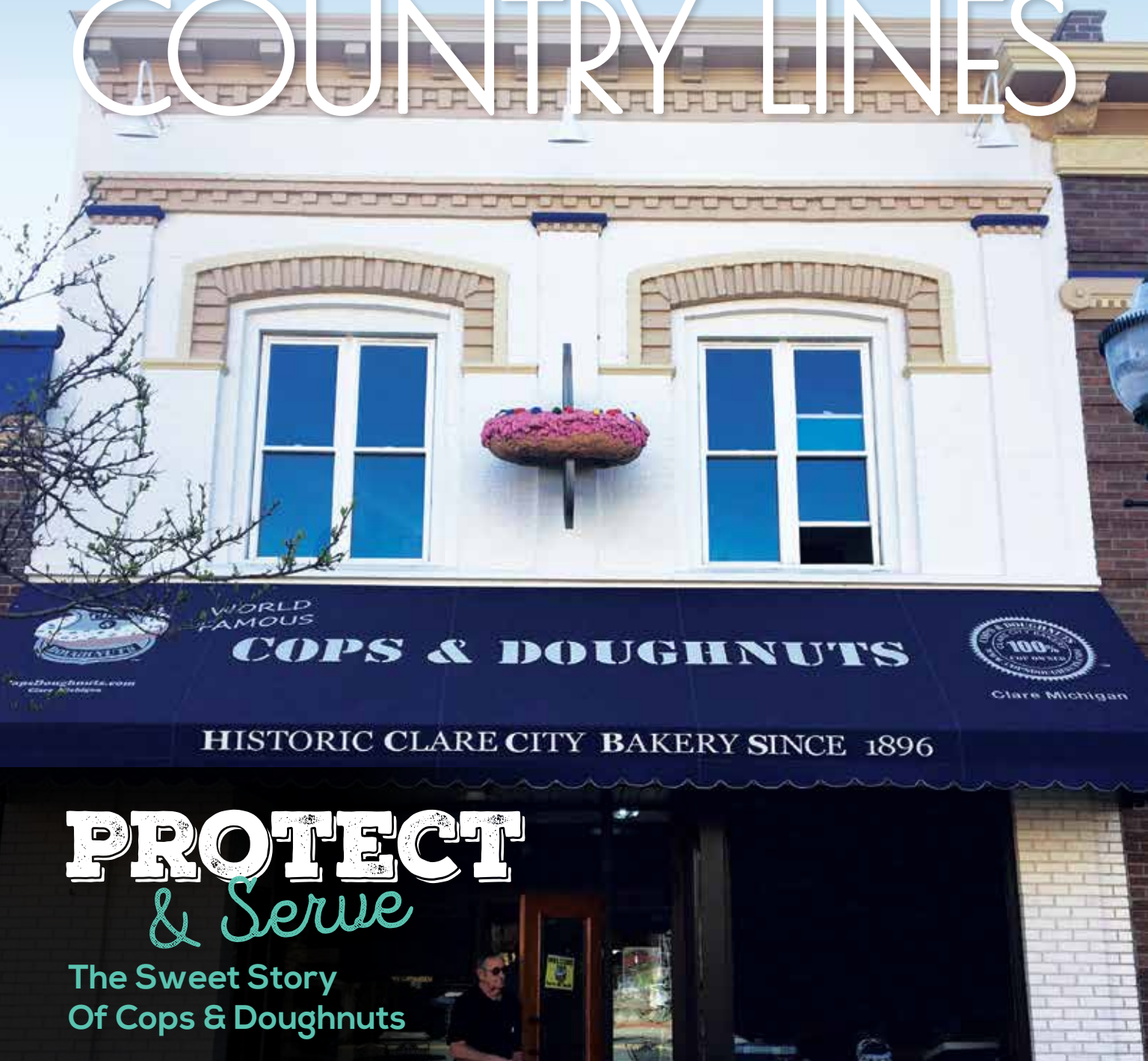


MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



PROTECT & Serve

The Sweet Story
Of Cops & Doughnuts

My Walk Down
Memory Lane

Freedom From
Data Caps

Student Artwork
On Public Display



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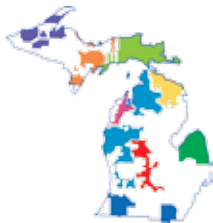
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IN THIS ISSUE

ON THE COVER

A bakery in Clare, Michigan, that had been in constant operation since 1896 was within weeks of closing in 2009. That's when the members of the Clare Police Department came to the rescue. All of them. Unwilling to let their historic bakery fail, all nine members of the local police department banded together to save this historic business. Today dubbed "Cops and Doughnuts," the bakery boasts handmade confections of all types and now has several locations throughout Michigan.

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Jack O'Malley

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A \$50 Bill Credit!

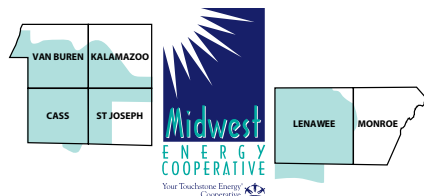
I Remember...

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 or email to cdorr@meca.coop



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Waxing Nostalgic As We Prepare To Move



Robert Hance
President/CEO

Everyday in my office right now is a walk down memory lane.

I'm in clean-out mode as we prepare for the August move to our new headquarters. I brought 35 years of career-related photos, files and memories with me when I joined the Midwest family in 2002 and have added much to my personal and professional collection over my 15 years here.

The work part is easy to clean out. With today's digital technology, much of that moves automatically with the computers and servers. But that's not the stuff I'm talking about.

This is not unlike moving from your long-time home. I'm unearthing many mementos as I go through files and cabinets, and it's an emotional experience. I've come across notes of appreciation for efforts like line clearance and outage restoration; colorful hand-drawn images from elementary students who benefitted from grants or participated in our safety demonstrations; heartfelt letters from members whose lives and rural experiences were changed through our fiber internet initiative; and so many pictures of our community service and volunteer efforts.

I've enjoyed a long and wonderful career in this industry, but as we make this move, I realize more than ever that it's the memories made with my work family that best define my career. I remember honoring personal milestones like marriages, babies, graduations and retirements; coping with the tragic death of a beloved apprentice lineman; leading an amazing, dedicated and fun-loving team on a wild ride of dynamic change; and feeling surrounded by love and support through my own illnesses and personal losses.

As I look back, I can't help but feel excited about what's to come. When I joined the Midwest team, we were not unlike most other rural electric cooperatives across the country. Today, thanks to the vision and commitment of our board and staff, we're marrying fiber communications solutions with our electric infrastructure and transforming the experience of those in our little corner of rural America. While we will always be your electric cooperative, today's Midwest is so much more. As our August move gets closer, we will unveil an exciting new name and logo that will better define who we are today and into the future. Be on the lookout for some exciting changes!

Each Midwest member and customer is part of my walk down memory lane. I look forward to the many new memories we will make during this exciting new chapter. ■

The FCC Appoints Hance To Broadband Group

Bob Hance, president and CEO of Midwest Energy, is taking on a new leadership role in rural broadband. In May, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Ajit Pai appointed Hance to the working group on model code for municipalities for the agency's new Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee (BDAC).

The BDAC is a federal advisory committee formed in January to make recommendations to the FCC on how to accelerate the deployment of high-speed internet access by reducing and removing regulatory barriers to infrastructure investment. The goal is to provide an effective means for stakeholders with interests in this area to exchange ideas and develop recommendations, which will enhance the FCC's ability to carry out its statutory responsibility to encourage broadband deployment to all Americans.

Hance will use his experience with rural broadband deployment at Midwest to offer practical

recommendations and best practices on breaking down the rural digital divide.

"We have established and are actively deploying a fiber communications business model that not only provides for the future operational success of our electric utility, but also allows us to deliver broadband solutions to our largely unserved and underserved rural population," Hance said. "By breaking down the financial and regulatory barriers that currently prevent many non-traditional players from entering the broadband space, we can finally make sure that geography no longer defines the scope of opportunity."

Utilities Technology Council also recognized our efforts and leadership in rural broadband with the APEX Award at their annual awards dinner during the Telecom & Technology 2017 conference in May. The APEX award recognizes individual accomplishment and organizational commitment for outstanding projects undertaken by utility telecom workers. ■



Offices Closed For Labor Day

Cooperative offices will be closed for Labor Day on Monday, Sept. 4. 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 safe Labor Day weekend.



PROTECT & SERVE

The Sweet Story Of Cops & Doughnuts

By Emily Haines Lloyd

There's something sweet happening in Clare, Michigan, and it's on a roll.

It started with a classic tale of a group of small-town police officers sitting in a local doughnut shop back in 2009. But then a twist occurred—the owner of Clare City Bakery told the officers he had to sell the bakery, which was one of the few open storefronts in the two-block downtown area of Clare. The officers lamented, continued talking and were struck by a thought—what if *they* bought the bakery?

"At first we laughed at [the thought of] a bunch of cops buying the only doughnut shop in town," said

Al "Bubba" White, the now vice president of Cops & Doughnuts. "But eventually we stopped laughing."

The recession had hit hard and the police force saw their small town slowly close storefront after storefront. Eventually, Clare City Bakery, a shop that had been around since 1896—surviving wars and the Great Depression—looked like it was about to be lost as well.

After making calls to the owner and quick talks among the nine-member police force, the deal was finalized within two weeks. Clare City Bakery became Cops & Doughnuts: Clare Precinct.

Without much business experience, White, along with now-president Greg "Ryno" Rynearson, as well as the other officers/owners, kept some of the bakery's key recipes along with the head baker. The result was a good first day.

It wasn't long before the story of a bunch of cops opening a doughnut shop caught some attention. They got a call from a reporter with *The Associated Press*, confirming that they were, in fact, a bunch of cops who opened a doughnut shop. Before they knew it, the guys were fielding interviews from





**"It's a combination of things—
a good product, of course, but it's
also a good story. We don't just
sell doughnuts," explains White.
"We sell cops selling doughnuts."**

*"NBC Nightly News," "Fox and Friends," and
"Good Morning America."*

When asked why he thinks Cops & Doughnuts is a story, White has some ideas.

"It's a combination of things—a good product, of course, but it's also a good story. We don't just sell doughnuts," explains White. "We sell cops selling doughnuts."

That combination, plus a healthy dose of good humor and community spirit, seems to be working in a big way. The Cops & Doughnuts crew saw that they had a good thing and knew they could grow. But where to expand became the next question. It had been important to them to save their beloved Clare City Bakery and the important role it had played in their story. So, what if they could save another historic bakery?

The group expanded to McDonald's Bakery, a fifth-generation establishment in Ludington, Mich., followed by The Sutherland Bakery in Bay City, which originally opened in 1912. The crew then expanded and opened a precinct (or bakery) in Jay's Sporting Goods in Gaylord, and finally, a gem in South Bend, Indiana, was acquired, known as The Dainty Maid Bake Shop. Each town was reinvigorated by the lively atmosphere and genuine love that White, Ryneerson and the team have for the history, community and, of course, the bakery.

With five precincts, more than 500 retail outlets, and approximately half a million customers visiting annually, Cops & Doughnuts is well on its way to their goal of "world domination," they attest. However, at the very heart, it's still a group of civic-minded public servants determined to protect the rich history of small-town bakeries by serving up great doughnuts. ■

Save Now On ENERGY STAR Air Purifiers

If you suffer from allergies, or would simply like to ensure the best air quality in your home, an air purifier is a great investment. These appliances can be costly, but the Energy Optimization program is here to help: Receive a \$50 cash incentive when you purchase an ENERGY STAR® qualified air purifier!

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

The Art Of Nature

The votes are in, and we're happy to share the winning photo (and some great runners-up) from our May photo contest. 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!



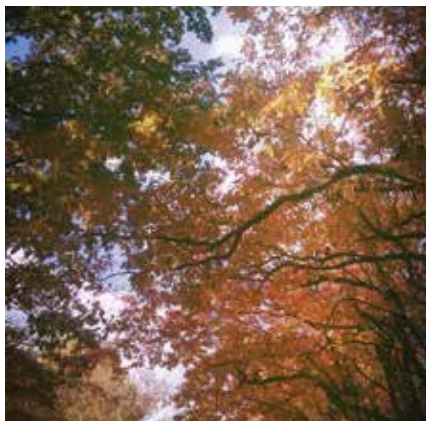
Cindy Koshar, Decatur—Out Standing In The Field



Richard McCoy, Brooklyn—
Sunrise In Irish Hills



Stacy Ford, White Pigeon—
Nature Imitating Nature



Shelia Alger, Paw Paw—Shining Through



Shirley Martenson, Cassopolis—
Sunrise At Puterbaugh Lake



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 July theme is **Birds and Feathers**. Photos can be submitted from **July 1** to **July 20** to be featured in our September issue.

Our August theme is **Life's a Beach—Michigan Waters**. Photos can be submitted from **August 1** to **August 20** to be featured in the October issue.

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

CHICKEN CHALLENGE

Transform your dinner with these easy-to-prepare chicken recipes.

Pepper Jack Pasta

Deb Mitteer, Great Lakes Energy

- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into medallions
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into small strips
- 1 green bell pepper, cut into small strips
- 1 yellow bell pepper, cut into small strips
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 4 cups mini penne pasta, uncooked
- 5 cups milk
- 8-ounce block pepper jack cheese, cut into small pieces
- 2–3 tablespoons cooking oil

Drizzle cooking oil in a dutch oven pot. Add the chicken medallions and cook chicken until no longer pink. Remove chicken from pot and set aside. Add the peppers and onions to the pot and cook until onion is transparent. Add chicken back to the pot with the peppers and onion. Add the uncooked penne pasta and 5 cups of milk to the pot. Bring the milk to a boil and stir constantly for 8–10 minutes or until pasta is tender. Remove from stove and add the pepper jack cheese. Let set until the cheese is melted. Stir until well mixed. Serve immediately.



Watch a video of
this recipe at
<https://goo.gl/BRjFXS>

Rosemary Chicken And Brie Bundles

Denise Barth, Cherryland

- 8-ounce can refrigerated crescent dinner rolls
- 2 tablespoons green onions, sliced
- 6 ounces Brie cheese, rind removed, cubed
- 1 ½ cups cooked chicken breast, chopped
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 teaspoon crushed dried rosemary
- 1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese



Heat oven to 350 F. Separate dough into four rectangles, press perforations to seal. Spoon ¼ of green onions onto the center of each rectangle; top with ¼ of the Brie cheese cubes. Top each with ¼ of chicken, pressing into cheese. Fold short

ends over chicken, overlapping slightly. Fold open ends over about ½ inch to form a rectangle. Press all edges to seal. Place seam side down on ungreased baking pan or cookie sheet. Cut three 1-inch slashes on top of each roll to allow steam to escape. Brush with egg, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and rosemary. Bake for 21 to 26 minutes or until golden brown. Let stand 5 minutes before serving. Serves 4.

Dawn's Elegant Chicken

Dawn Wagner, Great Lakes Energy

- 8 half chicken breasts (4 whole)
- 8 Swiss cheese slices
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 can cream of celery soup
- ½ to ¾ cup white cooking wine
- Pepperidge Farm Stuffing mix (or your favorite)
- ⅔ stick of butter



Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray a 9×13 baking dish with vegetable spray. Place chicken breasts in the baking dish. Place a slice of Swiss cheese on each piece of chicken. In a separate bowl, mix the cream of chicken soup, the cream of celery

soup and the white wine. Pour the mixture over the chicken. Cover the entire top of the dish with stuffing mix. Melt butter and pour it on top of the stuffing/chicken. Bake for 1 hour. Serve over Uncle Ben's Wild Rice (or your favorite).



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

- "Slow Cooker Favorites" due August 1
- "Pleasing Pies" due September 1

Go to micoopkitchen.com for more information and to register.

Cream Cheese Chicken Dumpling Soup

Jessi Smith, Great Lakes Energy

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 celery stalk, chopped
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 2 cups cooked chicken
- 8 cups chicken broth
- 2 eggs
- 1 package of cream cheese, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 cup flour
- salt and pepper, to taste



Melt butter in soup pot. Add chopped onions and sauté for 2 minutes or until lightly golden brown. Add chopped celery and carrots, and sauté for 2 minutes. Add chicken and chicken broth to vegetables. Continue to cook soup on medium

heat. To make the cream cheese dumplings, you will need either a food processor or a bowl and mixer. Combine the eggs, cubed cream cheese and flour, mix until smooth. When the broth in the soup pot is near a boil, reduce heat to low. Dip a large metal spoon into the pot to get the spoon hot. Remove about half a spoonful of the dumpling mixture and dunk the spoon into the soup, wiggling the spoon until the dumpling releases. Repeat this step until all the dumplings are in the pot. Allow the last dumplings to cook 2 minutes per side. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve and enjoy.

Safety Month Artwork On Public Display

It's not every day a fourth-grade student sees his or her artwork displayed on a billboard, but for Presley Allen of Mendon Elementary and Katie Fisher of Blissfield Elementary, that's exactly what happened in June and July. The two students won our poster contest this spring as part of our Safety Month efforts.

We brought our electrical safety message to nearly 700 fourth-grade students and teachers in April. Following each presentation, we invited students to submit a poster showing something they learned. The winning poster from each service territory was displayed on billboards and printed on t-shirts provided to all students in their class.

Presley, daughter of Travis and Devin Allen, lives in Mendon with her four siblings. Her family owns and cares for goats, horses, chickens, cows, dogs and cats. She is active in 4-H and enjoys helping out around the classroom.

Katie, daughter of Chad and Laura Fisher, lives in the Blissfield School District and plays softball. She and her family have a cow, hermit crab, salamander,

fish and sheep. She hopes to either become a florist or a veterinarian when she grows up.

"Electricity is something we take for granted, and people are often unaware of the dangers associated with the commodity," says Patty Nowlin, director of communications and community relations. "Students

love our interactive hotline demonstration, and the poster contest reinforces the lessons that we teach. Students have a better understanding when they can draw what they learned."

We offer free electrical and propane safety programs for any group or organization. Programs are adaptable for various audiences and timelines and can be conducted at Midwest or an off-site facility. For more information, please contact the community relations office at 800-492-5989 or pr@teammidwest.com. ■



Presley Allen represents the southwest Michigan service territory with this winning poster entry.

"Students love our interactive hotline demonstration and the poster contest reinforces the lessons that we teach. Students have a better understanding when they can draw what they learned."



Katie Fisher represents the southeast Michigan service territory with this winning poster entry.



Grant Creates A Buzz In Mattawan



A volunteer works with a student to smoke the bees. This process reduces the likelihood of getting stung and causes bees to focus on eating honey rather than defending their hive.

Did you know that one-third of the human diet comes from insect-pollinated plants and that honeybees pollinate of 80 percent of those plants?

Eric Hayner, a special education teacher, understands that much can be learned from these small insects who accomplish the seemingly impossible every day. So, with \$1,500 from our Strengthening Schools Grant Program, he started a beekeeping club at Mattawan Middle School to teach kids not only about bees, but also about responsibility, teamwork and nature.

Introduced this past March, the club consists of students who benefit from unique and hands-on discovery experiences. The goal is to give them positive and meaningful ways to engage in the community and the learning process. Hayner also engages students on an emotional level to help them build confidence and comfort in unfamiliar situations.

"These students are making peer and adult connections while gaining new skills through project-based activities," Hayner said. "It's been wonderful to watch them get excited about learning, and I'm looking forward helping them find a passion and build a sense of pride and accomplishment," Hayner added.

Once the colony is well established, the students hope to provide honey to the local community and fellow students. ■



Students and staff look for the queen bee to ensure she is laying eggs.

Applications Available For 2017–18 Grant Cycle

Today's students are tomorrow's business and community leaders, and we support the important work of regional teachers and schools with our Strengthening Schools Grant Program. The program is provided in partnership with Touchstone Energy Cooperative.

We are now accepting applications for the 2017–18 program. Any teacher, administrator or school official in a public elementary, middle or high school serving students in the our service territory may apply for a grant of up to \$2,500 to support classroom needs and special projects, technology, or academic clubs and organizations. School districts may be awarded multiple grants, not to exceed a total of \$5,000 during the annual award cycle.

Applications are due Oct. 16 and funds will be awarded in January 2018. Applications are evaluated and funding decisions made without knowledge of the school or district by a committee of cooperative members.

DOUGHNUTS & Craft Beer: A Divine Pairing

Our cover story on page 6 features the fun-loving Cops & Doughnuts bakeries. So, what better than to pair a few of these business-savvy police officer's favorite baked goods with some popular Michigan-made beers. It's a fun idea for dinner parties, tailgating or lounging around the fire pit.

By Emily Haines Lloyd | Photos—Christin McKamey

This is a classic doughnut for a reason and is a dream to pair.

When it comes to chocolate, fruit is pretty much a no-brainer. For a berry “wow factor,” try **Short's (Bellaire) Soft Parade**—a fruity-rye ale featuring strawberries, blueberries, raspberries and blackberries. It's a home run in contrasting flavors.

If you want to stay in the sweet pocket, look at **Saugatuck Brewing Company's (Saugatuck) Neopolitan Milk Stout**. It truly drinks like its namesake with a blend of chocolate, vanilla and strawberry. Super smooth and rich, you'll feel like you just added a dollop of ice cream to your already delicious doughnut.



CHOCOLATE
DIP RAISED
GLAZED



CINNAMON
BUN MAPLE
FROSTED

You would think a fresh-baked cinnamon bun can't get any better, but then you discover the delicious Cops & Doughnuts maple frosting and realize you were wrong.

A dessert lover's dream is a rich pairing with **New Holland's (Holland) Dragon's Milk Bourbon Barrel Aged Stout**. Its roasty malt character intermingled with deep vanilla tones, all dancing in an oak bath, is a whopping 12 percent ABV, but perfect for sipping with this dreamy doughnut.

Screamin' Pumpkin Ale from Griffin Claw Brewing Co. (Birmingham) is like a slice of warm pie, offering flavors of cinnamon, clove, sweet pumpkin and a little molasses. Paired with the cinnamon bun, it's like double dipping in the dessert category.

PEANUT BUTTER DEPUTY

Cops & Doughnuts' Peanut Butter Deputy is a Long John filled with peanut butter cream, topped with chocolate frosting and chopped peanuts. In other words—YUM!

Founder's (Grand Rapids) Curmudgeon is an old ale brewed with molasses and uber malty. It's a barrel-aged brew that seems made for this kind of decadent pairing.

Atwater Brewery's (Grand Rapids) Vanilla Java Porter has the rich flavor of dark roasted coffee with plenty of vanilla notes. It's a fairly simple beer that packs a classic coffee and doughnut punch.



FELONY FRITTER

This is a classic apple fritter that is sweet, tart and showcases hints of cinnamon. Each one is handcrafted in the historic bakery in downtown Clare, Michigan. Let's be honest, they're huge, satisfying and could be shared, but do you really want to do that?

For a beer pairing, try a hoppy IPA like North Peak's (Traverse City) Diabolical. It is unfiltered and dry-hopped with Michigan grown Chinook and Cascade hops. It has a smooth malt character and citrus pine aroma that brings forward the tartness in the apples.

Looking for something a bit more earthy and smoky? Try a Scotch Ale, such as Dark Horse Brewing Company's (Marshall) Scotty Karate. It's brewed with cherry wood smoked malt instead of the traditional peat smoked malt, offering up warming notes of coffee, caramel and sweet caramelized brown sugar. If that doesn't sound like a pair made in fritter heaven, we don't know what does.





Lisa from Hartford says, "Before your fiber, we've only ever had dial-up or satellite internet. Being out in the country, we thought we would never have the opportunity to have fiber internet. But Midwest changed all that! No more data caps. My kids can be online for school projects without worry of overages. We can stream movies, videos, music and more. It's FAST and your plans are VERY affordable!! We are so thankful that you were able to provide fiber internet to our area!"

Freedom From Data Caps

Many people consider cost and speed when shopping for internet service, but data is becoming an increasingly important consideration for today's connected families. While a 50 GB plan sounds pretty robust, be prepared to pay for overages if you download or stream television or movies, or if you have multiple users with multiple devices.

A data cap is simply a limit on the amount of data you can download and upload in any specified period, and limits vary widely by provider. If you exceed your limit, you may face overage fees, which quickly add up on your monthly bill. Many providers also impose bandwidth throttling, or the intentional slowing down of your internet service.

Rural residents have long been denied access to quality internet options, and we are in the process of deploying the gold-standard solution across our southwest Michigan service territory. Fiber internet offers unmatched speeds with unlimited data on all packages. Finally, a high-speed solution for the rural

space with all the bells and whistles our members need and deserve is available through Team Fiber.

Even if you use the internet only for email and Facebook, data is still an important consideration. Whenever you transfer files by email, you are eating into your data package. And, if your Facebook is set to automatically play video, you are accessing data whether or not you stop to watch the video. Many apps also consume data even when you aren't actively using them because they continue to update in the background. Take all of these scenarios and add in the number of people and devices in your home, and data quickly becomes an important consideration.

Now, with Team Fiber, you can use your high-speed fiber connection to stream as many programs as you want, videoconference friends and family, download music, upload photos and never worry again about your data use. It's all part of the fiber-speed experience. **Ready to learn more? Call us at 844-493-4237 or visit TeamFiber.com.** ■

Honoring Tomorrow's Leaders With Scholarship Support

Four students from our service area will begin their college careers with a little financial help from Team Midwest as recipients of our 2017 scholarships.

"Investing in our youth is one great way to achieve our vision of vibrant, relevant and sustainable rural communities. Our scholarship program takes some of the financial burden off families while rewarding outstanding high school students," says Patty Nowlin, director of communications and community relations.

We're honored to award \$1,000 scholarships to the following students for their leadership and academic achievement:



Kayla Cromer is the daughter of Kelly J. and Kelly A. Cromer and a graduate of Dowagiac Union High School. She was a member of the National Honor Society and completed 33 college credits at Southwestern Michigan College (SMC) during her junior and senior years. Kayla also served on the student senate and the 4-H Club and volunteered with the Rotary Interact food drive, local schools and the Cass County Fair. She will continue studies at SMC.



Audrey Fenwick, daughter of Bob and Cindy Fenwick and a graduate of Three Rivers High School, has dedicated over 150 hours to volunteerism. During high school, she was a member of the National Honor Society, was active in her youth group, played the violin for the Kalamazoo Jr. Symphony Orchestra and participated in four national Pathfinder Experience Bible Quiz Bowls. Audrey will attend Glen Oaks Community College and hopes to become a nurse practitioner.



Katherine Hurtle, daughter of Karen Murphy and Albert Hurtle, is a graduate of Dowagiac Union High School where she was vice president of the National Technical Honors Society and a member of the National Honor Society. She volunteered with a soup kitchen and United Way and was team captain of the Front Row Crew. During high school, Katherine earned her Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) license, and currently works as a lifeguard and EMT. She plans to attend Cornerstone University.



Ruben Vorster, son of Tom and Tanja Jones and a graduate of Mendon High School, served as leadership ambassador at the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists and president of the National Honor Society. He earned All-State for the 3200 meter relay in track and field and was named All-Conference and 2016 *Sturgis Journal* Prep Football Dream Team player. Ruben will play football at Albion College as he pursues his dream of becoming a doctor.

Beaver Island's Music Festival Offers Unique Vibes In A Throwback Setting

With a population of 600 living on 56 square miles of land off the coast of Charlevoix in Lake Michigan and accessible only by boat or air, Beaver Island could be described as a throwback to another era. How fitting then that the island hosts its own musical festival featuring sounds of the Renaissance.

Celebrating its 16th season this summer, Baroque on Beaver (known as BonB) focuses on classical music; however, guests may also be treated to jazz, Broadway, folk and other genres throughout the 10-day festival. Renowned musicians from symphonies in Midland, Grand Rapids, Chicago, and even as far away as Mexico, gather for what many consider the epicenter of classical music on the Great Lakes.

Originally organized by locals for locals, the event quickly gained a wider audience and became one of the island's most popular events and tourist destinations. According to Festival Director Matthew Thomas, the reason for the event's growth is simple. "Beaver Island is a unique place. Add high-quality music you can enjoy up close and personal, and suddenly a great experience becomes unforgettable!" For this small community, that's music to its ears.

While the event continues to be celebrated for raising cultural awareness of classical music, BonB also makes an important economic contribution to the island. Guests tend to stay longer, spend more, and support businesses whose primary focus is tourism, hospitality and transport. For those who don't have time for an extended stay, day packages are now available. Visit baroqueonbeaver.org for ticket, travel and accommodation information.



In the meantime, as locals and tourists gather under a canopy of stars on a remote island, the sound of music echoing off the water and surrounded by the region's finest musicians, the words of one musician sum up the experiences of most who attend BonB. "This might sound strange," this first-time event musician said, "but I really hope you have me back next year." ■

The Beaver Island Cultural Arts Association was formalized as a 501c3 corporation in 2006. BICAA's mission is "To serve the Beaver Island community by promoting and supporting the cultural arts, including the annual Baroque on Beaver Festival." For information about BICAA, please visit the website at bicaa.org or by calling 888-511-5189.



Jack O'Malley

The 2017 festival is July 28 through August 6.



«« Where In Michigan Is This?

Identify the correct location of the photo on the left by August 10 and be entered into a drawing to win a \$50 electric bill credit. Enter your guess at 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 May 2017 issue is Paul Morningstar, a Midwest Energy Cooperative member, who correctly identified the photo as the annual Harbor Beach BiYakAthon (bike, run, kayak) at Lincoln Memorial Park.

Winners are announced in the following issues of *Country Lines*: January, March, May, July/August, September and November/December.



May Photo



AMERICAN METAL ROOFS President, Frank Farmer



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I have been selling home improvements across Michigan since 1986. Over the years, one thing always worried me about what I saw in my customer's eyes - no matter what I said or did, deep down, I could tell that many of them just didn't trust me.

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Wednesday, July 12

Community Baptist Church
28647 US-12, Edwardsburg

Tuesday, August 22

Lewis Cass ISD
61682 Dailey Road, Cassopolis

Tuesday, September 19

Volinia Baptist Church
19526 Marcellus Hwy, Decatur

Tuesday, October 24

Midwest Energy Cooperative
60590 Decatur Road, Cassopolis

Visit TeamFiber.com to RSVP for your preferred venue.

*Free month of basic residential service valued at \$49.95. Midwest Connections is an unregulated service of Midwest Energy Cooperative.