

# MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



Northern Michigan's New  
**Alpine Power Plant**  
Is A Powerhouse

**Plus!**

Capital Credits In December

Mini Libraries, Big Imaginations

Puffer Tackles Metering

# Switch to geo by the end of the year for incredible savings



## Switching to geo can save you even more—if you hurry

Upgrading to geothermal just got more affordable, and with the 30% federal tax credit set to expire at the end of this year, the time to act is now! WaterFurnace units can save you up to 70% on heating, cooling & hot water by capturing the clean, renewable energy in your backyard to provide incredible home comfort. Now, for a limited time, we're offering homeowners with traditional systems a very special Switch-to-Geo rebate package on our most efficient and comfortable geothermal heat pumps—the 7 Series and the 5 Series—from now until Dec. 9, 2016. Contact your local WaterFurnace dealer to learn more about the Geothermal Upgrade Event!



7 SERIES  
**\$2000**  
INSTANT REBATE

5 SERIES  
**\$1000**  
INSTANT REBATE

ACT NOW FOR A  
**30% Tax Credit**  
EXPIRES DEC. 2016

### Your Local WaterFurnace Dealers

**Bad Axe**  
B & D Htg  
(989) 269-5280  
bdheating.com

**Berrien Springs**  
WaterFurnace  
Michiana  
(269) 473-5667  
gogreenmich  
geothermal.com

**Big Rapids**  
Stratz Htg & Clg, Inc.  
(231) 796-3717  
stratzgeocomfort.com

**Caro**  
AllTemp  
Comfort, Inc.  
(866) 844-HEAT (4328)  
geo4less.com

**Carsonville**  
Certified Temperature  
Innovations  
(810) 300-7748

**Clifford**  
Orton Refrigeration  
& Htg  
(989) 761-7691  
sanduskygeothermal.com

**DeWitt**  
S & J Htg & Clg  
(517) 669-3705  
geothermalservices  
ofmichigan.com

**Grand Rapids**  
Total Comfort  
Resource, LLC  
(616) 406-3182  
totalcomfortresource.com

**Hart/Ludington**  
Adams Htg & Clg  
(231) 873-2665  
adamsheatingcooling.com

**Indian River**  
M & M Plmb & Htg  
(231) 238-7201  
mm-plumbing.com

**Jackson/Adrian**  
Comfort 1  
Htg & A/C  
(517) 764-1500  
comfort1.net/geothermal

**Kalkaska**  
Kalkaska Plmb & Htg  
(231) 258-3588  
kalkaskageothermal.net

**Mt Pleasant**  
Walton Htg & Clg  
(989) 774-1566  
waltonheating.com

**Muskegon**  
Adams Htg & Clg  
(231) 873-2665  
adamsheating  
cooling.com

**Kiessel Geothermal**  
Htg & Clg  
(231) 747-7509  
kiesselsgeo.com

**Portland**  
ESI Htg & Clg  
(517) 647-6906  
esiheating.com

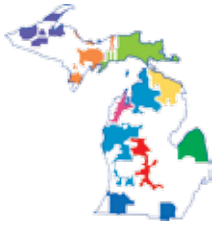
**Sunfield**  
Mark Woodman  
Plmb & Htg  
(517) 886-1138  
mwphonline.com

**Traverse City**  
Geofurnace Htg & Clg  
(231) 943-1000  
watergeofurnace.com  
D & W Mechanical  
(231) 941-1215  
dwgeothermal.com



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

Rebates available only to residential customers through participating dealers. WaterFurnace is a registered trademark of WaterFurnace International, Inc.



Michigan's Electric Cooperatives  
countrylines.com

**October 2016**  
**Vol. 36, No. 9**

Executive Editor

**Casey Clark**

Editor

**Christine Dorr**

Copy Editor

**Heidi Spencer**

Design and Layout

**Karreen Bird**

Publisher

**Michigan Electric  
Cooperative Association**

**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/LETTERS TO EDITOR:**

Michigan Country Lines  
201 Townsend St., Suite 900  
Lansing, MI 48933  
248-534-7358  
cdorr@meca.coop  
countrylines.com



**Change of Address:**

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

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

# IN THIS ISSUE

**6 OUR ENERGY**  
Michigan Co-ops Lead The Way In Renewable Energy

**10 COOKING COMMUNITY**  
World Cuisine: Take A Cultural Journey With These Tasty Recipes  
*Christin McKamey & Our Readers*

**14 FEATURE**  
Northern Michigan's New Alpine Power Plant Is A Powerhouse

**18 READER'S PAGE**  
National Co-op Month: Co-op Careers Offer Paycheck And A Purpose  
*By Justin LaBerge*

## ON THE COVER

The Smith family can rest easy, knowing their family sources their power from Alpine Power Plant. Alpine Power Plant is now the largest and most efficient generator in Michigan north of the Ludington-Midland line, including the Upper Peninsula.

## IN YOUR WORDS

### What is your favorite Michigan fall activity?

Please submit answers to countrylines.com by November 1.

Last month's responses to the question:

### What is your favorite Michigan craft beer?

"Perrin Grapefruit"

"Bell's Two-Hearted"

"Perrin Lil' Grizzly"

"Founders All Day IPA"

"Short's Soft Parade"

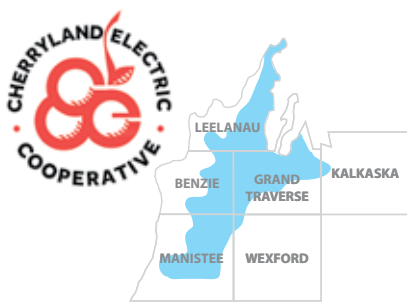
"Dark Horse Crooked Tree"



During construction of the Alpine Power Plant a favorite restaurant was discovered and enjoyed. The Railside Bar & Grill in Elmira is one of northern Michigan's best kept secrets—with a diverse array of tasty dishes, including genuine Polish meals, delicious pizzas, mouth-watering sandwiches, and of course, the World Famous Potato Burger.



Enjoy the Railside's recipe for Polish Nachos at [micoopkitchen.com](http://micoopkitchen.com) and read more about the Alpine Power Plant on page 14.



## Board Of Directors

### TERRY LAUTNER

President  
231-946-4623  
tlautner@cherrylandelectric.coop

### TOM VAN PELT

Senior Vice President  
231-386-5234  
tvanpelt@cherrylandelectric.coop

### MELINDA LAUTNER

Secretary  
231-947-2509  
mlautner@cherrylandelectric.coop

### RICK DENEWETH

Treasurer  
231-929-4526  
rdeneweth@cherrylandelectric.coop

### BETTY MACIEJEWSKI

Director  
231-947-0463  
bmaciejewski@cherrylandelectric.coop

### JOHN OLSON

Director  
231-938-1228  
jolson@cherrylandelectric.coop

### JON ZICKERT

Director  
231-631-1337  
jzickert@cherrylandelectric.coop

## GENERAL MANAGER

Tony Anderson

## CO-OP EDITORS

Rachel Johnson  
Rob Marsh

## OFFICE HOURS

Monday–Friday 7:30 a.m.– 4 p.m.

## TELEPHONE NUMBERS

231-486-9200 or 1-800-442-8616 (MI)

## ADDRESS

P.O. Box 298, Grawn, MI 49637

## WEBSITE

cherrylandelectric.coop

## PAY STATION

Cherryland Electric office  
5930 U.S. 31 South, Grawn MI, 49637

*Cherryland Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner  
*The power of human connections*



Find us on Facebook.

[facebook.com/cherrylandelectriccoop](https://facebook.com/cherrylandelectriccoop)

# CO-OP NEWS

## Cherryland Buys And Donates Pigs At The Fair

Cherryland purchased pigs from Skyler Duell and Courtney Ockert during the 4-H livestock auction at the Northwestern Michigan Fair in August. The pigs were then donated to Goodwill and Leelanau Christian Neighbors.

## Michigan Blood Bus Visits Cherryland Office This Month

The Michigan Blood Bus will be stationed at the Cherryland office in Grawn on Monday, Oct. 24, from noon to 4 p.m. All are welcome to donate and no appointments are necessary. If you wish to learn more about Michigan Blood, visit [MIBlood.org](http://MIBlood.org).

## Notification About Cherryland Cares

Area nonprofit agencies seeking financial help can apply for a grant through Cherryland Cares.

This program distributes funds to local nonprofit organizations seeking assistance. Cherryland Cares is overseen by a five-member board who reviews grant applications and allocates funds to nonprofits seeking assistance.

Cherryland Cares is funded through Operation Round Up—the voluntary rounding up of one's monthly electric bill to the next whole dollar amount. A member's average annual contribution is approximately \$6. Your annual contribution to Cherryland Cares is reported on your monthly statement in December. Participation in Operation Round Up is voluntary and may be discontinued at any time.

All grant information is highlighted in *Michigan Country Lines* and on Cherryland's Facebook page. The deadline for fourth quarter applications is Friday, Dec. 9. For additional information regarding Cherryland Cares, please call Shannon Mattson at 231-486-9234 or e-mail [smattson@cherrylandelectric.coop](mailto:smattson@cherrylandelectric.coop).

## October Is National Cooperative Month

Cherryland is one of more than 900 electric cooperatives, public utility districts and public power districts serving 42 million people in 47 states. Thank you to all the co-op members and employees that keep Cherryland and the cooperative tradition alive and well. ■



One of the guiding principles of cooperatives is democratic member control. Every Cherryland member has a say in what goes on at the co-op by voting for their board of directors.

# Show Me The Money!

**"Your board of directors  
voted to retire \$3 million  
back to you this December"**



**Tony Anderson**  
General Manager

Since 2008, your cooperative has returned more than \$18 million dollars back to you, our members, in the form of capital credits. As you know, members are *allocated* a portion of cooperative profits (margins) each year based on a member's contribution to total revenue. Your 2015 allocation appeared on your June 2016 bill.

These allocations are not cash. They are a simple notification of what each member will receive 20 or more years later when your board of directors approves a *retirement* of capital credits.

In the couple of decades between allocation and retirement, your dollars are hard at work at your cooperative. These margins are an essential source of operating capital that is used for line construction, maintenance, unforeseen events, like major storms, and allow the cooperative to reduce interest costs related to borrowing money.

When the cooperative board of directors determines that the financial condition of the cooperative is healthy enough to make a retirement of capital credits, members receive bill credits in most cases. Members without a current account and some large commercial members will receive an actual check. Regardless, this is the day when we "show you the money."

Traditionally, we have returned money to members in October to celebrate National Cooperative Month. This year will be different. Wolverine Power Cooperative will be retiring capital credits to its members in December 2016. Cherryland is one of those members. Therefore, Cherryland will retire capital credits to its members in the same month. This allows us to do one retirement without borrowing money and increasing our interest expense for 60 days. We expect this pattern to continue for at least the next three to four years.

How much am I talking about? At their September meeting, your board of directors voted to retire \$3 million back to you this December.

Will we ever go back to retiring capital credits in October? I don't think so. I believe future retirements will continue to occur in December.

We are anticipating member questions such as, "Where is my money?" or more likely, "Why is my October 2016 bill so much higher than my October 2015 bill?"

December certainly isn't cooperative month, but I am hopeful that we will "show you the money" in time to bring some relief before the Christmas holiday. It may be a small gift in the big picture of the giving season, but it is our mission as a not-for-profit electric cooperative to return as much of your money to you as our financial condition will allow. ■



# Michigan Co-ops Lead The Way In Renewable Energy

Sun. Water. Wind.

Michiganders know these elements can make for a great day at the beach. Michigan's electric cooperatives also know these raw energy sources can be a great way to power your home.

From solar to wind to hydroelectric (hydro) power, Michigan's electric cooperatives are the state's undeniable leaders in renewable energy.

Collectively, Michigan's nine electric cooperatives will receive more than 20 percent of their energy from renewable resources in 2017. Meanwhile, the statewide average for other utilities is closer to the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) requirement of 10 percent.

Michigan's cooperatives have been ahead of the curve on renewable energy for more than a decade.

In 2006, Wolverine Power Cooperative\* partnered with John Deere Renewables to develop Michigan's first commercial scale wind farm in Huron County. The wind farm was fully operational in 2007 with an output of 50 megawatts. The following year, Michigan adopted the RPS which mandated a 10 percent supply of renewable energy be utilized by electric providers by 2015.

After Michigan's first wind farm, progress continued with the state's very first community solar project at

Cherryland Electric Cooperative in 2013. Another community solar project was built by HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative in 2014. Community solar offers an affordable, convenient way for members to use renewable energy as a power source. A solar panel subscription entitles members to a share of energy produced on a utility-scale community solar array. Participants receive solar credits on their utility bill. It's a great way to remove up-front costs and installation barriers of solar, making it available to the wider membership.

Cloverland Electric Cooperative operates one of the largest hydropower facilities in Michigan. Located along the St. Marys River in Sault Ste. Marie, the hydro plant produces one-fifth of the power needs of the eastern Upper Peninsula.

Now there's the new \$200 million clean natural gas Alpine Power Plant. Commissioned just this year, it was developed to meet peak demand needs for Michigan co-op members and to supplement the often intermittent nature of renewable energy. (See the full story on page 14 of this issue).

This fall, a partnership that includes several of Michigan's electric cooperatives will begin construction on a large solar project located in Missaukee County, between Cadillac and Lake City. This large-scale array will begin generating electricity using the sun starting in January 2017. The project is still in the early stages, and



more information will appear in future issues of *Michigan Country Lines* as it develops. Additionally, members can sign-up to receive project updates at [spartansolar.com](http://spartansolar.com).

So why do Michigan's electric co-ops continue to lead the way in renewable energy?

"We listen to our members and are able to capitalize quickly on renewable energy opportunities," said Craig Borr, CEO/president of the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association (MECA). MECA is the service organization representing electric cooperatives in Michigan.

"Michigan's electric cooperatives got into renewable energy because it was the right thing to do from an environmental standpoint," said Borr. "But it turns out it's also the responsible thing to do from a financial standpoint."

Clean, renewable energy generation is where the future of energy is headed.

And for Michigan co-ops, that future looks pretty bright. ■

*\*Wolverine Power Cooperative supplies power to its member co-ops that include Cherryland Electric Cooperative, Great Lakes Energy Cooperative, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative, Midwest Energy Cooperative, and Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op.*

## "Pol"ar Energy

Some may know Jan Pol, DVM, as their neighbor and longtime veterinarian and others know him by his enduring title—*The Incredible Dr. Pol*. Seen on National Geographic's *WILD*, Dr. Pol, his wife, Diane, and their team care for countless animals, but they also care about renewable energy.



This year, the Pols engaged in their second solar project, this time mounted on the barn at their Central Michigan home. They worked closely with their local co-op, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric, local representative Nick Cluley with Ecojiva, their installer, as well as the folks from CNR Electric to install approximately 5,000 square feet of Canadian Solar's highest efficiency monocrystalline panels.

The system is equipped to generate up to 57 kW. By incorporating solar panels on their property, the Pols hope to take full advantage of the renewable energy generated in order to offset their residential usage. The Pols plan to sell their excess energy back to the utility for the benefit of their fellow co-op members.

The Pols energy for renewable energy is an inspiration to their community, our state and the world.

# MINI LIBRARIES

lead to

# BIG IMAGINATIONS

By Tom Carr



Lighthouse-shaped library outside the United Way offices in Traverse City.



A peek inside one of the libraries.

This may be the age of the e-book, but it's also the age of the mini lending library.

Shingle-topped book cabinets have sprung up in front of houses, restaurants, offices and even full-sized actual libraries in recent years. Looking kind of like large birdhouses, they hold books that readers can take, borrow or trade.

"People are excited about it because it encourages kids to read," said Herb Lemcool. He and his wife, Barb, have a mini library in front of their home.



In fact, encouraging kids to read is exactly what Herb's late mother, Josephine Lemcool, wanted. Herb and Barb had more than 20 mini libraries built and stocked with books around Traverse City in honor of her.

The philosophy of the libraries?

"Help yourself. It's your library," Herb says.

The Lemcools enlisted the help of the Boy Scouts and prisoners at Pugsley Correctional Facility

Herb and Barb Lemcool looking at children's books in their library.



to build them, with donations from several people and organizations, including Cherryland Electric Cooperative. They offered them to homeowners, businesses and organizations.

The Lemcools made their mini library look like Snoopy's doghouse, with the "Peanuts" canine sleeping on top of it. Heartwarming scenes sometimes play out in front of their house because of it.

"We saw a boy out there on the bench reading to his little sister," Herb says. "When he was done, she put the book back, gave him a kiss and hug and they got on their bikes and rode away."

Some show their appreciation in other ways, says Barb.

"We found money in an envelope once, saying 'Keep up the good work.' We bought more books with it," she says.

The Lemcools stock only children's books in their lending library, though others are open to all kinds of Westerns, romances, World War II novels—just good reads—that may appeal to all ages.

The Carpenters in Kingsley had seen the miniature libraries and wanted to put one up in their front yard. Tom Carpenter made the library and his wife, Ann, and their children regularly leave books to share. Sometimes, they find something they want to read and bring it inside.

Nine-year-old Logan Carpenter keeps track of its contents. He's found a lot of fascinating books that way.

"One time I found a book on how you act nice so your children will be nice. I gave it to my mom," he says mischievously.

Ann Carpenter says they get the books from their own collection, from donations by the Kingsley Branch Library down the street, or



Ann and Logan Carpenter checking out the latest inventory of the two-shelf free library in front of their Kingsley home.

other sales and sources. Some readers contribute books, as well.

"Teen books and Nora Roberts are very popular," Ann says. "I want to make sure it's very family friendly."

She says the library gets a lot of traffic. "It's starting to be kind of a landmark in the neighborhood."

An organization dedicated to spreading these street-side lending libraries throughout the country is at [littlefreelibrary.org](http://littlefreelibrary.org). ■

# WORLD CUISINE

Take a cultural journey with these tasty recipes.



Photos—831 Creative

## Seafood Tostadas (pictured)

Linda L. Ackerman, Thompsonville

- 1 cup medium-hot thick and chunky salsa
- ¼ teaspoon cumin
- ½ pound cod fillets
- ¼ pound medium raw shrimp, peeled and deveined
- ¼ pound shelled or imitation crab
- 1 cup slivered cabbage
- ½ avocado, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup each, thinly sliced red pepper and onion
- 4–8 small flour or corn tortillas, crisped
- chopped cilantro
- 4 lime wedges

Bring salsa and cumin to simmer in a medium skillet. Add cod; cover skillet and poach fish 3–4 minutes. Turn cod, add 2–3 tablespoons hot water to salsa if needed. Add shrimp and crab. Cover and simmer another 3–4 minutes, or until cod flakes easily and shrimp is opaque. Top each crisped tortilla with seafood and vegetables. Spoon warm salsa over tortillas. Garnish with cilantro and lime. Serve immediately!

## Scotch Eggs

Rebecca (Becky) Mikel, Union

- salt/pepper to taste
- ½ cup flour
- 3–4 hard boiled eggs, peeled
- 1 pound ground pork sausage
- 3 raw eggs (not boiled)
- 1 cup seasoned breadcrumbs
- shortening, heated



In a bowl, mix salt and pepper with flour. Peel boiled eggs, then roll in the flour and salt and pepper mixture. Pat sausage out into 4–6 equal patties and encase each egg evenly in sausage patty. Beat three raw eggs together

in a separate bowl, then dip the sausage encased egg in the beaten egg mixture. Roll the egg in breadcrumbs until well coated. Drop gently into the heated oil and turn slowly as sausage browns all the way through. This is traditional fare in the U.K. and is eaten hot or cold—so do either!

## Greek Salad

- 1 pound small-sized pasta
- 1 English cucumber, diced
- 1 small red onion, diced
- 1 cup pepperoncini peppers, sliced
- ½ cup sliced black olives
- ½ cup sliced grape tomatoes
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 cup mayo
- ⅓ cup Italian dressing



Cook small-sized pasta according to package directions. Rinse pasta with cold water. Mix mayo and Italian dressing in small bowl. Combine the rest of the ingredients. Chill in refrigerator for at least 30 minutes. Serve!

## Pannukakku (Finnish Oven Pancake)

- 1 ½ cups flour
- 1 ½ cups whole milk
- 6 eggs
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons butter
- powdered sugar, jam or maple syrup for serving



Preheat oven to 400 F and place a 13x9 pan inside while it is heating. In a blender, mix all ingredients, except the butter, until they are well blended. Put the butter into the hot pan and brush the pan with the melted butter. Add blender mixture, and bake for 20–25 minutes until pancake is puffy and golden. It will deflate when it's taken out of the oven. Serve sprinkled with powdered sugar and warm jam or maple syrup.



# Gather Round The Co-op Kitchen Table

Join our **EXCLUSIVE** online cooking community to submit your recipes and try recipes from other members.

Go to **MICOOPKITCHEN.COM** and register.

Please submit your favorite **“HEALTHY LIVING”** recipe by **NOVEMBER 4** for a chance to win a \$50 bill credit and have your recipe featured in *Country Lines*.

Enter your recipe online at [micoopkitchen.com](http://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**

# Fun At The Fair

Another year equaled another fun-filled week at the Northwestern Michigan Fair. Cherryland Electric Cooperative was proud to again sponsor the Pancake Breakfast and Kids & Special Kids Day, as well as participate in the 4-H livestock auction. Thank you to the fair staff and volunteers who helped make this year's fair one of the best we have ever had.



Cherryland employees love flipping pancakes.



The "Little Lineman" cut-out is a big hit.



The Fair Queen visits with youngsters at the Cherryland tent.



Rachel hands out prizes on Kids & Special Kids Day.

## Access To Rules & Rates

Please be advised that the following information is available to Cherryland Electric Cooperative members:

1. Complete rate schedules;
2. Clear and concise explanation of all rates that the member may be eligible to receive;
3. Assistance from the cooperative in determining the most appropriate rate for a member when the member is eligible to receive service under more than one rate;
4. Clear and concise explanation of the members' actual energy use for each billing period during the last 12 months.

**The information can be obtained by contacting Cherryland Electric Cooperative at 231-486-9200**

## Statement of Non-Discrimination

Cherryland Electric Cooperative is the recipient of federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form.

You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or e-mail at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).



The Cherryland family gathers around Sonya Sias (front center).

## Strength Amidst Cancer Diagnosis

By Rachel Johnson

Cancer sucks. We've all heard the saying, those of us who have been touched by a cancer diagnosis know it's true.

When cancer strikes, it is hard, messy and ugly. Cancer steals time, health and happiness. It breeds fear, anxiety and sometimes devastating uncertainty. Cancer just sucks.

Cancer can also forge amazing personal strength and community generosity.

This year, cancer struck our work family here at Cherryland when one of our member information representatives, Sonya Sias, was diagnosed with breast cancer. It's a diagnosis no one ever wants to hear.

As she has valiantly endured surgery and endless weeks of chemotherapy, I have constantly been impressed with her strength, her positivity, and the love she has inspired in others.

While Sonya has faced this painful diagnosis and treatment, our Cherryland family has pulled together

to show her support. Through our employees, I have been reminded of the goodness of people and the importance of taking care of one another.

From pocketbooks to personal time, every single member of the Cherryland team has given freely and generously.

Throughout Sonya's treatment, our employees have shown their support for her family in countless big and little ways. Meals, fundraisers, a sympathetic ear, cancer has revealed amazing generosity at Cherryland.



**Rachel Johnson**  
Member Relations  
Manager

It has shown the ways adversity engenders strength and beauty. The ways kindness builds amazing communities.

Don't get me wrong; I still think cancer sucks. But, if we're lucky, it also causes us to see what is most important: our time, our relationships, and the love we show one another. ■



## Wolverine Power Cooperative

generates and transmits power to our rural substations so we can distribute it to you, our members. They help us ensure that your energy is affordable, reliable, clean and safe. We rely on Wolverine to make well-informed decisions about the future of your electricity.

We're proud to announce that the newest addition to the Wolverine supply mix, the Alpine Power Plant, is now fully powered and generating enough power for 120,000 member households across the state of Michigan!

### What is the Alpine Power Plant?

Just 18 short months ago, Wolverine's board of directors—made up of co-op members just like you—set the Alpine Power Plant in motion. Alpine is the largest and most efficient generator in northern Michigan, including the Upper Peninsula.

Alpine is fueled by natural gas, a clean, reliable, and affordable alternative to coal. Its unique, state-of-the-art technology includes two GE simple-cycle combustion turbine generators that together are capable of producing up to 432 megawatts of power. Alpine is a "peaker plant," meaning it can be fired up quickly to provide electricity for surges in demand.

Wolverine invested approximately \$180 million into Alpine to ensure a quick start and flexible operations. As Michigan transitions away from coal plants toward more renewable forms of electric generation, Alpine provides us with a new, affordable, efficient and flexible generation asset, essential for years to come as the industry changes.

Northern Michigan's New  
**Alpine Power Plant**  
Is A Powerhouse

## How does Alpine impact me?

Wolverine Power Cooperative and its members, including Cherryland Electric Cooperative, Great Lakes Energy Cooperative, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative, Midwest Energy Cooperative and Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op, are proud to be leaders when it comes to providing long-term solutions for Michigan's energy capacity. Old coal plants are retiring, leaving a void that new power plants can and need to fill.

Adding Alpine's output to Michigan's energy supply will help maintain affordable rates in the midst of coal plants retiring, by giving us an additional option when market rates fluctuate. The plant will also serve to integrate new renewable energy sources, as we expect to receive 30 percent of our electricity from renewable sources in the future.

Beyond the energy benefits for Michigan as a whole, Alpine Power Plant offers economic impacts for its local community. Strategically located to support reliability in northern Michigan, the middle-of-the-mitt location in Otsego County provides a boost to the local economy. During construction, the site was host to more than 300 workers that, in turn, contributed greatly to the local economy. The plant will be maintained by nine full-time employees. The plant also provides a tax boost to units of government in Elmira Township, the City of Gaylord and Otsego County.

Michigan's energy future is secured in part because of projects like the Alpine Power Plant. We hope you're as excited as we are to see your electric bills stay low and your quality of life stay high! ■

Get more information about the Alpine Power Plant by visiting [alpinecleanenergy.com](http://alpinecleanenergy.com).

# WHAT IS ALPINE DOING?

## Generating Electricity

Wolverine's Alpine Power Plant is the largest power plant in Michigan's northern Lower and Upper Peninsulas, capable of generating up to 430 MW of electricity.



## Powering Members

Alpine ensures Wolverine's members have a reliable, clean and competitive power supply for decades to come.



## Supporting Michigan

With retiring coal plants and expanding regulations, Alpine is essential for replacing capacity to meet Michigan's energy demand. Alpine is the only large-scale power plant within a 150-mile radius.



## Helping Communities

Alpine provides a major boost to communities with increased tax revenues for local units of government.



# Puffer Tackles Metering At Cherryland

By Rob Marsh

Meet Jeff Puffer: husband, father, coach, and a member of the Cherryland Electric Cooperative team. This fall marks the one-year anniversary of his arrival at Cherryland. Though significant, his time at Cherryland is short compared to the 15 years he has spent working for utilities.

Puffer was born and raised in Manton, MI. He was a natural born athlete, playing football for Manton High School and later joining the Ferris State University football team as a defensive end.

Upon graduating, he moved to Minnesota and played arena football professionally. He spent a year on the team before deciding to hang up his helmet. "It was an interesting experience," says Puffer, "but ultimately it wasn't for me."

Puffer returned to his hometown in 2001 and officially began his utility career as a water/waste water operator. He would hold that title for 12 years and work throughout Wexford County before getting a taste of the electric utility business with Wolverine Power Cooperative.

Being that Wolverine is Cherryland's power supplier, it was natural that Puffer would hear talk about the co-op. "While working at Wolverine, I kept hearing about Cherryland and the great reputation it had with the community. I was definitely interested." A year later, when a position

opened up at Cherryland, Puffer jumped at the chance to work for the co-op.

Puffer is a metering technician. His job is to handle the installation and maintenance of meters throughout Cherryland's service area.

Working on meters requires that he wears many hats. He needs to be prepared like a lineman when an issue requires immediate attention, supportive like a member service representative when speaking with members about power usage, and mechanical like an engineer when a meter malfunctions.

With all these nuances, his favorite part of working at Cherryland is the people. "I like that I get to work with everybody. We all help each other to achieve common goals."

When Puffer isn't working on meters, he is spending time with his wife and two kids. One thing he enjoys, in particular, is coaching his kids' sports teams. Whether it's football, basketball, baseball or softball, Puffer believes that coaching is a "great way for me to take part in my kids' interests." He also jokes that he can't sit still. "It's hard for me to just sit in the bleachers and watch," he admits.

In everything he does, Puffer is a team player, working hard to achieve the goals of the co-op and his family. ■



Puffer coaches the teams of his kids' favorite sports.



The Puffer Family, from left to right: Brianna (daughter), Luke (son), Jeff and Keri (Jeff's wife).



# Best Friends



## Photo Contest Winners Photos With The Highest Facebook Votes!

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

"Soon We'll Both Be Running Around The Yard!" By Fred Bartlett



"Best Friends Nap Together While Camping."  
By Charlene Schlueter



"Best Friends Donate For Life."  
By Diane Johnston



"Twin Cousins! Best Friends From Birth, Best Friends For Life!" By Ambur Hammond



"A Little Man's Best Friend." By Tammy McManus



## Enter Your Photos and Win!

Every month we will announce a new theme. Just submit your best shot and encourage your friends to vote! The photo receiving the most votes on our Facebook contest will be printed in an issue of *Country Lines* along with some of our other favorites. Photos are accepted from the first of each month through the 20th.

Here is a sneak peek into our photo contests themes for the 2017 issues of *Country Lines*:

**November: "Wild Weather,"** featured in our January 2017 issue

**December: "Holiday Fun,"** featured in our February 2017 issue

**January: "Family,"** featured in our March 2017 issue

To submit a photo, visit [facebook.com/cherrylandelectriccoop](https://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](https://cherrylandelectric.coop/photo-contest).

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

# Co-op Careers Offer Paycheck And A Purpose

By Justin LaBerge

October is National Cooperative Month! Every day in this country, more than 75,000 men and women go to work at America's electric cooperatives to keep the lights on for 42 million energy consumers in 47 states.

It's challenging work, but in addition to a paycheck, co-op employees go home each night knowing they've helped make their communities better places to live.

Over the next five years, thousands of workers will get to experience that sense of purpose and pride as America's electric cooperatives hire nearly 15,000 employees nationwide. These new hires will replace Baby Boomers reaching retirement age and accommodate organic growth in the energy industry.

## Many career options

A lineworker high atop a pole is the first image that comes to mind for most people who think about electric cooperative employees. It's true that lineworkers comprise the largest segment of the co-op workforce—approximately 25 percent—but it takes a variety of talents to keep a cooperative running smoothly.

Information technology and engineering are two rapidly growing career opportunities at co-ops. The need for more high-tech workers is driven by the shift to a smarter electric grid and the growth of renewable energy sources that must be carefully monitored and managed.

Other in-demand career paths at electric cooperatives include finance, member services, equipment operators, energy advisors, communications and marketing, purchasing, administrative support and human resources.

## Second careers

Some people think the only time to start a new career is fresh out of high school or college. While the energy industry offers many rewarding careers to recent grads, it is also a great place to start a second or third career.



Electric Cooperative Careers  
*There's a place for you in the co-op network.*

Lineworker training programs offered through community colleges are growing in popularity among people who previously worked in oil and gas, manufacturing, mining, forestry and other similar industries.

## Make a difference

As not-for-profit, member-owned, locally-based businesses, America's electric cooperatives offer careers that allow employees to make a difference in the communities they serve. Cooperatives are guided by a set of principles that put people ahead of profits and offer fulfilling work to those who enjoy serving others. ■

## How to find a co-op job

Interested in joining the co-op family? To learn more about the opportunities available across the cooperative network, visit [careers.touchstoneenergy.coop](http://careers.touchstoneenergy.coop) or by visiting Michigan co-op websites at [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com).



# American Metal Roofs **DOUBLE REBATE**



*Order in the month of October  
and receive a **DOUBLE REBATE** from  
the Manufacturer - up to \$5000 -  
PLUS a 50% Rebate on Hi-Flow Ridge Vent!*

**REBATE UP TO  
\$5000 OFF**  
PLUS 50% REBATE ON  
HI-FLOW RIDGE VENT

**Do-It-Yourself  
and  
Save 50%**  
Free Classes - Register Online

**Call Today!** 844.638.2576  
**844.METAL.ROOFS**

**VISIT OUR SHOWROOMS:**

FLINT - 6140 Taylor Drive  
CHARLOTTE - 1875 Lansing Road

*Visit our website!*

**AmericanMetalRoofs.com**

See dozens of pictures • Enter to win a Metal Roof • Request a Quote

*Winter is coming...*  
**DON'T GET CAUGHT WITHOUT POWER...**  
**WHOLE HOUSE STANDBY**

# **GENERATORS**

- **INSTALLATION INCLUDED**
- **FINANCING AVAILABLE!!!**



Visit: [AmericanMetalRoofs.com/products/generators](http://AmericanMetalRoofs.com/products/generators)





cherrylandelectric.coop

# I'M A CO-OP VOTER

Visit the Co-ops Vote website at [VOTE.COOP](http://VOTE.COOP), and take the pledge to BECOME A CO-OP VOTER. Plus, learn more about state and federal candidates before you cast your vote.

Mark your calendar—vote in the general election on November 8.



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

