veteran Affairs.



9/11 it's been mobilized to combat terrorism and put boots on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan.

These duties require specialized training and Vadnais cites Camp Grayling's competitive package, including a counter improvised explosive device training area, firing and tank ranges, a Simulation Center with state-of-the-art virtual trainers, and one of the newest Combined Arms Training facilities in the country. "We've got 26 buildings designed for units to come in and train in an urban setting to replicate the sights, sounds, smells and environment that our soldiers would face in actual combat."

Sheer size is a plus. "It's 50 miles from north to southwest," Vadnais explains. "We can put units at the doctrinal distances that they would actually be experiencing in actual combat. We have a large airspace, particularly with the Alpena Combat Readiness Training Center." Another advantage Camp Grayling has over facilities in southern climates: winter training conditions. The base can bed 8,000 soldiers in the summer and 4,000 in the winter.

Several times a year Camp Grayling, under Installation Commander Col. Tom Perison, opens its gates for public tours. The outreach is important, says Vadnais. "The Grayling community is a part of that installation. They live with it. They've been great partners.

"I love telling our story, because it's a great story to tell." ■



Photos courtesy of the Michigan National Guard





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](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. ■

# Santa Claus is Coming to Town!

By Jack O'Malley

Holidays are a great time for tradition. A favorite in our family was taking the kids to see Santa. With so many children all over the world waiting expectantly to meet Mr. Claus, he welcomes a little seasonal assistance! Enter A. Michael Deller, a graduate of the World Famous Santa Claus School in Midland, MI, and Santa's helper since 2002.

How does one decide to enroll in Santa School? Years ago, Deller wanted to prove to his son that his beard would grow completely white, not salt and pepper. And it did! But even with a beard as white as snow drifting around Santa's workshop, portraying Santa was not on Deller's radar until he visited Livonia City Hall. After a volunteer backed out of the holiday parade, a staffer at city hall recognized Deller (and his beard). Frantic, she asked him to ride in the parade and with a "Ho! Ho! Ho!" Deller was hooked!

Knowing peoples' expectations and how important his seasonal duties are, Deller strives to "be authentic, true to tradition." The golden rule? "Don't promise anything! Even if the parent is nodding yes. I tell children I will do my best but it will be a surprise."

What about answers to the BIG questions? "I have a magic key. Elves are always watching who's been naughty or nice. There is no such thing as a bad cookie. And yes, the reindeer like treats too!"

Genetics have given Deller "the Santa build," so a gig impersonating Saint Nick was probably inevitable. With a jolly chuckle, Deller explained that



the beard stays year-round because "it's too itchy to grow it back." So I had to ask, do kids spot this Santa when he's off duty? Of course! And this Santa is prepared. A mother approached him one day and said her children thought he was indeed Mr. Claus! "You will grow up to be good detectives!" Deller told the kids, and handed each a card with his picture on one side and "I met Santa Claus" on the other.

But his favorite story involved his own grandchildren, Kate and Ryan. When they arrived at a function the two ran up and said, "Hi Santa!"...then Kate hugged him and whispered..."Don't worry grandpa, I won't blow your cover!"



Jack O'Malley

Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night!

A. Michael Deller is retired and a member of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op. ■



## «« Where in Michigan is This?

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

We do not accept Mystery Photo guesses by phone. Enter your guess at [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) or send by mail to: *Country Lines* Mystery Photo, 201 Townsend St., Suite 900, Lansing, MI 48933. Include the name on your account, address, phone number, and name of your co-op.



Sept Photo

Our Mystery Photo Contest Winner from the September 2015 issue is Adrian Jentoft, an Ontonagon co-op member who correctly identified the photo as "Whitefish Point" in Paradise, MI, on Lake Superior.



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