

Midwest Energy Cooperative

April 2017

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



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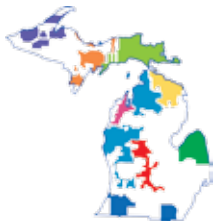
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Michigan's Electric Cooperatives
countrylines.com

April 2017
Vol. 37, No. 4

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**Michigan Electric
Cooperative Association**

Michigan Country Lines, USPS-591-710, is published monthly, except August and December, with periodicals postage paid at Lansing, Mich., 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.

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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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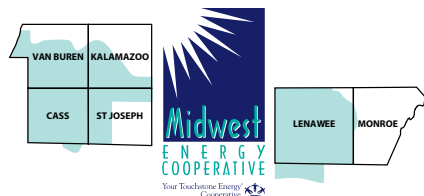
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A Tale Of Two Energy Innovators



Robert Hance
President/CEO

Thomas Edison essentially launched the modern electric utility industry when the Pearl Street Station in Manhattan began generating electricity on Sept. 4, 1882. It was the world's first central power plant, designed and built by the Edison Illuminating Company after the success of the Edison bulb created a demand for a source of power.

Almost a century-and-a-half later, Elon Musk is changing the energy game. The CEO of Tesla, Musk is a modern-day energy innovator and

on a mission to accelerate the world's transition to sustainable energy. Perhaps best known for launching a new generation of electric vehicles, Tesla is now advancing technologies that will decrease dependence on the central utility grid. The Powerwall is a rechargeable lithium-ion battery that integrates with a home solar array to store unused energy. It's not an inexpensive proposition, but it is another option—putting power into the hands of interested consumers.

The electric utility industry as I've known it during my 40-year career is in the midst of a major transition. Historically, the movement of electricity through the grid was in one direction, from the centralized generator through transmission and distribution systems to the customer. Distributed generation is changing the game as consumers can now install their own generation, like a solar array, and interconnect with the utility. These options give consumers new levels of energy control and convenience, and decrease dependence on the complex transmission and distribution systems that comprise today's bulk power grid.

Notice I said *decrease* consumer dependence, not eliminate.

At Midwest, we embrace these advancing technologies and are investing in applications on our distribution system to help you to maximize your control and experience. But the distribution system remains a key part of that experience, particularly when your source of generation does not produce enough electricity to power your needs.

This is another reason your board of directors is taking steps to restructure rates. You may choose to invest in distributed generation as a primary source of power for your home, but the fixed costs of making the distribution system available to you as needed don't go away. Every member should pay a fair and appropriate share to have access to electricity, regardless of how much or how little they use. Learn more about the rate restructuring and its impact on pages 16–17.

This is a transformational time for our industry. I believe Edison would applaud Musk's efforts to advance energy technology, and we embrace it as well. ■

Three Directors Retain Board Seats



Fred Turk—District 1



Jim Dickerson—District 2



John Green—District 5

Fred Turk, District 1, Jim Dickerson, District 2, and John Green, District 5, were recently re-elected to three-year terms on the cooperative board of directors after running unopposed in their respective districts.

Midwest Energy Cooperative is governed by a nine-member board, and each director is elected to serve a three-year term. Directors are elected by and represent members living in his or her district, and must reside in the district they represent. These are important roles as your directors make critical decisions on behalf of you and the other member-owners of the cooperative.

Three seats on the Midwest Energy Cooperative board of directors will be up for election in 2018. District 3, represented by Ron Armstrong, of

Lawton, includes Almena, Antwerp, Portage, Prairie Ronde, Oshtemo and Texas townships. District 4, represented by Clarence Barth, of Three Rivers, includes Brady, Fabius, Flowerfield, Leonidas, Lockport, Mendon, Newberg, Park, Schoolcraft and Wakeshma townships. District 8, represented by Arell Chapman, of Onsted, includes Adrian, Cambridge, Franklin, Raisin, Ridgeway, Rollin, Rome, Tecumseh, and Woodstock Townships, as well as northern portions of Blissfield, Deerfield, Dover, Hudson, Madison and Palmyra townships.

For more information about serving on the board of directors, please call the cooperative at 800-492-5989. More information about the 2018 election will be shared in the November/December issue of *Michigan Country Lines*. ■

Cooperative offices will be closed on Friday, April 14, in observance of the Good Friday holiday. Payments may be made at the drop box and will be posted on the next open business day.

From our family to yours, have a happy and blessed holiday weekend.



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

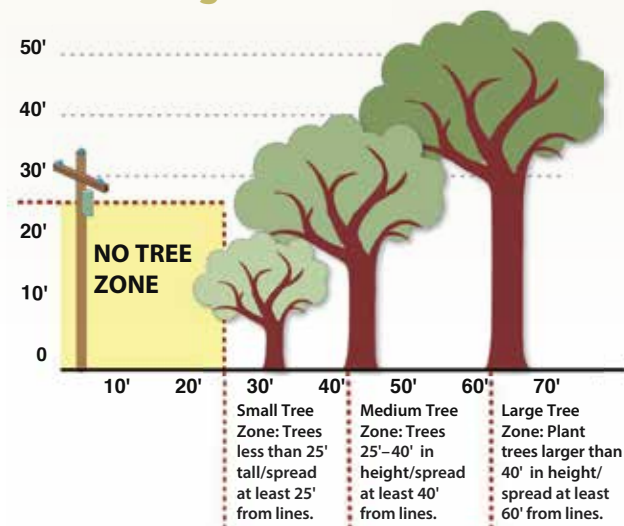
Earth Day is April 22. Show the earth some love, and plant a tree. Choose the right tree for the right place and avoid future problems with power lines.

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).
- 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
PHONE: 877.296.4319



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

Animals Near Me

The votes are in, and we're happy to share the photo with the highest votes (and some other selections) from our February photo contest. Winners were selected from 20 Facebook entries receiving nearly 400 votes! Thanks to everyone who submitted a photo, voted and spread the word by sharing the post on Facebook.

Visit teammidwest.com/photo-contest/ to view photos.

Most
Votes On
Facebook!



Rhonda McCauslin, Edwardsburg – Oh, That Warm February Sunshine!



Stephanie DiMarzio, Niles – A Girl And Her Best Friend.



Nichele Rohacs, Niles – The Doe Out For A Morning Stroll.



Steve Fischer, Lyons – Donkey Photo Bomb!



Don Cole, Mattawan – A Girl And Her Chicken.

**f Enter Our Photo Contest
And Win A Bill Credit!**

A winner every month!

Submit your best shot 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. Visit facebook.com/TeamMidwest and click on "Photo Contest" from the menu tabs to submit your high-resolution photos. Not on Facebook? You can also enter at TeamMidwest.com/photocontest. Make sure to vote, and encourage others to vote for you, too!

Our **April** theme is **Farms and Barns**. Photos can be submitted from **April 1** to **April 20** to be featured in our June issue.

The photo with the most votes will win a \$50 bill credit on their June bill.

MUFFINS & BREAD

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

Banana Chocolate Chip Bread

Pamela Blamer, Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup butter, at room temperature
- 8 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 eggs
- 3 cups flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ 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 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 for this recipe and others.

Midwest In The Community

Neighbor helping neighbor—that's how your Team Midwest family approaches daily work and efforts to give back. We live, work and serve right here in your local community, and we strive to actively live out our Community value in meaningful ways.



The Wheel of Reality is one of the most popular stations. Each student takes a turn spinning the wheel to determine how a chance event can impact their monthly budget.



Torie E. Conner, member service representative with the Greater Niles Community Federal Credit Union, works with a student to secure a transportation loan.



Goodwill of Southeast Michigan raised \$1,500, earning honors as the top fundraising team.

It's Reality

Nearly 200 high school students from across southwest Michigan got a dose of reality in February as Midwest Energy Cooperative, Southwestern Michigan College and Greater Niles Community Federal Credit Union teamed up for "It's Reality," an interactive personal financial management exercise for high school students.

The half-day program offered a practical, hands-on experience designed to teach students about budgeting and learning to live within their financial means. Each student was assigned a career and corresponding salary based on a general area of interest. Then they were tasked with navigating a series of stations where they made decisions for basic needs and lifestyle choices, including housing, transportation, utilities, student loans, clothing, fitness, and pets. Like the popular game of "Life," choices and chance helped students understand some of the financial realities of a post-high school world.

"Today's students are provided with great academic information and resources, and our goal was to supplement that with an engaging, interactive experience to bring those classroom lessons to life in a fun and meaningful way," said Lori Ruff, event organizer and community relations specialist at Midwest Energy Cooperative.

Students from Brandywine, Cassopolis, Dowagiac, Lawton and Marcellus schools participated in the event. Additional volunteer support was provided by Integrity Realty, Kemner Iott Benz, Chemical Bank, 5/3 Bank, C Wimberley Automotive, Honor Credit Union and AEP.

Walk 4 Warmth

The Penguins were out in force in late February, marching through Adrian in the annual Walk 4 Warmth fundraiser to raise money for utility bill assistance for Lenawee County families. The walk is sponsored by the Lenawee County Utilities Task Force and Community Action Agency and intended to help families avoid shut-offs and other heat-related emergencies. In 2016, more than 500 calls were made to 2-1-1 seeking assistance with utility bills and other heating emergencies, making it the number one reason people called 2-1-1 in Lenawee County. The 2017 event theme was March of the Penguins, and the event raised more than \$18,000. Team Midwest participates on the Utilities Task Force and was one of the corporate sponsors for this important event. ■



Take Charge With SmartHub Notifications

Want a reminder that your bill is due? How about confirmation that your payment posted? Wouldn't it be nice to receive alerts about power outages and restoration?

All of that and more is available through SmartHub, our free and secure online and mobile platform that puts everything you need to manage your account and service experience right at your fingertips.

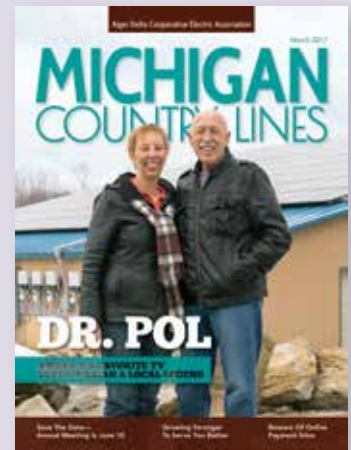
With SmartHub's notifications feature, you can choose both *how* and *why* we contact you by simply indicating your preferences and providing the appropriate contact information. Need multiple reminders? We can accommodate that too by sending notifications by email and text message.

Some of the common notifications available through SmartHub include:

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- Payment Confirmation
- Delinquent Notice
- Credit Card Expiration
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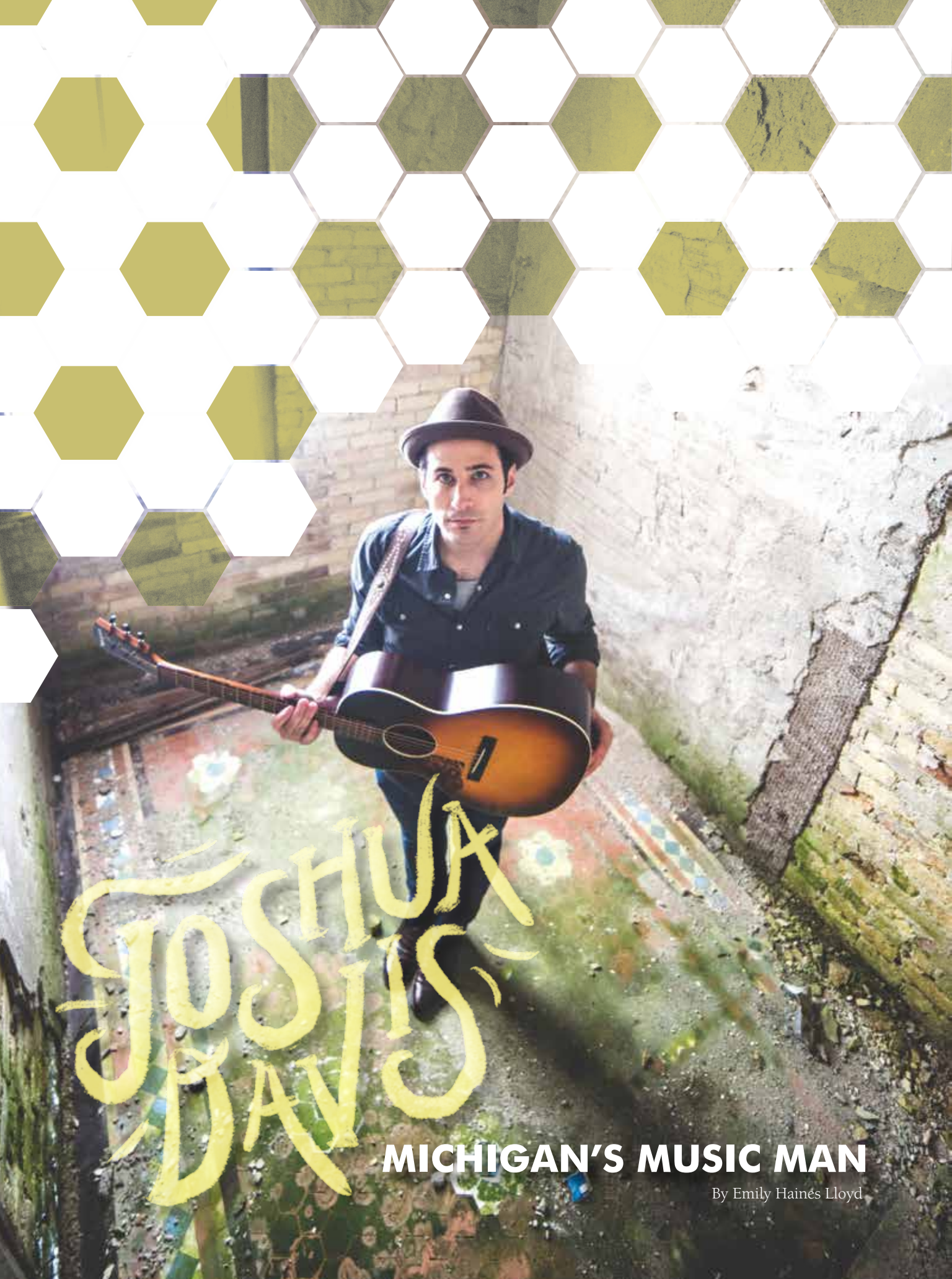
Ready to take charge over your service experience? Visit TeamMidwest.com to use the online platform, or download the free SmartHub app from the Apple App Store or Google Play, and search for Midwest Energy Cooperative. New users must complete a short, one-time registration. From the SmartHub homepage, simply click on the "Notifications" tab and add your contact information. Then begin choosing which notifications you want and how you prefer to receive them. You can cancel or change your settings anytime by logging back in.

SmartHub offers a lot of other great functionality! Report an outage, view and pay your bill, contact Midwest, report a service issue, and access detailed information about your energy use. The tools are all right there at your fingertips! ■



Country Lines, Your Communications Partner


For more than 35 years, our co-op members have received *Michigan Country Lines* because it is the most effective and economical way to share information with our members. An empowering communication tool, *Country Lines* keeps members up-to-date about everything going on within their electric co-op. Issues contain news about our services, director elections, member meetings and management decisions members need to know about as owners of the co-op. The magazine also includes legal notices that would otherwise have to be placed in local media at a substantial cost. And, sending *Michigan Country Lines* to you helps the co-op fulfill one of its important principles—to educate and communicate openly with its members. The board of directors authorizes the co-op to subscribe to *Michigan Country Lines* on behalf of each member at an average cost of \$4.01 per year, paid as part of members' electric bill. The current magazine cost is 49 cents per copy. *Michigan Country Lines* is published for us, at cost, by the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association in Lansing. As always, we welcome and value your comments.



JOSHUA
DAVIS

MICHIGAN'S MUSIC MAN

By Emily Hainés Lloyd



Many 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.

Understanding The Proposed Rate Restructuring

What is the monthly service charge?

The service charge is a fixed monthly fee intended to cover the costs of making electricity available at your location whenever you need it, regardless of how much or how little energy you actually use. It includes things like substations, poles and wires, labor, vehicles, and offices. It also includes annual capital investments of \$5–\$7 million to improve reliability and service.

Why increase the service charge?

According to our 2016 cost of service study, the residential service charge should be \$39/month. We currently collect \$18, so the remaining fixed costs are rolled into the distribution charge, which is variable based on monthly consumption. Consequently, members using more energy are paying more for fixed costs and subsidizing members who use less energy. All members should pay an equal and appropriate share of fixed costs.

How will my residential bill be impacted?

As the service charge increases, the variable distribution charge will decrease because we're shifting fixed costs. Members using about 1000 kWh/month will see little-to-no impact. Members using more than 1000 kWh/month will see some decrease as we move fixed costs away from energy consumption. Members using fewer than 1000 kWh/month will see some increase.

This restructuring is independent of any changes to the energy or power cost adjustment charges. Those are adjusted annually as needed based on the purchased price of power.

Who determines when a rate increase is necessary?

The board of directors and executive team continuously monitor the financial stability of the organization to determine when rate changes are necessary. The board has ultimate authority over rate-related matters.

What will change on the bill?

In the first year, the residential service charge will increase from \$18 to \$23.25/month, and the distribution charge will decrease from \$.038148/kWh to \$.032585/kWh. The chart on page 17 shows the impact to other rate classes.



When will the changes become effective?

The new rates will be effective with bills rendered in July 2017, and the rate will change annually every July over the four-year implementation. Changes to the irrigation rate will begin with the 2018 annual billing.

How will accounts with second meters be impacted?

The service charge on the second meter will also increase to reflect the cost of making electricity available.

Is this increase related to the new headquarters building?

This rate restructuring is based on our 2015 financials, so the impact of the new headquarters is not reflected. Members will not see rate increases related to the new building until 2018.

Is this increase related to the fiber internet deployment?

We are upgrading the electric distribution grid with a robust, two-way communication system that will allow us to implement energy efficiency, safety and reliability measures to enhance the member experience. That investment is represented in this rate restructuring.

We are leveraging that investment to deliver fiber-speed data and voice services to interested subscribers. Extending service into the home and all costs of providing service are expensed through Midwest Connections and are not part of the service charge. As the fiber internet business grows, all co-op members will benefit as profits help offset future rate increases. ■

Midwest Energy Cooperative Proposed Service Charge Summary

Rate Class	Current Monthly Service Charge	Proposed Monthly Service Charge	Annual Increase (4-year implementation)
Residential (regular and time-of-use)	\$18.00	\$39.00	\$5.25 per year
General Service (single phase)	\$22.00	\$39.00	\$4.25 per year
General Service (time-of-use single phase)	\$31.00	\$39.00	\$2.00 per year
General Service (three phase)	\$39.00	\$91.00	\$13.00 per year
General Service (time-of-use three phase)	\$66.00	\$91.00	\$6.25 per year
Irrigation (annual charge)	\$500.00	\$1,368.00	\$217.00 per year
Large Power	\$90.00	\$114.00	\$6.00 per year
Large Power (>200 kW)	\$90.00	\$114.00	\$6.00 per year
Large Power (time-of-use)	\$90.00	\$130.00	\$10.00 per year

Notice To Members Of Midwest Energy Cooperative Special Board Meeting—April 18, 2017

The Midwest Energy Cooperative Board of Directors will consider changes to the cooperative's rates and tariffs in accordance with P.A. 167 of 2008, at its meeting on April 18, 2017, beginning at 10 a.m. The meeting will be held at the headquarters office, 901 East State Street, Cassopolis, Mich., and is open to any Midwest Energy Cooperative member. Members will have an opportunity to address the board on the proposed changes prior to board action.

The following items will be considered:

- Increase Monthly Availability Charge (Monthly Service Charge) across all rate classifications
- Establish the 2017 Power Supply Cost Recovery Factor

Notice of changes or additions to the cooperative's rates or service rules shall be sent to all members, as required by P.A. 167, by publication in *Michigan Country Lines* at least 30 days prior to their effective date.

Separately, on December 14, 2016, the Midwest Energy Cooperative Board of Directors voted to limit membership to only those patrons who purchase electric energy services from the cooperative.

Participation: Any interested member may attend and participate. The location of the board meeting site is accessible, including handicapped parking. Persons needing any accommodation to participate should contact Kerri Wade at 800-492-5989, ext. 1094 a week in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance. Comments may also be shared through Mrs. Wade, or by email at Team.Midwest@teammidwest.com.

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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