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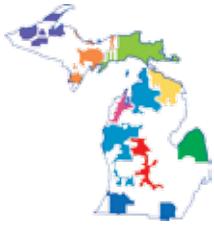
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Negaunee's Lucy Hill is the only full-length natural luge track in the United States. United States athletes train here before traveling to competitions in Europe.

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Once used to describe the three devastating waves that led to the sinking of the Edmond Fitzgerald, Three Sisters is also the name for three tight turns and the most technical part of the Negaunee Lucy Hill luge track. Find Three Sisters Luge Pizza recipe submitted by featured guest chefs from the U.P. Luge Club at [micookitchen.com](http://micookitchen.com), and see the full story on page 14.





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# CO-OP NEWS

## Cherryland Retires \$3 Million To Members In December

The Cherryland board of directors voted to retire \$3 million in capital credits to the membership this December. The amount retired to each member can be found on their December billing statement.

## Cherryland Cares Awards \$7,130 To Three Nonprofits

At their third quarter board meeting, the Cherryland Cares board awarded grants to Arts for All in Northern Michigan, Leelanau County Cancer Foundation and Reining Liberty Ranch. Cherryland Cares has awarded \$50,680 in grants to area nonprofit agencies this year.

The Cherryland Cares board is comprised of five volunteer Cherryland members. The funds distributed by Cherryland Cares are a result of members electing to round up their monthly bills to the nearest dollar.

If you are an area nonprofit agency seeking financial help, fourth quarter grant applications are due Friday, Dec. 9. For more information, please call Shannon Mattson at 231-486-9234 or email at [smattson@cherrylandelectric.coop](mailto:smattson@cherrylandelectric.coop).

## Members Recycle, Receive Rebates At Clean Up Green Up Event

Clean Up Green Up is a free community-wide recycle, repurpose and reuse event put on by Michigan Green Consortium on Sunday, Nov. 6 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at American Waste in Traverse City.

Cherryland will offer rebates to our members that recycle working condition, older model refrigerators (\$20), freezers (\$20), air conditioning units (\$15), and dehumidifiers (\$15).

## 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, Dec. 19, 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. Members are asked to keep their comments to five minutes. Member attendance at the board meeting is allowed for the public input portion of the meeting only.

## Cherryland Office Closed Over The Holidays

In observance of the holidays, the Cherryland office will be closed on the following dates:

- Thursday, Nov. 24 and Friday, Nov. 25 for Thanksgiving
- Friday, Dec. 23 thru Monday, Dec. 26 for Christmas
- Friday, Dec. 30 thru Monday, Jan. 2 for New Year's

## Members May Dispose Christmas Trees At Cherryland

Cherryland members are reminded that Christmas trees can be discarded at Cherryland's office in Grawn.

Trees can be dropped off on the right side of the Cherryland parking lot as you are driving in, just beyond where the two parking lots meet. This service is offered free to co-op members. ■



# Market Politics



**Tony Anderson**  
General Manager

**T**he Michigan Legislature passed Public Act 295 in 2008. The PA 295 energy bill mandated, among other things, energy conservation, a portfolio that required 10 percent renewable resources and capped the choice market for large users of electricity at 10 percent of a utility's annual sales.

In 2016, the Michigan Legislature attempted to write new energy policy. The key word is "attempted." As 2016 draws to a close, I don't have any final results from Lansing to write about. Bills were written in the House and Senate. Neither made it out of committee (at least not at press time for this magazine).

Some legislators talked about eliminating choice while others railed on expanding choice. Environmentalists wanted a higher renewable requirement and utilities talked about goals instead of mandates. Big utilities advocated for the elimination of choice because it had not worked in their favor over the years. Michigan's political machinery at all levels and factions was in full force as every interest group jockeyed for their desired outcome.

I participated when necessary and walked away in futility at other times. It all left me wondering why politicians need to be in the energy business. In Michigan's term limited legislature all sides end up spending inordinate amounts of time educating the newly elected year after year. In 2016, you will be hard pressed to find a dozen legislators who participated in the 2008 decisions.

If an LED bulb will save energy, why does there need to be a legislative mandate? Why can't the

company selling the bulbs and the stores that stock them convince the general public of the benefits of the product? This question is the same for each energy saving measure. Do we really need Lansing mandating that we save money in our homes? I believe that left to their own devices, the general public can take care of themselves in this regard.

As the prices of renewable energy dropped between 2008 and 2016, you saw renewable portfolios grow and exceed the legislative mandate at many utilities. In fact, your cooperative has an 18 percent renewable portfolio as of October 2016 and may go even higher next year. It really wasn't about a mandated target. It was simple economics. Wind developers and solar manufacturers don't need a legislative decree to support their industries. They simply need to be cost competitive like so many other businesses in Michigan and the country.

Admittedly, the argument for getting legislators out of the choice question and leaving it to the market is not as easy as it is for conservation and renewables. However, they do need to look at the success of the choice program over the past years. Are companies like DOW and Amway or universities like Ferris State and Michigan Tech saving significant dollars? I maintain that they are. Therefore, in my opinion, the argument can be made to leave the choice market alone. If it isn't broken, why waste the time debating how to fix it?

In 2017, I hope that legislators move past the energy issue.

The past eight years have taught me that the market does a good job taking care of the consumer without help from the politicians, and often in spite of them. ■

# Home Heating Assistance Programs • 2016–2017 Season

**Program: Home Heating Credit**

**Contact:** Mich. Dept. of Treasury

# Exemp.	Max. Income	# Exemp.	Max. Income
1	\$13,070	4	\$26,756
2	17,642	5	31,299
3	22,185	6	35,842

Add \$4,571 for each exemption over 6.

You can apply for a **Home Heating Credit** for the **2016** tax year if you meet the income guidelines listed at left or you qualify based on alternate guidelines including household income, exemptions, and heating costs. Additional exemptions are available for seniors, disabled claimants, or claimants with 5% or more of their income from unemployment compensation.

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

**Program: Earned Income Credit**

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

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

You may claim a **Michigan earned income tax credit** for tax year **2016** equal to a percentage of the federal earned income tax credit for which you are eligible. Visit the website or see the MI 2016 tax booklet for details.

**Program: Crisis Assistance Program**

**Contact:** Local Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) [michigan.gov/mdhhs](http://michigan.gov/mdhhs)

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

**Program: Low-Income Home Weatherization**

**Contact:** Local Community Action Agency

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

**Program: United Way**

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

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

**Program: Medical Emergency Protection**

**Contact:** Local Utility Company

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

**Program: Shut-off Protection for Military Active Duty**

**Contact:** Local Utility Company

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

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

**Contact:** MI Veterans Trust Fund

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

**Program: MI Energy Assistance Program**

**Contact:** Utility or 2-1-1 in late November

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



# Safety During Hunting Season

By Tim Velder



**B**e aware of what's behind that big buck or it might cost big bucks.

Your electric co-op's time and money are spent every year repairing equipment and power lines that have been struck by a stray bullet. As a not-for-profit cooperative, owned by the members, we all share in this expense.

This doesn't even include the inconvenience, damages, and hazards to members down the line that require power for medical equipment or other needs, while a lineman does some hunting of his own looking at spans of line trying to locate the problem.

Hunters and other gun-owners should be cautious not to shoot near or toward power lines, power poles, and substations. A stray bullet can cause damage to equipment, could be deadly to the shooter, and potentially interrupt electric service to large areas.

Sometimes the damage isn't noticed for several weeks or months and is only discovered when an unexplained outage occurs.

Landowners are also encouraged to take note of nonmembers who are hunting on their property and remind them to be aware of power lines.

Shooting near overhead power lines or insulators can result in severe injury or death.

## The main safety points to remember are:

- Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.
- Familiarize yourself with the location of power lines and equipment on land where you shoot.
- Damage to the conductor can happen, possibly dropping a phase on the ground. If it's dry and the electricity goes to ground, there is the possibility of electrocution and wildfire.
- Be especially careful in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.
- Do not use power line wood poles or towers to support equipment used in your shooting activity.
- Take notice of warning signs and keep clear of electrical equipment.
- Do not place deer stands on utility poles or climb poles. Energized lines and equipment on the poles can conduct electricity to anyone who comes in contact with them, causing shock or electrocution.
- Do not shoot at, or near, birds perching on utility lines. That goes for any firearm, including pistols, rifles or shotguns.
- Do not place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment. Anything attached to a pole besides utility equipment can pose an obstruction—and a serious hazard—to electric cooperative employees as they perform utility operations.
- Avoid the use of lofting poles near overhead power lines. Remember, electricity can jump across a considerable distance. ■

There's No Place Like

# ROVE

By Rob Marsh



Creighton and McKenzie Gallagher stretch netting across their 15 acres of vines.

When looking at a map of Grand Traverse area wineries, the spectacular views are the obvious attraction at Rove Estate and Vineyard—a new winery and Cherryland member.

The winery stands at the highest point in Leelanau County. But it's not the view that a visitor to northern Michigan would expect. It doesn't include Grand Traverse Bay or the Sleeping Bear Dunes. Rather, Rove's view is towards the southwest, looking upon the vast landscape of Leelanau and Grand Traverse County: the lush trees, rolling hills and rich farmland.

This is the same landscape Rove's owners Creighton and McKenzie Gallagher call home.

Rove's husband and wife duo were born and raised in the Grand Traverse area. The Gallagher family is one of the original names in the farming area. It might seem natural that a fifth generation farmer and his wife would want to jump into the business

of growing grapes and selling wine, but sometimes it takes a little inspiration.

Upon graduating from Grand Valley State University with a degree in accounting, Creighton Gallagher returned home to Traverse City, working in various jobs including helping out on the Gallagher family farm.



Rove Estate & Vineyard sits on the highest point in Leelanau County.





The Gallaghers want their guests to feel at home when visiting their winery.

In all that work, it was the moments when he worked alongside friend and local winemaker Coenraad Stassen assisting in the vineyard and the wine cellar that were truly impactful. “One time I was helping Coenraad do some bottling and it just hit me,” said Creighton. “This was what I wanted to do. I wanted to go into wine.”

As simple as it might sound, jumping into the wine business is not easy. It takes plenty of time and money, and that is before you even put wine in a bottle. “When Creighton first told me about wanting to open a winery, I asked him, ‘Yeah, with what money?’” joked Creighton’s wife McKenzie. “But as I put together a business plan as my thesis for my MBA, I saw that we could do this.”

The dream became a reality when they purchased a portion of the family farm from Creighton’s father. When learning that 15 acres of cherry trees on the property needed to be replaced, Rove Estate & Vineyard was born.

The concept for Rove stems from a visit to the Gallagher’s ancestral homeland. “When we visited our cousins in Ireland, the community was so warm and welcoming,” said Creighton. “They made you feel like you were a local—that you were home. We want our guests to feel the same way.”

This visit to Ireland resonated with the Gallaghers enough that they modeled the winery’s name and logo after an era in Irish history called the “Flight of the Wild Geese.” This was a time when thousands of Irish fled from their native land across the world more than 300 years ago—many of whom became winemakers.

Like their Irish relatives, the Gallaghers see Rove as a destination winery that visitors and locals alike can feel at home in and be proud to call their own. “We want our guests to bring their kids, stay a while, drink our award-winning wine and enjoy live music,” said McKenzie.

For the Gallaghers, being a “local’s spot” means being receptive to what locals want in their winery. Rove is now open later and has expanded its live music offerings because of guest input. “When we first opened up, we were booking live entertainment only once a month,” she explained. “But after the great reception we had the first night, our guests asked for more and we listened. Now we are hosting live music weekly.”

Most importantly, Creighton and McKenzie Gallagher aspire to have their patrons feel at home when visiting their winery. Whether sampling wine, enjoying music, or taking in the views, the Gallaghers hope visitors and locals will enjoy a taste of home and northern Michigan hospitality while experiencing an evening at Rove. ■

• *“We want our guests to bring their kids, stay a while, drink our award-winning wine and enjoy live music.”*

# CASSEROLES

These cozy comfort foods can go straight from your oven to your table.



Photos—831 Creative

## Great Chicken Casserole

Mary Ellen Babcock, Thumb Electric

- 3 cups chopped cooked chicken
- 2 cups finely chopped celery
- 1 cup (4 ounces by weight) shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 can (4 ounces) water chestnuts, drained and chopped
- 1 can (10- $\frac{3}{4}$  ounces) cream of chicken soup
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup slivered almonds
- 1 can (6 ounces) French-fried onion rings

Preheat oven to 350 F. Coat a 9×13 inch baking dish with cooking spray. In a large bowl, stir together chicken, celery, cheese, sour cream, mayonnaise, water chestnuts, soup, and almonds. Spoon into prepared baking dish. Bake, uncovered, for 30 minutes. Sprinkle onion rings evenly over top and bake 5 more minutes, or until bubbly around edges. Let stand 5–10 minutes before serving. Enjoy with a nice tossed salad on the side.

## Chicken and Rice Casserole

Mary Scodeller, Great Lakes Energy

- 4 chicken breasts
- 2 cups instant rice
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 can onion soup
- cooking spray

Preheat oven to 350 F. Blend the three kinds of soup with 2 cups of instant rice. Pour into a casserole dish sprayed with cooking spray. Top with the chicken breasts, and cook for 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours. Let cool and serve.





## Noodle Cream Cheese Casserole

Jeanie Henrion, Ontonagon

- 1 tablespoon margarine
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 16 ounces tomato sauce
- 8 ounce package of noodles
- 8 ounce package cream cheese
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese



Preheat oven to 350 F. Brown ground beef in margarine. Add garlic, salt, sugar and tomato sauce. Cover and cook slowly for 15–20 minutes. Cook noodles and drain. Combine cream cheese and sour cream.

In a baking dish, layer noodles, cream cheese mixture and half of the sauce. Repeat layers. Spread cheddar cheese over the top. Bake for about 30 minutes (until heated throughout). Serve!

## Uncle Ben's Chicken and Rice

Janice Harvey, Great Lakes Energy

- 6-ounce package Uncle Ben's Long Grain and Wild Rice
- 1 frying chicken or equivalent pieces
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 2 ½ cups water

Preheat oven to 350 F. Sprinkle rice mix on bottom of buttered 9x13 pan. Combine soup, seasoning packet from rice, and water. Place chicken on top of rice and pour soup mixture over all. Bake for 1 hour, 15 minutes.



# 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 recipe for **"CHIP DIPS"** by **DEC. 4**, **"SOUPS & STEWS"** recipe by **JAN. 4** and **"MUFFINS & BREADS"** by **FEB. 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**





# 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)



# (Un)Civil Discourse

By Rachel Johnson

James Buchanan once said, “I love the noise of democracy.” If that were the case, he would have loved this election season. Things have certainly been, well, noisy.

Want a sample of the noise? Go check out the online comments on the latest TC Ticker article about tall buildings, street redesigns, or county budgets. From immigration policy to local zoning, this election has brought out a lot of opinions and a lot of heated debate.

I’ve been enriched by the chance to participate in many of those debates at the occasional happy hour or get together. A voice or two may have been raised, a drink or two spilled in the heat of the moment. For me, this year has reinforced something I’ve always believed—civic engagement matters and if you’re doing it right, it might get messy.

Trying to figure out how to get along and work toward common goals as a community isn’t always easy, or even civil, but it’s important. And while we don’t always agree, I do believe that those who take the time to participate, to run for office or weigh in on the issues, are doing so because they care and they want to protect or improve our community.

Despite these good intentions, engaging those with whom we disagree can be really difficult. It would be a lot easier to simply surround ourselves with people who think like us.

So, why even bother?

When multiple opinions and perspectives are represented, our local organizations and our government get better.

And, I hope that somewhere in the process, those of us who participate also get better. We expand our horizons and our ways of thinking.

For my part, I’m going to continue to push myself out of my comfort zone. To learn from people with whom I disagree. To stretch my understanding of the world by exposing my beliefs to debate and criticism from people who think differently.



**Rachel Johnson**  
Member Relations  
Manager

And, I’m lucky because I have friends, colleagues, and community members who are willing to do the same and who aren’t afraid to get a little noisy. ■

Photos—Thom Skelding



## U.P. LUGE CLUB COMPETES ON

# WORLD STAGE

By Emily Haines Lloyd

**M**ost Michiganders have had the experience of climbing a snowy hill with a plastic or wooden sled in tow, plopping down at the top and pushing off to feel the cold, stinging air. Regardless of the bumps or wipeouts that follow, most people laugh like maniacs, stand up and brush off the snow, then climb the hill to do it all over again.

Far fewer individuals have the experience of sliding down a 280-foot hill at speeds ranging from 50–80 mph, but that’s just what’s happening in

Negaunee, MI at the Upper Peninsula Luge Club. For more than three decades, beginners with wide eyes and daredevils with years of experience have made the trek up Lucy Hill to make their way down in increments upwards of a half a mile. All of this happens on a luge—which looks similar to an old-fashioned winter sled with metal runners.

“You don’t start fast,” Coach Levi Underwood is quick to explain. “Your first time, it’s just fast enough to get down the hill, and it’s still thrilling.”

The U.P. Luge Club has been holding clinics and open sledding for the public since the mid-80s. It provides local communities and tourists an opportunity to experience something few people ever get to do. Sliding (not “lugging” as you might expect) isn’t available just anywhere, and Lucy Hill is the only natural luge track in the United States.

“Sliding, particularly on a natural track, isn’t something you find in every community,” said Tammy Wills, the current secretary of the luge club, former coach from 2010–2016 and a competitive slider herself since age 13. “Yet, this one-of-a-kind experience is in the middle of the Upper Peninsula and completely accessible and affordable.”





All that is needed are warm clothes, a hat and mittens—the U.P. Luge Club provides the rest. But this is not just for recreational sliders.

The U.P. Luge Club is a feeder club for the luge natural track competitive circuit. As the only natural track in the U.S., young sliders who show both promise and determination are often taken to Europe to compete—where a natural track is both prominent and very competitive.

The U.P. Luge Club President, Fred Anderson, first started sliding when he took his Boy Scout Troop to luge at Lucy Hill.

“I was hooked, and I wasn’t the only one,” Anderson explains. “Years later, two scouts from that first trip went on to compete at the Olympics. Wendall Suckow and Chris Thorpe became very successful sliders—Thorpe going on to become the first American to medal in luge at the Olympics. And they both came through this club.”

Remembering his experiences at Lucy Hill, Underwood, who competed for years in Europe and on the Olympic development team, came back to coach.

“I had so many great teachers, Tammy included, who showed me how an athlete could be humble enough to coach,” said Underwood. “And I wanted to give back to this sport that gave so much to me.”

The joy seen on the faces at the U.P. Luge Club comes from all sorts: individuals who have fallen in love with this unexpected sport; novices who are taking their first slide down a track; adrenaline junkies looking for another hit; and that inner child who remembers the freedom and excitement that comes from climbing up a hill, sitting on a sled and just letting go. ■



## Three Sisters Luge Pizza

*Submitted by guest chefs from the U.P. Luge Club.*

Once used to describe the three devastating waves that led to the sinking of the Edmond Fitzgerald, Three Sisters is also the name for three tight turns and the most technical part of the Negaunee luge track.

This “three-turn” pizza is a favorite with club members and goes down as fast as a luge.

### Ingredients

- 1 French Bread, sliced lengthwise
- ½ cup sweet onion, diced
- 3 ounces ham, diced
- 2 ounces pepperoni
- 4 ounces cudighi, cooked
- ½ cup green pepper
- ½ cup red pepper
- ½ cup sliced tomato
- 1 cup cheddar cheese
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese
- 14 ounces pizza sauce

### Instructions

Preheat oven to 450 F. Brown the 4 ounces of cudighi. Cut the French bread lengthwise and toast for 4 minutes at 450 F. Spread pizza sauce on both pieces of toasted French bread.

Then add the following ingredients to the French bread in thirds:

#### Turn one /Step one

First third—ham, green peppers, onions

#### Turn two /Step two

Second third—pepperoni, red peppers, onions

#### Turn three /Step three

Last third—cudighi, tomatoes, onions

Bake for 6–8 minutes and enjoy.

# Country Roads



Winner!

## 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.

"Streets Of Gold." By Lindsay Little



"Sunrise Over 22." By Nate Perdue



"49696" By Bonnie Young



"Leelanau Seasonal Road In Yellow." By Susan Sherby



## Enter Your Photos and Win!

Submit your best photo and encourage your friends to vote! The photo receiving the most votes from our Facebook contest will be printed in an issue of *Country Lines* along with some of our other favorites. If your photo is printed in *Country Lines* during 2017 you will be entered to win a credit of up to \$200 on your December 2017 bill.

Our November theme is **Wild Weather**. Photos can be submitted from **November 1 to November 20** to be featured in our January 2017 issue. Our December theme is **Holiday Fun**. Photos can be submitted from **December 1 to December 20** to be featured in our February 2017 issue.

To enter the contest 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!



# McFalls Improves Co-op With Tech Savvy

By Rob Marsh

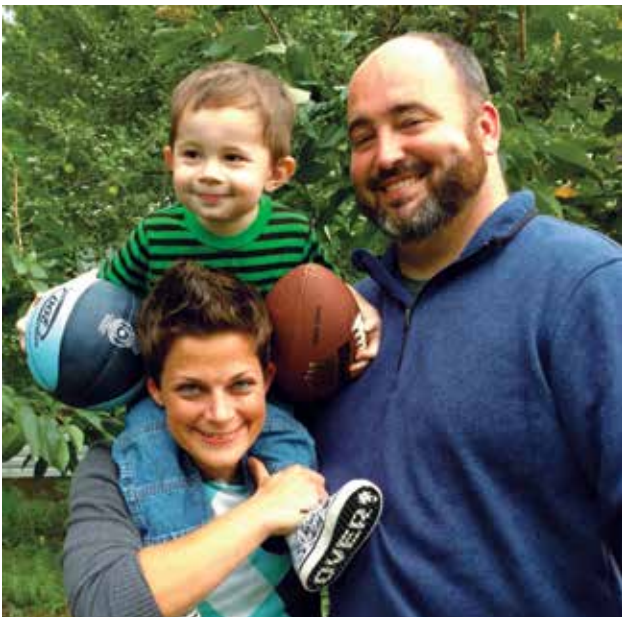
Listening to new employee Nikki McFalls talk about her technical job at Cherryland can sound like a foreign language. Although, one thing that's easy to understand is that she is making the co-op a better place.

McFalls was born and raised in Traverse City, but spent a portion of her childhood in Connecticut. It was there that she developed a love for sports and east coast sports teams like the New England Patriots and the Boston Red Sox. She returned to Traverse City in middle school and then graduated from Traverse City West Senior High School.

Though she was a political philosophy major at Northwestern Michigan College, McFalls always had an interest in technology, referring to herself as a "geek" from an early age. "I've always been a fan of puzzles," McFalls explained. "I enjoy taking things apart and putting them back together again."

Her interest in technology landed her an internship with a Traverse City-based tech company. She spent eight years with the company before interviewing for a job at the co-op.

Before getting a call from Cherryland's human resources department, McFalls always had an appreciation for the co-op. "I liked what I had heard about Cherryland's commitment to the community



Nikki McFalls with her son, Calvin, on her shoulders and her boyfriend, Matt, by her side.



McFalls's son, Calvin, a.k.a. "Zilla," peers through a plastic bubble used for bubble soccer.

and their team environment," said McFalls. That appreciation turned into a job with Cherryland this past June.

McFalls is Cherryland's process improvement specialist. "I analyze our workflow processes from a technical standpoint and find ways we can save time and money," she explained. For instance, McFalls is looking into using email as a means of communicating routine maintenance outages, as opposed to making individual phone calls or knocking on doors.

Another part of McFalls's job at the co-op is enhancing member experience through technology. She works side-by-side with the member service representatives to improve systems that mediate between the member and the co-op, such as Smarthub. McFalls' work creates better experiences for the employees who use co-op systems and the members who are affected by them.

When McFalls isn't making the co-op better, she is making Traverse City more fun by running TC Bubble Soccer with her boyfriend, Matt. "Bubble Soccer is all the chaos and ridiculousness you wanted to participate in as a kid while being protected by a giant bubble," she chuckled. It's not all business, of course. When she isn't renting it out for others to enjoy, she is playing the game with her two-year-old son, Calvin.

Between McFalls's technical know-how and her knack for improving the world around her, the co-op's in good hands, even if her "language" is hard to understand. ■



# Every Vote Counts

By Jack O'Malley

A busy year celebrating Olympians and honoring lost legends like Gordie Howe and David Bowie, 2016 will conclude with one of the most highly debated presidential elections in history. As we prepare ourselves for a new leader, I urge you to do one of two things.

1. Vote
2. Encourage someone you know to vote.

"I don't like the candidates." "My vote doesn't make a difference." "I'm busy." These may be reasonable explanations for the nearly half of Americans who choose not to vote during a presidential election year. To those who understand voting to be a great American privilege, they might sound more like excuses releasing our neighbors of any personal responsibility for the future of our nation.

"Voting is a right, not a duty," non-voters argue. "I have just as much right to exercise my right NOT to vote!" True. American people voluntarily fight (and sometimes die) for you to keep your right to vote—whether used or not. It's a right extended to every American citizen regardless of sex, race or economic standing. It's a right exercised in peace.

In 1964, the U.S. Supreme Court described voting like this: No right is more precious in a free country than that of having a voice in the election of those who make the laws under which, as good citizens, we must live. Other rights, even the most basic, are illusory if the right to vote is undermined. *Wesberry v. Sanders*, 376 U.S. 1 (U.S. 1964).

Vital for the democratic process to work, your vote not only counts, but it also serves as a united voice to elected officials regardless of party. Your vote says, "Here I am, I'm paying attention!"



Jack O'Malley

Whether you choose to exercise your right to vote or not, Abraham Lincoln described it best when he said, "Elections belong to the people. It's their decision. If they decide to turn their back on the fire and burn their behinds, then they will just have to sit on their blisters."

Hope to see you at the polls. ■

## I Remember...

**We invite members to share their fondest memories.**  
Country Lines will pay \$50 for stories we publish.

### Guidelines

1. Approximately 200 words
2. Digital photos must be at least 600 KB
3. Only one entry per household, per month
4. Country Lines retains reprint rights
5. Please include your name, address, email, phone number and the name of your electric co-op
6. Submit your memories online: [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com)



## «« Where In Michigan Is This?


Identify the correct location of the photo on the left by Nov. 30 and be entered into a drawing to win a \$50 electric bill credit. Enter your guess at [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) or send by mail to: Country Lines Mystery Photo, 201 Townsend St., Suite 900, Lansing, MI 48933. Include the name on your account, address, phone number, and the name of your co-op.

Our Mystery Photo Contest winner from the September 2016 issue is Karen Wienke, a HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative member who correctly identified the photo as Black Star Farms in Suttons Bay. Winners are announced in the following issues of *Country Lines*: January, March, May, July/August, September and November/December.



# American Metal Roofs

“Winter storms, ice dams, power outages...



We'll help you protect your home against the ravages of a Michigan winter ...”

**Frank Farmer - President, AMERICAN METAL ROOFS**

It's true, our main business is metal roofing, but this time of year we offer products that help protect your home against the damaging effects of our long, icy winters. Products like Heated Shingle<sup>®</sup> and Heated Shingle Ice Dam Cutter<sup>®</sup> are products designed to melt ice buildup on your roof before it can take hold and cause expensive damage.

**Protection for any kind of roof - not just metal.**

We designed our Heated Shingle products to work on asphalt roofs as well as metal. So, if you've got problem ice areas on your roof, one of our Heated Shingle options may be exactly the solution you need.

**Keep the power on through local outages - no worries.**

Imagine. Within seconds of a local power outage, electricity in your home is restored - automatically. A whole house generator system keeps critical systems like heat, well pumps and medical equipment online until power is restored - and you never have to go outside.

**I grew up in the U.P. so I know firsthand what a Michigan winter can do.**

There is no doubt that winter weather can be hard on your home. That's why we offer our Heated Shingle products and whole house generator systems; to help protect your home through the worst of winter. And once the snow clears, we'll be happy to talk with you about one of our Snow Country roofs as well.

**Protection. Permanence. You deserve nothing less.**

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# It's Capital Credit Season!

It's the most wonderful time of the year to give you capital credits.

Take a look at your December bill under **Capital Credits** and see how much you got this year.

*Learn about capital credits and other cooperative benefits at [CherrylandElectric.coop](http://CherrylandElectric.coop)*

