

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



THE NEW GUYS

MI Local Hops Stands Out
In Growing Hops Industry

Details On
Your Co-op's
Proposed Plan
Of Redistricting
On Page 8.

Ontonagon REA
Represented At Youth Tour

Be Aware Of
Roadside Crews



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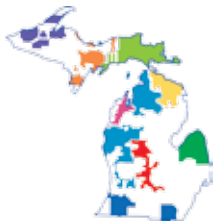
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Michigan's Electric Cooperatives
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Please notify your electric cooperative. See page 4 for contact information.

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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!

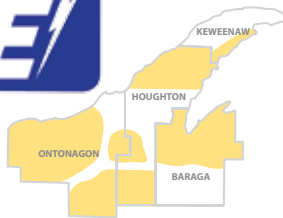
I Remember...

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



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Date of Incorporation: Sept. 30, 1937

Fiscal year-end: Dec. 31

countrylines.com/coops/ontonagon

Ontonagon County REA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

A Cooperative Day In Your Life

Co-ops are all around us.



Debbie Miles
General Manager

So how did you spend your day? Chances are cooperatives were a big part of it. Take a look at how co-ops might be impacting you every day.

Your orange juice might have come from Florida's Natural, a producer-owned cooperative based in Florida, but distributes its products throughout the U.S. If your morning coffee came from Equal Exchange, you get bonus points because they source their coffee from farmer-owned co-ops in developing countries and are a worker-owned co-op. If you like milk in your coffee or cereal, check this out: more than 86 percent of all fluid milk flows through a co-op!

The wheat in your muffin or toast was most likely processed through a farmer-owned grain elevator in the Midwest. If you had cranberries in that muffin, they likely came from Ocean Spray; or maybe you used Land O'Lakes Butter or Welch's Concord Grape Jam—all producer-owned co-ops that make the products we love for our toast.

Perhaps this is the day to make some improvements to your home. Ace Hardware, True Value and Do It Best are all examples of purchasing co-ops. These are businesses that come together to form a co-op so that they can compete with the big box retailers that are not owned by people in the local community.

You might need to stop by the credit union, which are co-ops, for a loan or pick up some cash for that home project from one of their 25,000 ATMs in their network.

On your way home, you may stop at one of the 300 community-owned cooperative grocery stores in the country. If you are in a hurry, maybe you swing by KFC, Taco Bell or Pizza Hut to pick up dinner. The franchise owners of these fast food restaurants are all members of a purchasing co-op.

After dinner, perhaps you watch TV from one of the more than 1,000 small cable companies that have come together to form a co-op. Or maybe you surf the internet through services provided by your local telecommunications co-op.

And when it's time for "lights out," you can flip that switch knowing you're receiving safe, reliable electricity from your local electric cooperative—your friends at Ontonagon REA. From morning until night, you can have a very cooperative day. ■

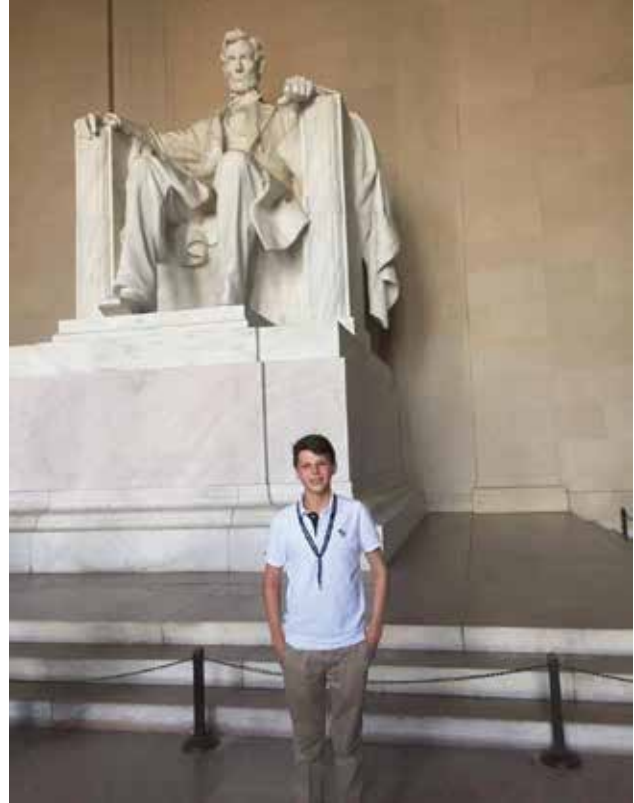
Ontonagon REA Represented At Youth Tour 2017

For the last 50 years, approximately 1,800 students from at least 45 states have participated in the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program. This five-day trip is a high-energy, interactive experience and is designed to help young people grow as leaders and takes place every June.

Through an application and interview process, rising juniors and seniors are selected and sponsored by their local electric co-ops to travel to Washington, D.C., for a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Together with students from across the country, the selected Michigan students learn about co-ops, leadership, history and the importance of civic engagement.

This year is the first time Ontonagon REA sponsored a student, choosing 15-year-old Johnathan Mantila, son of Pelkie residents and longtime Ontonagon REA customers, Jason and Tammy Mantila. Johnathan applied because, "I enjoy learning, not just about government but about everything. I was interested in doing Youth Tour so that I could learn more about how our government works and see historical places I have only read about in books."

One of the questions on his application pertained to how cooperatives can help a community to grow, and Mantila called on his farming background for



examples. "Farming plays a big role in our small town of Pelkie. The farmers in our community all get together to ship the cattle out and they all put their cattle in a trailer to ship them to Iowa. This cooperative effort greatly reduces the cost of shipping for everyone. And when the farmers buy seed they all get seed at the same time. They buy the seed in bulk and get it for a lower price."

Mantila's application came with outstanding reviews from some of his teachers and coaches. Baraga High School U.S. History teacher Greg Markkonen commented, "Johnathan is very conscientious and an excellent role model to other students. I wish I had 50 more students like him."

Remarks like this helped to put Mantila on a plane headed to Washington D.C. on June 10 with the rest of the Michigan Youth Tour participants. Once there, Johnathan visited historic places such as the Gettysburg Battlefield Tour, Arlington National Cemetery, U.S. Capitol Building, Basilica of the National Shrine, Library of Congress, and the Smithsonian Museum. Meetings with members of Congress and a Washington Nationals Baseball Game were also on the whirlwind itinerary.

When asked about the most meaningful experience of the trip, Mantila thoughtfully responded, "Something I'll never forget is going to Arlington Cemetery. You see it in photos, but it's not the same as seeing it in person. It makes you realize the sacrifice that all these people made who fought for us. Everyone should see this once in their lives." ■



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

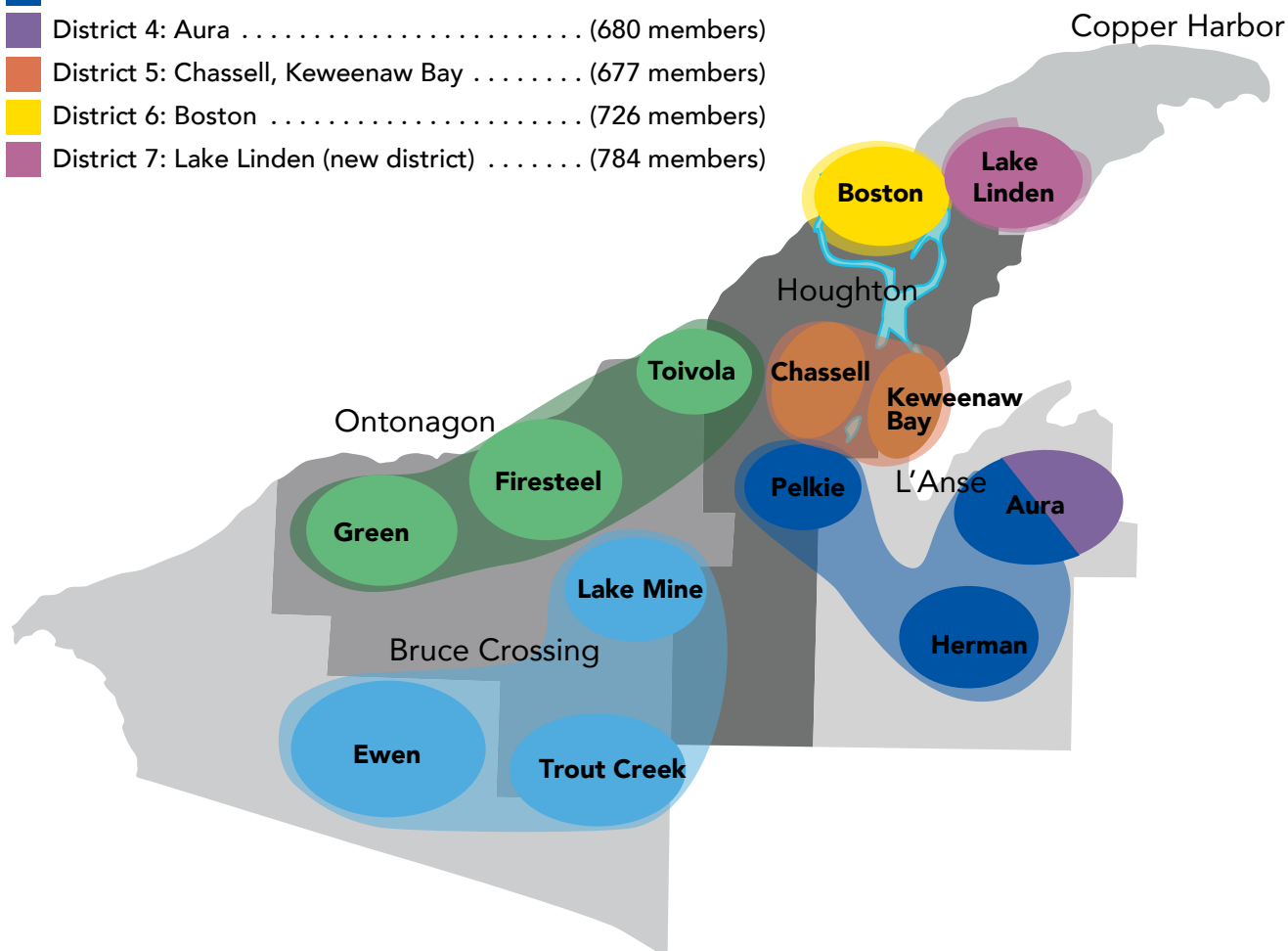
National Rural Electric Cooperative Association staff briefed the students on the many opportunities available for those interested in living, working or studying in Washington, D.C.

Ontonagon Board Seeks Member Feedback On Plan Of Redistricting

At this year's Ontonagon County REA (Ontonagon) Annual Meeting of Members in Chassell, a number of members raised concerns about the co-op's composition of director voting districts and how the current composition may be inconsistent with the Ontonagon bylaws. Ontonagon's bylaws require the board of directors to ensure the districts are similar in size. Currently, the voting districts range in size from nearly 400 members to more than 1,500 members. The Ontonagon board of directors intends to address this concern with a plan of redistricting. The map on this page explains how the districts would be divided under the proposed plan of redistricting.

Proposed Plan of Redistricting

- District 1: Green, Firesteel, Toivola (611 members)
- District 2: Ewen, Trout Creek, Lake Mine . . . (740 members)
- District 3: Pelkie, Herman, Aura (628 members)
- District 4: Aura (680 members)
- District 5: Chassell, Keweenaw Bay (677 members)
- District 6: Boston (726 members)
- District 7: Lake Linden (new district) (784 members)



Have a few questions? We thought you might.

The following Q&A is focused on how the Ontonagon board of directors intends to address the inequity in size of voting districts with a plan of redistricting.

What is driving the need for a plan of redistricting?

The simple answer is growth. Over the past several years Ontonagon's service territory has grown at a faster pace in the Boston/Lake Linden areas than in other parts of the co-ops service area. This has resulted in much larger districts in those areas than others in the co-op's service footprint.

Why is growth in the Boston/Lake Linden areas a concern?

It is not a concern, but it does result in voting districts in those areas that are substantially larger than many of the other voting districts.

What is the Ontonagon board doing about this inequity in size of voting districts?

The Ontonagon board of directors has worked with the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association (MECA) on the plan of redistricting (see map) that, if approved by the board at a future meeting, will result in seven voting districts that are all similarly sized. Most importantly, this will ensure that the co-op's voting districts and number of members in each are consistent with the organization's bylaws.

What is the practical impact of this plan of redistricting?

The plan of redistricting being proposed by the board of directors will ensure that each of the seven voting districts would have between 600 to 800 members. The Boston district would be split into two districts by the addition of a new Lake Linden voting district in the area north of Hancock.

When would these proposed new districts become effective?

Once approved by the Ontonagon board of directors, the new districts would become effective in June 2018 with the addition of the new Lake Linden district and a new director being elected from that district to the Ontonagon board of directors.

How can Ontonagon members provide input on the proposed plan of redistricting?

Members can submit their comments on the proposed plan of redistricting at ontonagon.coop or by contacting their local director by Oct. 16. All member comments will be provided to the board of directors prior to any formal action on the proposed plan of redistricting. The Ontonagon Board will likely take action on the plan of redistricting later this year.



We Welcome Your Feedback

Do you have a question or comment about the redistricting plan? If so, submit it at ontonagon.coop by Oct. 16. We'd love to hear from you.

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.

FUEL MIX REPORT

The fuel mix characteristics of Ontonagon REA as required by Public Act 141 of 2000 for the 12-month period ending 6/30/17.

COMPARISON OF FUEL SOURCES USED

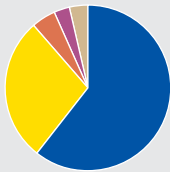
Regional average fuel mix used

Your co-op's fuel mix

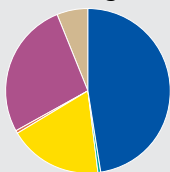
| FUEL SOURCE | | |
|--------------------------|-------|-------|
| Coal | 60.5% | 47.7% |
| Oil | 0.0% | 0.6% |
| Gas | 28.1% | 18.1% |
| Hydroelectric | 4.8% | 0.8% |
| Nuclear | 3.0% | 26.7% |
| Renewable Fuels | 3.5% | 6.1% |
| Biofuel | 0.0% | 0.8% |
| Biomass | 0.0% | 0.5% |
| Solar | 0.0% | 0.1% |
| Solid Waste Incineration | 0.0% | 0.1% |
| Wind | 3.5% | 4.1% |
| Wood | 0.0% | 0.5% |

NOTE: Biomass above excludes wood; solid waste incineration includes landfill gas.

Your Co-op's Fuel Mix



Regional Average Fuel Mix



EMISSIONS AND WASTE COMPARISON

| TYPE OF EMISSION/WASTE | lbs/MWh | |
|--------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| | Your Co-op | Regional Average* |
| Sulfur Dioxide | 0.7 | 7.6 |
| Carbon Dioxide | 1,518 | 2,170 |
| Oxides of Nitrogen | 0.7 | 2.0 |
| High-level Nuclear Waste | 0.0000 | 0.0083 |

*Regional average information was obtained from MPSC website and is for the 12-month period ending 12/31/16.

Figures for Ontonagon County REA are based on those of its principle power suppliers, Wisconsin Public Service and WE Energies.

Public Act 295: The Clean Renewable And Efficient Energy Act

2016 Annual Energy Optimization Report Ontonagon County Rural Electrification Association MPSC Case Number U-17784

Ontonagon County REA 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 Ontonagon County REA collected \$61,244 through the Energy Optimization Surcharge and spent \$69,691 resulting in an under-collection of \$8,477. Ontonagon County REA achieved 326 MWh of energy savings in 2016 and carried forward 139 MWh from 2015 into 2016 for a total reported energy savings of 465 MWh for 2016. The full report can be obtained at your cooperative's headquarters and www.michigan-energy.org or <http://efile.mpsc.state.mi.us/efile>.

Notice to Members of Ontonagon County Rural Electric Cooperative Association

Case No. U-16595

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, Ontonagon County Rural Electric Cooperative Association submits an annual report to the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) regarding its Renewable Energy Plan. In 2016, Ontonagon acquired a total of 3,614 renewable energy credits and 157 incentive credits. All credit transfers were directed through Ontonagon's wholesale power supplier. Ontonagon 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 ontonagon.coop or by request at the cooperative's office.

Please Make Room For Roadside Crews

When the power goes out, so do Ontonagon REA's line crews. Lineworkers are the first to respond after an outage occurs, and they work tirelessly to restore power to the communities we serve.

If you're traveling and see one of our crews on the side of the road, we kindly ask that you move over if possible and give them a little extra space to work. We deeply care about the safety of all, and this extra precaution ensures just that.

If you approach a crew while traveling on a two-lane road, moving over to the next lane might not be an option. In this case, we simply ask that you slow down when approaching roadside crews. If you approach a crew while traveling on a four-lane road, and safety and traffic conditions allow, we ask that you move over into the far lane.

Utility crews aren't the only ones who could use the extra space. Emergency responders, such as police officers, firefighters and emergency medical technicians often find themselves responding to emergency situations near busy roadways. We ask that you follow the same procedures mentioned above to help keep these crews safe.

There's plenty of room for all. Let's work together to keep everyone safe on our local roadways.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY *Tip of the Month*

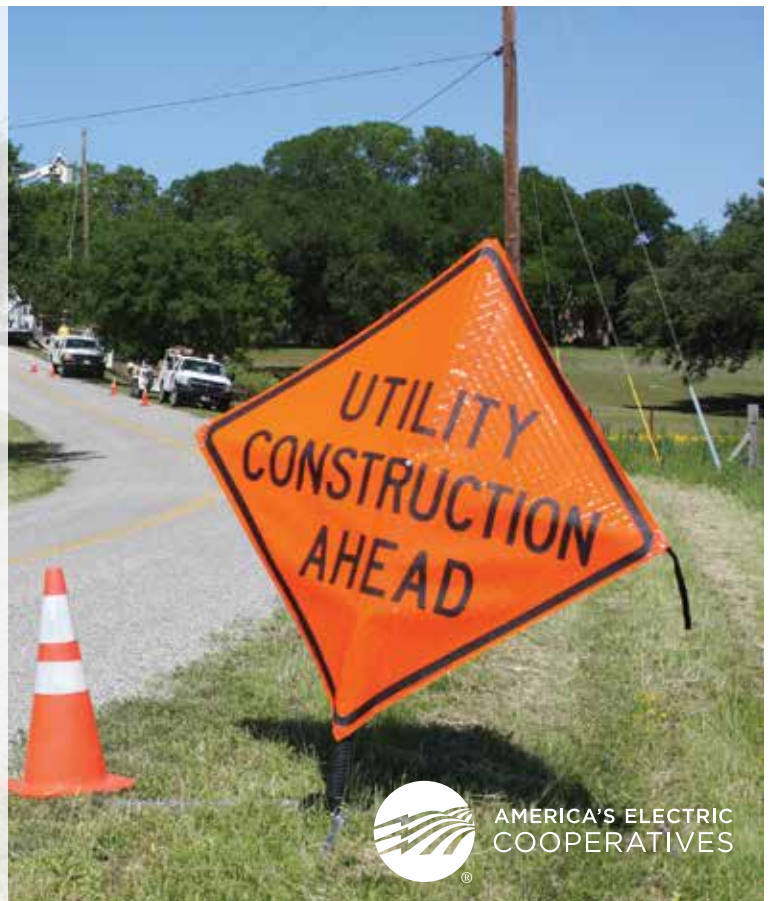
Cooler temps will be here soon! No matter what kind of heating system you have in your home, you can save money and increase your comfort by properly maintaining and upgrading your equipment. Contact a licensed professional to inspect your system *before* the winter chill arrives.



PLEASE MOVE OVER FOR EMERGENCY AND UTILITY CREWS

If you see police, firefighters, utility crews or other emergency personnel on the side of the road, please slow down and move over when possible.

Together, we can keep our crews safe.



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVES

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.

Easy Ways to Save Energy At Home

Saving energy is a great way to control your utility bills—while also helping to preserve the environment! Just a few small actions can make a big difference. Read on to discover quick and easy ways to start saving energy at home today!



Maintain your heating and cooling systems. Check the filter every month and replace it at least every three months. Remove leaves, dirt, and other debris from around the outdoor components to improve air flow and efficiency.



Strategically open and close window coverings. On hot, sunny days, keep your home cool by closing blinds, window shades, and curtains—especially on the south and west sides of your home. In cooler weather, leave shades open to maximize heat from the sun.



Set a schedule on your programmable thermostat. Program temperatures to save energy while you're at work, sleeping, or away. In the summer, increase the temperature during these times to save on cooling costs. In the winter, lower the heat to save energy and money.



Seal air leaks. Prevent cool air from seeping out in the summer and warm air from escaping in the winter. Up to 30 percent of heating and cooling bills are consumed by air leakage!



Clean and dust key areas of your home. Vacuum air registers and vents to keep air flowing as efficiently as possible. Dust electronics and light bulbs to ensure they run at maximum capacity. Clean the track on your sliding glass door to maintain a tight seal.

As always, visit michigan-energy.org or call 877-296-4319 for additional energy-saving information and incentives. ■

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



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.

Birds And Feathers



Submit A Photo & Win A Bill Credit!

Ontonagon REA members whose photos we print in Michigan Country Lines will be entered in a drawing. One lucky member will win a credit up to \$200 on their December 2017 energy bill! The upcoming topic and deadline is: **Back To School** due **Sept. 20** for the Nov./Dec. issue.

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

We look forward to seeing your best photos!



Hummingbirds return to us every spring, and many stay all summer and early fall. They have always loved to sit in this Prairie Fire Crabapple tree. This year the tree has developed fire blight, but this photo of the hummingbird was striking in that both the little bird's feathers and some of the curled, blighted leaves are highlighted by the sunlight at this precise moment. *By Lynda Graham*



My favorite bird, the chickadee, will come and eat right out of my hand. *By Karen Dault*



I took this picture in my garden in Trout Creek. I call it "Nuthatch Gymnastics." *By Mary Shegan*



Nesting on the shore of Keweenaw Bay. *By Bill Rinkinen*



These bluebirds sat on top of their nesting box on our pond in the spring when they first came home. *By Elizabeth Codd*

Restoring The Great Lakes Lighthouses

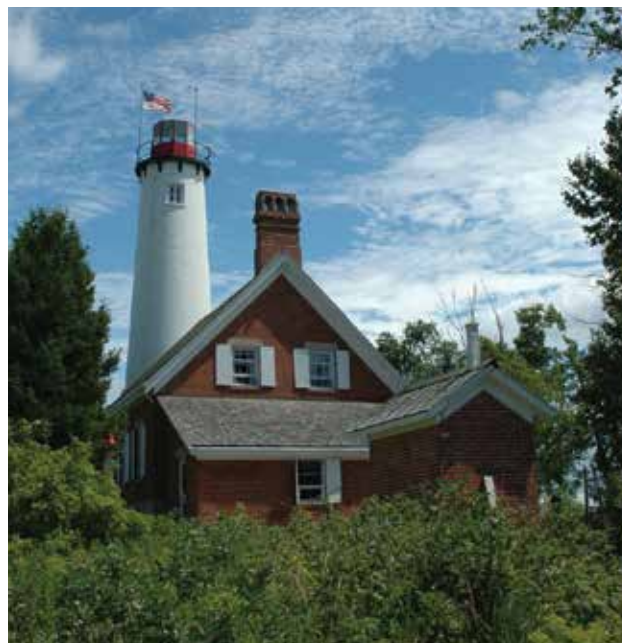
Scattered along Michigan's shoreline and numbering over 200 at their peak, the Great Lakes lighthouses once served as a beacon of hope to the weary seafarer. Today only 124 lights still stand, many in desperate need of repair. Enter the Great Lakes Lighthouse Keepers Association (GLLKA).

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.



July/August Photo

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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