

Alger Delta Cooperative Electric Association

April 2017

# MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



JOSHUA  
DAVIS

**MICHIGAN'S  
MUSIC MAN**

National Lineman Day—  
April 10

Meet Your  
Director Candidates

Annual Meeting  
Is June 10





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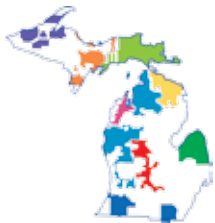
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Michigan's Electric Cooperatives  
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### **Change of Address:**

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

## ON THE COVER

Michigan-based Joshua Davis has honed an impressive range of skills—songwriter, bandleader, guitarist, and vocalist among others. From his first performance on NBC's *The Voice*, Davis triumphed, and his rootsy, sincere approach emerged as a refreshing alternative and propelled him all the way to finals.



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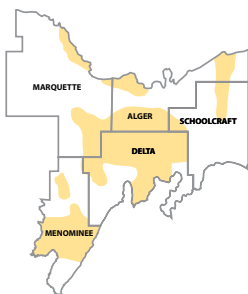
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Submit An 'I Remember' Story And Earn \$50!



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### Office Hours

M–F, 8 a.m.–4 p.m. (ET)

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

**[algerdelta.com](http://algerdelta.com)**

# On The Line With Alger Delta



**Tom Harrell**  
Chief Executive  
Officer

In April of each year, we take the time to thank our extraordinary lineworkers and support staff who dedicate themselves to keeping the lights on in our local communities. Alger Delta lineworkers maintain about 1,300 miles of line in our service territory; without them, your house or place of business would be dark.

We depend on the entire staff at Alger Delta to keep things running smoothly, but on April 10, we recognize and honor all lineworkers who often find themselves working in a challenging environment to make our lives a little bit brighter every day.

Lineworkers build and maintain the transmission and distribution system that every community relies on—literally every moment of every day. Without the hard work and dedication of our lineworkers, Alger Delta would not thrive. Their commitment is displayed when they respond to outages. No matter when the calls come in—day or night, weekdays, weekends, or holidays—if the lights go out, so do they.

Perhaps you have seen them in an aerial lift rising to the overhead wires in howling winds and pouring rain, or in snow or freezing, icy conditions? They work around the clock, often within a few feet or inches of high-voltage power lines, until electricity is restored to every member of our co-op.

Line work is both physically and mentally challenging. Just weathering the elements can take a toll on a person. Working in bulky rubber gloves and sleeves, fire retardant clothing, work boots, tool belts, fall arrest/work positioning equipment, and a host of other safety and work-related items can add to the fatigue factor. The mental challenge comes in the form of using the right tools and equipment, work methods, and following the appropriate safety-related work practices while working on a pole or a bucket truck with weights and tensions that must be controlled at all times. Oh...and did I mention the wires are usually energized at 7,200 volts or more? Well, they are.

In addition to all this, our lineworkers are ready and willing to do more—not just through volunteerism in our communities, but also when a neighboring co-op needs help. Yes, Alger Delta's lineworkers are committed and critical to our success.

Please join us in thanking our lineworkers—not only here at Alger Delta, but throughout Michigan, the United States and literally around the world. Use #ThankALineman on social media to show your support. Remember, your power works because they do! ■



## Official Notice of District Meetings

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

District	Description	Date and Time	Location
5	Gourley/LaBranche/Cornell	Monday, May 8, 2017 6 p.m. ET	Convention Center at the Island Resort and Casino —W399 Hwy 2 & 41 Harris, MI 49845
7	Stonington	Tuesday, May 9, 2017 6 p.m. ET	Rapid River High School Library— 10070 U.S. Highway 2 Northwest, Rapid River, MI 49878
8	Isabella/Nahama	Wednesday, May 10, 2017 6 p.m. ET	Isabella Community Hall—9682 LL Rd., Rapid River, MI 49878

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

Each district shall complete the following items of official business:

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

## Alger Delta To Award \$1,000 Toward Economic Development

**A**lger Delta Electric Cooperative is accepting applications for a \$1,000 donation to be awarded this June. The utility encourages those organizations that are increasing economic development in the community to apply. These organizations could include: local economic development organizations; industrial park boards; revitalization/redevelopment authorities; business improvement districts and community action councils; and chambers of commerce.

Eligible organizations must be Alger Delta Electric Cooperative members. Recipients will be chosen based on upcoming projects and plans for economic development, as well as a variety of other criteria. "Part of being a locally-owned, not-for-profit utility is supporting the vibrant communities that support us. Economic development helps communities stay healthy by keeping funds local and bringing jobs to the area. We are pleased to be able to make this small contribution to an



organization fostering growth in one of our local communities," said CEO Tom Harrell.

Applications are due no later than May 10 and recipients will be announced on June 10 at Alger Delta's Annual Meeting. For application materials, call 906-428-4141 or visit [algerdelta.com](http://algerdelta.com). ■

# Thank A Lineworker On April 10

As the “first responders” of the electric co-op family, lineworkers perform around-the-clock duties in dangerous conditions and challenging situations to keep power flowing and protect the public’s safety. These brave members of our community go above and beyond to restore power to their neighborhoods and towns, often in the most hazardous environment. That’s why electric co-ops have designated the second Monday in April as National Lineman Appreciation Day. This year, April 10 is the day we honor the hard-working men and women who keep the lights on.

Resolutions adopted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) explain it best: *“Whereas linemen leave their families and put their lives on the line every day to keep the power on; Whereas linemen work 365 days a year under dangerous conditions to build, maintain and repair the electric infrastructure; Whereas there would be no electric co-ops without the brave men and women who comprise our corps of lineworkers.”* Lineworkers everywhere deserve this special day of recognition.



These highly-skilled men and women light our homes and businesses every day. They endure harsh weather and long hours, all to make our lives more comfortable. On April 10 (and every day), please take a moment to thank them. Lineworkers are the heart of the co-op nation, proud and strong.

Use #ThankALineman on social media to show your support for the men and women who light our lives. ■

## Plant A Tree In The Right Place

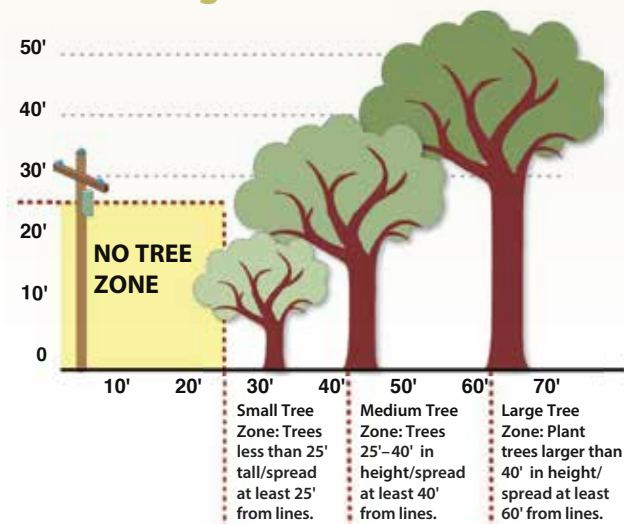
Earth Day is April 22. Show the earth some love, and plant a tree. Choose the right tree for the right place and avoid future problems with power lines.

To avoid future electrical hazards, planting tips include:

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

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

### Tree Planting Guide





## Walk The Line

By Jack O'Malley

Linemen are the backbone of every power system. They are the people on the front lines who maintain the grid regardless of weather conditions. Moreover, while these linemen are restoring power in sometimes the most difficult situations, the backbone of these hardworking individuals are the family members supporting their odd schedules. Spouses keep the home fires burning while their lineworker is on call or out in the field.

Bryan Aerts, a young lineman, met Angie, a college student, on the job with Great Lakes Energy. Their introduction sparked a romance that led to a trip down the aisle and four daughters, ages one through 14.

The wife of a now-seasoned lineman, Angie adapts each day to Bryan's sometimes-grueling work schedule. "It's as if I'm two different people," she explains. "There's mom mode and storm mode. When he's gone, it's like I'm a single mom."

When on call Bryan stays close to home, often missing the kids' basketball games. And holidays are never guaranteed. One Christmas, oldest daughter Brenna asked Santa to bring Dad home in time for the holiday. Bryan had been gone for days after a big storm hit the region. Reminiscent of a scene from the movies, he woke up Brenna at 4 a.m. Christmas morning to let her know he was home. Santa had come through!

While the uncertainty of Dad's schedule, combined with prolonged absences, can be hard on the girls, Angie admits she struggles, too. Shuffling four active kids when Bryan is on call can be a challenge, but her concerns run deeper than the inconvenience of trying to find family and friends to help her while Bryan's away. Angie understands perfectly the risks associated with his job.

Confident in his abilities and the comprehensive safety training programs required of all linemen, Angie and Bryan understand that each situation is different. Ice, wind and falling limbs are out of his control. And every decision made on the job could mean the difference between life and death.

Fortunately, casualties are few. And when the job calls, Bryan knows his girls anxiously await his safe return, proud of their Dad for the sacrifices and risks he takes to ensure the community has power. ■



Jack O'Malley

Photo L to R: Allie is being held by Bryan's wife Angie. Brenna is to the right of Angie, with Audrey to the far right. Caeley is sitting on Bryan's lap.

Photo courtesy of Forbear Photos



# Optimize Your Home With A Free Energy Audit

Is your home properly sealed, insulated and ventilated? If you've noticed any issues such as mold, mildew, ice dams, drafts or overall discomfort, your home may require improvements to resolve energy inefficiencies. To better understand and manage your home's energy use and costs, take advantage of the Energy Optimization program's free energy audit!

The Home Energy Optimizer is a brief online survey that analyzes your home's energy use. You will be required to enter some specific information, such as the year your home was built, the type of heating and cooling systems in place, and when various other systems and appliances were purchased and installed.

Once you've completed the survey, you will receive a personalized, comprehensive report, as well as cost-saving tips and recommendations to help

reduce energy waste throughout your household. Additionally, all participants will receive a free energy-saving kit, which includes lightbulbs and other devices to help save energy and water!

How to complete your home energy audit:

- Visit the Energy Optimization website ([michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org)).
- Select your electric utility from the drop-down menu at the top of the page.
- In the left menu bar, select "Online Home Audit."
- Click "Get Started Now!" and complete the questionnaire.

Upon completion of the Home Energy Optimizer survey, your free energy-saving kit will be mailed to the address you indicate. Have questions about the free home energy audit or energy-saving kit? Call us at 877-296-4319. ■



## Energy Savings At Your Fingertips

Team up with the Energy Optimization program to improve the comfort, durability and energy efficiency of your home! Complete our Online Home Audit to assess your home's energy performance and receive a comprehensive report featuring cost-saving tips and opportunities.

**ENERGY TIP:** Receive a **FREE** energy-saving kit when you complete your Online Home Audit!

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

**PHONE:** 877.296.4319

# Better Together



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





## Save The Date— June 10

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Alger Delta's 2017 Annual Meeting is Saturday, June 10, at the Upper Peninsula State Fairgrounds in Escanaba. The annual event will feature a cookout, events for kids and adults, and—of course—lots of prizes! The business meeting will include a report on the state of your cooperative, its accomplishments during 2016, and the seating of elected directors.

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

Frequent prize drawings will entertain everyone!

More information will be published in upcoming editions of *Michigan Country Lines*.



### Dault Joins Alger Delta

Alger Delta welcomes John Dault as its new meter technician. Dault brings a wealth of experience to the position and holds a degree from Michigan Technological University. Dault is a native of Delta County and has worked on a variety of energy projects for the cooperative. Dault is familiar with Alger Delta's meter shop, its employees and many of Alger Delta's consumers. Welcome, John!



# MUFFINS & BREAD

These recipes are perfect for breakfast, brunch or snack time.

## Banana Chocolate Chip Bread

*Pamela Blamer, Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op*

- ¾ cup butter, at room temperature
- 8 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 eggs
- 3 cups flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1½ cups mashed ripe bananas (about 3–4 medium)
- 1 cup chocolate chips (I use mini chips)
- 1 cup chopped nuts, optional

Preheat oven to 350 F. In a large bowl, beat butter and cream cheese with mixer until combined. Add sugar and eggs. In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Stir dry ingredients into mixture. Add mashed bananas. Mix. Add chocolate chips. Stir in by hand. Spoon mixture into two greased bread pans. Sprinkle nuts (optional) over batter. Bake at 350 F for 1 hour. Test for doneness.



## Hawaiian Loaf

Janice Clark, Cherryland

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup mashed, ripe banana
- 4 cups flour
- 2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon salt
- 1 can (20-ounce) can crushed pineapple, undrained
- 1 cup flaked coconut

Preheat oven to 350 F. Beat butter with electric mixer until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in sugar until light. Add eggs and beat well. Fold in mashed bananas. Stir flour, baking power, baking soda and salt into butter mixture till just smooth (don't over-mix.) Fold in pineapple and coconut. Spoon batter into two greased and floured 9x5 loaf pans. Bake at 350 F for 60–70 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.



## Lemon Raspberry Muffins

Mary Ala, Ontonagon REA

- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup half-and-half
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon lemon extract
- 1 cup fresh or frozen unsweetened raspberries, do not thaw (Blueberries also work well.)

Preheat oven to 350 F. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. In another bowl, mix eggs, cream, vegetable oil and extract. Stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Fold in berries. Fill cupcake liners  $\frac{2}{3}$  full. Bake at 350 F for 18–20 minutes.

Submit your favorite recipe for a chance to win a \$50 bill credit and have your recipe featured in *Country Lines*:

- “Chicken Challenge” due May 4
- “Apple Recipes” due July 5

Go to [micoopkitchen.com](http://micoopkitchen.com) for more information and to register.



## Garlic Cheddar Chicken

Angie and Bryan Aerts

In honor of National Lineman Appreciation Day on April 10, here is a family favorite for a busy day from Angie Aerts, wife of Great Lakes Energy lineman, Bryan Aerts.

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup butter
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup dry bread crumbs
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups shredded Cheddar cheese
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon dried parsley
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon dried oregano
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon ground black pepper
- $\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon salt
- 8 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves—pounded thin

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Melt the butter in a saucepan over low heat and cook the garlic until tender, about 5 minutes. In a shallow bowl, mix the bread crumbs, Parmesan cheese, Cheddar cheese, parsley, oregano, pepper, and salt. Dip each chicken breast in the garlic butter to coat, then press into the bread crumb mixture. Arrange the coated chicken breasts in a 9 x 13 inch baking dish. Drizzle with any remaining butter and top with any remaining bread crumb mixture. Bake 30 minutes in the preheated oven, or until chicken is no longer pink and juices run clear.

Read the full story about the life of a lineman on page 7 and visit [micoopkitchen.com](http://micoopkitchen.com) for this recipe and others.



# Meet The Director Candidates

## DISTRICT 5 – GOURLEY/ LABRANCH/ CORNELL



### DAVID ANTHONY

**Occupation:**

- Director of Community Development and Government Affairs for the Hannahville Indian Community
- Farmer—Owner of Anthony Vineyards
- Small Business Owner—Co-owner of Northern Sun Winery with wife, Susan
- State Representative for Michigan's 108th House District
- Regional Representative to U.S. Senator Carl Levin

**Affiliations/Community Activities/Volunteer Service:**

- 2015–Present: Michigan Wine Collaboration Board Member
- 2011–Present: Delta County Economic Development Alliance Board Member
- 2010–Present: U.P. State Fair Board Member
- 2001–Present: Work Force Board of the Six County Consortium for Employment and Training—Board Member
- 2002–Present: Community Action Agency of Delta, Menominee, Schoolcraft Counties—Board Member
- 2007–09: Member, Michigan Grape and Wine Industry Council

- 2005–11: Delta County Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors
- 2000–04: U.P. Business Today—Authored a column for the monthly periodical
- 2001–2004: Community Foundation—Board Member
- 1994–99: Youth in Government State Board

**Candidate Comments:**

My pledge to the members of the Alger Delta Electric Cooperative is to remain accessible and maintain an open mind to all ideas presented to me. After serving on the Alger Delta Board of Directors for three years, I have learned a lot. I have gained a great deal of insight into the electrical power industry and to the workings of our board of directors. In addition, my life's experiences have given me patience and acceptance of differing opinions. These characteristics will help me direct the co-op through the next three years. Over my many years of public service, I have learned to listen to all sides and maintain a balanced temperament. I recognize that all of Alger Delta's directors have the best interest of our members in mind, but their approaches to addressing issues vary. Through teamwork, we can provide the best service and rates possible to our members.



### DENNIS SLAGA

**Occupation:**

- Retired
- Former AT&T Lineman Spanning 34 Years of Service
- Former Union Vice President for Communication Workers Of America Local 4021

**Affiliations/Community Activities/Volunteer Service:**

- Michigan National Guard
- United States Air Force
- NRA Member
- Delta County Gun Owners Association
- Hobbies: canoeing, fishing, hunting and woodworking

**Candidate Comments:**

I am a lifelong resident of Delta County and graduated from Escanaba Area High School in 1965. I served for two years in the

Michigan National Guard during high school. In 1966, I joined the United State Air Force and served on active duty for four years. I was stationed at Minot Air Force Base N.D., and Great Falls, Mont., as a Minute Man Missile Cable Splicing Specialist. I was honorably discharged in 1970.

I married my wife, Lorayne, in 1968 in Minot, N.D., and moved back to the Upper Peninsula and raised two sons and a daughter. In 1970, I was employed by AT&T as a lineman/repairman and spent the next 34 years working for them until my retirement in 2004. During that time I served as a union vice president for Communication Workers Of America Local 4021.

I am interested in the rising cost of electricity and the long-term viability of the Alger Delta Cooperative. I feel my experience as a union representative would be an asset to the cooperative in the area of employee relations if chosen to serve on the board.

## DISTRICT 7 – STONINGTON



### KIRK BRUNO

**Occupations:**

- Management Consultant, semi-retired
- Former Vice President Finance and Strategy, Mead Corporation
- Former Managing Director, Devon Valley Paper Mill
- Former Director of Internal Consulting, MeadWestvaco

**Affiliations/Community Activities/Volunteer Service:**

- Past President, Rapid River School Board
- Church Member

**Candidate Comments:**

At Kalamazoo College, 40 years ago, I wrote "The Economic Growth Patterns of the Upper Peninsula." I have been in the U.P. for 30 years now. Even at a young age, I knew I wanted to be here. Stonington is home for me.

While at Mead, I worked with local utilities and was responsible for energy purchases and investment decisions. I know WPPI, the company that supplies power to our co-op. I understand the electric business and the needs of home-based and commercial co-op members.

I am also familiar with the business of our co-op (bylaws, finances, personnel and history). I have recently assisted the board of directors with evaluation of management and business performance. Safety should be our top priority.

As consumers, we have one of the higher electric rate costs in the nation. One of our biggest challenges will be to lower rates, but I believe we can. Planning for the future is important. We need to maintain the co-op's financial health while ensuring that we are an integral part of Michigan's energy systems of the future. As your representative from District 7, I will use my knowledge and experience to ensure that our electric needs are met now and for future generations.



### ALLISON SMITH-WARN

**Occupations:**

- Bookkeeper at First Bank Upper Michigan
- Former Medical Transcriptionist
- Former Clerical Support—Community Mental Health.

**Affiliations/Community Activities/Volunteer Service:**

- Grace Church Gladstone—currently serve on the praise team, co-chairperson of the special needs ministry, substitute teacher for children's ministries, dessert coordinator for the BACM Monday night dinners at Bay College, and pianist for the once-a-month nursing home ministry.
- Co-lead a summer horseback riding camp for young girls and provide guided trail rides.
- Assist in placing luminaries on a two-mile section of County Road 513T on Christmas Eve.

**Candidate Comments:**

With the exception of a brief hiatus in Lansing to pursue a college degree, I have lived in the Rapid River area my entire life. I grew up in Stonington, graduating in 1983 from Rapid River High School. I have been a member of the Alger Delta Cooperative for the past 24 years. While I have never served on the board, I am a very active member in my community; volunteering in the school as my children were growing up, actively participating in my church, as well as volunteering to act as a secretary for the local Lutheran church when they needed a secretary. I have been open to ways I can get involved in and serve my community. Serving on the co-op would allow me to serve the people I grew up with and work with. The fact that I have lived in the Rapid River area for most of my life gives me a unique perspective as to the issues facing the residents of the community. I believe my reliability, dedication, integrity and enthusiasm would be an asset to the board. I am a careful thinker, willing to weigh the pros and cons of all issues.

## DISTRICT 8 – ISABELLA/ NAHMA



### RAYMOND YOUNG

**Occupations:**

- Adjunct Professor (Human Biology, Chemistry) for Bay College
- Former High School Teacher
- Retired Sheet Metal Worker
- EMT with Tri-Star EMS

**Affiliations/Community Activities/Volunteer Service:**

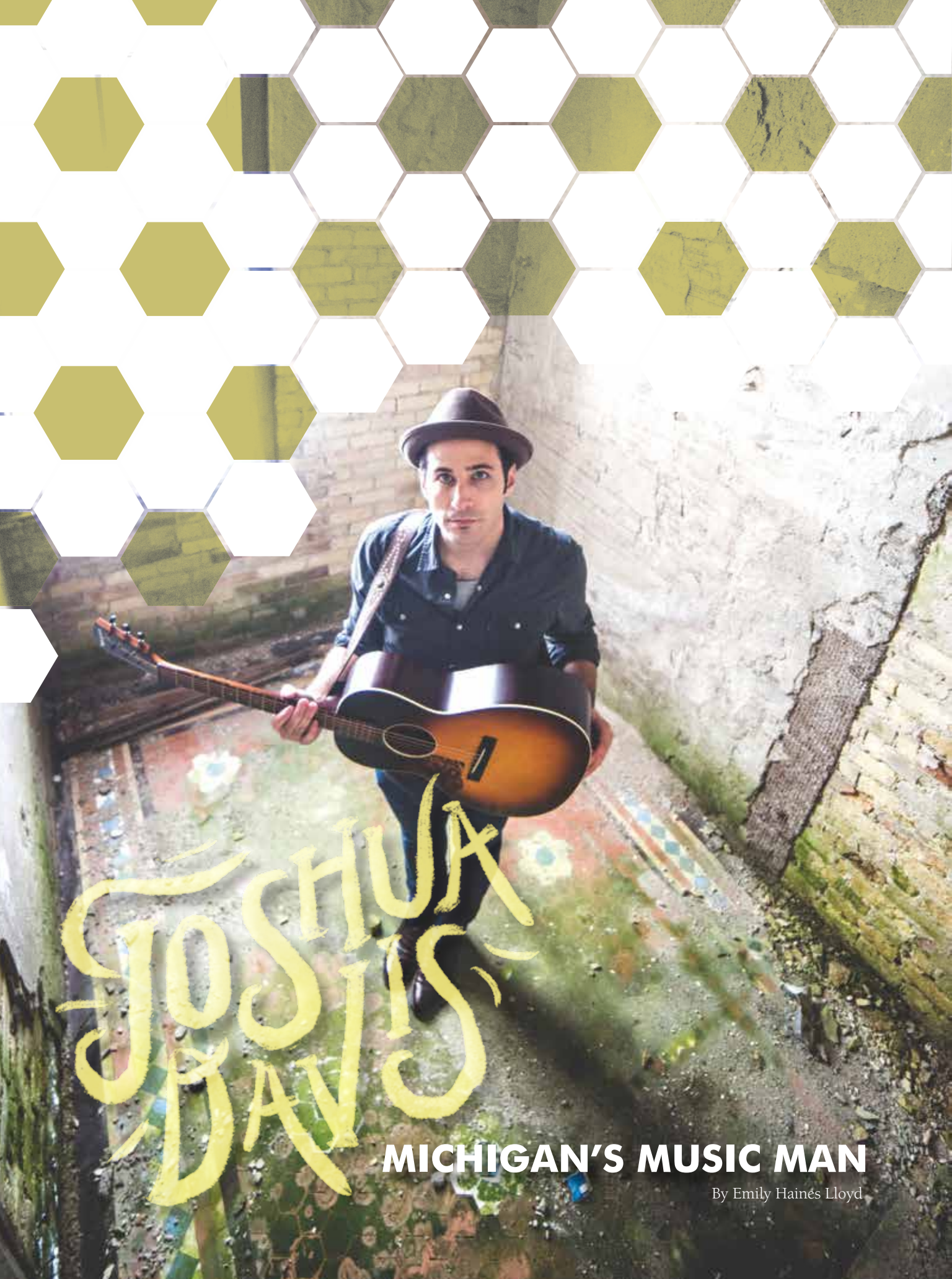
- Board member and coordinator for Hope At The Inn
- Missions Chair at Memorial United Methodist Church in Gladstone

**Candidate Comments:**

My wife, Kathy, and I are full-time residents of District 8 and have been members of the co-op for 28 years. When your power is

out, our power is out. Having served as your representative on the Alger Delta Cooperative board for the past three years, I believe that our power has become much more reliable. When I started, I wanted to cut our rates. My father, a member for 45 years, was on a fixed income. When the rates went up, he turned things off and gave up some little pleasures. District 8 has many members on fixed incomes. As you are aware, our neighboring utility company has had substantial increases in the past several years. Because of increased efficiency and a long-term power purchasing agreement, Alger Delta has not had an increase in rates since 2009. I have taken six Credential Director classes and have a much-improved understanding of the electrical industry. I promise I will fight any future rate increases. I believe in providing affordable, reliant and efficient power.






JOSHUA  
DAVIS

## MICHIGAN'S MUSIC MAN

By Emily Hainés Lloyd





**M**any people were introduced to Joshua Davis on NBC's *The Voice*, where he stunned audiences with his authentic, grassroots sound and Midwest charm. However, those who are tuned into the Michigan music scene have known Davis for ages, both as a solo artist and member of the popular band, Steppin' In It. Fans close to home weren't at all surprised by his popularity on the show or that he made it all the way to the show's finals.

Born in Marquette and raised on the east side of the state, Davis comes from deep roots in both music and humility.

"My parents lived off the grid—in the woods, no running water, no electricity. Real pioneer-type stuff," Davis said. "They took me to folk music festivals as a kid and all of that really had an effect on me."

Davis describes folk music as "music by and for the people," and that legacy has definitely impacted his career and his lifestyle.

"There was a point where my wife and I knew we either wanted to move to a larger city or find a place in the country," explained Davis. "Eventually we chose a home in Leelanau County. We'd been coming up here for years—playing music, vacationing, camping—it's remarkable—all the beauty, fresh water and community we have here."

Community is another popular theme with Davis, who is a member of Earthworks Music, a collective group of independent artists who use music to raise awareness, mentor youth, build community and celebrate local culture. While Davis is involved with many community efforts that range from social and hardship causes to environmental work, he notes that fine arts education for kids is especially close to his heart.

"Obviously, I love music and I think it's important to pass on the history and power of music to kids," said Davis.

Davis has taught classes at Interlochen, the prestigious music school in northern Michigan. He has taught songwriting and instrumental classes to children, as well as adults, through the school's College of Creative Arts program.

"Interlochen is an incredible place," said Davis. "There's such a unique energy there and so much talent and enthusiasm; it's hard not to be inspired by the students."

Davis has settled back into life in the Mitten State after the rush of additional attention created by *The Voice*. While Los Angeles provided an opportunity of a lifetime, this husband, father, activist, teacher and, of course, musician has returned home to Michigan where there's nothing like real life to inspire new music.

**After *The Voice*, Davis got right back to the studio, cutting a seven-inch vinyl with two tracks "Always Gonna Be Here For You" and "Let Me In." These tracks are included on his most recent album, *The Way Back Home*, released in February 2017.**

# Alger Delta's Power Supply To Include Electricity From Wisconsin's Largest Solar Energy Center



**A**lger Delta Cooperative Electric Association will meet more of its customers' electricity needs with power harnessed from the sun thanks to a recently announced agreement between Alger Delta's not-for-profit power supplier, WPPI Energy, and NextEra Energy Resources.

WPPI Energy and NextEra Energy Resources recently announced plans to build a 100-megawatt solar energy center—Wisconsin's largest—with a capacity to serve more than 23,000 people with affordable, clean energy.

"This solar energy center adds diversity to help us meet WPPI Energy member utilities' long-term needs in a way that's more cost-effective than other opportunities currently available to us," said Mike Peters, president and CEO of WPPI Energy. "In addition, our membership has achieved significant emission reductions over the past 10 years, and the clean, renewable energy generated by this project will help us continue that effort."

NextEra Energy Resources plans to build and operate the Point Beach Solar Energy Center on

land adjacent to its existing Point Beach Nuclear Plant in Two Rivers, Wis. The project is scheduled to come online in 2021.

WPPI Energy has entered into a 20-year power purchase agreement to buy the electricity from the solar energy center to serve its 51 member utilities across Wisconsin, Upper Michigan and Iowa, including Alger Delta.

"We are pleased that the addition of this major power supply resource complements Alger Delta's commitment to serving our community as cost-effectively as possible and will help us continue reducing our emissions," said Tom Harrell, Alger Delta's CEO. "The timing of this deal could not be better for Alger Delta and its members. The energy bills passed at the end of the last legislative session call for increased reliance on renewables, among other things. Securing 100 megawatts of solar energy through WPPI helps us meet those goals while keeping energy clean, reliable and affordable. What a great thing for our members and the U.P." Harrell added. ■



# Wild About Animals



A young red fox. By Vickie Rodriguez



At Lake Antoine Park near Iron Mountain, we caught a tiny tree frog in a park building and released him into the wild. By L. Coffman



Mighty Elk. By Suzanne Aidif



An eagle scans our camp site. By Tiki Wilson



**Share Your  
Captured  
Moments!**

Alger Delta invites members to share their amazing photos. Selected photos will be published in *Michigan Country Lines*. Upcoming topics and deadlines are: **Farms and Barns** due **April 20** for the June issue and **The Art of Nature** due **May 20** for the July/August issue.

To submit photos go to <http://bit.ly/countrylines>

We look forward to seeing your best photos!



# *I Remember...*

## *Memories Of 1940s Michigan Farm Life*

Born in the winter of 1929 at our home on Elder Road in Alden, Mich., I was the ninth child in a family of 12. When World War II ended, life started to become normal again. My dad was back home from Detroit where he had worked during the war to earn money for a new barn—as ours had blown down from high winds in 1940.

Having no barn meant my dad had to rent a barn a half-mile away on Helena Road for our livestock. It was up to my mother, brother and me to tend to our livestock while dad worked in Detroit. Mother would get my brother up at 4:30 a.m. every day to go milk the cows before going to school in Elk Rapids. We were transported to school by bus at that time. It was my job to let the cattle and horses out of the barn at noon to go down to the cistern, and break the ice (during winters), so they could have a drink of water. I was in the seventh and eighth grades during that time at Alden Elementary School.

In 1946, after dad returned home, he was able to build a new barn with steel stanchions and automatic milkers. He also was able to repair the well that had quit working when I was quite small. I remember we had to carry our drinking water for years from our neighbor's property. We hauled water from the creek, and my mother would heat it in a copper boiler for washing clothes. She washed our clothes by hand on a wash board until she finally had a gasoline washer for all of us.

In 1947, I was a senior at Elk Rapids School, and the first day returning home from school after the Christmas holiday I received the best surprise—a fully lighted house! Mom and dad would now have life a little easier. Electricity was God's blessing to my parents! They deserved it!

I would never trade those first 17 years of growing up with hard work and a loving family. Electricity sure made life much easier, for which we were all thankful. Not having electricity for the first part of my life made me appreciate it as a real commodity. Today, I'm thankful for all the people that work hard to keep our lights on.

*Erma Barber Deater, Great Lakes Energy  
Cooperative member for more than 50 years*



Actual photos from 1946–1947

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# **ALGER DELTA COOPERATIVE ANNUAL MEETING**

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**Saturday, June 10, 2017  
11 a.m.–1 p.m.**

**U.P. State Fairgrounds  
Miracle of Life Building**

**This year's Annual Meeting will feature  
something for the whole family!**

**For more information and to RSVP, call  
800-562-0950 or visit [AlgerDelta.com](http://AlgerDelta.com)**