

# MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



## Plus!

More New Businesses  
Choose Co-op Model

Photo Contest:  
Members Share 'Selfies'

Quilting Threads Its  
Way Through A Life

## Partners For POWER

Michigan Electric Co-ops Help Bring Power  
To Buena Vista, Guatemala



# CUT YOUR GAS BILLS IN HALF LITERALLY.

Imagine eliminating the need for gas, propane or fuel oil and **drastically reducing your energy bills**. WaterFurnace geothermal systems tap into the **clean, renewable energy** in your own backyard to provide **savings up to 70% on heating, cooling and hot water**. They're safer, more comfortable and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. For more information, contact your local WaterFurnace dealer today. Now get out those scissors.

## YOUR LOCAL WATERFURNACE DEALERS

### Bad Axe

B & D Htg  
(989) 269-5280

### Berrien Springs

WaterFurnace  
Michiana  
(269) 473-5667

### Big Rapids

Stratz Htg & Clg, Inc.  
(231) 796-3717

### Caro

AllTemp Comfort, Inc.  
(866) 844-HEAT (4328)

### Carsonville

Certified Temperature  
Innovations  
(810) 300-7748

### Clifford

Orton Refrig & Htg  
(989) 761-7691

### DeWitt

S & J Htg & Clg  
(517) 669-3705

### Grand Rapids

Total Comfort  
Resource, LLC  
(616) 406-3182

### Hart/Ludington

Adams Htg & Clg  
(231) 873-2665

### Indian River

M & M Plmb & Htg  
(231) 238-7201

### Jackson/Adrian

Comfort 1 Htg & A/C  
(517) 764-1500

### Kalkaska

Kalkaska Plmb & Htg  
(231) 258-3588

### Mt Pleasant

Walton Htg & Clg  
(989) 774-1566

### Muskegon

Adams Htg & Clg  
(231) 873-2665

### Muskegon

Kiessel Geothermal  
Htg & Clg  
(231) 747-7509

### Portland

ESI Htg & Clg  
(517) 647-6906

### Sunfield

Mark Woodman  
Plmb & Htg  
(517) 886-1138

### Traverse City

Geofurnace Htg & Clg  
(231) 943-1000

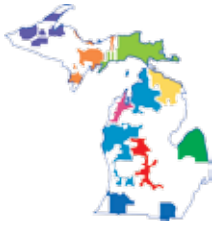
### Traverse City

D & W Mechanical  
(231) 941-1215



visit us at [waterfurnace.com](http://waterfurnace.com)





Michigan's Electric Cooperatives  
[countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com)

**January 2016**  
**Vol. 36, No. 1**

Executive Editor  
**Casey Clark**

Editor  
**Christine Dorr**

Publisher  
**Michigan Electric  
Cooperative Association**

Design and Layout  
**Ciesa Design**

**Michigan Country Lines**, USPS-591-710, is published monthly, except August and December, with periodicals postage paid at Lansing, MI, and additional offices. It is the official publication of the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association, 201 Townsend St., Suite 900, Lansing, MI 48933.

**Subscriptions** are authorized for members of Alger Delta, Cherryland, Great Lakes, HomeWorks Tri-County, Midwest Energy, Ontonagon, Presque Isle, and Thumb electric cooperatives by their boards of directors.

**POSTMASTER:** SEND ALL UAA TO CFS.

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

**CONTACT US:**  
Michigan Country Lines  
201 Townsend St., Suite 900  
Lansing, MI 48933  
248-534-7358  
[cdorr@meca.coop](mailto:cdorr@meca.coop)

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

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

## ON THE COVER\*

Ofelia De Leon (far left), of Buena Vista, with his family and lineworkers when the lights came on in their home for the very first time. Ofelia had the honor of flipping the switch, and when the light came on the room radiated with happiness—lots of laughter, and tears. Linemen (L-R) Tom Ulatowski, Cherryland, Dan King, MECA, and Tony Reichle, Great Lakes Energy.

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

Cover photo by Garrett Hubbard



## IN YOUR WORDS

Question of the Month—We Asked, You Answered.

Last month, we asked electric co-op members a question: If you could have a lifetime supply of anything, what would it be? Thank you for all the responses. Here are some answers from our members...

"Love, good health, happy family & friends, great weather and a very large pay check to share."

"Burgers and fries from Clyde's Restaurant in Manistique, MI."

"If I could have a lifetime supply of anything, it would be free electricity. I am 90 years old, a World War II Veteran, and have a bronze star (along with many other medals). I've been a member of Great Lakes Energy most of my life. My wife and I have been married 70 years this coming July. God Bless."

"Wisdom."

"Unwavering Faith."

**Our new Question of the Month is:**

If you could only have one meal for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Please submit answers to [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) by Feb. 1.

**6 OUR ENERGY AND SAFETY**  
Saving Energy In The Kitchen  
*Brian Sloboda*

Be Prepared For Winter Storms  
*Abby Berry*

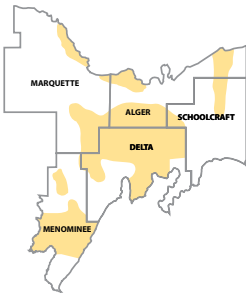
**10 HOME COOKING**  
Warm Up With Comforting Chili Recipes  
*Christin McKamey & Our Readers*

**14 FEATURE**  
Partners For Power In Guatemala: It Takes A Village  
*Emily Haines Lloyd*

**18 READERS' PAGE**  
Michigan Quilt Maker  
*Jack O'Malley*

Guess Our New Mystery Photo





## Board Of Directors

### District 1—Big Bay

Mike Nason  
906-360-1477 • mnason9993@charter.net

### District 2—Harvey/Deerton

Karen Alholm  
906-249-1095 • karenalholm@gmail.com

### District 3—Grand Marais

Nancy Gardner-Platt  
906-494-2772 • rlnkgard@jamadots.com

### District 4—Cedar River/Palestine

Dave Prestin  
906-424-0055 • cedarriverplaza@gmail.com

### District 5—Gourley/LaBranche/Cornell

David Anthony  
906-466-2932 • anthony@hannahville.org

### District 6—Nathan/White Rapids

Paul Sederquist  
906-753-4484 • sedergrrove@gmail.com

### District 7—Stonington/Rapid River

Sue Alexander  
906-399-3666 • smalexander55@yahoo.com

### District 8—Nahma/Isabella

Ray Young  
906-644-2488 • kyoung@uplogon.com

### District 9—Hiawatha/Maple Ridge

Ron Oberg  
906-573-2551  
director9-algerdelta@jamadots.com

## CEO

Tom Harrell  
tharrell@algerdelta.com

## Headquarters:

426 N. 9th St, Gladstone, MI 49837  
906-428-4141 • 800-562-0950  
Fax: 906-428-3840 • admin@algerdelta.com  
www.algerdelta.com

## Office Hours

M–F, 8 a.m.–4 p.m. (ET)

*Alger Delta Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

**algerdelta.com**

# Young Entrepreneurs Embrace Co-op Model



**Tom Harrell**  
Chief Executive  
Officer

A recent study, “Freelancing in America, A National Survey of the New Workforce,” shows that 53 million Americans are earning all or part of their income by working for themselves. At the same time, a growing number of entrepreneurs of all ages, but particularly young people, are turning to co-ops as the business model of choice.

A great challenge to starting a co-op is finding credible information about the business model, since it is rarely taught in schools. Listed below are some resources—but first, let’s quickly tour some co-ops already started by young people.

When Ruthy Woodring and Alex Jarret thought they could use bicycles to pick up trash, recyclables and food scraps for compost, they called their city of Northampton, MA, to get approval for the idea. The person who answered said, “You want to do what?”

Today, hundreds of families—and all the town’s municipal garbage cans—use The Pedal People Cooperative to dispose of waste via specially designed bike trailers that operate year-round, even in winter. The work is physically demanding, so the majority of the Cooperative’s 15 employees (who are also the owners) are part-time.

Austin, TX, is known for many things, including its city slogan, “Keep Austin Weird,” so it’s no surprise that the nation’s first cooperatively-owned brew pub began here. Black Star Co-op brews its own beer and serves very tasty food. It is owned by consumers that elect its board of directors. The board delegates operations to the workers assembly that ensures all the employees have a real voice in how the business operates.

Since Black Star’s opening, other co-op brewpubs have surfaced in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Washington. Designed to build better alignment between consumers and workers, all of the businesses pledge to pay a “Living Wage,” which allows full-time employees to earn enough money to cover typical living expenses.

Many young electric co-op members get their first taste of what a co-op is and how it works from the National Rural Electric Youth Tour program. Every year, Michigan electric co-ops (and co-ops in over 40 other states) sponsor local high school students on a free, week-long tour of Washington, D.C. As part of their tour, the students often will establish their own soda pop or candy co-ops during the week. The profits, called “margins” are then distributed

*Continued on page 13*

## Report, Track Outages 21st Century Style

You hear a loud pop, almost like a gunshot, and suddenly you are sitting in the dark. Your power is out. What do you do first? Start by checking your breakers. Just do a simple off-and-on with your main breaker switch to determine if the problem is something within your own fuse panel. If that doesn't solve the problem, then you need to make sure that Alger Delta Cooperative is notified about your power outage. It is very important that you notify us of a power outage: don't rely on your neighbors to do it—you may be the only house without power! You can notify us by:

- **Calling us at** 906-428-4141 or 800-562-0950, but the fastest way to report your outage is through the automated phone system. Or, you can speak with a member services representative. At that time, you will be able to report any important information that you may have concerning the outage, such as a fallen tree on the transformer.
- **Online at [algerdelta.com](http://algerdelta.com)** Log-in to "My Account" and choose "Report an Outage." If you have any additional information, include it in the notes section.
- **Using your mobile phone.** Through the SmartHub® app, navigate to "Service Status" and choose "Report an Outage." If you experience an outage, please follow the prompts to enter your information.



## Dial 2-1-1 For Heating, Other Help

Find help paying your utility bills this winter by dialing 2-1-1.

It's a free community health and human services information and referral service that connects eligible residents with energy payment assistance help, and much more. By simply dialing 2-1-1, available 24/7, callers are connected with a trained, caring professional who will confidentially assess their situation, identify their needs, and refer them to local resources for help.

While they vary by location, local resources include basic needs such as food, housing, shelter, temporary financial assistance, transportation, utility assistance, and more. In addition, local resources include mental health care and counseling, health care, individual/family life assistance and other services.

If you have trouble accessing 2-1-1, visit the website at [211.org](http://211.org) to search for the closest provider in your area. You can also find program and contact information in the November–December issue of *Michigan Country Lines* magazine by visiting [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) and choosing the "My Co-op" menu at the top. Then, click on "Alger Delta" and the November–December 2015 issue cover (see the Home Heating Assistance chart on p. 6).

Please remember to review Alger Delta's Energy Optimization programs, too, for energy efficiency rebate offers. Visit [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org) for details or call 877-296-4319.

Helping our members with their energy costs is another way we're looking out for you. ■

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

### *Tip of the Month*

If you only want to heat or supplement inadequate heating in one room, small space heaters can be less expensive to use than your central heating system. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions for operating the heater safely.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



# Saving Energy In The Kitchen

By Brian Sloboda

**M**ost of us spend a lot of time in the kitchen. Whether you are considering replacing an appliance or simply looking for ways to be more efficient, here are some tips to help you save energy—and money.

Most people don't think about their refrigerator that often—as long as it's working. Older refrigerators use more energy. Upgrading this appliance can bring a major return on your investment. Look for rebate programs, too!

Cooking also uses a lot of energy. To save energy while cooking, placing the lid on a pot of boiling water will trap heat and cause the water to boil faster. And there is no need to preheat the oven when cooking a large piece of meat, like a turkey or ham (you do need to preheat when baking, or cooking smaller dishes). If you are planning on using the oven for a long period of time, consider turning

down your home's thermostat. Cooking will add warmth to the home because the heat from the oven can raise the temperature in the kitchen and surrounding rooms.

Even after the meal is over, you can save energy. Make sure your dishwasher is full before it's started. Next, make sure you are using the right setting on your dishwasher. Newer models have sensors that detect how clean your dishes are. When these "auto" cycles are used, they will get dishes clean without wasting energy or water. The sanitize setting should rarely be used since it is energy intensive. It is also a good idea to make sure the filter at the bottom of the washtub is cleaned to help the washer work at its optimal level.

As you can see, there are many different ways to practice efficiency in the kitchen, and maybe even save enough money to have dinner out sometimes! ■

# Be Prepared For Winter Storms

By Abby Berry

**W**hen winter temperatures drop and storms hit, it can be challenging to stay safe and warm. Your electric cooperative cares about your safety, and we want you to be prepared.



Heavy snow and ice can lead to downed power lines, leaving you without power. During a power outage, our crews will continue to work as quickly and safely as possible to restore power, but there are a few things you can do to prepare yourself.

- **Stay warm** – Use a safe alternate heating source, such as a fireplace or wood-burning stove, during a power outage. Exercise caution when using, and never leave the heating source unattended.

If you are using gasoline, propane or natural gas-burning devices to stay warm, never use them indoors. Remember that fuel and wood-burning sources of heat should always be properly ventilated. Always read the manufacturer's directions before using.

- **Stay fed** – Be sure to have several days' supply of food on hand. Crackers, cereal, canned goods, bread, and other foods that do not need to be cooked, are good options. Five gallons of water per person should also be available in the event of an extended power outage.
- **Stay safe** – When an outage occurs, it usually means power lines are down. Try not to travel during winter storms, but if you must, bring a survival kit along, and do not travel alone. If you encounter downed lines, always assume they are live and stay as far away from them as possible.

Winter weather can be unpredictable and dangerous, and planning ahead is important. For more winter safety tips, visit [ready.gov/winter-weather](http://ready.gov/winter-weather). ■



Photo: Garrett Hubbard

## Electric Cooperatives Donate Suitcases Packed With A Purpose

The recent Partners for Power team reached their goal to build an electric line extension in Guatemala that changed the lives of about 54 families in the small community of Buena Vista. But our team's work did not end there. The 10-person team distributed over 450 pounds of donated items sent over with the Partners For Power project.

The suitcases were filled by a team effort of employees from Cherryland Electric Cooperative, Great Lakes Energy, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric, Midwest Energy, Wolverine Power, and Cloverland Electric. The much needed items included school supplies, shoes, backpacks, toothbrushes, toothpaste, dental floss, mouthwash, stuffed animals, sweatshirts/t-shirts of all sizes, small sewing kits, stocking caps, baseball hats, soccer balls, a basketball, a football, air pumps, soccer nets, and basketball nets. The electric cooperatives were eager to help out and make a difference for the villagers in Buena Vista.

To distribute the supplies fairly, the team of linemen divided the items into three stations, grouped by age, so that everyone received something. "The villagers have worked so hard on this entire project with us," said Wolverine Power safety coordinator, Matt Monroe. "It was fun to be able to give their



families one more surprise before we headed back home."

Partners For Power also sent a basketball backboard, rim and hardware, along with individual pieces of plexiglass, glass cutters, and caulk to replace broken school windows in the village.

Read the full story about how Michigan electric cooperatives teamed up to "turn on the lights" in Buena Vista, Guatemala, on page 14. ■



# New Year's Resolution—Peace Of Mind In 2016

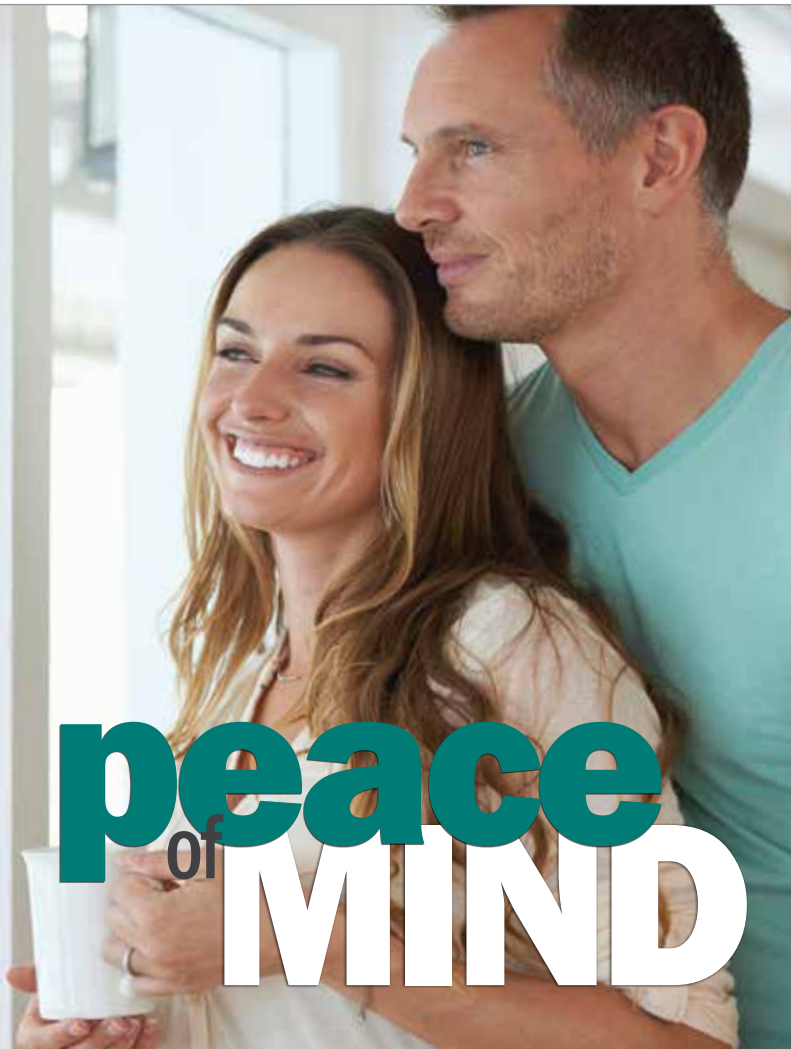
You know the story. The clock strikes midnight and millions of people make resolutions to change. But, if something is working great, why fix it? Our thoughts exactly. Alger Delta Cooperative is keeping its most popular 2015 Energy Optimization (EO) rebates for 2016, and adding a few new options. Ring in the New Year with savings and peace of mind by participating in some top rated rebates.

Make a resolution to manage your energy use in 2016 by taking advantage of these popular customer incentives, as well as a new option for smart occupancy-sensing thermostats.

## Next Steps

For a complete list of EO rebates offered by Alger Delta Cooperative visit [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org) to see which solutions are right for you, or call 877-296-4319 if you have questions about applications or product eligibility. ■

| Rebate Name  | Incentive Amount  |
|--|---|
| ENERGY STAR® television  | 31–40" = \$25<br>41–50" = \$25<br>51–60" = \$50   |
| ENERGY STAR® dehumidifier                                      | \$25  |
| Efficient HVAC—furnaces with electric commutated motors (ECMs) | \$200   |
| ENERGY STAR® refrigerator/freezer side-by-side                 | \$25  |
| Programmable or Wi-Fi-enabled thermostat                       | \$20  |
| Smart occupancy-sensing thermostat                             | \$50  |
| Online home audit—Home Energy Optimizer                        | FREE energy-saving kit (\$30 value) and a list of energy efficient home improvement options |



## Peace of mind, comfort and savings

We provide the savings—you enjoy peace of mind while saving energy with our Energy Optimization program.

There are many ways to save, from appliances to lighting and maintaining the comfort of your home with our efficient HVAC programs. Visit [Michigan-energy.org](http://Michigan-energy.org) for a complete list of opportunities and rebates.

**ENERGY TIP:** Receive your rebate faster by using the online application.

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

**PHONE:** 877.296.4319



Energy Optimization programs and incentives are applicable to Michigan service locations only. Other restrictions may apply. For a complete list of participating utilities, visit [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org).



# Members Share 'Best Of Selfies' Photos



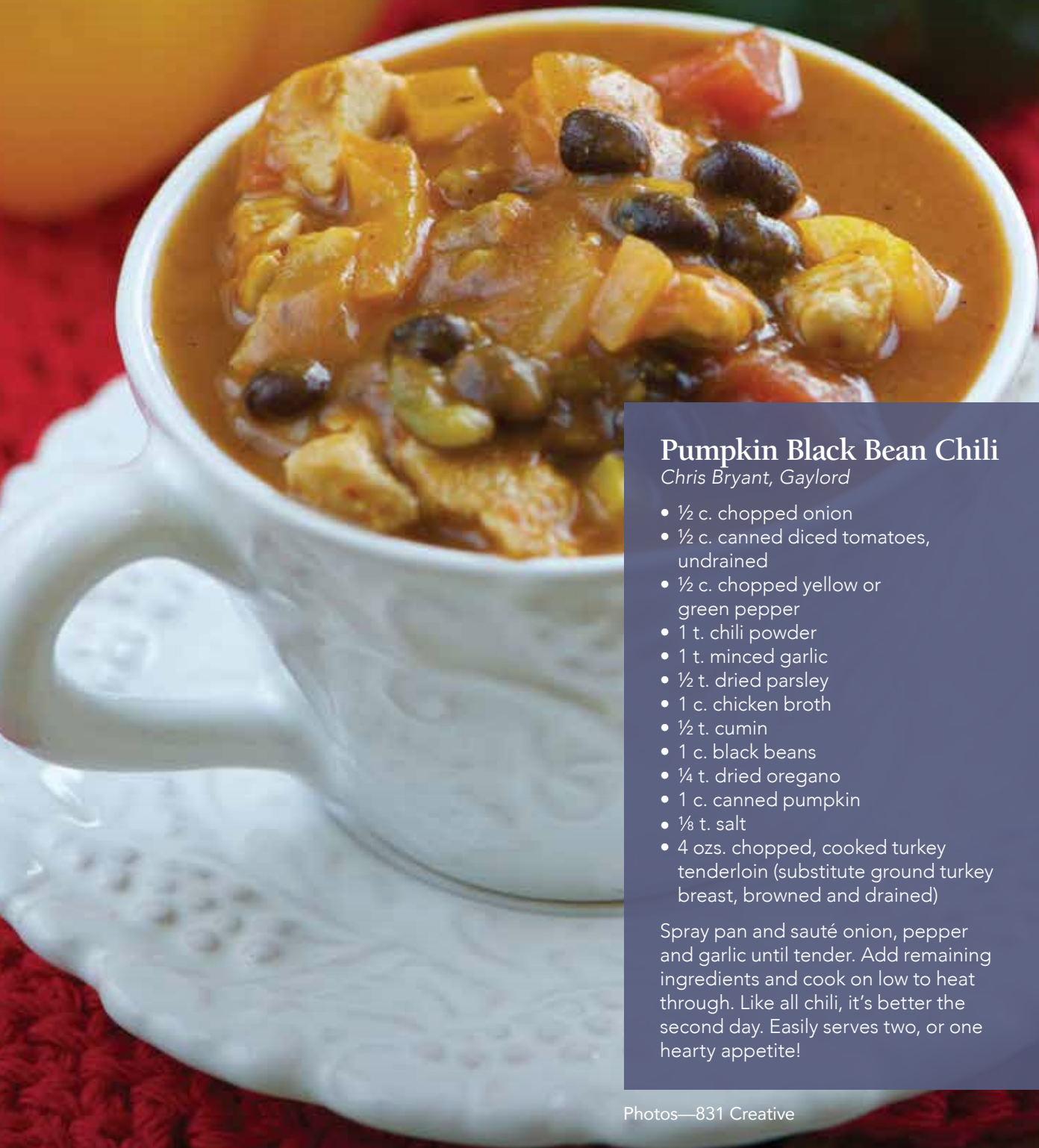
## There's A Story In Every Photo

Alger Delta invites members to share their amazing photos. Selected photos will be published in *Michigan Country Lines*. Upcoming topics and deadlines are: **"Winter Fun,"** due **Jan. 15** for the March issue; and **"Birds of Beauty,"** due **Feb. 15** for the April issue. Details and instructions for photo submission—including rules, topic list, publication date, and submission deadlines—can be found at <http://bit.ly/1JX5Afh>. We look forward to seeing your best photos!

1. "Canoeing on the Cataract Basin, Gwinn, MI. The selfie part is my toes; the rest speaks for itself," says Debbie Goldsworthy, of Marquette.
2. "Making Strides Breast Cancer Walk in Grand Rapids with my best friend and son, Joseph. I was raising money and celebrating two years cancer free!" says Valerie Drier.
3. "This was taken in Rocky Mountain National Park during a June 2015 trip to visit our son. This is just one of many spectacular views to see in the Park," said Alysse LaRose.
4. Wayne Brown (right) says, "Not sure of the bear's name, he didn't tell me."
5. Susan LaRose-Grover shares a multimedia selfie.

# CHILI

Warm up this season with these comforting chili recipes.



## Pumpkin Black Bean Chili

*Chris Bryant, Gaylord*

- ½ c. chopped onion
- ½ c. canned diced tomatoes, undrained
- ½ c. chopped yellow or green pepper
- 1 t. chili powder
- 1 t. minced garlic
- ½ t. dried parsley
- 1 c. chicken broth
- ½ t. cumin
- 1 c. black beans
- ¼ t. dried oregano
- 1 c. canned pumpkin
- ⅛ t. salt
- 4 ozs. chopped, cooked turkey tenderloin (substitute ground turkey breast, browned and drained)

Spray pan and sauté onion, pepper and garlic until tender. Add remaining ingredients and cook on low to heat through. Like all chili, it's better the second day. Easily serves two, or one hearty appetite!



# Congratulations



to Ann Brown of Niles. Her name was drawn from all readers whose recipes we printed in 2015 and *Country Lines* will pay her January electric bill (up to \$200) as a prize.

Ann and her family have been Midwest Energy Cooperative members since her father built their home back in 1940. Her winning "Campfire Chicken" recipe was an original created by her mother. "My dad liked to grill and camp. When we couldn't go camping he would cook out in the backyard and this was a favorite recipe." Ann is a home healthcare nurse and enjoys cooking, sewing and knitting.



## White Chicken Chili (pictured)

Donna Theriault, Petoskey

- 3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 T. olive oil + extra for drizzling on chicken
- 2 lg. onions, sliced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 c. chicken broth
- 1 c. dry white wine
- 2 cans Navy or cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- ½ c. lime juice
- 1 small can green chilies
- 1 T. ground coriander
- 1 t. ground oregano
- ½ t. ground cumin
- ¼ t. cinnamon
- 1 c. Monterey Jack

Drizzle olive oil, and sprinkle salt and pepper on chicken. Roast seasoned chicken on cookie sheet at 350° for 40 minutes, or until cooked through. Cool chicken and shred with fingers. Put 1 T. oil in large pot. Add onions and garlic and stir until onions are golden, about 20 minutes. Add broth and remaining ingredients, except cheese. Simmer for 15 minutes. Add cheese to melt just before serving.

## Angie's Chili

Mary Scodeller, Lansing

- 1 ½ lbs. 80/20 ground beef
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 28-oz. cans whole tomatoes
- 2 15.5-oz. cans kidney beans
- 15.5-oz. can mild chili beans in chili sauce
- Spartan chili mix envelope
- 1 pkg. French's original chili seasoning mix
- ¼ t. salt
- ¼ t. pepper
- ¼ t. seasoning salt
- ¼ t. garlic powder
- ¼ t. chili powder
- ¼ t. ground cumin

Brown meat with the chopped onion. Drain fat, crush tomatoes and add to meat. Add all beans, seasoning mix, and other seasonings. Simmer on medium to high heat for 20 minutes, stirring constantly. Reduce heat and simmer another 30 to 45 minutes. Very good and great for a crowd.

## SUBMIT YOUR RECIPE!

Thanks to all our readers who send in recipes. Please send in your favorite "Side Dish" recipes by **Feb. 1** and "Snacks and Appetizers" recipes by **March 1**.

## A RECIPE WINNER EACH MONTH IN 2016!

Contributors whose recipes we print each month will be entered in a drawing and *Country Lines* will pay the winner's electric bill with a \$50 bill credit! A winner will be selected every month!

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.



# >> What's on that pole?

This illustration shows basic equipment found on electric power distribution poles. Not all poles have all this equipment on them. They vary according to location and the service they provide.

>> **Primary wires** run on top. Each usually carries 7,200 volts of electricity from a substation.

>> A **crossarm** holds power lines, allowing required clearances between lines.

>> **Surge arrestors** protect the transformer from lightning strikes.

>> A **secondary service drop** carries 120/240-volts of electricity to the end user. It has two "hot" wires from the transformer, and a bare neutral wire connected to the ground wire on the pole.

>> **Telephone and cable TV lines** are typically the lowest wires.

>> A head-high "**birth-mark**" shows the size of the pole, as well as where and when it was made.

>> **40-foot poles** are sunk six feet into the ground.

>> **Insulators** (made of porcelain or a composite) prevent energized wires from contacting each other or the pole.

>> The **neutral wire** acts as a line back to the substation and is tied to ground, balancing the electricity on the system.

>> **Transformers** convert higher voltage electricity from primary wires to lower voltage for use by consumers.

>> **Guy wires** help stabilize poles. They also are connected to the pole's ground wire.

>> **Pole ground wire**—running the length of the pole—connects to the neutral wire to complete the circuit inside the transformer. It also directs electricity from lightning safely into the earth.

>> Co-ops are responsible for **keeping vegetation around poles trimmed** to avoid interference with the electric system.

# Why Electric Co-ops Replace Utility Poles

**Y**ou probably don't pay much attention to the utility poles found throughout Alger Delta Cooperative's service area, but did you know these tall structures are the backbone of our distribution network?

Strong, sturdy utility poles ensure a reliable electric system, which is why we routinely inspect the thousands of poles on our lines. Throughout the year, our crews check poles for decay caused by exposure to the elements. They know which poles are oldest and conduct inspections by a rotational process. Typically, a standard wooden distribution pole is expected to last over 50 years.

Occasionally, poles need to be replaced for reasons besides decay and old age. Weather disasters, power line relocation and car crashes are potential causes for immediate replacement. When possible, Alger Delta communicates when and where pole replacements will take place so that you stay informed of where crews will be working.

## Here is a quick breakdown of how crews replace a utility pole:

When a pole needs to be replaced, crews start the process by digging a hole, typically next to the pole being replaced. The hole depth must be 15 percent of the new pole's height. Next, the new pole is fitted with bolts, cross arms, insulators, ground wires and arm braces—all of the necessary parts (see graphic on opposite page), for delivering safe and reliable electricity. Then, crews safely detach the power



lines from the old pole. The new pole is then raised and guided carefully into position, and the lines are attached, leaving the new pole to do its job.

So, the next time you drive by an Alger Delta crew replacing a pole, use caution and know that this process ensures a more reliable electric system for you, our members. ■

## Young Entrepreneurs Embrace Co-op Model

*Continued from page 4*

back to the members in proportion to their use. It is a simple but effective way of demonstrating how a co-op operates.

Globally, people of all ages are coming together and turning to co-ops as the solution. For information on starting a co-op, try these resources:

- **Cooperation Works!**—National network of regional centers that offer technical and operational assistance at a very low cost, focusing on rural areas. [cooperationworks.coop](http://cooperationworks.coop)

- **U.S. Federation of Worker Cooperatives**—Provides resources and consulting for groups of people looking to start worker-owned cooperatives. [usworker.coop](http://usworker.coop)

Further, your cooperative, Alger Delta Electric, also participates in the Youth Tour of Washington, D.C., and an in-state program called the Youth Leadership Summit. See the ad on page 20 to see how you or a student you know can apply to participate in this wonderful opportunity for fun, travel, and learning about co-ops. ■



# It Really Does Take A Village

## Partners For Power

By Emily Haines Lloyd

Photo: Garrett Hubbard



In rural Guatemala, not far from the border with Mexico, is a tiny village called Buena Vista and it is just that—a “good view.” Set amongst the mountains, with peaks poking through the clouds—it’s a magical sight. At least during the day.

At night, the small town disappears into the fog banks and darkness due to a simple reality—Buena Vista did not have electricity.

Which is why in early 2015, Michigan electric co-ops partnered with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) International, an organization that helps developing countries gain access to safe, reliable and affordable electricity, to bring power to approximately 54 families in Buena Vista. Lineworkers from five electric co-ops in Michigan packed over 1,500 pounds of luggage, equipment and tools and traveled to Buena Vista to do just that.

“On the day we arrived, we realized that all of the villagers—men, women and children—had gathered there to greet us. It was humbling to see so many smiling faces, all filled with such joy and gratitude, because they knew we had come to help bring them electricity,” said Brad Parkhouse, HomeWorks







Photo: Garrett Hubbard

Tri-County lineworker. “They expressed how grateful they were to us for coming, and we told them how happy we were to be there. It was emotional, really.”

The Michigan lineworkers discovered that local residents had already hand-dug and set all of the electric poles. With the mountainous terrain, the lineworkers remarked how difficult that task was, particularly without the power tools that would have been used stateside for such an undertaking.

Over 12 days, the Michigan lineworkers and their unofficial team of about 40 local residents prepared poles (by climbing them the old fashioned way, no bucket trucks here) and hanging wire.

“I thought I was a hard worker until I met these people,” said Trevor Stratton, Wolverine Power lineworker. “They’re pulling wire into the valleys where the elevation drop is incredible...I don’t know how we could ever do this job without them.”

While electric power is taken for granted by those in the United States, it is seen as nothing short of a lifeline to this community—which is likely why the local people were so committed to making it happen

in their small town. It promises improvement in health care, safety, education and economic growth. Power is the spark that changes communities, provides opportunities, and ignites imaginations. While the social and economic impact is nothing short of staggering—the experience for the team of 10 linemen did not lie in the metrics, but the experience itself.

“One of the locals, Ofelia De Leon, invited several of us to be with his family when the lights came on in their house for the very first time,” said Dan King, Michigan Electric Cooperative Association safety instructor. “You could feel the anticipation in the air as we all gathered together inside their small mountain home. Ofelia had the honor of flipping the switch, and when the light came on everyone began clapping. The room radiated with happiness—there was plenty of smiling, laughter, and even some tears. It was a very emotional experience, and by far my proudest moment in 26 years of linework.” ■

**For more information about Partners for Power and to see more amazing photos please visit [partnersforpower.org](http://partnersforpower.org).**

Edna designed this piece in 1990, in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of Earth Day and titled it "Song for the Earth".



# Quilting Threads Its Way Through A Life

By Yvonne Whitman

**E**dna Harbison-Yonker was born and raised as a "horse-and-buggy" Mennonite in Lancaster County, PA. During those simpler days, Edna watched her mother and aunts gather often for quilting bees that were part of a self-sustaining and industrious lifestyle. "I was always excited to see their fabrics and hear their ideas and see their finished quilts," Edna recalls. These impressions, along with the skills she acquired, would follow and serve her through many decades—and several states—providing necessary income and, ultimately, an award-winning career and thriving business.

Following a family move to Lower Michigan, Edna married her high school sweetheart, and they headed to Montana. "It was just after the Vietnam War and that had been a difficult time so we decided we wanted to live somewhere less crowded. It was beautiful there, but we couldn't afford the price of land." On their way back to Michigan, they detoured through the U.P. and fell in love with the entire area, but specifically Ontonagon, where they were able to buy 80 acres and build a small log cabin. "We had to get creative because we needed money, which is when I started



making quilted wall hangings," she explains. Having no electricity, Edna made her first quilts by hand-sewing each one. Edna's late husband created frames for them, and for 20 years they made a living by selling the pieces at art and craft shows throughout Wisconsin and Michigan.

The thread of quilting through her life led the couple to the 2001 purchase of a historic former grocery store in Ontonagon, which they dubbed "The Nonesuch Gallery," serving as a store and showplace for their unique work. When Edna's husband became ill and died in 2004, she was forced to expand her handcrafted offerings to include aprons, purses, note cards and even iPad holders.

Of the thousands of pieces Edna has created through the years, her favorite is a quilt entitled "Living a Dream," a piece inspired by her life in the U.P. At the behest of a friend, Edna submitted this quilt to "The All American Quilt Competition" sponsored by *Good Housekeeping* magazine and Land's End. Having already garnered over 40 national quilting awards, she knew that the year-away deadline would require a great deal of work, but she began the project hopefully. As the deadline loomed, Edna found herself working on the quilt every day for 12-16 hours. In the end, "Living a Dream" was chosen from



One of Edna's beautiful quilted creations. This original design is titled "Sailing Home."

4,000 other entries as the winning quilt from Michigan! As such, it was part of an invitational exhibit at the "International World's Fair of Quilts Show" in Houston, TX, displayed along with other winning state quilts. Unbeknownst to Edna, a team from the Library of Congress was also at the show to photograph and create a documentary titled, "Quilting in the '90s" for the Library of Congress Folk Life Center. They chose to feature 12 quilts from hundreds at the show, and Edna's made the cut. Since then, the quilt has been permanently displayed at the Nonesuch Gallery.

Edna's life took another fortuitous turn in 2006, when a Wisconsin tourist stopped into the shop. "We just started talking and became fast friends," Edna says. She and "the tourist," Brad Yonkers, married in 2007. "We became partners in life and in our work and are just so thankful to have found each other," she says. "It's a wonderful life." A talented craftsman, Brad has made considerable improvements to the store, including turning the lower level into a shop where he displays and sells an assortment of new and used acoustic instruments as well as his own handmade guitars.

When asked about the best part of having her own gallery and store, Edna thoughtfully responded, "The people. I get to meet so many interesting people and everyone has a story. I love that." Stop in sometime and share your story with Edna. ■

*The Nonesuch Gallery is located at 638 River Street in Ontonagon and is open 10-5 Monday through Saturday, from November-April and daily, May through October.*



Edna sits in the store in front of her prize winning "Living a Dream" quilt.



# The Quilt Lady

By Jack O'Malley

Eleanor Howard's story began when she was eight years old and asked her mother how to quilt. As a team, they pieced together Eleanor's first quilt and 87 years later, she still has it. "I've used that quilt on all my children's beds. I pert near wore it out!"

Speaking of children, Eleanor has five. And 15 grandchildren, along with 20 great-grandchildren. Each one has a quilt lovingly stitched by grandma. In addition, Eleanor donates many of her quilts to charity. How many has she made? "Oh, too many to



count!" Of the dozens of quilts assembled in her 95 years, one in particular stands out.

She made the quilt for her son, Albert, carefully patching each piece over two years. The result? A quilt depicting the state of Michigan, including all 83 counties, each painstakingly cut to its exact shape and featuring the product or service it's



Jack O'Malley

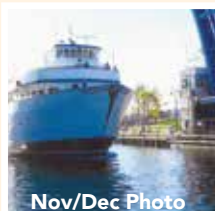
known for. Using appliques, stenciling, embroidery and hand painting, Eleanor had no pattern. She bought the biggest map she could find and went to work on figuring scale. The detail of Eleanor's Michigan quilt catches everyone's eye and has won multiple medals and ribbons. ■



## «« Where In Michigan Is This?

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



Nov/Dec Photo

Our Mystery Photo Contest Winner from the November/December 2015 issue is Brian Thompson, an Alger Delta co-op member who correctly identified the photo as "U.S.-31 Outlet Bridge in Charlevoix with the Emerald Isle boat."



# KEEP YOUR POWER ON!

WHOLE HOUSE GENERATOR SYSTEMS  
NOW AVAILABLE FROM



AMERICAN METAL ROOFS

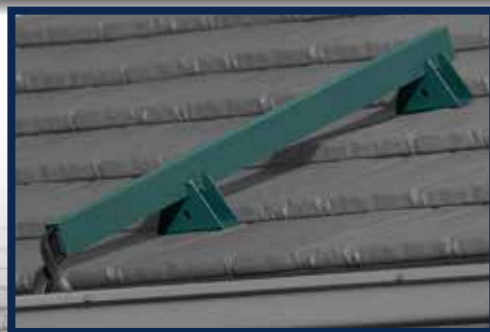


## HEATED SHINGLE ICEDAM CUTTER

A NEW Product From American Metal Roofs

AMR introduces Ice Dam Cutter - designed to relieve your home's ice dam build-up. Ice Dam Cutter uses heat to melt channels in roof ice allowing water to flow freely. The open channels prevent ice damming and build-up.

**CUT ICE DAMS FOREVER - CALL TODAY!**



**Installing through the Winter!**

See our Photo Gallery and Enter our **SWEEPSTAKES** at

**[www.AmericanMetalRoofs.com](http://www.AmericanMetalRoofs.com)**

Visit the American Metal Roofs Showrooms at

6140 Taylor Dr., Flint, MI 48507 or 1875 Lansing Rd., Charlotte, MI 48813

**844-METAL-ROOFS**

**844-638-2576**





# ELEVATE YOUR FUTURE

**YOU ARE A LEADER.** Whether it's in the classroom

or in your community, you guide and inspire others to contribute their best efforts. Your electric cooperative has two **FREE** programs to help students like you develop strong leadership habits, explore career opportunities in the electric industry, and engage in the democratic process. Learn more about the **Youth Leadership Summit** and **Washington, D.C. Youth Tour** at [miYLS.com](http://miYLS.com). You are a leader. **YOU ARE THE FUTURE.**



**WANT TO LEARN MORE?** Watch the videos and apply online at [miYLS.com](http://miYLS.com).



**Youth Leadership Summit**  
April 27-29 | SpringHill Camp, Ewart, MI



**Electric Cooperative Youth Tour**  
June 11-16 | Washington, D.C.