

Cherryland Electric Cooperative

June 2016

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



Plus!

Opposing Viewpoints

Fighting Prescription Drug Abuse

Meet The Annual Meeting 'Guru'



Asparagus

REIGNS IN MICHIGAN

Both of these devices create hot air but which uses less power?



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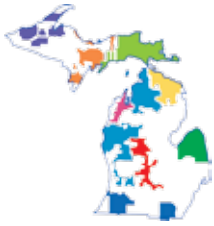
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Association officers are **Robert Kran**, Great Lakes Energy, chairman; **Mark Kappler**, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric, vice chairman; and **Eric Baker**, Wolverine Power Cooperative, secretary-treasurer. **Craig Borr** is president and CEO.

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IN YOUR WORDS

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

If you could ask your future self one question, what would it be?

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

"Will I always over think everything?"

"Will I ever not need to call mom every time I have a bad day?"

"Have I seen the world and did I let it shape me?"

"Am I happy?"

"Was college really worth all of the money?"

Our new Question of the Month is:

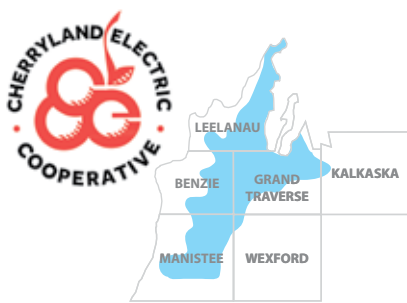
If you could spend the day with any celebrity, who would it be?

Please submit answers to countrylines.com by July 1.

ON THE COVER

Marcia and Dick Walsworth, second-generation asparagus farmers from Mears, MI, introduce us to their 260-acre kingdom as they explain the struggles of maintaining their domain in the second largest asparagus producing state.

Photo-Emily Haines Lloyd



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Find us on Facebook.
[facebook.com/cherrylandelectriccoop](https://www.facebook.com/cherrylandelectriccoop)

Co-op News

Cherryland Announces Scholarship Winners

Three high school seniors and two adult learners have been awarded 2016 Cherryland Electric Cooperative scholarships.

The three high school scholarships are worth \$4,000 each – \$1,000 per year for four years. The adult scholarships are a one-time award of \$1,000 each.

Winners of the high school scholarships are Cara Ferguson of Traverse City Central High School, Anna Roth of Traverse West Senior High School, and Chelsea Amalfitano of St. Mary Lake Leelanau High School.

The adult scholarship winners are Terri Wilkinson of Interlochen and Nathan Weemhoff of Traverse City.

Cherryland Cares Seeks Grant Applications

Area nonprofit agencies seeking financial help can apply for a grant through Cherryland Cares. The deadline for applications is Friday, June 10. The next quarterly meeting of Cherryland Cares is Monday, June 20. For more information, call Shannon Mattson at 231-486-9234 or email smattson@cherrylandelectric.coop.

Members May Give Input At Monthly Board Meeting

The board of directors at Cherryland is offering an opportunity for members to provide direct input to the board on Monday, June 20, at 9 a.m. at the company office in Grawn. Members are asked to come to the lobby and request to speak to the board. Comments must be kept to five minutes and attendance at the meeting is only allowed for the public input portion.

Cherryland Presents The Touchstone Energy Junior Royale Parade

Cherryland is sponsoring the Touchstone Energy Junior Royale Parade held Thursday, July 7, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., as part of the National Cherry Festival. The parade features the National Cherry Festival Prince and Princess court representing our 27 local elementary schools. Come out and join the fun. ■

Cherryland Office Closed Independence Day

The Cherryland office will be closed Monday, July 4, in observance of Independence Day. There's no better way to celebrate the U.S.A. than with family and friends. Keep your fingers crossed for sunny weather.





Opposing Viewpoints



Tony Anderson
General Manager

At your cooperative, we serve more than 34,000 meters. Obviously, this is a lot of people to make happy on a daily basis. Just as obvious is the fact that we will never make everyone happy. So, I simply don't lose sleep over it.

One consistent area that you could say "pokes" the unhappy from time-to-time is this monthly column. Often, it is pointed out to me that my viewpoints are wrong, misguided or slanted to the cooperative's viewpoint.

Wrong and misguided are matters of opinion worthy of debate. "Slanted" is a term I will not argue because my columns are absolutely slanted to what I think is best for our cooperative. This doesn't mean that I provide false information. I would not do that. It simply means that when you read my column, you get my experienced opinion on the issue of the month.

As a reader, you can agree, disagree, applaud or toss the proverbial rotten tomato. Reactions of all kinds are truly welcome. They give me a pulse on what our members are thinking.

I honestly enjoy a thoughtful and intelligent debate. I try to be open-minded as much as a person can be with more than 32 years dedicated to the cooperative industry. So, when I get a response that is something more than an anonymous "you suck," I feel like the column has done its job by creating a conversation.

Members who want more than a back and forth with a stubborn general manager do have options. They can comment on Cherryland's blog or

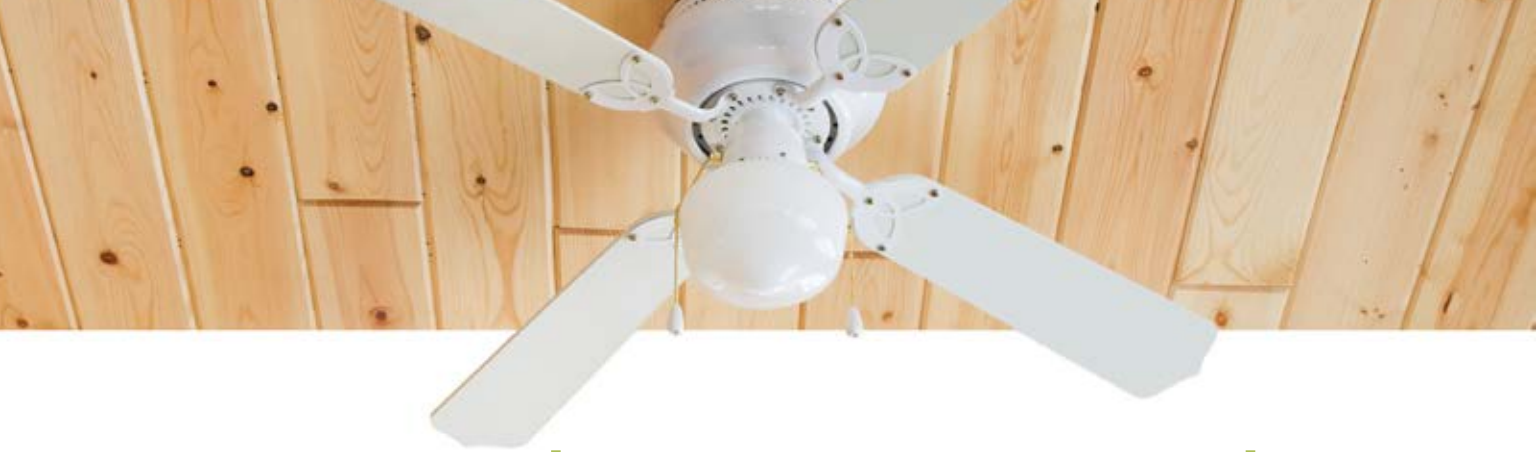
Facebook page, attend various public meetings held by the cooperative, or attend a quarterly member input session at a board meeting. The email address of every board member is on our website, as well.

Members can also ask us to come to their doorstep or local coffee shop. Board members, cooperative staff and I are always willing to meet with one, 10 or 100 members at a place and time convenient to the individual or group involved. We are not bound by the Freedom of Information Act or the Open Meetings Act, but we are open to input and communication.

There are times when a member with an opposing viewpoint will go through one of our many options to communicate and still not be satisfied because their position is not seen as fair or favorable to all 34,000 co-op members. Too often, these individuals then point to the cooperative as being isolated, insular and closed-minded. While never surprising, it is always a bit disappointing.

In these times, I go back to the fact that I will never make everybody happy. Did I create thought? Did I truly listen? Did I create conversation? Did I give the member respect? When I can answer "yes" to each of these questions, I move forward. There will be another issue, another column, another opinion and another opportunity for discussion next month. ■

Want more? Check out episode "Member-Owned, The Co-op Way" on our podcast Co-op Energy Talk. Download and subscribe to our podcast on SoundCloud or iTunes or listen via our blog at CherrylandElectric.coop.



How To Use Ceiling Fans For Year-Round Comfort, Savings

By James Dullely

People often wonder which ceiling fans to install. There are so many models and prices, leaving some to wonder if they can help cut energy costs.

People typically think of fans only for summertime comfort and lower air-conditioning costs. Ceiling fans are unique in that they can also reduce your wintertime heating bills with proper use.

Before installing a ceiling fan, it's important to understand how one functions. A ceiling fan does not cool a room like an air conditioner. It heats the room whenever it is running. All of the electricity it uses ends up as heat. Always turn the fan off when no one is in a room.

You feel cooler under a ceiling fan because it creates a downward breeze over your skin. This breeze allows you to run your air conditioner less or set its thermostat a few degrees higher without sacrificing comfort. If you do not do this, running the ceiling fan will increase your electric bills.

During winter, reverse the rotation of the fan blades, so the air flows up toward the ceiling. Run it on low speed. This gently moves up the hotter air, which collects near the ceiling, throughout the room without creating a chilly breeze. This allows you to set the heating thermostat a few degrees lower for savings.

The simplest way to select an efficient ceiling fan is to pick one which is Energy Star certified. When selecting a typical, lower-cost, four or five blade fan, a rule of thumb for sizing is (room size vs. diameter of blades): up to 75 sq. ft.—36 in., 75 to 144 sq. ft.—36 to 42 in., 144 to 225 sq. ft.—44 to 50 in., 225 to 400 sq. ft.—50 to 54 in.

The ideal height for the fan blades is about eight feet above the floor. A three-inch downrod is included with most fans to provide the proper height. For high ceilings, downrods up to six feet long are used to get the fan low enough. For safety reasons, never have the blades closer than seven feet from the floor.

Many new, stylish fans come with multiple blades, ranging from one to six blades, with three being the most common. Pay attention to the pitch angle of the blades to get an idea of how strong a breeze it creates. A steeper pitch moves more air at a slower speed. This often indicates a quiet and more powerful motor.

The newest and most efficient motors are DC (Direct Current) motors. These are similar in design concept to the variable speed motors in new heat pumps.

Most people install a lighting kit under the ceiling fan. Select one with LED lighting. It is not only efficient, but it lasts for many years, and most are dimmable.

A model with a hand-held remote control is most convenient to adjust the speed and is the easiest to switch off when leaving a room. Some new high-tech fans can even be controlled by a cell phone with a special fan app.

The universe of ceiling fans is amazingly big! Besides the brick-and-mortar stores, online stores have a nice selection, too.

A good online site for ceiling fans is Hansen Wholesale. For each product it sells, Hansen offers information on motor quality, CFM (air movement measured in cubic feet per minute) output, energy efficiency and other pertinent data. ■

Perform An Annual Safety Inspection On Your Boat And Dock Before Lifting The Anchor

Water comprises almost one-half of Michigan, so it's easy to see why the state boasts a thriving recreational industry and leads the nation with nearly 1 million registered pleasure boats. For boating and water safety, there are items you must legally have on your watercraft—life vests, fire extinguisher, throwable flotation device, and properly working lights—but make sure the boat and the dock are safe, too.

To help prevent accidents, the National Electrical Contractors Association says:

- All installations should be performed by a professional electrical contractor.
- All dock receptacles must comply with the National Electrical Code, which mandates a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI). A GFCI measures a circuit's current and senses any imbalance (such as a discharge into the water), which trips the GFCI and cuts off the power.
- Test any GFCIs every month. Locate it along the ramp to the dock so it can be easily tested by local fire departments.
- Metal dock frames should have "bonding jumpers" that connect all metal parts to an

on-shore grounding rod. This means any dock part that becomes energized by electrical malfunction will trip the GFCI or circuit breaker.

- Ask neighbors if their dock electrical systems have been inspected and are up to Code.
- Household wire is not suitable for boats.
- *Do not* use wire nuts (these are for solid conductor wire, which should never be on a boat) or splice connectors (can cut wire strands)!
- Fuses are rated to protect the wire, not the stereo. If a fuse blows continuously, something else is wrong.
- If you rent a dock or boat, notify the owner of safety violations immediately.
- Have your boat's system (especially with onboard generators) checked at least annually and when something is added or removed.
- Ropes, string, masts and rigging also conduct electricity—don't be the common ground between water and electricity! ■

See [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org) for more tips.





Attend Cherryland Electric Cooperative's 78th Annual Meeting!

Thursday, June 23, 2016
Incredible Mo's, Grawn

Registration: 4 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Business Meeting: 5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Evening: Entertainment, Education & Music until 8 p.m.

In-person voting at the Annual Meeting ends at 5:30 p.m. on June 23

Inside Incredible Mo's:

- Buffet (pizza, pasta, salad)
- Bowling
- Arcade Games
- Laser Tag
- Special Guest: Willie Wiredhand

Outside Incredible Mo's:

- Business Meeting
- Face Painting
- Bucket Truck Rides
- Information Booths
- Cornhole (weather permitting)
- Blood Drive (MI Blood)
- Food Drive (Father Fred Foundation)
- Raffle (As a bonus: donate to the food drive and get an extra raffle ticket!)
- Entertainer: Levi Britton

NOTICE TO MEMBERS OF CHERRYLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CASE NO. U-15815 2014 RENEWABLE ENERGY PLAN ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY

The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) requires all Michigan electric utilities to get approximately two percent of their power supply from renewable sources by 2012 and increasing to 10 percent by 2015.

Under this requirement, Cherryland Electric Cooperative submits an annual report to the MPSC regarding its Renewable Energy Plan. In 2014, Cherryland acquired a total of 13,427 renewable energy credits (8,379 credits from Harvest Wind Farm, LLC and 5,048 credits from Thunder Bay – Four Mile) and 471 incentive credits from Thunder Bay – Four Mile. All credit transfers were directed through Cherryland's wholesale power supplier, Wolverine Power Supply Cooperative, Inc. Wolverine will continue to generate renewable energy and bank unused renewable energy credits for future use and compliance with statutory renewable portfolio standard requirements on behalf of all of its members.

A full copy of the cooperative's Renewable Energy Plan annual report that was filed with the MPSC is available on the cooperative's website at cherrylandelectric.coop or by request at any of the cooperative's offices.

'Reeling It In' Fishing Photo Contest Winners



The votes are in, and we're happy to share the winning photo (and some great runners-up) from our recent photo contest. Thanks to everyone who submitted a photo, voted and spread the word by sharing the post on Facebook.

1. **Winner!** "A Boy And His Fish."
By Katheryn West
2. "Fishing Buddies Forever."
By Katrina Schafer
3. "It's A Keeper!"
By Jamie Schafer
4. "Heading Home."
By Robert Lee

Enter Our Annual Meeting Photo Contest!

Enter Your Photo and Win!

In anticipation of Cherryland's Annual Meeting, we are holding a **Special Edition Photo Contest**. Our special June theme is **Arcade-Style Family Fun**. Submit a photo and vote for your favorite. The winner* will receive a **\$50 Incredible Mo's gift card!** Photos can be submitted from **June 1 to June 20** to be entered into the Annual Meeting Photo Contest.

Remember, join us for Cherryland's Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 23!

Ready to submit? Just visit facebook.com/cherrylandelectriccoop and click "Photo Contest" from the menu tabs. If you're not on Facebook, don't worry. You can also enter the contest at cherrylandelectric.coop/photo-contest.

Make sure to vote, and encourage others to vote for you, too!

*The Annual Meeting Photo Contest is online only. The winner will not be printed in *Michigan Country Lines*.

QUICK & EASY

Cook these fresh and simple recipes.

Blender Pots de Crème

Janice Harvey, Charlevoix

- 1 pkg. (6 oz.) chocolate chips
- 1 egg
- 2 T. sugar
- 1 t. vanilla
- ¼ t. salt
- ½ c. plus 2 T. milk
- whipped topping
- chocolate sprinkles or grated chocolate

In a blender, add the chocolate chips, egg, sugar, vanilla, and salt. Blend at high speed to mix ingredients and break up chocolate chips. Heat milk just to a boil, pour into blender and whirl at medium speed 1 minute. Pour into six small pot de crème dishes or custard cups and chill several hours. Just before serving, top with whipped topping and sprinkles.



Photos—831 Creative

BBQ Meatballs

Theresa Mandeville, Manistee

- 3 lbs. ground beef
- 1 c. milk
- 1 T. Worcestershire sauce
- 2 c. quick oats
- 1 T. minced onions
- 2 eggs
- pepper to taste

Topping:

- 2 c. ketchup
- 1 T. mustard
- 1 T. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 ½ c. brown sugar
- 1 T. garlic powder

Preheat oven to 350°. Lightly grease a 9x13 pan. Mix meatball ingredients and form into large meatballs. Mix topping ingredients together in a saucepan on low heat until blended. Pour topping over meatballs and bake for 1 hour, covered.



Quick Corn Fritters

Virginia Curtiss, Bitley

- 1 egg
- ½ t. salt
- pinch of sugar
- ½ can cream style corn
- ¾ c. water
- peanut oil
- 2 c. self-rising flour
- sugar or powdered sugar

In a medium mixing bowl using a wire whisk, whip the egg with salt and a good pinch of sugar. Add the cream style corn and water; whisk. Fill an 8 ½" HEAVY skillet half full of peanut oil. Heat to just below medium heat. Add self-rising flour; stir with a fork. Drop the mixture into the frying pan one tablespoon at a time, using about ½ the batter. Turn fritters over once. Place on paper towels to drain. When just warm, roll in sugar or powdered sugar, and place them on a platter Tip: put sugar in a plastic bag and shake them quickly.

Gramma's Microwave Cashew Brittle

Linda Ackerman, Thompsonville

- ¾ c. whole cashews (or other nuts)
- ½ c. white sugar
- ¼ c. white corn syrup
- pinch salt
- ½ t. butter
- ¼ t. vanilla
- ½ t. baking soda

Place the first four ingredients in a glass microwave safe container (a 2-cup Pyrex measuring cup is perfect). Stir thoroughly. Cook 2 minutes on high; stir and cook 2 minutes longer on high. Add butter and vanilla. Stir and cook 30-35 seconds on high. The bubbling syrup should be light brown. Sprinkle baking soda over top. Stir quickly, thoroughly and carefully, because it's very hot. Pour immediately onto warm, lightly cooked, greased cooling rack. Cool and break up into pieces. Makes approximately 12 large pieces.



Gather Round The Co-op Kitchen Table

A **NEW** and **EXCLUSIVE** online cooking community for our electric co-op members.

Members can submit recipes online for a chance to win a \$50 electric bill credit; plus there's more! We will print the winning recipe in *Country Lines* with a photo of the dish and create an instructional "how to" video for micoopkitchen.com.

Ready to pull up a seat?

GREAT! Go to MICOOPKITCHEN.COM and register.

Please submit your favorite "Dessert" recipes by July 1 and "World Cuisine" recipes by August 1.

Enter your recipe online at micoopkitchen.com or send to (handprint 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.

micoopkitchen.com



Cherryland Partners With Members To Save Money, Energy in 2015

By Tammy Squires

Member focused—this is one of the core values of electric cooperatives. Our Energy Optimization (EO) program gives us an opportunity to help our members by providing rebates on energy efficiency upgrades. As a utility, we have state-mandated EO requirements through Public Act 295. But, as a co-op, we have always had an “energy use advisor” on staff to help our members manage their electric bill and meet their energy efficiency goals.

In 2015, we focused on increasing residential member participation in our rebate program. We introduced a new, streamlined application form and continued with the enhanced rebates for Energy Star rated LED bulbs. Additionally, we increased our outreach to local vendors and allies, making rebate applications available at many point-of-purchase locations.

I am proud to report that these changes resulted in a significant increase in residential member

participation. Rebates were provided to 1,365 residential members for Energy Star appliances, HVAC, Solar, Energy Star LED lights and recycling of old working model appliances. That’s a 158 percent increase over last year!

Our state mandated EO requirement in 2015 was to save a total of 3.8 million kilowatt hours (kWh). Through our residential and commercial rebate program, we saved 4.3 million kWh, thanks to our energy-conscious members.



Tammy Squires
Energy Use Advisor

As we continue to focus on assisting our members in becoming energy efficient, we will again offer rebates for measures purchased and installed in 2016. Please visit CherrylandElectric.coop for more details on our rebates and to access the 2016 residential rebate form. ■

PUT SOME EXTRA GREEN IN YOUR WALLET

Make the switch to LED lighting and get more money back from Cherryland’s enhanced rebate program.



Residential LED Rebate Guide

Light Type	Rebate Amount
Replacement for standard incandescent bulb	\$4 – \$6
Interior flood light	\$8
Exterior flood light	\$15

* commercial rebates vary



Download the LED rebate application at cherrylandelectric.coop



Up North Prevention Leads Fight Against Prescription Drug Abuse

Prescription drug abuse seems like a far-off problem, but the harsh reality is that it is happening here in the Grand Traverse area. And it's not occurring in some back alley. The problem exists in our own homes. Four out of five teenagers who abused prescription drugs say they got them from a friend or relative. More often than not, this occurs unknowingly.

Here in the Grand Traverse region, organizations like Up North Prevention are leading the fight against prescription drug abuse. Up North Prevention is an initiative developed under the umbrella of Catholic Human Services. Their goal is to develop a unified approach to substance abuse prevention across northern lower Michigan.

Kristen Wilson is a certified prevention specialist at Up North Prevention, representing Grand Traverse, Leelanau, and Kalkaska counties. Wilson meets with area church groups, teachers, college classes and others to discuss issues related to prescription drug abuse.

For Wilson, a vital part of her job is educating area youth. "Youth coalition work is my true passion," says Wilson. "Prescription drug awareness begins with kids." She explains that the youth are more likely to listen to one another when discussing drug abuse. It is important that we give them the tools and guidance to handle these issues among their peers.

Up North Prevention also performs grassroots outreach to drive community involvement in the fight against substance abuse. They host conferences that feature speakers and educators

to discuss pain management and prescription drug addiction with local medical professionals.


Prescription drug prevention doesn't begin and end with Up North Prevention. Here are some basic tips you can follow to prevent this from happening in your home:

- Monitor your prescriptions. Know what you have been prescribed, why you were prescribed it and how the drug works. Keep track of what each pill looks like, how many refills you have and when they expire.
- Secure your medications. Lock your medications in a place only you or your caregiver know. Keep your medications with you if you are having work done on your house.
- Dispose of your unused, expired or unwanted medications properly. Don't flush any medications even if it says you can on the label. You can take these medications, including controlled narcotics, to your local law enforcement agency for disposal.

With the guidance of organizations like Up North Prevention, we are better equipped to fight prescription drug abuse in our communities. ■



For more information about Up North Prevention and prescription drug disposal locations, visit UpNorthPrevention.com.



Asparagus

REIGNS IN MICHIGAN

By Emily Haines Lloyd

In the second week of June, Oceana County, also known as “The Asparagus Capital of the Nation,” gears up for its annual Asparagus Festival. Started in 1974, it’s the longest running asparagus festival in the country. It boasts all the events you’d expect—a parade, 5k run, arts and crafts fair, and the annual Asparagus Queen pageant. Back in 2001, the grand marshal was a well-known figure in the industry—Dick Walsworth.

Walsworth, a second-generation asparagus farmer from Mears was happy to ride in the parade, but has always known that the real star is the asparagus.

“Oceana County produces two-thirds of the asparagus grown in the state of Michigan,” Walsworth says, proudly. “Considering Michigan is the second largest grower of asparagus in the country, that’s a pretty big deal.”

Walsworth got his start on the farm established by his parents, Walter and Anna Walsworth, in 1932, and purchased it himself in the early 1970s. He has since expanded the acreage. It is now owned by his son and daughter-in-law, Ryan and Janice, and at 260 acres, Golden Stock Farms is one of Michigan’s largest.

“The Lake Michigan shore is the perfect place to grow asparagus,” Walsworth explains. “The lake moderates the temperatures, keeping it from getting too hot or cold and preventing frost.”

The Michigan asparagus yields prove his point, producing up to 23 million pounds annually—an impressive harvest for a crop that produces primarily early May through late June. However, a short season isn’t the most difficult challenge facing the industry.

Walsworth identifies the increase in imported asparagus, labor demands, and the lack of local processing plants as pressing concerns. With countries like Peru and Mexico—





The Walsworth family (left to right) Ryan, Janice, Marcia and Dick work together to make Golden Stock Farms successful.



who have very favorable growing conditions all year and large processing companies like Del Monte and Green Giant that have moved their plants to Peru—things are tough. Additionally, asparagus is a hand-harvested crop, meaning that labor costs are very expensive—an estimated 25 percent of gross sales, Walsworth says. Altogether, it means Michigan’s asparagus industry is facing real struggles.



As of 2005, those struggles are also faced by Ryan, who bought the farm from his father and mother.

“Ryan is confronted with a much different landscape than when I purchased the farm from my father,” Walsworth says. “Things are difficult, but we keep working on solutions.”

The Walsworths are most definitely problem solvers, as Ryan also recently took over his father’s role as chairman of the Michigan Asparagus Advisory Board. Dick also served for 30 years on the Great Lakes Energy Board of Directors and 25 years on the Wolverine Power Cooperative Board—providing valuable knowledge and insight to both. Walsworth retires from his seats this year, but is in no way sitting on the sidelines as he focuses on promoting renewable energy, as a member of the Spartan Renewable Energy Board of Directors.

At 74 years old, why does Dick Walsworth keep working so hard? “Once a farmer, always a farmer,” he says. ■

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Photos-Emily Haines Lloyd

A Walsworth Family Favorite: Asparagus Roll-Ups

- Fresh asparagus
- Thinly sliced ham
- Thinly sliced turkey, chicken or hard salami
- Softened cream cheese (plain or flavored)

Trim and clean asparagus spears. Blanche in boiling water for 2 minutes. Drain and submerge in ice water to cool. Drain well. Spread slices of meat with cream cheese, lay asparagus on top and roll up. Refrigerate in covered container.

Visit micoopkitchen.com for this recipe and others.



Meet Shannon: Cherryland's Annual Meeting 'Guru'

At the heart of the Cherryland office is executive administrative assistant Shannon Mattson. Her many talents extend to every department. This year, Shannon is coordinating the biggest event of the year—Cherryland's Annual Meeting. Shannon shared with *Michigan Country Lines* a little about herself and the role she played in bringing Cherryland's Annual Meeting to life.

Q: Tell us about yourself.

A: I came to the Grand Traverse area over 16 years ago with the intent of building a life here and raising my daughter. Being born and raised in a small farming community in the U.P., I spent most of my time in the hay field or riding horses. Admittedly, I'm a bit of a thrill seeker and try to take full advantage of all this area has to offer, from hiking and camping adventures to skydiving over Little Traverse Bay (twice in one week!). I've made incredible friends and had some life changing experiences. I am proud to call Traverse City my home.

After working in the travel industry for most of my adult life, a friend (and future colleague) referred me to Cherryland Electric Cooperative and the rest is history!

Q: What is your role with Cherryland?

A: Thankfully, I've been empowered to shape my role within our cooperative into much more than I expected. I'm involved in a lot that goes on here including planning our cooperative events, assisting both our Cherryland board of directors and the Cherryland Cares board, organizing our volunteer efforts, arranging corporate travel, and more. Every day is different, and that certainly keeps it interesting.

Q: What goes into planning the Annual Meeting?

A: An incredibly willing team and mad scientist organization. For each 'job' at our Annual Meeting, we've got a team captain from Cherryland to oversee the tasks at hand and their employee volunteers. My job as the planner is to make sure they have everything they need to be successful. The planning process starts at the end of the previous year's meeting and doesn't stop until the event comes together. I maintain a detailed timeline of how and when things occur, so nothing is missed,



Shannon Mattson (left) with daughter, Makenna, and their dog, Mina.

ensuring our members enjoy their time with us and that the business meeting runs smoothly.

Q: What can members expect from this year's Annual Meeting?

A: As a member, you can expect a great afternoon with a mix of business and fun. You'll have an opportunity to attend our business meeting, vote for your representatives on the board, eat tasty food, listen to great music, familiarize yourself with a handful of our area nonprofits, grab a ride in a bucket truck, get your picture taken with a lineman, play games and win prizes!

Our theme this year is "Members—Just Like You!" This theme highlights both our commercial and residential members. All of our members are important to us. We thought it would be fun to bring that all together in one gathering.

Q: Why did you want to coordinate the Annual Meeting?

A: It's such a great event that I couldn't resist volunteering for it. We're able to incorporate our annual business meeting with providing an opportunity for our members to spend some time with our employees in a more casual setting. It's a win-win, and I wanted to be a part of that. ■



Here To Serve

By Rob Marsh

Northern Michigan is my home. I'm sure you feel the same sense of pride in saying that statement as I do. We have a community that is unmatched—not to mention that it is as beautiful as can be.

I was born and raised in Traverse City. After graduating from St. Francis High School, I attended the University of Michigan and graduated with a bachelor's degree in Communication Studies. I spent my collegiate career studying new technologies and their impact on history.

I was lucky. While my peers were studying for chemistry exams, I listened to lectures on the history and future of television, the internet, and social media.

After college, I returned home. Like many of you, this area is so much a part of me that I couldn't stay away.

I worked primarily in the service industry. I've poured wine and given tours at several wineries in the area. I served food and drinks at a high-end restaurant in downtown Traverse City. I most recently worked for a cellular carrier, spending my days resetting customers' passwords and troubleshooting their long lists of technical problems.

Some may feel that this work is unbearable, but I believe it is a higher calling.

The importance of serving others was instilled in me at a young age. My family owns a series of car dealerships in northern Michigan. Their success derives from a simple mission: "strive to create positive experiences... every customer, every day."

My family taught me that to be successful in life and business, we have to envision ourselves in service to others. It doesn't matter in what capacity, whether it be selling a car or serving a plate of food, just as long as we keep our community at the forefront of our decision-making.

The culmination of my education and work experience landed me at Cherryland Electric Cooperative. So far, it has been a perfect match. I get to focus my time and energy on expanding the ways we can serve our community through new communication mediums.

Cherryland is pushing the boundaries of how we communicate with our members. Our conversation began with *Michigan Country Lines*, but the future doesn't end with ink and paper. Our dialogue will take shape in the mediums that you, the modern member, use and enjoy.



Rob Marsh
Communications
Specialist

I am thankful and excited to join the Cherryland team. I am excited to continue being in service to our community, and to you. ■

I Remember...

We invite members to share their fondest memories.

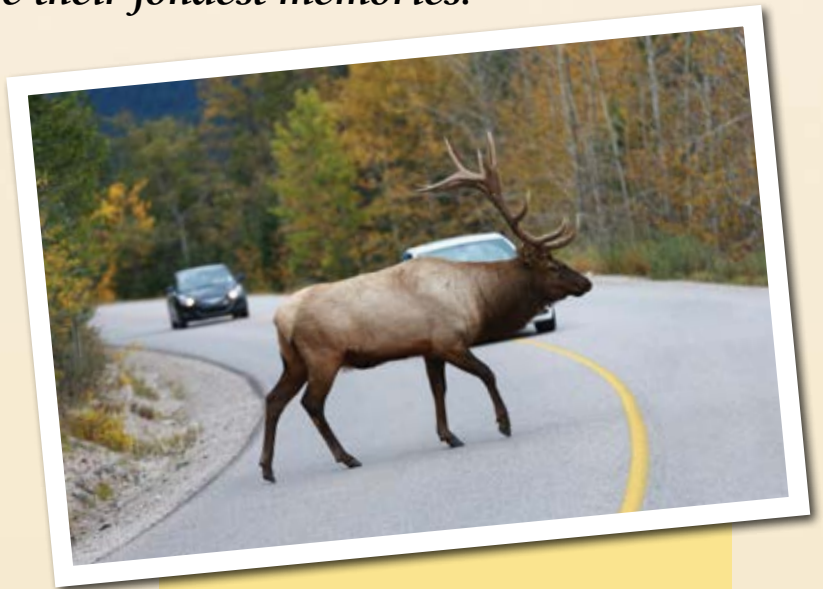
A Unique Driving Lesson

When my daughter was almost 15, I took her down a narrow traffic-free dirt road in northern Michigan to teach her gear shifting in our Volkswagen GTI. She quickly got the hang of using the clutch and gears and was quietly cruising down the road when, without warning, an enormous bull elk leapt into the road 20 yards ahead of the car!

The elk, with a full rack of antlers, proceeded ahead of us filling the road while my daughter, totally unfazed by the event, just drove behind this awe-inspiring animal. Its enormous body towered above us for about 200 yards before it sauntered back into the woods.

My wife, with our dog, was picking blackberries further down the road. Imagine her surprise when we told her what had happened. Since then, we have frequently seen the imprint of large cloven hooves on the same road but never another elk, which was likely part of the Pigeon River herd. (The road is just north of Vanderbilt to the west of I-75.) Has anyone else in northern Michigan, or the USA for that matter, been partnered by a bull elk on their first driving lesson?

*Ed Robinson, Thumb Lake
Great Lakes Energy Cooperative member*



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