

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



THE NEW GUYS

MI Local Hops Stands Out
In Growing Hops Industry

Meet Director
Shirley Sprague

Additional
Scholarships Awarded

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Give High Marks



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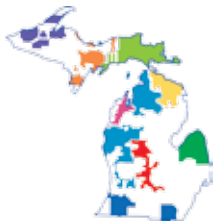
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Please notify your electric cooperative. See page 4 for contact information.

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IN THIS ISSUE



ON THE COVER

Located in Williamsburg, Mich., MI Local Hops is a 280-acre farm with the capacity to harvest 350,000 pounds of hops annually. These bitter cones are the heart and soul of many Michigan beers.

6

YOUTH TOUR 2017

Michigan Co-ops Empower Future Leaders—
Youth Tour Washington, D.C. Highlights

10

COOKING COMMUNITY

Amazing Apples Yield Fall's Favorite Desserts
Christin McKamey & Our Readers

Enter Our Recipe Contest And Win A \$50 Bill Credit!

Special Guest Chef Recipe From Nationally-
Recognized Fred "The Beervangelist" Buelmann

14

FEATURE

The New Guys: MI Local Hops Stands Out
In Growing Hops Industry

Rob Marsh

18

READER'S PAGE

Restoring The Great Lakes Lighthouses

Jack O'Malley

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

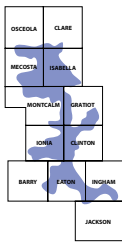
I Remember...

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 or email to cdorr@meca.coop



Tri-County Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Portland office/Mail payments to:

7973 E. Grand River Avenue
Portland, MI 48875
Open 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday–Friday

Blanchard office:

3681 Costabella Avenue
Blanchard, MI 49310
Open 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday–Friday

Night deposit box available at both locations.

Electric bill/account questions:

517-647-7554 or 1-800-562-8232

Pay by phone, anytime:

1-877-999-3395

Service questions/outages:

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Tri-County Propane:

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High Speed Internet

1-800-668-8413

homeworks.org

E-mail: tricoenergy@homeworks.org

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How Much Does Bad Legislation Cost?



Mark Kappler
General Manager

For the next 12 months, the answer to that question is: just under \$1 per month, for each of our member-owners. You'll start seeing the "MI Low Energy Fund" surcharge on this month's bills, and it will be there through next August.

Here's why: the Low Income Energy Assistance Fund was created by 2013 legislation that asked all Michigan electric utilities to charge their customers up to \$1 per month each. What made this legislation "bad" is that instead of funding it from the general budget, only energy providers that meter their service were included, and even then it was made optional.

Here at HomeWorks, we took a close look at the program and felt that money should stay here in mid-Michigan with you, our member-owners. Our customer service representatives worked hard to help members in need use the 2-1-1 services to get heating assistance, and the Tri-County Electric People Fund was able to help some families in dire straits.

Our write-offs for bad debt didn't increase by much, and we calculate that we saved you about \$750,000 over three years of opting out.

On June 26, your board held a Special Open Member Meeting to consider opting out again for the 2017–2018 heating season. On staff's recommendations, they voted to opt out for the fourth year in a row. But after the vote, we received new information from the state.

Because of federal budget cuts and other issues, they said, if we opted out our members would not be able to get any state or federally-funded help with their heating bills. Your board and staff were not comfortable with leaving any of our members without that safety net, and the board rescinded its vote on June 29.

We are now opted in to the program for the coming year, and each of us will help fund it with the monthly surcharge. We'll take another look at the options after this heating season to see what will work best for you and your cooperative. ■

Meet One Of The Members Of Your Co-op's Board Of Directors

Shirley Sprague

By Charly Markwart

Shirley Sprague is a nurturer. You can hear it in her voice as she speaks of her husband of 38 years, Eldon, and their four grown sons. You can see it in the way she lovingly cares for the plants and flowers that make up her homegrown Perennial Patch nursery. And, you can feel it in her passion for her work as one of the newest members of HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors.

"What impacts life more than electricity?" asks Sprague. "It means a lot to me to have the chance to work with the cooperative."

A Tri-County member since birth, Sprague first became more closely involved with the co-op after she and her husband wed and moved into their own home on HomeWorks lines in Barryton, where they still live today.

"I began attending district meetings, and I was always so impressed with the co-op," she said. "Years later, after being served so well for so long, I just felt like I should take my turn. I wanted to serve."

So, Sprague ran for the board of directors and was elected as the District 7 director in May of 2016. A year later, it's a position she still doesn't take for granted.

"It's a privilege to be chosen by the people of my area to represent them, and it's my responsibility to do my best for them," she said.

That type of responsibility isn't new to Sprague. She has worked on various Sheridan Township boards since 1994, including serving as township treasurer for the past 15 years.

"I have been working with the people in this district for years, and we have great people here," she said. "They're friendly and just great to work with. I enjoy serving the people."

The thoughtful and humorous Sprague appreciates the fact that she gets to serve those neighbors she



"I enjoy serving the people."

From her gardens to her work on the HomeWorks board of directors, Shirley Sprague is always looking for new ways to move forward.

loves as a board member of an organization that genuinely cares for them.

"The difference between a cooperative and an investor-owned utility, to me, is that a co-op is focused on the members," she said. "An investor-owned utility is for profit, and you don't see them operating the same way. From what I have seen, most people who are served by an IOU would prefer to be served by a co-op."

When she speaks about the future of her co-op, Sprague's characteristic enthusiasm shines through.

"I don't know that I've been involved long enough to even understand all of the possibilities for the future, and that's what's exciting to me," she said. "We're looking at the possibility of fiber-to-the-home now, and if we can do that, it's going to be amazing, and parallel to the cooperatives bringing electricity to the rural areas for the first time."

Outside of her family and her work with the cooperative and the township, you can most often find Sprague in the garden, where her life's work of the past 30-plus years is so much more than a job.

"I'm addicted to gardening," she said. "I love perennials, and I love helping my customers have the garden they've always wanted; that's a high point for me. It's my therapy." ■

Shirley represents District 7, which includes Mecosta and Osceola Counties. She was elected to the board in 2016. For more on Shirley, including a video of our interview with her, go to: <http://bit.ly/2eUHXwx>

Michigan Co-ops Empower Future Leaders

Youth Tour Washington, D.C. Highlights

Designed to inspire the leaders of tomorrow, Youth Tour teaches the brightest students of Michigan about their past—and helps equip them with the skills they need to be Michigan's next generation of energy-minded leaders. Youth Tour offers a unique opportunity to build leadership and public speaking skills, enhance students' knowledge of the cooperative form of business, and build life-long friendships with other student-leaders from across the country.

Michigan's electric cooperatives sent 20 high school juniors and seniors to experience Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. this past June. The following pictures tell the story. ■

**Information is available at
CooperativeYouthTour.com.**



↑ *Future Mitten State Leaders*

The 20 selected students from across the state toured multiple landmarks, including a guided tour of the U.S. Capitol.

↩ *Captivating Congressman*

Students enjoyed meeting with several members of Congress, including Rep. Bill Huizenga from Michigan's 2nd District.





↪ The Lincoln Legacy

Part of Youth Tour involves learning about the great historical and political figures of our country. As these young women consider their futures, they will bring Lincoln's values of respect and fairness with them as they rise to become the next generation of Michigan leaders.

Never Forget

Several students found the names of family members or family friends on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.



National Mall

A group of students gathered on the National Mall prior to legislative visits and an opening-night performance of "The Sound of Music" at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

↪ What's Next For Energy-Minded Students

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association staff briefed the students on the many opportunities available for those interested in living, working or studying in Washington, D.C.



Public Act 295: The Clean Renewable And Efficient Energy Act

2016 Annual Energy Optimization Report HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative MPSC Case Number U-17787

HomeWorks Tri-County contracted with the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association (MECA) to administer the Energy Optimization efforts in order to comply with PA-295. MECA filed a four-year Energy Optimization plan with the MPSC on August 3, 2015, as required by PA 295. This EO plan was approved by the MPSC on December 8, 2015, and we began implementing our 2016–2019 EO Plan January 1, 2016. WECC was selected to implement all Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Programs, and the Energy Optimization website www.michigan-energy.org. WECC has subcontracted with JACO, Michigan Energy Options, Franklin Energy, Morgan Marketing Partners, and Honeywell to assist with the implementation of the EO Programs. MECA contracted with KEMA as the independent third party evaluation contractor for the certification of kWh savings.

In 2016, HomeWorks Tri-County collected \$562,913 through the Energy Optimization Surcharge and spent \$685,770, resulting in an under-collection of \$122,857. HomeWorks Tri-County achieved 4,145 MWh of energy savings in 2016 and carried forward 46 MWh from 2015 into 2016 for a total reported energy savings of 4,191 MWh for 2016. The full report can be obtained at your cooperative's headquarters and at www.michigan-energy.org or <http://efile.mpsc.state.mi.us/efile>.



Start saving energy today!

- **Turn off and unplug electronics.** There's still time to get outside!
- **Fire up the grill.** Enjoy great tasting food and keep your home cool.
- **Hang your clothes outside.** Save energy and enjoy the fresh scent!
- **Change your furnace filter.** Improve efficiency and indoor air quality.

ONLINE: michigan-energy.org
PHONE: 877.296.4319



**Energy
Optimization**



**Tri-County Electric
Cooperative**

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.



Nancy Gitre of Howard City sent in this photo, describing it as "Our bush and birds! Robin eggs and azaleas—lovely."



Cheryl Roote from Barryton shared this Snap Shot and note: "Home Tweet Home.... A bird visits our bird house during the blooming of our apple tree. Must be the beautiful apple blossoms that attracted it."



Mark Wardynski of Canadian Lakes captured this scene. "Cardinals travel in pairs for most of the year but will form flocks in the winter, as these 31-plus birds have done."



Karen Retter from Jerome (who takes HomeWorks Tri-County service at Barryton) says, "While enjoying summer evenings on the Martiny Flooding, it's always fun to watch the Blue Herons; they remind us of gentle giants."



Doug Schlappi of Sunfield captured one of nature's tricksters, a Clearwing hummingbird moth.

Upcoming Snap Shot Contest Topics And Deadlines

"Decorative Mailboxes," Deadline: **September 15** (November-December issue)

"Furry Friends," Deadline: **October 16** (January 2018 issue)

"Winter Sports," Deadline: **November 15** (February 2018 issue)

Go to homeworks.org and select *Country Lines* under the Electric tab to submit your photos and see additional themes. It's fast and easy. To send by mail: include your name, address, phone number, photographer's name, and details about your photo. Mail to Attn: *Country Lines* Snap Shots, 7973 E. Grand River, Portland, MI 48875. Photos will not be returned. Do not send color laser prints or professional studio photos.

Submit Your Photo!

Contributors whose photos we publish in 2017 will be entered into a drawing. *Country Lines* will choose two winners for a bill credit of \$100 each on their December electric bill, due in January 2018!

AMAZING APPLES

Fall's favorite fruit teams up with sweets and spices to bring you these comforting desserts.

Photos—831 Creative

Apple Cheesecake (pictured)

Rebecca Cronk, Presque Isle

- 1 cup butter
- 1¼ cups sugar, divided
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla, divided
- 2 cups flour
- 1 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened
- 1 egg
- 5–6 Macintosh apples, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- ¼ cup almond slices

Preheat oven to 450 F. For the crust, blend 1 cup butter, ⅔ cup sugar, ½ teaspoon vanilla and 2 cups flour. Press into an 8-inch spring form pan—¾ of the way up the pan. For the filling, blend the cream cheese, ¼ cup sugar, remaining 1 teaspoon vanilla and 1 egg. Pour over the crust evenly. For the topping, add the thinly sliced apples to a bowl with juice from a lemon. Stir to coat. Add the remaining ⅓ cup sugar and 2 teaspoons cinnamon. Stir to coat and layer the apples on top of the filling in the pan. Sprinkle almond slices on top. Bake at 450 F for 10 minutes, then lower to 400 F for 20–25 minutes.

▶ Watch a video of this recipe at <https://goo.gl/hbYd7p>

Apple Dapple Cake

Judy Farley, Midwest Energy

For the cake:

- 1½ cups oil
- 3 eggs
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 3 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 cup walnuts, chopped
- 3 cups apples, peeled and chopped

For the sauce:

- 1 cup brown sugar
- ½ cup butter
- ¼ cup milk



Preheat oven to 350 F. Cream oil, sugar, eggs and vanilla. Sift together flour, baking soda, salt and cinnamon; add to creamed mixture. Beat well. Fold in nuts and apples. Bake in a well-greased Bundt pan for

1 hour and 10 minutes. When cake is almost done, mix sauce ingredients in a saucepan. Bring to a boil; boil for 3 minutes. Pour sauce over hot cake and let cake remain in pan for 2 hours. Then turn cake right side up on serving plate.

Apple Butter

Jane Ellison, Great Lakes Energy

- 5½ pounds apples—peeled, cored and finely chopped
- 4 cups white sugar
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon salt



Place the apples in a slow cooker. In a medium bowl, mix the sugar, cinnamon, cloves and salt. Pour the mixture over the apples in the

slow cooker and mix well. Cover and cook on high 1 hour. Reduce heat to low and cook 9 to 11 hours, stirring occasionally, until the mixture is thickened and dark brown. Uncover and continue cooking on low 1 hour. Stir with a whisk, if desired, to increase smoothness. Spoon the mixture into sterile containers, cover and refrigerate or freeze.

MI
co-op
KITCHEN

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

**“Healthy Salads”
due November 1**

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



Fred “The Beervangelist” Bueltmann is the vice president of brand and lifestyle at New Holland Brewing Co., as well as a nationally-recognized expert on beer and food. He offered up this delicious beer-brined chicken recipe from his cookbook, *“The Beervangelist’s Guide to the Universe.”* <http://beervangelist.net/book/>

Beer-Brined Jerk Chicken

This dish requires some forethought and a few days, so plan accordingly.

Brine:

- 2 quarts IPA or pale ale
- 2 quarts chicken stock
- 1 quart water
- 1 cup kosher salt
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1 onion, peeled and julienne
- 6 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 cup chopped cilantro
- 2 tablespoon whole black peppercorns
- 3 bay leaves
- 4 chickens, butchered to grill

Place the water, salt, onion, garlic, parsley, peppercorns, and bay leaves on the stove and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and chill completely. Add the beer and stir thoroughly, then add the chicken. Let sit refrigerated for 8–24 hours. Remove the chicken from the brine and rinse under cold water. Pat dry and keep cold.

Jerk Marinade:

- 1 tablespoon ground allspice
- 1 tablespoon dried thyme
- ½ tablespoon black pepper
- ½ tablespoon sage
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 12 cloves garlic
- 2 tablespoon dark molasses
- ¼ cup peanut oil
- ¾ cup apple cider vinegar
- ½ cup lime juice
- 3 green onions, minced
- 1 large yellow onion, minced
- 3 habanero peppers, stemmed
- ¼ cup dark soy sauce

Combine the above ingredients in a food processor and puree until smooth, about 2 minutes. Pour the marinade over the chicken and refrigerate overnight (two nights is best), turning once or twice to redistribute the marinade. Place the chicken on the grill and cook over medium heat, turning often, until done, about 25 minutes. Let rest for 5 minutes and serve.

Read the full story about MI Local Hops on page 14 and find this recipe and more at micoopkitchen.com.

Stebbins, Hansen Re-Elected To Board

Directors Jim Stebbins of Clarksville and Kimber Hansen of Edmore were re-elected to their board seats. Members voted at district meetings in May or by absentee ballot.

Final vote counts in District 2 (Barry and Ionia counties) were Jim Stebbins, 191; Edith Farrell, 55; and Larry Lewis, 10. For District 4 (most of Montcalm County), Kimber Hansen received 109 votes and Cathy Killinger, 23.

The elections and credentials committee—district officers from Districts 2 and 4, including Wilma Bailey, Bill Nichols, Kristine Ceasar, Lisa Johnson, Glenn Kebler, and Elaine Rossman, along with

corporate counsel Dan Templin, performed the count at our Portland office June 16.



Jim Stebbins,
District 2 director



Kimber Hansen,
District 4 director

Your Board In Action

Meeting at Portland on June 26, your board of directors:

- Approved a Green/Renewable Energy rider to the current tariffs.
- Discussed the district membership meetings and initial planning for the 2017 Annual Meeting.
- Reviewed the first of two feasibility studies done for a potential fiber-to-the-home project.
- Reviewed the cooperative's equity position and IRS Form 990 for 2016.
- Reviewed and approved Board Policy 106 – Director Replacement, and Board Policy 108 – Indemnification of Directors and Others as amended.
- Learned there were 103 new members in May.
- Acknowledged the May safety report, listing employee and public incidents and employee training.

At the Special Open Member Meeting, the board also authorized opting out of the annual Low Income Energy Assistance Fund (LIEAF), which had to be done by July 1. After the vote, however, staff learned of issues with the state of Michigan that could jeopardize our members' ability to receive any state-funded assistance in the 2017–18 heating season. In a special telephone conference call vote on June 29, the board rescinded their earlier vote and opted HomeWorks in to the LIEAF program. This means in September our members will start seeing a per meter, per month charge of \$0.93 on their bills through August 2018. The exact amount

will be determined by the Michigan Public Service Commission before September.

Meeting at Blanchard on July 24, your board of directors:

- Approved a resolution of support for the proposed 2018 NRECA International Foundation project in Bolivia.
- Reviewed the second of two feasibility studies done for a potential fiber to the home project.
- Reviewed and approved Board Policy 109 – Consulting Services, and Board Policy 110 – Delegations of Authority from the Board of Directors to the General Manager, as amended.
- Learned there were 141 new members in June.
- Acknowledged the June safety report, listing employee and public incidents and employee training. ■

Time Set Aside for Members to Comment Before Cooperative Board Meetings

The first 15 minutes of every board meeting are available for members who wish to address the board of directors on any subject. The next meetings are scheduled for 9 a.m. on Sept. 25 and Oct. 23 at Portland. Members who need directions to the meeting, or wish to have items considered on the board agenda, should call 517-647-7554.

People Fund Assists With Housing Needs

Meeting May 31 and again on July 12, the Tri-County Electric People Fund board made 13 grants, totaling \$23,257.06, including:

- \$1,281.21 to an Isabella County family, to pay property taxes;
- \$784.38 to Mecosta County family, to help with housing and medical expenses;
- \$2,500 to a Montcalm County family, to help with medical expenses;
- \$2,850 to Mecosta County Habitat for Humanity program, Big Rapids, to support A Brush with Kindness program (addressing critical home repair needs);
- \$500 to Eaton Clothing & Furniture Center in Charlotte, to purchase clothing for children;
- \$2,016.94 to Fork Township Rescue, Barryton, to purchase a new radio for their rescue unit, to be able to communicate with their county EMS;
- \$3,000 to St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, Charlotte, for their utility and homeless assistance program;
- \$3,000 to Housing Services of Mid-Michigan, Charlotte, for their housing assistance program;
- \$2,500 to a Clinton County family to install handicap hand controls in their van;
- \$400 to an Isabella County family, to help with housing expenses;
- \$710 to a Mecosta County family, to purchase a new well pump;
- \$1,214.53 to another Mecosta County family, to help with housing expenses; and
- \$2,500 to a Montcalm County family to help with housing expenses. ■

How to Apply for a Grant

The Tri-County Electric People Fund provides grants to individuals and organizations in the co-op's service area for food, shelter, clothing, health, and other humane needs, or for programs or services that benefit a significant segment of a community.

Write to 7973 E. Grand River Avenue, Portland, MI. 48875, for an application form and grant guidelines, or visit the People Fund tab at homeworks.org.

Note: Applications must be received by Sept. 25 for the October board meeting, and by Nov. 6 for the November board meeting.

Notice to Members of HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative

Case No. U-16596 2016 Renewable Energy Plan Annual Report Summary

2008 PA 295, as amended requires all Michigan electric utilities to get 10 percent of their power supply from renewable sources by 2015. Under this requirement, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative submits an annual report to the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) regarding its Renewable Energy Plan. In 2016, HomeWorks acquired a total of 15,573 renewable energy credits (6,243 credits from Harvest Wind Farm, LLC, 3,900 credits from Thunder Bay—Four Mile, 5,064 credits from Deerfield Wind Farm and 1 credit from SpartanSolar) and 3 incentive credits from SpartanSolar. All credit transfers were directed through HomeWorks' wholesale power supplier, Wolverine Power Supply Cooperative, Inc. Wolverine will continue to generate renewable energy and bank unused renewable energy credits for future use and compliance with statutory renewable portfolio standard requirements on behalf of all of its members. A full copy of the cooperative's Renewable Energy Plan annual report that was filed with the MPSC is available on the cooperative's website at homeworks.org or by request at any of the cooperative's offices.

THE NEW GUYS

MI Local Hops Stands Out In Growing Hops Industry

By Rob Marsh



Before your bartender at the local beer tap fills an empty pint glass or you snatch up a six-pack of brew at your hometown liquor store, you may be surprised to learn that many of your favorite beers began their journey to the tap in the rich, fertile soil of Michigan.

Located in Williamsburg, Mich., and a member of Cherryland Electric Cooperative, MI Local Hops (MLH), is a 280-acre farm (plus an additional 100 acres the company cooperatively manages with other growers) with the capability to harvest up to 350,000 pounds of hops annually. At the farm, rows of twisty vines creep up trellises, each in an effort to produce bitter cones that are the heart and soul of almost any Michigan beer.

"The hops industry has become a bit like the music industry," said Mike Moran, sales and marketing manager of MI Local Hops. "Everyone's looking for the next big thing. The next exciting flavor.

But those flavors need to be consistent and dependable. We know the wow factor is nothing without the quality."

A century ago, Michigan's hops industry was decimated by downy mildew. However, with advancements in modern farming and the determination of local hops growers, Michigan is now one of the top growing regions for hops in the United States.

MI Local Hops is now the largest hop farm east of the Rocky Mountains. The magnitude of that statement isn't lost on the owners, as they build the infrastructure to support and sustain that accomplishment.

With "local" in the name, MLH is supplying some of the Midwest's biggest beer players. Providing hops to Bell's, Founders and New Holland, all of whom are based in Michigan but offer national distribution, the Michigan hops agriculture boom has swept the state and the Midwest.





Still, remaining a local supplier is especially important to MI Local Hops. That sentiment is also felt by the local breweries that receive the crop each season. New Holland Brewing Co., out of Holland, Mich., uses MLH hops exclusively in their flagship beer: Mad Hatter, Midwest IPA.

"We have a lot of Michigan pride and want to support local agriculture, but we also want to have the highest quality ingredients," said Head Brewer Jason Salas of New Holland Brewing Co. "Michigan hop growers have been demonstrating to us their commitment to the brewing industry by turning out unique, high-quality products that allow us to develop beers worthy of our industry. As a brewer, that means a lot."

MI Local Hops has grown from being the "new guys" to a significant force in Michigan's growing hops industry. ■



Pictured L to R are several of the MI Local Hops team members: Dan Taber, chief operating officer; Tim Prentice, project and facility manager; and Mike Moran, sales and marketing manager.



The former High Point Golf Course in Williamsburg is now home to MI Local Hops.

More Classroom Technology Grants Helping Students

Lakeview Elementary and Middle Schools received \$1,099 to purchase school-wide teaching materials on bullying prevention. Accepting the grant check from HomeWorks director Kimber Hansen are, from left, secretary Rechelle Winter, Lakeview success coach Mary Laframboise, and office paraprofessional Lisa Larson.



Parkview Elementary in Charlotte received \$1,953.96 to buy Strawbees engineering kits for all classrooms. Teacher Ken Wright is shown accepting the check.

(Photos by Charly Markwart)

Additional Students Win Touchstone Energy Scholarships

Four more high-school seniors will receive Touchstone Energy Scholarships from HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative, thanks to the board of directors providing more funds from unclaimed capital credits.

HomeWorks' by-laws allow the board to disburse capital credits that are unclaimed after five years to community projects. This year, the board provided \$5,000 for additional scholarships and \$20,000 for additional Touchstone Energy Classroom Technology Grants, among other community contributions.

Kaylynn Brecht of Riverdale and Francis Pytlowany of Lake Odessa, who were originally set to receive \$500 scholarships, will now receive \$1,000 each.

Scholarship winners are chosen based on a combination of academic achievements, leadership both at school and in their community, and their own statements regarding career goals and financial need.

As a Touchstone Energy co-op, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric provides high standards of service according to four core values: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. These scholarships are one way we show support for our communities. ■

New Recipients Include:



Faith Esch, daughter of Joan and Steve Esch of Pewamo, a graduate of Pewamo-Westphalia High School, who will study speech and language pathology at Central Michigan University;



Jace Feldpausch, son of Roy and Patricia Feldpausch of Fowler, a graduate of Fowler High School, who will study agribusiness management at Michigan State University;



Brynn Lobert, daughter of Bryan and Kellie Lobert, a graduate of Montabella High School, who will study occupational therapy at Aquinas College; and



Ashley Van Ells, daughter of William and Beth Van Ells of Saint Johns, a graduate of Fowler High School, who will study occupational therapy at Grand Valley State University.

Customers Give Tri-County Propane High Marks

In late 2016, our subsidiary HomeWorks Tri-County Propane conducted a Customer Satisfaction and Attitude Survey regarding our propane service.

Conducted by a third-party service, the survey asked about member satisfaction and loyalty, perceptions about the performance of our propane service, attitudes regarding the cost and reliability of our propane service, and more.

The survey results include telephone and online responses from 300 randomly selected residential

propane customers. We are happy to report that the marks came back very high, with 96 percent of customers being somewhat or very satisfied with the overall performance of our propane service.

Thank you for the high marks! We are committed to maintaining, and continuing to improve upon, the level of comfort, service and reliability you have come to expect from your co-op.

If you'd like to learn more about Tri-County Propane, please call us at 877-574-2740. ■

2016 TRI-COUNTY PROPANE CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY RESULTS

Conducted & compiled by
Inside Information® Inc.



96%

of members report being **"SATISFIED"** or **"VERY SATISFIED"** with our overall performance, our **HIGHEST-EVER** average satisfaction rating!



97%
rating for
knowledgeable
and professional
employees



96%
rating for
quality service
and courteous
employees



96%
rating for timely
deliveries



93%
rating for charging
reasonable rates

American Customer Satisfaction Index Score

WE ALSO
RECEIVED
AN ACSI
SCORE OF

93

In addition to being our highest score ever, that puts us well above the national averages for co-ops, investor-owned utilities, and municipals. It also ranks us higher than:

Apple Coca-Cola Nike
Southwest Airlines Facebook Cadillac
and many more!

*HomeWorks Tri-County Propane is not regulated
by the Michigan Public Service Commission.*

Restoring The Great Lakes Lighthouses

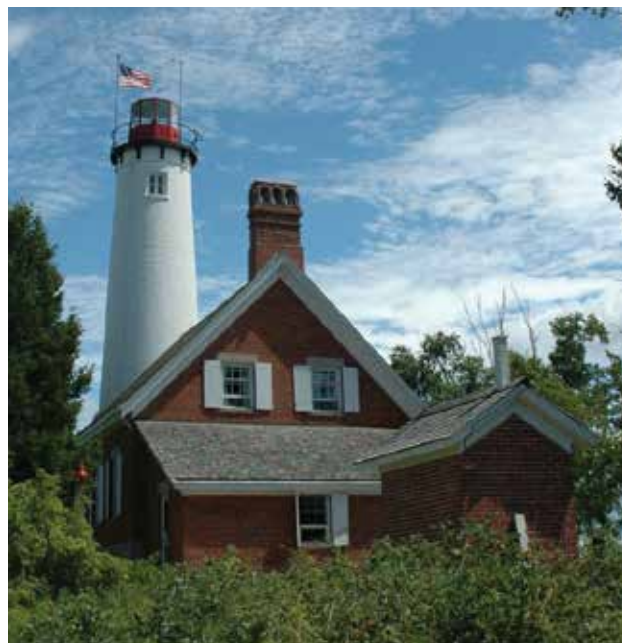
Scattered along Michigan's shoreline and numbering over 200 at their peak, the Great Lakes lighthouses once served as a beacon of hope to the weary seafarer. Today only 124 lights still stand, many in desperate need of repair. Enter the Great Lakes Lighthouse Keepers Association (GLLKA).

Founded in 1983, the GLLKA's mission of preserving lighthouses and the stories of those who kept them while fostering a new generation of preservationists came to life when given license to restore St. Helena Island Light Station in 1986. Built in 1873 off the coast of St. Ignace, constant exposure to the elements left St. Helena vulnerable. Abandoned, she endured years of vandalism and theft requiring the removal of several outbuildings. What remained of the station continued deteriorating.

Before arrangements were made for the complete demolition of the structure, members from GLLKA requested permission to restore St. Helena. With the help of countless volunteers including Boy Scout Troop 4 from Ann Arbor, St. Helena slowly came back to life.

Inspiring awe and admiration from thousands of guests each year, the original restoration project began nearly three decades ago. While the threat of theft and vandalism have declined, the elements continue taking a toll. Fortunately, GLLKA volunteers are committed for the long haul, tirelessly maintaining the facility for another generation to enjoy.

In the meantime, GLLKA President Rick Mixer offers guidance and support to groups wanting to preserve lights in their region. In some cases he



can even find old blueprints, making the renovation a true labor of love for those involved in restoring these facilities to their original glory.

Today Great Lakes lighthouses are towering symbols of strength and resilience, often shouldering a much deeper meaning to guests who visit each year. "They brought lost mariners home," explained Mixer. "They represent hope, and we all need a little of that."



Jack O'Malley

Visit gllka.com for information on GLLKA's current projects, a list of lighthouses, and ways to help with the restoration efforts. ■

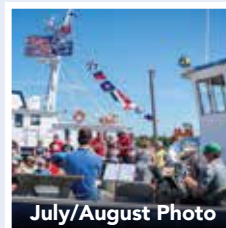


«« Where In Michigan Is This?

Identify the correct location of the photo on the left by September 15 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 July/August 2017 issue is Susan Scherer, a Great Lakes Energy Cooperative member, who correctly identified the photo as a Beaver Island outdoor concert at Baroque on Beaver.

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



Why Is My Roof Failing?

Are you wondering why the roof you had installed less than 15 years ago is failing? You're not alone. Like many homeowners, you listened when the sales guy told you to buy top-of-the-line, 40-year, heavy architectural shingle so you would never have to worry about your roof again. But now you're worried. What happened?



Failed asphalt shingles cracking and peeling.

Did You Miss The Warnings?

Home improvement experts like Bob Vila have been warning consumers for years about bogus asphalt warranties, "While asphalt shingles come with warranties ranging from 20 to as long as 45 years, roofers and builders remain skeptical of those warranties. Since warranties are a marketing device, they are not a reliable predictor of lifespan. In the past decade, there have been many complaints of asphalt shingle failure long before warranties expired."

Manufacturers have also been telling homeowners that today's shingles will not perform like shingles

of old. As far back as 1999, the Certainteed Corporation made the following statement in their own publication: *"Due to the severity of the roof environment, even a one-year-old roof may look different from a roof that was just installed. While you may have first noticed the cracks or blistering from the ladder as you were cleaning the gutters, please be mindful that these normal weathering characteristics may not be visible when you view your roof from your front lawn or driveway."* (Quoted from 1999 Certainteed Corp. "The Lifecycle of Your Roof.")

Why Is My Asphalt Roof Failing?

Asphalt shingles become dried out by heat and the sun's ultraviolet rays. Eventually, the drying of the heavy oils in your shingles causes the fibers to shrink, exposing the nail heads under the shingle flaps. The shrinkage also breaks up the surface coating of sand granules adhered to the underlying asphalt-coated paper. Without the protection of the embedded granules, the paper begins to tear itself apart.

Once the nail heads are exposed, water running down the roof can seep into your attic around the nail shank, resulting in the rotting of your roof deck. This can cause

moisture damage to your interior ceilings and walls.

What Can You Do?

Since at least 1999, the asphalt roofing industry has known of the problems with modern shingles. The solution is simple: make a shingle like they did 40 years ago. However, in order to do that, the oil content of their shingles would need to be dramatically increased and that would make the product cost prohibitive.

While the asphalt industry has its problems, the metal roof industry continues to grow in market share. This growth has been fueled in part by the shortcomings of asphalt roofs. However, consumers attest that the beauty and maintenance-free benefits homeowners get by installing a metal roof are the true reason for the industry's growth.



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