

Thumb Electric Cooperative

May/June 2017

# MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

A large, white, octagonal barn with a green roof and a cupola on top. The barn has multiple windows and a large double door in the center. It is situated in a grassy field under a clear blue sky.

## THE HISTORICAL THUMB OCTAGON BARN

• NEW ANNUAL MEETING LOCATION •

Food, Fun And Prizes At The  
Annual Meeting June 10!

Board Of  
Director Nominees

Bring Your  
Voting Proxy



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for incredible comfort and savings



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WaterFurnace units can save you up to 70% on heating, cooling & hot water by capturing the clean, renewable energy in your backyard to provide incredible home comfort. Now, for a limited time, we're offering homeowners with traditional systems a very special Switch-to-Geo rebate package on our most efficient and comfortable geothermal heat pumps—the 7 Series and the dual capacity 5 Series—from now until June 23, 2017. Hurry and contact your local WaterFurnace dealer to learn more about the Geothermal Upgrade Event!

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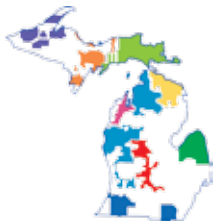
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[countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com)

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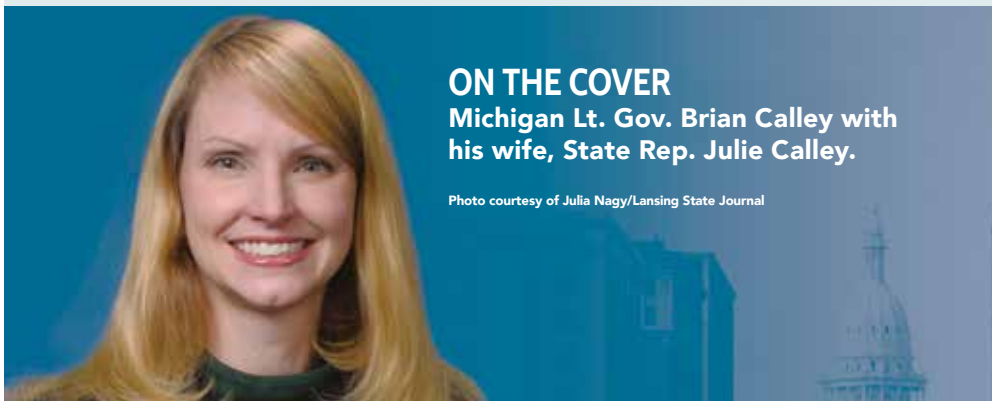
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Please notify your electric cooperative. See page 4 for contact information.

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

# IN THIS ISSUE



## ON THE COVER

**Michigan Lt. Gov. Brian Calley with his wife, State Rep. Julie Calley.**

Photo courtesy of Julia Nagy/Lansing State Journal

6

## OUR ENERGY

Choosing The Right Air Conditioner For Your Home

7

## SAFETY

Always Call MISS DIG Before You Dig  
Thunderstorm Safety Tips

10

## COOKING COMMUNITY

Sweet And Savory Breakfast And Brunch Recipes  
*Christin McKamey & Our Readers*

Enter Our Recipe Contest And Win A Bill Credit!  
Special Guest Chef Recipe From Rep. Julie Calley

14

## FEATURE

Small Town To Capital City: Rural Michigan's Political Couple  
*Emily Haines Lloyd*

18

## READER'S PAGE

Disability 101: A Lesson In Respect  
*Jack O'Malley*

Guess Our New Mystery Photo And Win  
A \$50 Bill Credit!

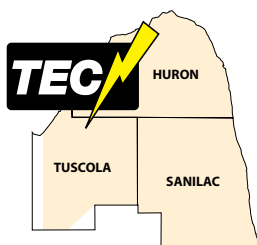
## *I Remember...*

**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)



## Thumb Electric Cooperative

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[www.tecmi.coop](http://www.tecmi.coop)

### Board Of Directors

#### HURON COUNTY

**Randall Dhyse**, Treasurer  
District 1 • 989-551-6533  
**Donald Wolschleger**, Vice President  
District 2 • 989-975-2027  
**Beth McDonald**, Secretary  
District 3 • 989-550-7470

#### SANILAC COUNTY

**Kim Nunn**, Director  
District 1 • 810-679-4291  
**Mike Briolat**, Director  
District 2 • 989-284-3405  
**Duane Kursinsky**, Director  
District 3 • 810-837-3828

#### TUSCOLA COUNTY

**Louis Wenzlaff**, President  
District 1 • 989-683-2696  
**Jonathan Findlay**, Director  
District 2 • 989-551-8393  
**Carl Cousins**, Director  
District 3 • 989-871-4449

**Dallas Braun**, General Manager

#### PAYMENT STATIONS

##### Huron County

Bad Axe—Northstar Bank  
Pigeon—Northstar Bank

##### Tuscola County

Akron—Northstar Bank  
Caro—Northstar Bank  
Mayville—Mayville State Bank  
Millington—Mayville State Bank

##### Sanilac County

Sandusky—Northstar Bank

Visit Thumb Electric's website  
[www.tecmi.coop](http://www.tecmi.coop)

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

# Meet The Candidates— Three Director Positions Open

See back cover for Annual Meeting details and voting information!

## DISTRICT 3 SANILAC COUNTY



**Duane Kursinsky**  
(Incumbent)

Raised in the Deckerville area, Duane is the owner and operator of the Sandusky D.Q. Grill & Chill Restaurant. He has been with Dairy Queen for 46 years and a Thumb Electric member since 1994.

Duane is a member and past chairperson of Peace Lutheran Church and has also served as vice chairperson. He also serves on the Sanilac County 4-H board, is a member of the Motor City Oragas Society, Sandusky Chamber of Commerce, and is a member of several snowmobile clubs.

Duane and his wife, Wanda, will celebrate their 50th anniversary this year. They have three sons—Curt, Steve and Ryan—and eight grandchildren.

If elected, Duane would like to continue looking for new forms of energy and ways to keep TEC's electric rates competitive for members while maintaining the excellent service we all enjoy. He feels it has been a real honor serving TEC members with the present board of directors.



**Kenneth Landsburg**

Ken Landsburg owns and operates Sandusky Flight Academy. In addition to being a flight instructor, he charts flights. He is also a midsize farmer, has several part-time employees, does custom spraying, and has a trucking business.

Raised in the Sandusky area, Ken graduated from Sandusky High School and attended flight school in Tampa, Fla. Ken has been a member of TEC since 1987.

He has three children and one grandson, served on the Sanilac County Farm Bureau Board of Directors, and is a member of Sandusky United Methodist Church.

If elected, Ken would like TEC to continue to offer competitive rates and great service, now and into the future.

### Notice of Annual Membership Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the members of Thumb Electric Cooperative of Michigan will be held at the Thumb Octagon Barn, 6948 Richie Road, Gagetown, Michigan at 10:00 a.m. on June 10, 2017 to take action on the following matters:

1. The reports on officers, directors and committees.
2. The election of one director from Huron County—District 3, one director from Sanilac County—District 3, and one director from Tuscola County—District 3 to the Board of Directors of the Cooperative.
3. All other business which may rightfully come before the meeting or any adjournment or adjournments thereof.

April 18, 2017  
BETH MCDONALD, Secretary

## DISTRICT 3 HURON COUNTY



**Beth  
McDonald**  
(Incumbent)

Beth McDonald has served on Thumb Electric Cooperative's (TEC) board of directors since October 1995.

Beth is the retired personnel director and current corporate secretary for McDonald's Food & Family Center of Bad Axe, having been employed there since 1973. The retail grocery store has 135 employees. Prior to that she was a legal secretary for 11 years. Raised in the Bad Axe area three miles north of where she currently lives, Beth has been a co-op member since November 1974. She and her husband, Lowell, have three children (one son and two daughters), nine grandchildren (eight girls and one boy), two grandson in-laws, and have two great-grandchildren.

Beth attends the Bad Axe Free Methodist Church, and her entire family has been and are still involved in many community boards and projects.

Beth wants to see TEC continue to be a local, member-owned cooperative. She also believes TEC has a great general manager, staff and board of directors that are totally committed to serving you. Thumb Electric Cooperative wants to provide you with the best possible service at fair prices, in a caring, professional manner, and Beth is always looking for ways to conserve energy and make the future better for upcoming generations.



**Philip  
Roth**

Philip Roth was born and raised on a farm in Delaware Township. He lived there until 1974, when he and his brother, Les, formed Roth Brothers Farms at their current location in Sheridan Township. He has been on Thumb Electric lines all his life. Both the farm he grew up on and the farm he and his brother started are both served by TEC. Roth Brothers Farms grow sugar beets, corn, wheat, and dry beans. Up until a few years ago, they also managed a dairy operation as part of their business. Recently Phil's nephews, Gavin and Forest, have come aboard and are part of the farm operations.

Philip and his wife, Ellen, have two children, a daughter who lives in Grand Rapids and a son who is finishing up his doctorate at MSU in Lansing. Philip is an active member at the First Baptist Church in Bad Axe, where he is a trustee in charge of the building and grounds. He has taken five mission trips to Honduras through the years and looks forward to going again to offer his services to those less fortunate.

If elected to serve on the Thumb Electric Board of Directors, Philip thinks the most important aspect is reliability at an affordable cost. He understands the importance of maintaining and upgrading the system when it is needed.

## DISTRICT 3 TUSCOLA COUNTY



**Carl  
Cousins**  
(Incumbent)

Carl Cousins is a retired registered civil engineer. He worked for about 40 years, splitting his time working for the Michigan Department of Transportation and private industry. He has been a member of Thumb Electric Cooperative since 1974.

Born in Flint and raised on a dairy farm east of Grand Blanc, he graduated from Davison High School. He attended Mott Community College and graduated from Wayne State University with a bachelor's of science degree in engineering.

Carl and his wife, Billy Jean, were married for 41 years prior to her death in 2008.

They had two sons, Rodney, who was formerly a pilot with the U.S. Air Force and now works for Boeing, and William Lloyd, who passed away in 1998.

He has been a member of the Millington Lions Club since 1977 and past president of the Pinto Horse Association of America, is a member of the Michigan Pinto and Breeders Association, and a past member of the American Society of Civil Engineers, and attends Millington United Methodist Church.

Carl feels community participation is very important, and he has the time to represent members. He also believes maintaining reliable service at competitive prices is important.





# Choosing The Right Air Conditioner For Your Home

**D**o you have a central air conditioner (AC) in your home that is at least 15 years old that still works but is not very efficient? Replacing an inefficient air conditioner with a more efficient model could reduce your electric bill. A new AC unit is 20 to 40 percent more efficient than one from the 1990s—and ENERGY STAR®-certified systems are even more efficient.

How much money you save by replacing your current AC unit depends on how often your AC runs and your electric rate. The best way to determine possible savings is to have an in-home assessment conducted by a qualified heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) professional or a certified energy auditor. Electric co-ops are often interested in reducing peak summer loads and sometimes offer information, rebates or a list of qualified professionals.

Your contractor needs to size the system to your home. A unit that is too small will not cool your home to the levels you want. If it is too large, it may not dehumidify your home sufficiently, and it will cycle on and off more frequently, which can increase wear and tear on the system and shorten its life significantly. To size the system, the contractor will look at the efficiency of the home by checking insulation levels. If you add insulation where it's most needed, you may be able to install a smaller AC unit and enjoy greater comfort and lower cooling costs. The contractor should also assess your ductwork, which is often poorly designed, leaky or inadequately insulated.

It's good to know there are several air conditioning options suited to different situations. It may or may not be practical to change to a different type of system.

Central air conditioning is one of two types: either split or packaged. A split system, which has the cold coils inside the home and an outside unit exhausting heat, is the most common. Packaged systems, which are sometimes installed because of space constraints, combine these functions into one box located outside the home.

A heat pump can provide cooling and heating in homes with or without ducts. If you are currently using propane or natural gas as your fuel source, this may be a good option.

A ductless mini-split heat pump can be an efficient way to cool up to four zones inside the home. If your existing ductwork is in bad shape or poorly designed, this could be a good solution.

Window units are much less efficient than other options, but they can still be effective for cooling a single room. It's worth paying a little more for a new ENERGY STAR-compliant unit, rather than the dusty \$80 unit from the yard sale.

Evaporative (or "swamp") coolers are an alternative in very dry climates. While they use a quarter of the energy and are less expensive to install than central air conditioning, they also require more frequent maintenance. ■

**Replacing an aging air conditioner is a great way to improve comfort, cut energy costs and reduce peak energy demand.**

# Thunderstorm Safety Tips

**W**hen thunderstorms are rolling your way, stay safe with these helpful tips from the American Red Cross:

- Listen to local news or NOAA Weather Radio for emergency updates. Watch for signs of a storm, like darkening skies, lightning flashes or increasing wind.
  - Postpone outdoor activities if thunderstorms are likely to occur. Many people struck by lightning are not in the area where rain is occurring.
  - If a severe thunderstorm warning is issued, take shelter in a substantial building or in a vehicle with the windows closed. Get out of mobile homes that can blow over in high winds.
  - If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to be in danger from lightning. If thunder roars, go indoors! The National Weather Service recommends staying inside for at least 30 minutes after the last thunder clap.
  - Avoid electrical equipment and telephones. Use battery-powered TVs and radios instead.
  - Shutter windows and close outside doors securely. Keep away from windows.
  - Do not take a bath, shower or use plumbing.
- If you are driving, try to safely exit the roadway and park. Stay in the vehicle and turn on the emergency flashers until the heavy rain ends. Avoid touching metal or other surfaces that conduct electricity in and outside the vehicle.
  - If you are outside and cannot reach a safe building, avoid high ground, water, tall and isolated trees, as well as metal objects such as fences and bleachers. Picnic shelters, dugouts and sheds are also NOT safe. ■



## ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

**For your safety and for the protection of underground utility lines, always follow these steps before starting any digging project.**

1. Contact MISS DIG at 811 or [missdig.org](http://missdig.org)
2. Wait three business days for utility owners to mark their lines
3. Respect the marks
4. Dig with care



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**  
visit [missdig.org](http://missdig.org) for more information



## Go Paperless And Win A Bill Credit

**That's right—four winners!**

- All members who sign up for paperless billing by June 8 will be entered in the drawing, including current paperless members.
- Sign up online at [tecmi.coop](http://tecmi.coop) or via Smarthub.
- Winners will be announced at TEC's Annual Meeting on June 10.
- Paperless members will receive an email or text letting them know their bill is available to view. No physical copy of the bill will be mailed unless a member falls into shutoff status.

# Recycle That Old Refrigerator Or Freezer And Get Cash Back!

# \$\$\$\$\$

**Receive \$50 for an old refrigerator or freezer and \$20 for an old window AC\* unit or dehumidifier.\***



**Call 844-631-2130 to schedule your pick up today!**



\*Small appliances will only be picked up in conjunction with a larger unit.



# Planes, Trains & Automobiles



During a visit to the mouth of the Huron River in the U.P., we spied a group of old Fords puttering along the sandy roads. They posed for some photos among the red pines and sand dunes, then took off again. Talk about being in the right place at the right time!  
*By Nathan Miller*



At 10 degrees below zero with the mist rising off the water, this ship truly looked like a Lake Michigan ghost! *By Jon Labs*



The Yankee Lady on display at the Alpena Air Show.  
*By John Garavaglia*



Up close view of an F-16. *By John Garavaglia*



Our preschool class enjoyed learning about trains and the letter T! The electric train is a hit every year! *By Kati Ek*

## Photo Fun

Thumb Electric invites members to share their photos. Selected photos will be published in *Michigan Country Lines*.

Upcoming topics and deadlines are: **The Art of Nature** due **May 20** for the July/August issue and **Birds and Feathers** due **July 20** for the Sept./Oct. issue.

To submit photos, and for details and instructions, go to <http://bit.ly/countrylines>

We look forward to seeing your best photos!

# BREAKFAST AND BRUNCH

These sweet and savory breakfast or brunch ideas are sure to please.

## Orange Cranberry-Carrot Muffins

*Luise Bolleber, Cherryland*

- ⅓ cup butter, melted
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- Juice and zest from 1 orange
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 cups finely shredded carrots
- 1 cup fresh or frozen cranberries, coarsely chopped

Heat oven to 350 F and place paper cups in a muffin tin. Whisk sugar and butter together in a medium bowl until blended. Beat in eggs, orange juice and vanilla. Combine the flour, orange zest (peel), baking soda, baking powder and salt in a separate bowl. Add to creamed mixture just until combined. Fold in carrots and cranberries. Fill muffin cups three-fourths full. Bake 25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

▶ Watch a video on this recipe at <https://goo.gl/HN697I>

Photos—831 Creative







## Peggy's Stolen Stuffed French Toast

Jessica Waite, Great Lakes Energy Cooperative

- 1 loaf Italian bread
- 1 stick butter, melted
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 8 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- ¼ cup maple syrup

Preheat oven to 375 F. Tear half of bread loaf into ¼" cubes and place in bottom of 13×9 greased pan. Cube cream cheese and place evenly throughout. Top with the remaining loaf in ¼" cubes. In a separate bowl combine remaining ingredients. Pour over bread mixture. Pat down with a spatula, so bread is soaked. Cover with tinfoil and let sit overnight. Bake for 45 minutes covered. Serve immediately with extra maple syrup.



## All-In-One Breakfast Bake

Mary Ellen Seguin-Adomat,  
Cherryland Electric Cooperative

- 1 pound plain pork sausage
- 6 eggs
- 2 cups milk
- 1 cup shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- 6 slices bread, torn into pieces
- 1 tablespoon dry mustard
- 1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms

Preheat oven to 350 F. Butter a 13×9 glass baking dish. Brown sausage and drain on paper towels; set aside. In a large bowl, beat eggs, then add milk and beat again. Stir in remaining ingredients, including sausage. Pour into baking dish. Bake for 45 minutes. This can be prepared the night before and refrigerated; pop it in the oven in the morning.



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

• "All About Apples" due July 5

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

## Raspberry Pie (pictured above)

Rep. Julie Calley

If you're as busy as Rep. Julie Calley, you'll appreciate this simple, but scrumptious, pie recipe that's a favorite in the Calley home.

- 1 pie crust, store bought or homemade
- 1 3.4-ounce package vanilla instant pudding
- 2 cups milk
- 3 ounces cream cheese
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 1 3-ounce package raspberry Jell-O
- 1 cup boiling water
- 9 ounces fresh raspberries
- ¼ cup chopped nuts (optional)

Prepare and bake pie shell for open face pie. Let the pie shell cool. Combine pudding, milk, cream cheese and almond extract. Beat for 2 minutes. Pour into pie shell and chill until firm. Mix Jell-O with boiling water and chill until partially set. Gently stir in the raspberries and nuts. Pour over vanilla filling and chill until set.

Read the full story about the Calleys on page 14 and visit [micoopkitchen.com](http://micoopkitchen.com) for this recipe and others.





## Thumb Electric Cooperative Of Michigan Seventy-Ninth Annual Meeting Of The Members

**T**he Seventy-Ninth Annual Meeting of the Members of the Thumb Electric Cooperative of Michigan was held at the Cass City Recreational Park in Cass City, Tuscola County, Mich. at 10 a.m. on Saturday, June 11, 2016, pursuant to call and notice thereof given to each member of the Cooperative and pursuant to the laws of the State of Michigan.

The meeting was called to order by Louis Wenzlaff, President of the Cooperative, who presided. Randy Dhyse acted as Secretary for the meeting, due to Beth McDonald's absence. Jason Bitzer, Attorney for the Cooperative, acted as recording secretary of the meeting and kept the minutes thereof.

A moment of silence was held to recognize the passing of longtime TEC Attorney Jim Woodworth and Board Member Walter Cook.

The President introduced the members of the Cooperative's Board of Directors and Board Officers as follows: Louis Wenzlaff, President Tuscola County; Donald Wolschleger, Vice-President, Huron County; Beth McDonald, Secretary Huron County; Randall Dhyse, Treasurer, Huron County; Carl Cousins, Tuscola County; Mike Briolat, Sanilac County; Jonathan Findlay, Tuscola County; Kim Nunn, Sanilac County; Duane Kursinsky, Sanilac County; and Beth McDonald being absent.

Also introduced were General Manager Dallas Braun and Jason Bitzer, the Cooperative Attorney.

The reading of the Notice of the Meeting and Affidavit of Mailing thereof to all the Cooperative members within the time prescribed by the Cooperative Bylaws was dispensed with; it having been published in *Country Lines*. A copy of the Notice and Affidavit is attached to these minutes and incorporated herein.

The President reported that the members of the Cooperative present in person or by proxy had been checked by the registration of names of the members attending the meeting in person and the names of the members represented at the meeting by proxy and the names of their respective proxies, as said members entered the meeting room, and that more than one hundred fifty (150) members of the Cooperative were present in

person, constituting a quorum of the members in accordance with the Bylaws of the Cooperative.

The President also reported that members of the Cooperative were present at the meeting in person, and that members were represented at the meeting by proxies. All of said members being named and described as to their county of residence and as to attendance in person or by proxy. The proxies were ordered filed in the records of the Cooperative.

The minutes of the Seventy-Eighth Annual Meeting of the Members were not read since a copy of same had been mailed to each of the members. There being no additions or corrections to those minutes, upon motion duly made, seconded and carried, said minutes were approved as drafted.

The Treasurer's Report to the Seventy-Ninth Annual Meeting was not read since a copy of same had been mailed to each of the members. There being no amendments thereto or questions upon the matters contained therein, upon motion duly made, seconded and carried, the report was approved as presented. The Treasurer's Report, published in *Country Lines*, presented the 2015 financial statement and showed operating revenues of \$19,550,303 and expenses of \$19,228,953 resulting in an operating margin of \$321,350. Total assignable margins were \$603,154 for 2015. The 2015 members' patronage capital accounts will be allocated 2.9 cents on each dollar paid by TEC members. The 2015 general patronage retirement appeared as a credit on member's electric bills received in May 2016.

President Wenzlaff then introduced the Cooperative's General Manager Dallas Braun. Manager Braun thanked the Cooperative employees for all their labors and efforts over the past year. He then reported on the Cooperative's financial status, rates, member services, marketing activities, patronage capital retirement, energy efficiency, interest, property taxes, construction and improvements. In closing, Manager Braun thanked the members for their interest in their Cooperative and for their support.

After questions and answers of the General Manager's Report, the meeting was returned to President Wenzlaff, and upon motion duly made,

seconded and carried, the General Manager's Report was approved as presented.

President Wenzlaff then gave the President's Report explaining growth of the Cooperative's total utility plant in 2015, increase in equity while maintaining competitive rates, member district meetings, patronage capital retirements, major construction projects in 2016, utility plant and upgrades, renewable energy, energy optimization program, renewable portfolio standard, tree trimming, taxes and legislation. Upon motion duly made, seconded and carried, the President's Report was approved as presented.

The next order of business was the election of three Directors, representing District 1. One from each county for three-year terms each. The meeting was turned over to the Cooperative attorney Jason Bitzer to conduct the election and voting.

Acting Chairman Bitzer appointed the following members as Inspectors of the Election, all of whom were sworn to the faithful performance of their duties by the Acting Chairman who is also a notary public:

**Huron:** Harold Cook, Arthur Miller, Joel Weber;  
**Sanilac:** Robert Noll, Marjorie Maher, Clara M. Ziehm;  
**Tuscola:** Kenneth Platt, Larry Dicks, Mark Torma, Elaine Reid.

The Nominating Committee Report was published in *Michigan Country Lines*. The Committee nominated the following for Directorships: **Huron County—District 1:** Randall Dhyse (incumbent), Joseph Mausolf, **Sanilac County—District 1:** Kim Nunn (incumbent), Michael Bender, **Tuscola County—District 1:** Louis Wenzlaff (incumbent), Edward Gerstenberger, Paul VanHorn.

Acting Chairman Bitzer entertained further nominations from the floor for each Directorship in each county. There being no such nominations from

the floor, upon motion duly made, seconded and carried, the nominations were closed.

The election process was explained. Each candidate was then introduced and invited to address the members for up to five minutes. Acting Chairman Bitzer then requested the members to vote upon their ballots for the respective Directorships. The Inspectors of the Election were requested to collect and tabulate the ballots. The meeting was turned back over to President Wenzlaff.

The President introduced Michigan Electric Cooperative Association CEO Craig Borr, who addressed TEC's membership.

The President then announced the prize drawing winners. He then asked if there was any old business to address. There being none; he asked for new business. There being none. He entertained a motion to adjourn. Upon motion duly made, seconded and carried, the business portion of the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m. Invocation was given, and members were released for lunch and family activities.

After lunch, the meeting was informally reconvened and turned over to Attorney Jason Bitzer who announced the results of the tabulation of votes which were as follows: **Huron County—District 1:** Randall Dhyse 159; Joseph Mausolf 84. **Sanilac County—District 1:** Kim Nunn 163; Michael Bender 76. **Tuscola County—District 1:** Louis Wenzlaff 153; Edward Gerstenberger 37; Paul VanHorn 53.

The elected Directors were declared to be Randall Dhyse from Huron County—District 1, Kim Nunn from Sanilac County—District 1, and Louis Wenzlaff from Tuscola County—District 1.

RANDY DHYSE, Acting Secretary

APPROVED BY: LOUIS WENZLAFF, President

## Watch Your May Electric Bill For Capital Credit Refund!

Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues, called margins, are returned to members in the form of capital credits. Thumb Electric Cooperative member-owners will see the benefits of cooperative principle #3 (Members' Economic Participation) on their May electric bills as a credit on a line item called "Patronage Refund."

More than \$550,482 will be applied to members' May electric bills for those who had service during 1986, 1987 and 2016. Since retiring patronage capital, more than \$8,282,909 has been returned to the co-op's members.

# — small town to — CAPITAL CITY

## Rural Michigan's Political Couple

By Emily Haines Lloyd



Rep. Julie Calley with her husband, Lt. Gov. Brian Calley and children Collin, Reagan and Karagan.

Down a country road in Ionia County, not too far from where she grew up on a sesquicentennial farm, Julie Calley lives a fairly normal life. Julie is a wife, mother of three and devoted public servant. Of course, she's also married to the lieutenant governor of Michigan, Brian Calley, but her career takes her to Lansing as the representative for the 87th District in the state's House of Representatives.

The pair are a rare commodity in Lansing, with Brian serving his final two years as the lieutenant governor of Michigan while Julie began a two-year term in January. She now holds the seat that her great-grandfather Herbert Powell, grandfather Stanley Powell and her husband have all held. Both Calleys also have served as Ionia County commissioners.

One wouldn't think of small-town Portland as a hub of Michigan politics, but for Representative Julie Calley, it's sort of the family business.

"My family has a legacy of public service," said Calley. "My mother has served at the township level for almost as long as I've been alive. She just retired last





“It boils down to making government work better for the average citizen. Politics can overcomplicate things. It has to center back on the community we’re serving—a person-centered approach.”

year as a township trustee. My grandfather and great-grandfather both served in the state legislature, so public service is definitely in my blood.”

Julie notes that one doesn’t need to have a long heritage of politics in the family in order to serve. “There are usually a number of local boards which need more interest and participation. There are numerous empty roles on the county level that sometimes have only one candidate or sometimes not even one. There is a definite need for public servants.”

It may have been that desire to serve that drew Julie and Brian together. High school sweethearts, the Calleys married as she was finishing a degree at Northwood University and Brian at Michigan State University.

After college, the Calleys moved back to Ionia County. Julie had worked in commercial real estate while her husband made his mark in the state political scene, but Julie always stayed involved in local politics. Calley was chairwoman of the Ionia County Board of Commissioners and chairperson of the Michigan Community Service Commission. She also served two terms on the Republican State

Committee. Now, as Julie is still in the early part of her two-year term in the Michigan House of Representatives, she is taking her local experience to the state level.

“It boils down to making government work better for the average citizen. Politics can overcomplicate things. It has to center back on the community we’re serving—a person-centered approach.”

Julie’s experience living in a rural setting has actually driven her work approach. While she notes that the jump from roughly 9,000 constituents to approximately 90,000 constituents is daunting, she is utilizing the same relationship-building skills she used on the local level in her new role. Her experience in small-town Michigan is an inspiration as she moves forward, building relationships in the state’s House of Representatives.

“Those who choose to live in the country tend to have a certain independence and yet reliance on one another,” Julie concluded. “So when a problem arises, it’s typical for neighbors to band together and take care of one another. Identifying a need and taking care of it—I wish we could see more of that.” ■

## Tree Trimming Efforts Continue

Tree trimming will continue at an aggressive rate during 2017. We are seeing fewer outages and shorter duration of outages that do occur because of these efforts. Priorities will continue for line sections that are historically problematic lines, followed by overgrown sections. As time allows, less severe circuits will be maintained. Members in Evergreen Township and Elkland Township will see crews this spring, as the area has been hit especially hard with diseased and aging trees falling on lines, sometimes from far out of our right-of-way. Members in Freemont Township and Kingston Township will see crews as well as part of regular system maintenance.

Due to a disease in the Ash tree, which is a very popular species of tree in our service territory, we have had to adjust our trimming locations. It has made planning a challenge at times, but we make every effort to contact members ahead of the trimmers. We will send out a postcard to members to let them know trimmers will be in the area and, at times, we will try and call members to let them know the plan for their area. If you have an updated phone number, please call us with your new contact information.

## Annual Meeting At Thumb Octagon Barn

Thumb Electric Cooperative's Annual Meeting will be held June 10 at the Thumb Octagon Barn near Gagetown. Mark your calendar and join your cooperative members. Registration begins at 9 a.m. and the business meeting will start at 10 a.m. Be a part of the democratic process at your electric cooperative, and plan on attending and casting your ballot for the board of director election. As always, there will be entertainment for the kids, such as balloons, face painting, pony rides and bucket truck rides. When the meeting is over and after you have had lunch, feel free to take in the sites of years gone by and enjoy the Octagon Barn's vast collection of farm, home and early 20th century items.

## Appliance Recycling

Appliance recycling is open again for 2017 with our same contractor SEEL. They will pick up an old working refrigerator or freezer, and we will credit your account \$50. If they have scheduled to pick up a refrigerator or freezer, they will also schedule to pickup a dehumidifier or a window AC unit you wish to recycle. Those are worth a \$20 bill credit. Call 844-631-2130 to schedule your pick up today! ■

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The report of the 2017 Nominating Committee which met in Ubly, Mich. at 11 a.m. on April 13, 2017, to select nominees for the position of Director of Thumb Electric Cooperative. Nominees for one director position from Huron, Sanilac and Tuscola Counties are as follows:

**Huron County—District 3:** Beth McDonald—Incumbent Director  
Philip Roth

**Sanilac County—District 3:** Duane Kursinsky—Incumbent Director  
Kenneth Landsburg

**Tuscola County—District 3:** Carl Cousins—Incumbent Director

These names shall be placed on the Annual Meeting ballot in accordance with Article III, Section 3 of the Cooperative Bylaws.

Dated: April 13, 2017

CATHY KNOERR, CHAIRPERSON

**Thumb Electric Cooperative**  
**Financial Statement Balance Sheets**  
December 31, 2016 & 2015

ASSETS	2016	2015
ELECTRIC PLANT		
In service—at cost	\$ 89,329,056	\$ 86,922,717
Under construction	1,852,090	902,291
Total electric plant	91,181,146	87,825,008
Less accumulated depreciation	28,045,306	26,786,428
ELECTRIC PLANT—NET	63,135,840	61,038,580
OTHER PROPERTY AND INVESTMENTS		
Investments in associated organizations	1,594,000	1,569,063
Investment in subsidiary	1,593,470	1,472,003
Energy loans receivable	128,623	118,567
Nonutility property	107,154	111,627
Short-term investments—restricted	298,852	150,000
TOTAL OTHER PROPERTY AND INVESTMENTS	3,722,092	3,421,260
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and temporary cash investments	290,838	637,160
Accounts receivable, less allowance for doubtful accounts of \$505,762 and \$522,331 in 2016 and 2015	2,432,296	2,113,285
Unbilled revenue	706,597	584,615
Materials and supplies	913,031	974,092
Prepaid expenses	71,160	113,538
Interest receivable	8,331	8,333
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	4,422,253	4,431,023
DEFERRED CHARGES	674,900	859,291
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 71,955,092</b>	<b>\$ 69,750,154</b>
EQUITIES AND LIABILITIES		
EQUITIES		
Memberships	\$ 175,160	\$ 172,395
Patronage capital	22,148,341	21,764,988
Other equities	1,852,382	1,631,463
TOTAL EQUITIES	24,175,883	23,568,846
LONG-TERM DEBT, NET OF CURRENT MATURITIES	39,494,649	39,012,276
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Current maturities of long-term debt	1,929,640	1,841,163
Note payable – line of credit	3,304,608	1,700,000
Accounts payable:		
Purchased power	964,402	842,026
Subsidiary	63,527	38,711
Other	492,854	1,254,606
Accrued property taxes	599,701	575,106
Accrued payroll and vacation	527,656	487,444
Customer deposits	187,520	185,008
Other	102,924	111,554
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	8,172,832	7,035,618
DEFERRED CREDITS	111,728	133,414
<b>TOTAL EQUITIES AND LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$ 71,955,092</b>	<b>\$ 69,750,154</b>
OPERATING REVENUES		
Electric sales	\$ 18,930,534	\$ 18,623,490
Other sales	1,232,396	926,814
	20,162,930	19,550,304
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Cost of power	9,871,912	9,548,694
Generation	23,341	9,791
Transmission	236,145	108,510
Distribution—operations	535,485	612,632
Distribution—maintenance	2,231,870	2,567,455
Customer accounts	698,729	621,112
Customer service	412,157	394,062
Sales	6,515	8,549
Administrative and general	968,634	1,004,550
Depreciation	2,183,368	2,085,881
Taxes—property	785,610	754,690
Taxes—other	=	4,995
	17,953,766	17,720,921
OPERATING INCOME BEFORE FIXED CHARGES	2,209,164	1,829,383
FIXED CHARGES:		
Interest on long-term debt	1,510,355	1,456,776
Other interest	52,266	51,260
	1,562,621	1,508,036
OPERATING MARGINS AFTER FIXED CHARGES	646,543	321,347
CAPITAL CREDITS	122,862	109,219
NET OPERATING MARGINS	769,412	431,266
NON-OPERATING MARGINS		
Interest	74,221	44,576
Income from subsidiary	43,026	85,541
Other income	70,923	41,767
	188,170	171,884
<b>NET MARGINS</b>	<b>\$ 957,582</b>	<b>\$ 603,150</b>



# Disability 101: A Lesson in Respect

By Jack O'Malley, WTCM 103.5 FM Traverse City and host of Jack's Journal on 9 & 10 News

"Well, Jack," said the doctor, examining my foot while studying X-rays of my heel. "If that tendon tears, it's going to be a bear to fix. You need foot surgery." Not one to argue, I took his advice.

In the days prior to surgery, I prepared for my recovery: two to four weeks off my feet, hobbling unsteadily on crutches and learning how to steer my scooter, followed by a week or two walking with a cane.

"Easy enough," I thought. With a foot brace, prescriptions and disability parking permit in hand, I was feeling confident!

After a relatively pain-and-incident-free first few weeks, I had mastered the dance—juggling my brief case, foot brace, scooter and crutches, jostling them in and out of the car, all while balancing on one leg. Lugging everything through a near freezing parking deck at least twice per day, I quickly tired of the hassle. But the end was near! Soon the doc would give me the all-clear, and it would be just me, my brief case, and my intricately-carved, walnut-stained Beechwood walking cane, which was an accessory I hoped would offer an air of distinction (unlike my scooter).

But then, a complication—a complication setting my recovery back at least two weeks. And then another setback.

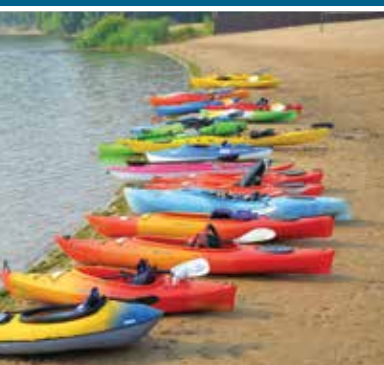
In mid-December, with mobility still dependent on the knee scooter and crutches, my wife and I attended a music program in search of some much-needed holiday cheer. Entering an auditorium brimming with families, grandparents and students, we noticed all handicapped-accessible rows were full, many seats occupied by young children. While obvious I couldn't use the stairs, no one moved. Dismayed, I found a folding chair by the entrance while my wife took a seat elsewhere in the auditorium.

Initially frustrated at being separated from my wife, I paused. Since surgery, folks had repeatedly grabbed doors, held elevators and carried bags for me. While some were oblivious, the vast majority of those I "bumped" into kindly offered assistance. Plus, I had a light at the end of the tunnel. I would recover. Eventually.



Yet this situation forced me to ask a tough question. What about those people suffering permanent disabilities, many of whom regularly experience these types of situations? What about people discouraged from going out because of limited parking and seating, who feel uncomfortable asking for help, overburdened with medical equipment, and just overwhelmed with the situation in general?

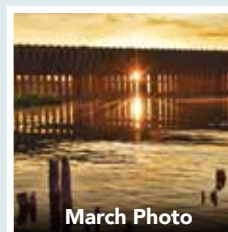
Though I'm still not 100 percent, doctors assure me I'll make a full recovery. In the meantime, my respect and appreciation for those with a permanent physical or cognitive disability has only deepened. My hope now is to encourage others to think twice when in public. Save those reserved parking spaces and seating sections for those people and families who could really use it. Open a door, offer a seat, and give a smile to someone who genuinely needs it. I know I will. ■



## «« Where In Michigan Is This?

Identify the correct location of the photo on the left by June 10 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 March 2017 issue is Walter Seavoy, an Ontonagon County REA member, who correctly identified the photo as the Lower Harbor Ore Dock in downtown Marquette, Mich. Winners are announced in the following issues of *Country Lines*: January, March, May, July/August, September and November/December.



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Cooperative**  
www.tecmi.coop

**DON'T MISS IT!**

## 80<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

**Saturday, June 10, 2017**  
**Thumb Octagon Barn**  
**6948 Richie Rd.**  
**Gagetown, MI 48735**

### MAIN TENT

9–11:15 a.m. . . . . Prize Drawing  
Registration  
10 a.m. . . . . Business Meeting  
Noon . . . . . Lunch

### KIDS' TENT

11 a.m.–2 p.m. . . . Face painting  
11 a.m.–2 p.m. . . . Clown  
Noon–2 p.m. . . . . Pony & Bucket  
Truck Rides  
12:45 p.m. . . . . Candy Drop

**Kids' Drawing:** Two bicycles  
**Adult Drawing:** Electric water  
heater and more!



## TEC 2017 ANNUAL MEETING Registration Form



**TEC MEMBER:** **Bring this entire registration form, or have the proxy appointee named below bring this form, to the Annual Meeting. It is important that the imprinted member information at the top is included. It will be used to register you for voting and the prize drawing.**

### Proxy Information

If you are unable to attend the annual meeting and want to have another member, your spouse or child (of legal voting age) vote in your place, please fill in the information below. Only one (1) proxy may be voted by an individual per membership.

As a member of Thumb Electric Cooperative of Michigan, I, the undersigned, hereby appoint (write in the name of who you appoint)

\_\_\_\_\_ to act as my proxy and vote in my absence at the meeting of the members to be held at Cass City Park, Cass City, Michigan, at 10 a.m., on the 10th day of June, 2017.

I realize that this is my duty as a member of this cooperative to take an active interest in its affairs and to exercise my voting privilege in person. I have carefully considered the business which is to be acted upon, and have decided to give my proxy to the above-named person, who agreed to vote this proxy on all matters as he or she believes I would vote if personally present. I hereby ratify and confirm my proxy's vote in my stead.

Witness my hand and seal this \_\_\_\_\_ day of June, 2017.

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Member giving proxy

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

*Please bring this entire registration form panel with you to the meeting.  
It is important that the imprinted member information at the top is included.*

### How To Get There:

Gagetown is about 1 mile west of Richie Rd. on Bay City Forestville Rd., and about 6 miles east of M-53.

