

# MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



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Shares The  
World  
He Has  
Shaped

**Plus!**

Annual Meeting Is June 18

Meet Your Director Candidates

The Roller Skating Seamstress

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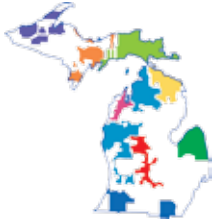


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Michigan's Electric Cooperatives  
countrylines.com

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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.

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**Change of Address:**

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

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## IN YOUR WORDS

Last month, we asked electric co-op members a question:

**If you could be any age for a week, what age would that be?**

Thank you for all the responses. Here are some of your answers...

"I would like to be 17 again, when I met and dated my first girlfriend."

"I think of myself as 61 years old. I am really 82, and married 60 years. To be 61 again would be great...the kids are educated and married, our home and cottage are paid for, and we still have date nights!"

"My current age, 76. I'm healthy and can enjoy all the blessings provided by God."

Our new Question of the Month is:

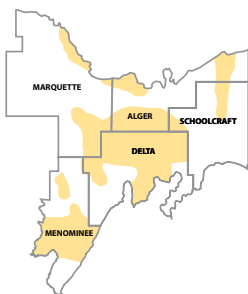
**If you had to be trapped in a tv show for a month, which would you choose?**

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

### ON THE COVER\*

Tom Lakenen, creator of Lakenenland Sculpture Park in the Upper Peninsula, has created over 80 whimsical sculptures from bits of salvaged iron.

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



## Board Of Directors

### District 1—Big Bay

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### District 8—Nahma/Isabella

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

### District 9—Hiawatha/Maple Ridge

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## Office Hours

M–F, 8 a.m.–4 p.m. (ET)

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

**algerdelta.com**

# Alger Delta Offers New Voting Option



**Tom Harrell**  
Chief Executive  
Officer

A few days after getting this edition of *Country Lines*, members in Districts 1 (Big Bay), 6 (Nathan/White Rapids) and 9 (Hiawatha) will be able to vote for their district director. For the first time ever, Alger Delta will offer two ways for members to participate in this democratic process: voting by mail or voting online.

Eligible members will receive an envelope that includes the mail-in ballot and complete instructions on how to vote online, including an election ID number and passcode. The ID number and passcode are unique to each voter and are required for casting your vote. Members who use online voting will access a secure website and enter their ID and Passcode. Members can then follow the instructions for voting and submitting their ballot.

This is the fourth year that Alger Delta has used mail balloting and most members are probably familiar with how that works. Members who opt for this method should follow the instructions for submitting their ballot in the pre-paid return envelope.

Whichever method you choose, it's important to follow the instructions to ensure that your vote counts. Because Alger Delta offers options, safeguards are built-in to ensure that each vote counts only once. The election ID number and passcode are part of these important safeguards.

All ballots are submitted to Survey and Ballot Systems (SBS) in Eden Prairie, MN. This is our third year with SBS to conduct the election, count the ballots and submit the results to the board on the day of each district meeting.

Alger Delta is owned by its members and is a democratically controlled corporation, so it's important for you to participate. Mail balloting and online voting are two ways to help ensure you have the greatest opportunity. ■

## Save The Date!—June 18

Alger Delta's annual meeting is Saturday, June 18, at the Upper Peninsula State Fairgrounds in Escanaba. The year's event will feature a cookout, activities for kids and adults, and—of course—lots of prizes. The business meeting will include a report on the state of your cooperative, its accomplishments during 2015, and the seating of elected directors.

The meeting will be held in the Miracle of Life building. This newer building allows plenty of space and features a good sound system, bright lighting and clean washrooms.

Prize drawings every 20 minutes will entertain everyone.

More information will be published in upcoming editions of *Michigan Country Lines*.  
**So, for now, save the date—June 18, 2016!**

## Official Notice of District Meetings

Pursuant to the bylaws, notice is hereby given that the Alger Delta Cooperative Electric Association shall convene a district meeting of the members of the cooperative in the districts identified in the chart below, on the following dates, and at the stated locations and times:

District	Description	Date and Time	Location
1	Big Bay	May 9, 2016 6 p.m. ET	Powell Township School 101 Deutsch Ave Big Bay, MI 49808
6	Nathan / White Rapids	May 10, 2016 6 p.m. CT	American Legion Post 43 W5554 River Rd. Stephenson, MI 49887
9	Hiawatha	May 11, 2016 6 p.m. ET	Mathias Township Community Building E2997 State Highway M67 Trenary, MI 49891

Each district meeting shall be called to order at 6 p.m., local time.

Each district shall complete the following items of official business:

- Election of one (1) person to serve on the board of directors for a term of three (3) years.
- Presentation and consideration of reports by the officer(s) and/or director(s) of the cooperative.

## Project Improves Reliability, Reduces Cost

Alger Delta Cooperative is gaining reliability and reduced costs by completing its U.S.-41 line building project. The project began in mid-2015 and was completed at the end of that year. The co-op has now completed the process of transferring all the electrical load to the new line.

"There aren't very many times that a project helps pay for itself, so this one is particularly satisfying," says Tom Harrell, Alger Delta's CEO. "I'm proud of the members who watched this project develop and helped us along the way with good suggestions about where to place poles, and worked with us on the easement and property issues," Harrell explains. Harrell also commended Fox Power, a utility contracting company located in Gladstone, for getting the work done in a timely fashion. Harrell pointed out that the new line "looks great"—which he also attributes to Fox.

Bugle Contracting, of Cornell, completed the tree work and other vegetation management work.

Alger Delta crews also helped with various aspects of the job, including installation of line protective devices, and moving all the load to the new line.

The new lines run between Alger Delta's Rapid River substation, roughly paralleling U.S.-41 to County Road 432, which is also known as the Rock cut-across. Interconnecting these two parts of the system allows the co-op to feed consumers in the Trenary and Maple Ridge areas from the Rapid River substation. This will improve reliability for the Trenary/Maple Ridge areas because the Rapid River substation is fed from the American Transmission Company (ATC) system. Power can be purchased from ATC at a lower cost than the previous arrangement.

Members in these areas have experienced some lengthy outages, so these changes will provide relief and improve system operations. "I hope our members can see that we listened to their concerns and responded because we care," Harrell says. ■

# Co-ops Launch Voter Engagement Program

**M**ichigan electric cooperatives have joined a national initiative for a non-partisan effort to promote civic engagement and voter participation in the communities they serve.

Through this program, we want to help our members know when elections are, what's at stake, and how to make their voices heard. Who folks vote for isn't really as important as the fact that they do vote.

In keeping with its non-partisan goals, the initiative will not be endorsing specific candidates for office. It's about real people in real places facing real challenges. It's about our co-ops living out the principles of our movement: Concern for community and democratic control.

Visit [vote.coop](http://vote.coop) to learn more. ■



Don't forget to vote in the state primary election on August 2 and the general election on November 8.

# I'M A CO-OP VOTER



A PROGRAM OF AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES  
[WWW.VOTE.COOP](http://WWW.VOTE.COOP)



# Thank A Lineworker On April 11

As the “first responders” of the electric co-op family, lineworkers perform around-the-clock in dangerous conditions and challenging situations to keep power flowing and protect the public’s safety, going above and beyond to restore power to their communities. That’s why electric co-ops have designated a National Lineman Appreciation Day. This year, April 11 is the day we honor the hard-working men and women who keep the lights on.

Resolutions adopted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) explain it best:

“Whereas linemen leave their families and put their lives on the line every day to keep the power on; Whereas linemen work 365 days a year under dangerous conditions to build, maintain and repair the electric infrastructure; Whereas there would be no electric co-ops without the brave men and women who comprise our corps of lineworkers.”



Lineworkers everywhere deserve this special day of recognition. As a co-op member, please take a moment to “thank a lineworker” for the job they do and show support for those who help light our lives. ■

## Plant A Tree In The Right Place

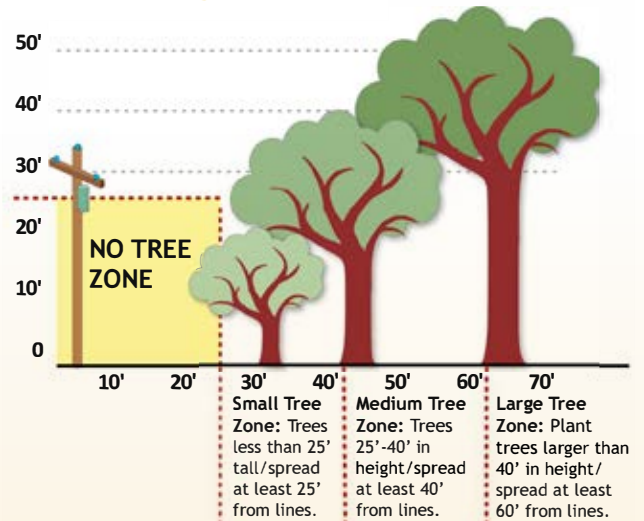
Earth Day is April 22. Show the earth some love, and plant a tree. Choose the right tree for the right place and avoid future problems with power lines.

To avoid future electrical hazards, planting tips include:

- Consider the mature height of trees. Any tree that can grow to 25 feet tall or more should not be planted near overhead power lines. A mature height of less than 15 feet is recommended.
- Do not plant near underground utility services. Tree roots can grow and interfere with underground pipes, cables and wires. Future repairs to these facilities could also damage the health and beauty of nearby plants and trees.
- Keep areas around electric meters, transformers or other electrical equipment free of any vegetation that could limit utility service access.

- Before digging, call 811, the local underground utility locator service so that accidental contact, damage and injuries can be avoided. ■

### Tree Planting Guide



# Spring Clean Your Way To Energy Savings

**S**pruce up your spring cleaning routine by adding a few extra activities that will keep your home spotless and help you save energy.

- Vacuum air registers and vents to keep air flowing as efficiently as possible.
- Wash or replace air filters and consider installing a timer switch on your bathroom fan.
- Dust electronics and lightbulbs thoroughly to ensure they operate at maximum capacity.
- Vacuum refrigerator coils to remove dust and dirt, which can force the fridge to work harder.
- Clean the track on your sliding glass door to maintain a tight seal. A dirty track can create gaps where heat or cold air can escape.

Take a quick break from cleaning and prep your home for energy savings by doing the following:

- Redirect ceiling fans to spin counterclockwise. This helps move air downward, cooling the room and maintaining constant airflow.
- Purchase a smart or programmable thermostat to control the temperature in your home, even when you're away.



- Open windows to create a cross-wise breeze, cooling your home without switching on the A/C.
- Seal air leaks to prevent cool air from seeping out. Up to 30 percent of heating and cooling bills are consumed by air leakage!
- Schedule a professional tune-up for your cooling system to ensure it runs at peak efficiency. Regular tune-ups can also help prevent costly breakdowns.

REBATES ARE NOW AVAILABLE toward the purchase of many energy-efficient products and appliances. Visit [Michigan-energy.org](http://Michigan-energy.org) or call 877-296-4319 for additional energy-saving information and rebates. ■



# Fresh start

## Out with the old

**It's the season of change!** Now is the perfect time to identify opportunities to upgrade outdated, inefficient lighting and equipment at your office or facility. The Energy Optimization program helps businesses save energy—and improve their bottom line—by providing cash incentives toward the purchase of:

- HVAC equipment
- Food service equipment
- Energy-efficient lighting
- Industrial process equipment
- Commercial refrigeration equipment

**ENERGY TIP: Rebates are available for custom projects tailored to meet unique business needs.**

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).



# Birds Of Beauty Photo Gallery



## Photo Fun

Alger Delta invites members to share their amazing photos. Selected photos will be published in *Michigan Country Lines*. Upcoming topics and deadlines are: **"Fishing,"** due **April 25** for the June issue and **"All About Michigan,"** due **May 25** for the July/August 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. Caught this sandpiper wading in our pond.  
*Photo by Kim Foos, Cedar River*
2. A female cardinal at my feeder last winter.  
*Photo by Kathy Sendek, Trenary*
3. My granddaughter, Riley, feeding the chickadees.  
*Photo by Tina Hiironen, Felch*
4. Beautiful birds are inside, too! Lovebirds Emily, Kiwi and Pace squawk whenever we talk and they love to listen to their feathered friends outside.  
*Photo by Beth Freydank, Menominee*

Remember <http://bit.ly/1JX5Afh> to submit photos!

# CLEVER SIDE DISHES

Complete your meal with these simple sides.



## Spicy Roasted Brussels Sprouts

*Cynthia Hodges, Calumet*

- 1 ½ lbs. brussels sprouts
- 2 T. extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ c. white wine vinegar
- ¼ c. honey
- 4 T. Sriracha, or more to taste
- kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Cover a baking sheet with foil. Trim the base away from the brussels sprouts and discard. Cut the sprouts in half. In a large bowl, whisk the olive oil with the vinegar, honey and Sriracha to combine. Add the brussels sprouts and toss until fully coated. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Spread the brussels sprouts on the foil-lined baking sheet, cut sides down. Pour any extra olive oil mixture onto the pan and tilt the pan around to distribute it. Roast until the sprouts are crispy on the outside and golden and caramelized on the cut sides, 20 to 30 minutes. Serve immediately.

## Broccoli Salad (pictured)

Karen Armstrong, Webberville

- 1 head broccoli, cut into bite size florets
- ½ red onion, chopped
- ½ c. crumbled bacon
- 1 ½ c. shredded cheese
- ½ c. mayo
- 1 T. cider vinegar
- ½ c. sugar (or to taste)

Mix all ingredients together; toss with broccoli. Serve.

## German Potato Salad

Joan Nachtman, Ellsworth

- ½ lb. bacon, cut into small pieces
- 1 medium onion
- 2 T. flour
- ½ c. sugar
- ⅔ c. white vinegar
- 1½ c. water
- salt and pepper, to taste
- 6–8 large potatoes, peeled and cubed

Fry bacon and remove from pan; leave the fat from bacon in the pan. Add the onion and fry in the bacon grease for 3 to 4 minutes. Add flour and cook for a couple minutes, stirring. Mix in sugar and white vinegar. Boil the potatoes in water until done. Drain and add potatoes with bacon and sauce. Best made one day ahead, cover and refrigerate.

## Sauerkraut Salad

Lorraine Hartley, Wolverine

- 16 ozs. sauerkraut, drained and rinsed
- 1 med. green pepper, diced
- 1 c. celery, diced
- 1 med. onion, diced
- ¾ c. to 1 c. sugar
- ½ c. apple cider vinegar
- 2-oz. jar diced pimentos, drained

Combine all ingredients. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Stir and serve.

## Apple Slaw

Robin Musselman, Charlotte

- 2 c. chopped apples
- 2 c. shredded red cabbage
- 2 c. shredded green cabbage
- 1 med. carrot, finely chopped
- 1½ c. Miracle Whip
- 2 T. honey
- spiced or sugared pecans, optional

Mix Miracle Whip and honey; set aside. In a large bowl, combine apples, carrot and both cabbages. Mix in Miracle Whip/honey mixture. Chill. Serve as is or with pecans on top.



## Swiss Vegetable Medley

Terry Baxter, Alanson

- 1 bag (16 oz.) frozen vegetables (broccoli, carrots, cauliflower), thawed and drained
- 1 can (10 ¾ oz.) condensed cream of mushroom soup
- 1 c. (4 oz.) shredded Swiss cheese
- ⅓ c. sour cream
- ¼ t. pepper
- 1 can (2.8 oz.) French fried onions

Preheat oven to 350°. In a large bowl, combine vegetables, soup, ½ c. cheese, sour cream, pepper and ½ can of French fried onions. Pour into shallow (1 qt.) rectangle baking dish. Bake covered for 30 to 40 minutes. Sprinkle remaining cheese and onions in diagonal rows across top; bake uncovered 5 minutes or until onions are golden. Makes 6 servings.

### SUBMIT YOUR RECIPE!

Thanks to all our readers who send in recipes. Please send in your favorite "BBQ" recipes by **May 1** and "Dessert" recipes by **July 1**.

Enter your recipe online at [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) or send to (hand print or type 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.

### A RECIPE WINNER EVERY MONTH!

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

# Meet The Director Candidates

## DISTRICT 1 – BIG BAY



### MICHAEL (MIKE) NASON

#### Occupations:

Retired, State of Michigan, and current small business owner

#### Candidate Comments:

I am a consulting partner in managing two businesses in Marquette, where I have lived my whole life. I am running for re-election in order to:

1. Keep the member-owners of Alger Delta informed through transparency.
2. Better understand Alger Delta's position in future economic developments.
3. Ensure the distribution of capital credits.
4. To make sure that Alger Delta operates to the best of its ability in a manner that is consistent with the changing environment of the electrical industry.

## DISTRICT 1 – BIG BAY



### DARRYL SMALL

#### Occupation:

Part-time employment with the Huron Mountain Club.

#### Affiliations/Community Activities/Volunteer Service:

Commissioned Ruling Elder with First Presbyterian Church, Big Bay 550 Snowmobile Club, community volunteer in Big Bay and Marquette

#### Candidate Comments:

I served on the Alger Delta board from 2003 to 2014. Early in that time, Alger Delta had multiple problems and was close to bankruptcy. With the guidance of the board and a new CEO, Alger Delta became solvent within six years. This was partly due to the knowledge and dedication of the board members who laid the foundation for future success. Education and training on how the utility industry works enriched our service, and enabled the board members to work together as a team. Our current director sponsored a policy change so board members are no longer required to obtain their director credentials. I believe that to effectively serve the members of our cooperative and make sound business decisions, directors must keep informed of the changes in the utility industry.

A vote for me is a vote for knowledge, leadership, and integrity. I will be responsive to your concerns.

## DISTRICT 6 – NATHAN/WHITE RAPIDS



### PAUL SEDERQUIST

#### Occupation:

Retired Dairy Farmer

Lifelong farmer. I still do hay and small grains as a cash crop on my farm.

#### Affiliations/Community Activities/Volunteer Service:

Served on the Alger Delta Cooperative Board from 1986-1995, and again from 1998 to present.

#### Candidate Comments:

My name is Paul Sederquist. I am running for director of the co-op. I believe in the way they are member-owned and run by the directors and not stock-owned. I was first elected to the Alger Delta board in 1986. I have held the positions of vice president and president in the past and have been a member since.

I am an active member of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church and have served many years on the church council. I also held the position as sexton for the church-owned cemetery for the past 10 years. I have been a member of Stephenson Marketing Cooperative and served as a director there for nine years. I was also president of the association for 12 years.

I would love the opportunity to continue to serve Alger Delta members as a board director.

## DISTRICT 9 – HIAWATHA



### DOUG BOVIN

#### Occupations:

Retired Vocational Accounting Instructor

Former Munising City Manager

Former 108th District Representative—Michigan House  
Operation Action U.P.—Executive Director,

Nine years as City Commissioner for Gladstone

Five years as Mayor of Gladstone

22 years on the Delta County Board of Commissioners,  
with 16 years as chairman.

#### Affiliations/Community Activities/Volunteer Service:

President of the Michigan and National Association of Counties, member of National and International Board of Directors, volunteer for Kiwanis, volunteer for Jaycee's

#### Candidate Comments:

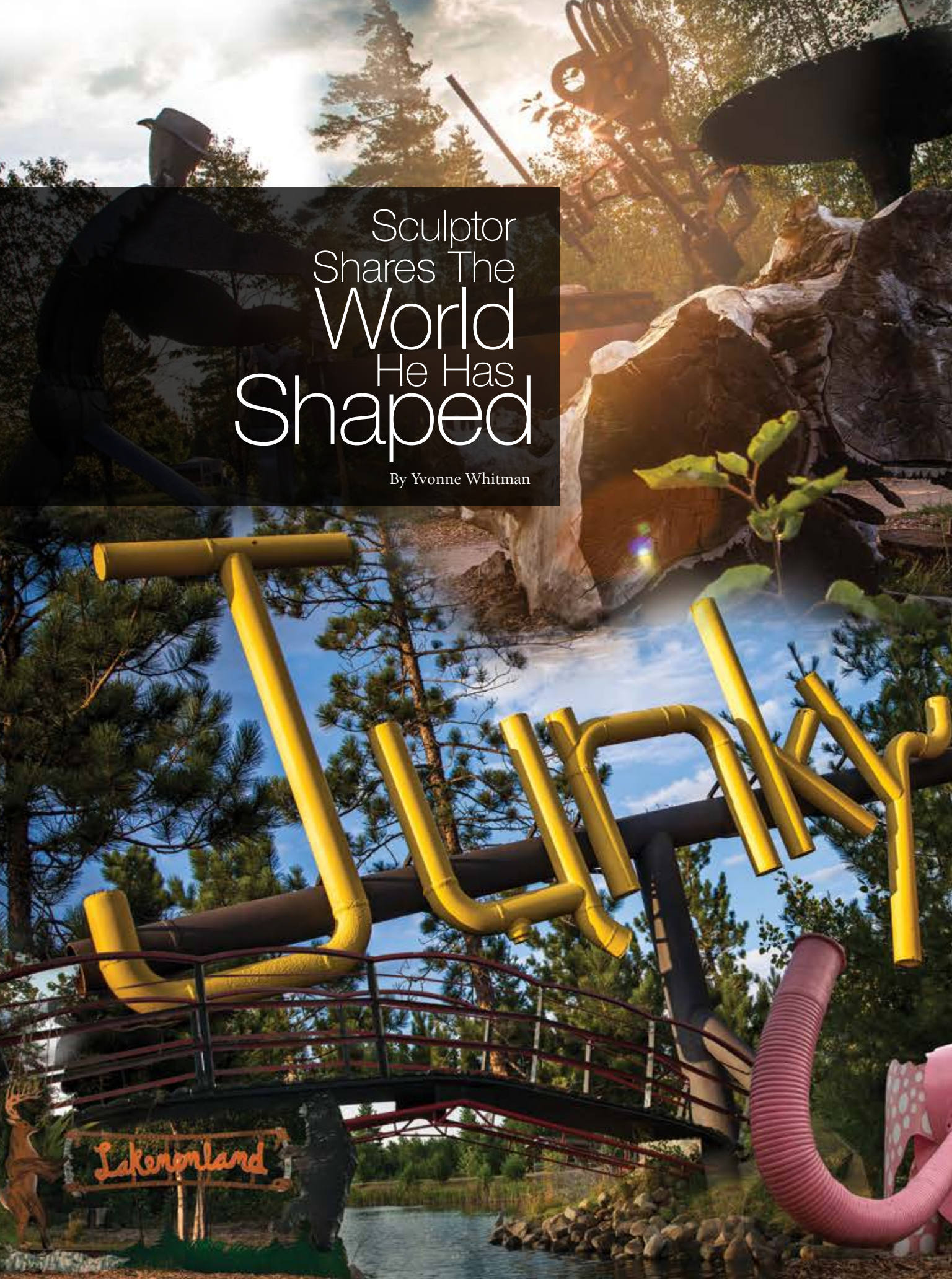
Bonnie and I have been members of Alger Delta Cooperative for 47 years and I am asking to represent you as Hiawatha District 9 director.

Experience, ability and willingness to serve are important. I demonstrated these qualities in the Michigan House of Representatives and on the Energy and Technology Committee working, with all utilities and the MPSC.

As a vocational accounting instructor I am uniquely qualified to understand the financial considerations important to you and the co-op. As a past city manager, I have a record of success at updating facilities and equipment while lowering taxes.

Finally, I am a traditional Yooper. I grew up at that "Camp in the Woods," and I appreciate the ability to escape to the back 40 or lake. If you have ideas, I want to hear them because cooperation and understanding is how we can improve and enjoy our U.P. lifestyle.

Thank you.

The image is a collage. The top half features a dark, semi-transparent rectangular area containing white text. Behind this text, a sculptor wearing a hat is seen working on a large, dark sculpture. To the right, a large, abstract sculpture of a hand is visible against a bright, sunlit background. The bottom half of the image shows a vibrant water slide structure made of yellow and black pipes, set against a backdrop of pine trees and a blue sky. A pink, corrugated slide is also visible on the right side. In the bottom left corner, a wooden sign with the word 'Lakemontland' is mounted on a rock, with a small deer sculpture nearby.

Sculptor  
Shares The  
World  
He Has  
Shaped

By Yvonne Whitman

Lakemontland



Highway M-28, east of Marquette, is a typical stretch of U.P. road—until you notice the startling, out-of-place objects emerging from the nearby woods. Some say the experience is like stumbling upon a north woods “Jurassic Park.” In truth, you have entered the fantastical and far-friendlier world of Lakenenland Sculpture Park.

Yes, you will find a dinosaur or two roaming the nearly 40-acre woodland park. But they’re gentle giants—over 80 whimsical sculptures created by a single artist from bits of salvaged iron. Each of the works scattered throughout the park are the creation of a local iron sculptor, Tom Lakenen, 53.

The park is the result of a major lifestyle change and grew from a single project. “I traded beer drinking and bar stools for metal sculpting,” Lakenen says with a wide grin. Working in his garage, he first crafted “Eight Dancing Wolves,” which he hesitantly displayed in his front yard. “No one threw eggs at my house, so I decided to make something else,” says Lakenen, a boilermaker by trade. These were soon joined by a motorcycle-riding skeleton and other imaginative creatures. His neighbors didn’t appear to mind his installations, but his output soon overflowed his yard. And thus was born the Lakenenland Sculpture Park.

“In 2003, I remortgaged my house for the next 100 years!” Lakenen jokingly exclaims about buying 37 acres “to scatter my ‘junk art’ around.” After years of clearing trees and building roads by himself, the park has evolved to include a visitor pavilion, band shell, two fishing ponds and a lean-to warming shack for the many winter visitors arriving by snowmobile. The park is open year-round and there is no admission fee.

Most winter weekends find Lakenen stoking the bonfire for snowmobilers and offering free hot chocolate, coffee and snacks to upwards of 150 people. (Snowmobile Trail #417 runs through the park). His generosity is matched by his resourcefulness, since he’s become adept at bartering. In fact, Lakenen traded sand from the property with both a neighbor and a road crew, who removed enough earth to create the two large craters that became the ponds he now stocks with fish.

Lakenenland and its contents are financed solely by the sculptor himself—with one fine exception. An area doctor, Ken Buran, once left a \$2,000 donation. Buran subsequently asked Lakenen if there were any other improvements he wished to make in the park. “A pavilion,” Lakenen told him, “so guests can eat their lunch in shade.” The pavilion arose from a \$10,000 second donation. “Tom and his wife, Lisa, are good people,” Buran says. “They do a lot for the community. His park is unique, and I thought it worth preserving and building upon. Communities need these places as a cultural heritage and identity.”

And indeed, Lakenenland represents more than a sculpture park. It stands as a testament to creativity, determination, generosity and—above all—community. And you can’t put a price on that. ■

Visit [lakenenland.com](http://lakenenland.com) for more information on the park.



Pat Lakenen putting the finishing touches on another one of her son’s creations.





## The Roller Skating Seamstress

By Yvonne Whitman

Professional sewing has made its way through four generations of Kendra Symbal's family tree. But what would her great grandmother, a milliner, have made of seamstress Kendra's decision to don a short skirt and fishnet stockings and roll into the public arena as a roller derby team member? One can only imagine!

Kendra runs The Stitch Witch shop in Marquette's Gateway Plaza, specializing in mens' and womens' alterations and repairs, including bridal and formal wear. First opened in 2008 in Ashland, WI, her business has grown to the point where she is looking to hire additional help. "Many times new clothes don't fit as you wish they would. These clothes are never perfect for your individual body. And, uncomfortable clothes that don't look as good as they could, leave you feeling less confident. With subtle alterations, you can look and feel amazing in clothes you already love," Kendra explains.



Kendra Symbal with daughter, Evelyn, at half-time during a roller derby race.

Speaking of looking and feeling amazing, Kendra's foray into the roller derby was the result of growing boredom with everyday gym visits. "I saw on Facebook that there was a roller derby group forming in Marquette. I thought, "Wow. I get to



wear fishnets. In public? And be on roller skates? I mean who doesn't love that? I thought, this sounds really fun! So I joined the Dead River Derby. I trained hard. I hadn't been on roller skates since middle school and I was a wall climber," Kendra said.

Unfortunately, or fortunately, the increased success of her business—and the responsibility of raising two children—meant she had to retire from the derby. Kendra managed to referee for a season and is now a proud business sponsor of her former team.

Kendra's children are often found in her shop, just as she spent a great deal of time in her own mother's business. She maintains a back room where the kids can play while she works.



## THE STITCH WITCH

She sees how much she absorbed about sewing as a child and how that led to it becoming her passion and livelihood.

"I learned a lot from her. I was always absorbing and observing the multi-generational sewing thing as a kid. You don't realize these things when you are growing up, but they really are influential," Kendra explains. "That's why I bring my kids to my shop—so that they can learn and observe."

Sewing was always a part of Kendra's life. Her great grandmother owned the millinery shop and her grandmother, Janice, sewed cushions for her husband's boat business. And, Kendra's mother was a home economics teacher who always had a home-based business, taking in sewing to supplement her income.

Kendra recalls her first sewing experience of creating a felt Valentines box in kindergarten, and in high school, she was known as "The Costume Goddess" by the theatre department. She sewed clothes for herself and assisted her mother with back-logged customer work.



Kendra refereeing a match.

While Kendra did enjoy sewing, she opted for a degree in cosmetology. Attending NMU, she also did alterations part-time to make extra cash. "I started realizing that I liked doing it. I enjoyed the customers and particularly enjoyed taking a garment that a customer especially loved and fixing it," Kendra explains. "I've always liked taking something rough and making it shiny."

Completing her cosmetology studies, Kendra found herself unfulfilled and unchallenged by the work. On a particularly slow day working in a salon, she had a realization. "I found myself at the salon without any customers, knowing that I had a rack of clothes at my mom's shop just waiting for me to sew. I thought, 'I can't do this anymore.' I can't sit here for eight hours a day, making no money, and work all night at mom's shop to catch up!" Thus, Kendra became the fifth in her family to live by the sewing needle. ■

*Kendra Symbal is an Alger Delta Electric cooperative member. For more information, contact The Stitch Witch at 906-236-1087 or [MiStitchWitch@gmail.com](mailto:MiStitchWitch@gmail.com). Appointments for bridal wear are required. Walk-ins are accepted for standard alterations. Rush season (prom and wedding) requires six-week advance orders.*

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## Jampot Bakery Offers A Divine Experience

By Yvonne Whitman

For area residents and tourists alike, no drive along the Keweenaw Peninsula's scenic lakefront is complete without a stop at The Jampot. The shop is operated by a small order of Byzantine monks and well-known for everything homemade, from jams and jellies to fresh-baked goods. The signature thimbleberry jam is heavenly.

Monastery founders Frs. Basil and Nicholas arrived in the area in 1983, seeking a place for quiet prayer and peace. Hearing that the Upper Peninsula was "a place of small towns and wilderness," noted Basil, they purchased a quaint lakeside resort. "The Holy Spirit led us here. The first winter our business was just finding a way to survive," Basil explains. In order to support themselves, they quickly became familiar with the tradition of harvesting a local fruit—the thimbleberry—long used to make jam for winter sustenance. They decided to try jam-making by default, as there wasn't much else in the rugged, sparsely-populated land.

Welcoming area residents helped the monks as they worked to establish their business. "Community members embraced us and that made all the difference," Basil says. "They shared the best locations of berry patches and the local grocer sold us the jars at cost." That first year, they produced 120 cases of jam, selling them to a local distributor for use in gift baskets. In 1986, they opened the



Photo courtesy of The Jampot

doors of The Jampot, adding unique bakery items to their product line that receive rave reviews.

However, the main focus of their lives remains prayer, to which they devote every possible waking hour, and The Jampot exists to support a place of religious devotion. Visit [societystjohn.com](http://societystjohn.com) to learn more about the monastery's fascinating story. ■

*The Jampot is located on M-26 between Eagle Harbor and Eagle River. The store's season is late April through mid-October. Products are also available year-round by online mail order. Store hours are Monday - Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visit [store.societystjohn.com](http://store.societystjohn.com) for more details.*



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